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## The effect of social factors on skin color preference of Black preschool age children

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THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL FACTORS ON SKIN COLOR PREFERENCE  
OF BLACK PRESCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Department of Sociology  
and the  
Faculty of the Graduate College  
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
University of Nebraska at Omaha  
by  
Charles J. Alexander  
June 1977

UMI Number: EP72936

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the College of Graduate studies of the University of Nebraska at Omaha in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts.

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6-10-77  
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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother who always has set an example of what hard work and determination will accomplish, and who encouraged me to pursue education with an aggressive and determined attitude. To her I owe this accomplishment.

A special dedication to my late grandmother who passed away during the final stages of this thesis. She was a very beautiful and thoughtful woman. God bless her.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I always told myself that if I ever had the opportunity to pursue graduate education I would pursue it with the most serious and aggressive attitude. Well, I finally achieved that second step in my life, as far as education is concerned, with the assistance of some very thoughtful and intelligent people.

Most acknowledgeable are the members of my thesis committee. I thank Dr. George Barger for his constant encouragement and scholarly counsel during my graduate training and especially during the writing of this thesis. And Dr. Norman Hamm for his perspective, insight and attention to detail which, among other things, aided in my own concern about preschool age Black children's skin color preferences. Special thanks go to Dr. Robert Simpson for his scholarly expertise in guiding all aspects of this research, his unlimited availability to me for comment and feedback during all phases of the project, and the opportunity to work with a person who is understanding, sincere and sensitive to the complexities and problems that plague Blacks and minorities alike (in the social psychology of race awareness).

I am grateful for the numerous contributions of my committee members, both as individuals and as a group, thank you.

I also would like to thank my wife Paula who

laboriously typed and retyped the rough draft, sometimes into the wee hours of the morning. And a special thank you to the typist, Diane Egelston, who typed the final copy.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of Purpose

The primary purpose of this thesis is to determine if different shades of Black skin color have an effect on skin color preference among Black preschool age children. More specifically, it is an investigation of the relation skin color preference has to playmate choice among preschool age Black children and how this relation is affected by age, sex and social setting.

#### Background Information

Research concerning skin color preference among young children has been a major issue for quite sometime. Attention was probably given to this area as a result of the monumental 1954 Supreme Court Decision, Brown vs. the Board of Topeka, which involved court ordered school desegregation.

It was this historic case that argued segregated schools had a detrimental effect on young children, both Black and White. The research studies of Kenneth and Mamie Clark (1940, 1958) concerning skin color and its effect on young children were very instrumental in the 1954 Supreme Court case: explaining the ill effects that segregated

schools had upon young children. Their doll studies have been very instrumental to our understanding of the development of racial awareness in young children and their studies have stimulated a number of subsequent studies. The following review of the literature will discuss some of the past studies on this subject. These studies represent some of the better research done in the area of skin color preference and racial awareness development among preschool age children.

The review will explore the findings and implications that researchers have discovered about racial awareness and development in young children. This researcher would like to point out that none of the studies on skin color preference focused on color preference within racial categories. Past researchers always dichotomize Black and White subjects, measuring their skin color preference, while at the same time, comparing their skin color preference. Thus one of the unique characteristics of this study is its exploration of attitudinal and behavioral implications of within-race color differences.

The Clarks (1958) conducted a study during the 1940 s which focused on racial identification and preference in Negro children. They examined the development of racial identity as a function of personality development.

The subjects consisted of 253 Negro children; 134 from segregated nursery schools in the south and 119 from

racially mixed nursery schools in the north. Ages ranged from three to seven years and included both males and females. The children were also divided by skin color; light (46), medium (128) and dark (79).

The children were presented with four dolls, two were white with yellow hair and two were brown with black hair. A series of eight questions were asked to reveal racial preference, racial differences and to show self identification.

The most important findings from the Clarks' study revealed that the majority of the Black children preferred the white doll and rejected the colored doll. This preference decreases gradually from age four through seven years. The majority of the children had a clear knowledge of racial differences.

Northern children preferred the white doll more than the Southern children. The Clarks attributed this to the Northern children being exposed to an interracial setting more frequently.

Another monumental study that was conducted during the 1950's was done by Mary Ellen Goodman (1952). Goodman, like the Clarks, was seeking to understand the development of racial attitudes in children and those which were concerned with the personality concomitance of racial awareness and identification.

The subjects consisted of 103 children; 57 Negroes

and 46 whites. Most of the children were four years old. Data was collected through a series of methods: non-participant observation, participant observation, interviewing, objective test and even use of school records.

Goodman, as did the Clarks, found there was a preference among Black children for white dolls. Negative attitudes about Negroes were found in some white children by age four. Goodman also divided her children into three racial color awareness groups (high, medium, and low). More girls than boys have higher awareness level; 40% of the Black children and 24% of the White children showed high awareness. According to Goodman, racial preference among pre-school age children had been present for a number of years.

Catherine Landreth and B. C. Johnson (1953) explored the significance of family income and social circumstances specifically on the child's response to persons of different skin color. The researchers collected data from 48 children, ages three to five years old, of white upper, white lower and Negro lower socioeconomic status. The data consisted of choices of insets, showing figures of different skin colors. Data was collected by using a picture inset test. The test required each child to make 54 choices of one of a pair of insets to complete a picture.

In terms of the relationship between social status

and awareness, the authors of the study concluded that white children whose parents are engaged in the professions perceived skin color in "cognitive terms"; that is to say, the children were aware of the different skin colors, but their perception of it did not effect their present mental state condition. They made more matching responses than any other group. Whereas, those children whose parents were in semi-skilled occupations perceived skin color in "affective terms"; they were more emotional in selecting their skin color choice and seemed to be effected by it.

Harold W. Stevenson and Edward C. Stewart (1958) were highly interested in what age race awareness occurs and in the development of racial attitudes in young children. Data was collected from 225 children in a private nursery and an elementary school in Austin, Texas. Ages ranged from three to seven, with 125 subjects being white and 100 Negroes. The data consisted of responses from four test; a discrimination test (using picture insets), doll assembly test, doll selection test and incomplete stories.

The findings revealed that the ability to discriminate physical differences between Negroes and Whites develops rapidly during the preschool years. Items on the test that related to attitudes toward self and toward race revealed a higher frequency of negative attitudes among Negroes. In conclusion, it was discovered that whites were

able to discriminate at a much earlier age than Negroes. \*

The above mentioned studies were very significant in the development of racial attitudes in young children during the 1950's. During the 1960's many of these studies were duplicated and the results sometimes contradicted earlier studies.

Earl Ogletree (1969) was one investigator who attempted to test the Clarks' proposition "as children develop an awareness of racial differences of their racial identities, they also develop an awareness and acceptance of the prevailing social attitudes and values toward race and skin color".

Ogletree's subjects consisted of 199 pupils of which 74 (67%) were Negro and 54 (37%) were White. The data was collected by using a skin color preference test that called for the coloring of two human figures. From this test the author was able to measure skin color preference.

The findings revealed that 72% of the Negro pupils colored both figures brown and 75% of the White children colored both figures white. There is some disparity between the Ogletree's and Clarks' findings. The differences may be attributed to the sociocultural changes, according to the author.

Steven Asher and Vernon Allen (1969) were also interested in the Clarks' findings and set out to determine

if children negatively and/or positively evaluated white skin color. The authors felt that, though there had been sociocultural changes, there was a possibility that preference for white skin color still held in 1969. The rationale for this problem developed out of two theories. The social and economic progress theory holds that as success is experienced and extensions of control over the environment develops, an enhanced feeling of competence and racial pride will evolve. The social comparison theory states briefly, economic progress and social mobility should lead to more frequent comparisons with Whites. This leads to greater feeling of inferiority, since Whites are greatly advantaged.

The authors collected data from a total of 344 children (118 Black and 155 White) from Newark, New Jersey. Ages ranged from three to eight years; social economic status was based on parents' occupation; and the data was sorted into middle and lower class groups.

The data consisted of racial preferences for three pairs of puppets, both black and white. Two puppets, one brown and one white, were placed in prone positions before each child. Younger children were shown baby puppets. Older children were shown puppets which were the same sex of the subject. Questions adapted from the Clarks' studies were asked of each child. Children responded by pointing to the puppet of their preference.

The findings of the study revealed some interesting



implications. There was a strong tendency for middle class Negro children to prefer the White puppet, while lower class children showed no difference in consistency of response across items (on the test) as a function of social class. Boys favored the white puppet more than the girls, among both races. Among Negro children, there was a tendency for male-female differences in racial preference to widen with age.

In conclusion, on three of the four items there was a greater white preference than supported by the Clarks' findings 28 years earlier. According to the authors, the preference for white skin color is still prevalent during the 1960 s.

In 1970, Joseph Hraba and Geoffrey Grant investigated the problem of racial preference and identification. The authors' interest was to determine if interracial contact for Black children engenders preference for Whites, since the Clarks' doll studies implies "Black is not Beautiful".

Hraba and Grant were interested in testing the Clarks' study in an interracial setting. Data was collected from 160 children, 90 black and 71 whites. Ages ranged from four to eight years. An interview technique using a set of four dolls was employed; two black dolls and two white dolls. A set of questions that the Clarks used were given in order to achieve an attitudinal response to-

ward racial preference.

There were some striking differences between the authors' study and the Clark and Clark study. The study revealed that Black and White children preferred dolls of their own race. Black children preferred Black dolls at all ages and the preference increased with age. The children of light skin color were at least as strong in their preference for a black doll as others. There was no significant difference in misidentification. Hraba and Grant's study introduced a totally new outlook on research involving racial preference and identification among Black children.

A study similar to Hraba and Grant, except that it involved adults, was conducted by Norman Hamm, David O. Williams and Derrick Dalhouse (1973). The authors felt sociocultural change had an influence on developing racial attitudes and also racial self-concept. In past years, studies have revealed that Black skin is undesirable and along with it are other negative connotations.

Data was collected from twenty-four respondents; age 15 to 25, 35 to 45, and 55 to 65 years old. Data was collected by a "choose a person" task, which contained five cards with ten caucasians and ten Blacks of various shades of skin color. Subjects were required to choose faces of various skin colors from a visual chart, which contained, human figures dressed in the same attire.

The authors concluded there was no significant preferences on the part of the respondents for dark skin color nor was there an increasing tendency for older subjects to prefer light skin. However, younger subjects (age 15 to 25) attributed significantly more positive behavioral attributes to black skin than the older subjects.

All of these studies have been very instrumental in the understanding of skin color preference among preschool age children. Clark and Clark were pioneers in the study of racial preference among children and their studies during the late 1940's and early 1950's set the pace for future studies. Unlike the Clarks' studies, Goodman concentrated on four year old preschool children and how they formulate their racial attitudes and awareness. Her general line of inquiry was very similar to the Clarks; she focused on the development of racial attitudes and preference. In these two studies and others conducted during this time period, there always was a preference for white skin color among Black children.

During the 1960's the investigation of skin color preference among children began to create new facts and findings. Again, the Clarks' studies had a major influence on many facets of research done on the subject. Asher and Allen adopted the Clarks' questions in trying to determine if white skin color is preferred among black preschool children. They found that there is a greater preference for

white skin color among middle-class, female and older children, but not among lower-class, younger males. They interpreted their findings in terms of the social comparison theory being the contributing factor for greater white preference.

Earl Ogletree disproves the Clarks' proposition on black skin color being undesirable and he also disproves Asher and Allen's findings on racial preference. Ogletree attributes sociocultural change as the major influence in determining the positive attributes to dark skin color.

Hraba and Grant, again used the Clarks' method in an interracial setting to determine if there is a white preference among Black children. The authors found that Black dolls were preferred at all ages among Black children. Since there was a strong positive value on black doll choices among the Black children, it was concluded that "Black was Beautiful" instead of "Black is not Beautiful", which the Clarks' studies implied.

Hamm, Williams and Dalhouse suggested that much has been done in the past decade to improve the Negroe's image of himself. This helped eliminate the negative value attributed to black skin color and a positive value has been attributed to dark skin among adult Blacks. The authors also suggested that further research should attempt to identify the sociocultural factors (e.g., mass media exposure, Black literature, racial desegregation, etc.) which are

responsible for producing changes in self-concept among Black children and young adults.

In conclusion, this writer assumes sociocultural change has had an influence on the development of racial attitudes and racial preference among children. The evidence gathered in the past 30 years has certainly diminished the theory that black skin is undesirable. The sociocultural changes and present research has produced a new outlook on dark skin color and it's meaning to Black people.

However, we still lack evidence that measures skin color preference among children within race. This research, therefore, is an attempt to explain the social factors that influence skin color preference among preschool age children within the "Negro" race.

#### Theoretical Orientation

The theoretical orientation employed herein is based on the framework espoused by George Casper Homans in Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms (1974). Homans explains how balance theory relates to social interaction and liking.

Balance theory is concerned with the mutual influence of two or more different kinds of exchange in relationships between persons (Homans:1961, 1964). Homans also states:

If balance relationships are those in which the persons concerned either interact frequently with one another and resemble one another in some aspect of behavior such as expressed opinion or interact infrequently

and differ, then it follows that for a number of persons in these circumstances, considered as a set of pairs, the more frequent is the interaction between any two of them, the more likely they are to be similar in some respect. We base this generalization not only on the tendency for the two to become more similar if interaction is maintained between them--here the interaction causes the similarity--but also on the tendency for them to reward one another and thus to increase their interaction if they are initially similar--here the similarity causes the interaction (Homans:1961, 64).

In retrospect, Homan's balance theory suggests; because two people possess a similar characteristic, i.e., dress, manners, speech, etc., it is more than likely for them to interact because of the greater chance of acceptance of friendship and personal rewards. In a given situation the rewards and cost will be similar for each person. For instance if two subjects possess similar physical traits it is more than likely that they will possess some degree of liking or preference for each other.

In relating Homan's theory to the research problem, the preschool age child will select their playmate choice on the basis of whether or not they like their playmate choice. It is this researcher's assumption that playmate choice will be someone of the same skin color. Homan's balance theory will serve as the foundation for the basic hypothesis outlined in this research project; because of it's orientation to viewing like categories, such as preference for a particular shade of skin.

### Hypotheses

In utilizing Homan's theoretical perspective (which is based on balance theory) as a springboard, this writer is proposing a theoretical framework focused upon skin color preference of Black preschool age children.

Hypothesis #1: Playmate preference varies directly with sameness of skin color.

The first hypothesis stems directly from the theoretical foundation employed in this thesis and does not need further logical elaboration.

Hypothesis #2: The older the child the less likely playmate choice will be determined by sameness of skin.

Prior research has indicated the older the child, the less likely he/she will choose a playmate that resembles himself (Porter: 1971, Asher and Allen: 1969).

According to Judith Porter (1971) differences in color begin to acquire social meaning for the child at an early age. Porter's research data revealed that three year old children, both Black and White, matched doll choices correctly in regards to selecting the correct racial group the doll belonged in. Younger children were more concerned with matching or association.

As the child grows older, his perceptual keenness develops; he becomes more aware of cues, and he can more easily verbalize what he notices (Porter: 1971, 22). Therefore the older the child the less likely playmate choice will be determined by sameness of skin color.

There is also further indication in the literature that skin color preference differs with age (Asher and Allen: 1969, Hraba and Grant: 1970). Asher and Allen found in their study of preschool age children that there was a tendency for male-female differences regarding skin color preference to increase with age among Negroes. Hraba and Grant also found that there was a positive association between differences in skin color preference as age increases.

Hypothesis #3: Female subjects are more likely to choose playmates with dark skin than males.

This hypothesis attempts to investigate the relationship between skin color and sex. Porter (1971) discovered Black preschool age girls are generally more concerned about physical appearance than boys. Since skin color is a physical feature, and it is emphasized as being beautiful, it is only logical to assume female subjects are more likely to choose playmates with dark skin.

To add to this hypothetical inquiry, Asher and Allen (1969) discovered that Negro boys favored the white puppet more than Negro girls in their study on skin color preference. This reveals that females preferred the darker shade of skin color more than boys.

Finally, an examination will be directed at the effect social situations have on skin color preference and playmate choice. There seems to be a lack of pertinent information concerning social setting and skin color pre-



ference, therefore it makes it difficult to formulate a hypothesis worth testing. For this reason, the investigation of this variable will be one of an exploratory nature.

This writer hopes to focus upon the effect social settings have on the preschool age Black child and his/her skin color preference. It is plausible to speculate that social setting has no effect on skin color preference.

Drawing on the logical assumption of the first hypothesis it seems appropriate to hypothesize:

Hypothesis #4: Social setting has no effect on skin color preference.

This hypothesis is worth examining, however, because behavior and interaction varies with situations. Situational factors are known to be determinants of social behavior.

## CHAPTER II

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design and Description of Sampling Process

The research design consists of a cross-sectional study of Black preschool children in selected day care centers of Omaha's Near Northside. The data collection instruments consist of a questionnaire and photographs of Black children who are of preschool age.

The questionnaire was designed to reveal the child's skin color preference regarding playmate choice controlled by sex and age as well as by private setting (home) versus public setting (preschool).

The population under study consisted of fifty-two preschool age children who attended predominantly Black preschools or day care centers in Omaha, Nebraska, preferably preschools with only a Black population. The sample was stratified by skin color, sex and age to insure sufficient data for analysis on the major variables.

To avoid complications with preschool personnel who might have indifferent feelings about the research project, availability sampling was utilized. The possibility of resistance to the study based on such issues as (1) small children being manipulated for experimental purposes,

(2) disruption of preschool daily programming, (3) introduction of an unfamiliar person (experimenter) to the preschool population, and (4) parental disapproval of experimenting with children, can render random sampling not just time consuming and expensive, but also disruptive of the aims of the research.

Since the researcher is not generalizing to a certain population, the need for randomization in selection of respondents is reduced and thus the sample can be obtained by availability. It is known that availability samples are quite legitimate, so long as the inferences drawn from them are accompanied by reservations which are made necessary by the ill-defined relation between universe and sample (Mueller, Schuessler and Costner, 1970:351). Proponents of availability sampling also feel that social scientists, like everyone else, often must content themselves with compromises. Notwithstanding their shortcomings, availability samples do yield significant information and insights.

For example, the Burgess and Cottrel sample of 526 married couples (as discussed by Mueller, Schuessler and Costner, 1970) produced many revealing propositions on the positive and negative factors in marital happiness; Znaniecki's renowned sample of letters written by Polish peasants provided suggestive hypothesis on basic human motives. Moreover, inexpensive captive samples often can be utilized to develop research techniques and to supply

experience in applying them (Mueller, Schuessler and Costner, 1970:351).

#### Developing the Data Collection Instruments

Photographs were taken of Black preschool age children who were of various skin colors. Twenty-five photographs of male and female children were taken in order to achieve an adequate number for the final selection process. The children were each dressed in a neutral (gray) T-shirt with as few color distraction as possible (such as hair ribbons, barrettes, earrings, etc..). This allowed for greater continuity in dress among the subjects in the photographs and it also limited distraction.

Each photograph attempted to record the three representative shades of skin color among Black people; light, medium and dark. Since our intent was to allow the child to select the subject in the photograph on the basis of skin color, an effort was made to minimize physical characteristics of subjects photographed and to make skin color salient.

Five raters were utilized to judge and select pictures that would best represent the three basic skin color groups among Black people. The raters, who were Black, were individuals who had daily contact with Black people of various skin colors and could best judge skin color for categorizing. Photographs of the children were rated for skin color.

The raters, who consisted of educators, day care center personnel and children, were asked to group the photographs into three categories: light, medium and dark skin color. After each rater made their initial first choice of each shade, the initial of the skin color was placed on a rating chart (see Appendix B). The chart listed the photographs by numbers and the initial of the selected skin color went under the designated photograph number (e.g., L went under photograph #2). The rest of the photographs were then placed in each skin color category; initialed with a small letter and recorded on the rating sheet. The net results of this process produced six photographs; two light skin color subjects (male and female), two medium color subjects, and two dark skin subjects. This process was completed three times. The sets of photographs accompanied the interview schedule; a set of three males and a set of three females.

The questionnaire was designed to record the responses of the child and also served as the interview schedule (see Appendix D). The general focus of the questionnaire was to gain informal familiarity with the research problem.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of background information, such as sex, age, skin color, etc. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of situational interaction questions that examined the child's skin

color preference. Hamm, Dalhouse and Williams (1973) mentioned the use of situational behavioral questions in their study of skin color preference. The situational behavioral questions they make reference to were concerned with conduct that was appropriate in a given situation. In contrast, for this study, situational interaction questions refers to how the child selects playmates if placed in a situation where he/she would have to interact with children of various skin colors.

The questions on the interview schedule were designed to reveal certain characteristics about the child. The following are the major research questions that each child responded to: along with a brief description of what the question attempted to measure:

1. These six boys and girls in the pictures are about the same age as you are. Please look at each picture and tell me what child you would like to have as a playmate in your school?

This question was an attempt to measure the child's public or preschool preference for playmate choice. By selecting a playmate, the child gives an indication of skin color he or she prefers.

2. Now tell me what child you would not like to have as a playmate in your school? (reveals skin color dislike)
3. Which one of these children do you think is pretty?

This question was formulated to determine if there was a need to control for outstanding physical characteristics, such as prettiness, physical features (noses, eyes, etc.)

and facial expressions. This issue will be discussed in the following pages.

4. Which one of these children is not pretty?  
(same argument as discussed in question number three)
5. If you had a birthday party which one of these children would you like to invite to your house for your party?

This question was an attempt to measure the child's skin color choice in a private setting. If the child has to select someone to take home, because of possible parental or family influences, the child will select someone he feels will be generally accepted at home. This would be his/her personal choice for personal reasons.

6. Which one of these children would you not invite to your house for a birthday party?

Again, we are interested in the child's dislike for a certain shade of skin color. This will aid in determining the general shade for skin color dislike.

The preceding questions and their response created the major portion of the research data. It was assumed that the questions served the purpose as mentioned above. A pretest was conducted to determine if any of the questions needed revision.

The pretest consisted of asking the child to sit at a table with the interviewer. The interviewer then asked the child the questions on the interview schedule, showing the child the photographs as each question was asked. After the child responded to the question, the appropriate

answer was circled on the questionnaire. Particular attention was paid to the child's understanding of the question; eye contact with the photographs; the degree of difficulty encountered with each question; and the no response rate. The seven children subjected to the pretest had little difficulty in completing the interview. The response to the questions were at a rate that was consistent with time (no long lapse of time between questions and answers). However, there was a slow response rate in the selection of photographs when the subjects were asked to select a child who they thought was pretty. However, this did not lengthen the interview session, time wise, to effect the continuity of the data collection process.

The procedure of using real life photographs added to the meaningfulness of helping the child select photographs with minimal difficulty. Hopefully, it not only helped reduce possible confusion for the child, but also increased the ecological validity of the research data.

#### Data Collection Procedure

During the development of the research, contact was made with area day-care directors, teachers, and other preschool personnel, to discuss the feasibility of measuring preschool age Black children's skin color preferences. The idea was well received by each day care center contacted and cooperation was assured. The day care center's personnel were very interested in serving as interviewers and were



willing to undergo brief training in order to learn more about the research and its data collection instrument.

A three hour interview session was planned to train and familiarize the interviewers with the different photographs and the interview schedule. The interview training session involved discussing questions that may evolve during an interview session; such as a child's skin color, incomplete responses, etc.

The set of photographs consisting of three children (light, medium and dark skin colors) accompanied the interview schedule and served as a guide for identifying a subject's skin color. There was an introduction to the interview schedule to discuss any irregularities as well as a discussion on the techniques of interviewing. Each interviewer received a list of suggested steps to undertake while interviewing each subject (see Appendix C).

The rationale behind letting the day care staff undertake the responsibility of interviewing was, 1) to eliminate introducing an unfamiliar person to the children, which might have a negative affect on responses, 2) to avoid disrupting normal classroom procedure, 3) to increase reliability in the response rate, and 4) to minimize the amount of time spent on each interview.

The following is a list of training steps used during the interview training sessions;

## Training Steps

- I. General description of the study
  - a. thesis project
  - b. purpose of study
  - c. how sample was selected
  - d. how questionnaire was constructed
  - e. how the data will be processed
  - f. how the data will be analyzed
  - g. length of interview
  
- II. Studying the questionnaire and specifications
  - a. discuss each question's purpose
  - b. explain the intent of each question
  - c. discuss answer categories
  
- III. Practicing the interviews
  - a. conducting situational interviews
  - b. practicing interviewing one another
  - c. refining interviewing techniques
  
- IV. Pretest of interview schedule
  - a. discussion of problems
  - b. interviewers should fully understand the task
  - c. discussion of interviewing experiences
  - d. last minute changes

The actual training of the interviewers took place the day before the interview sessions with the children. The interviewers found the sessions helpful, because it enabled them to participate in investigating a very interesting area; understand the mechanics of the interview schedule; serve as administrators of the questionnaires; and enable them to understand the interview schedule's relationship to the overall research problem.

It was during the interview training sessions, that the meaning of question seven and eight were discussed in depth. Questions seven and eight were formulated to determine if there was a need to control for outstanding physical features (or prettiness).

Everyone involved in the session questioned the relevancy of this item in regards to the child making a skin color preference. Most felt, from their own past experiences and observations, that skin color is such a salient feature among preschool age children, that how the child looks does not determine playmate choice. As one day care center director commented;

"We have a very beautiful dark skin girl who always comes to the center looking nice, hair combed, clean nice clothes, cute smile, etc., but guess who the light skin children choose to play with?...Other light skin children. They all seem to play with their own skin color group in most instances."

The viewpoint that skin color is so salient that it takes precedent over physical features was further questioned by the researcher during the pretest and the actual interviews with the child. On questions number seven and eight, the interviewers noticed the child taking longer to respond to the question. The child was observed studying the photographs for perhaps another characteristic to associate with the word "pretty". This led the researcher to believe that the child was not selecting photographs on the basis of physical features, but because of the skin color of the subject in the photograph.

The question remained in the questionnaire, despite much debate, for content purposes. The investigation for the influence of "prettiness" was abandoned, however, for the reasons mentioned above. This researcher felt there was

sound observational reasons, as well as cultural reasons, to not investigate the influence of physical features in this research problem.

### Analysis

The analysis of the data consisted of objective statistics such as Kendall's Tau ( $T_b$ ) and percentage differences; and subjective analysis through visual inspection of the data.

The statistical analysis for hypothesis number one, two and four focus on modal categories, determining if a relationship exists between subject's skin color and subject's playmate choice. If a relationship exist, statistical analysis will determine the significance of the relationship.

Kendall's Tau ( $T_b$ ) was utilized as the measure of association because of its applicability of ordinal data. It was also used because, 1) it was the most appropriate statistic for analyzing ordinal data, 2) it was adequate for the sample size, 3) it analyzed the cell frequencies with minimal difficulty, and 4) it was appropriate in measuring skin color as a category rank measure. Skin color is categorically ranked by shades (light to dark). Kendall's  $Tau_b$  is a directional measure of association which measures the strength of a relationship between category rank linear relationship.

A category rank linear relationship is one which

suggest, as "X" increases, "Y" increases (and vice versa). Values of tau range from -1.0 (strong inverse relationship) to +1.0 (strong positive association). A one to one correspondence of this type implies that the category ranks of "X" and "Y" are linearly related.<sup>1</sup>

To determine if the measurement of association was significant, measures of significance for  $T_b$  were computed ( $Z$ )<sup>2</sup>. An alpha of .05 was adopted as the general critical level. Therefore, for this particular research problem, the computed Z score had to be greater than  $\pm 1.96$  in order to be of significance. A value greater than  $\pm 1.96$  would indicate, given the sample size, the probability of the subject's playmate choice exceeds chance. This would indicate a significant  $T_b$ .

Percentage differences were used in examining hypothesis number three because the nature of the data, which consisted of small observed cell frequencies, allowed the researcher to make better modal frequency comparisons. Comparisons were made by taking the percentage difference between females' and males' playmate choices; and then determining the affect the independent variable had on the dependent variable. There will be a further elaboration on

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<sup>1</sup>For a further discussion on Kendall's Tau ( $T_b$ ) refer to Kohout (1974:224-235).

<sup>2</sup>For a further discussion on significant taus ( $T_b$ ) see Siegel (1958:220-222).

the statistical analysis of this hypothesis, during the discussion of findings.

Table A summarizes the demographic characteristics of this research. This information will be utilized in the statistical analysis of the research data.

TABLE 1  
Demographic Characteristics of Subjects

Characteristic	# of Subjects
Sex	
male	46%
female	$\frac{54\%}{100\%}$ (N=52)
Age	
3 year olds	37%
5 year olds	$\frac{63\%}{100\%}$ (N=52)
Skin Color	
light	21%
medium	52%
dark	$\frac{27\%}{100\%}$ (N=52)

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

Hypothesis number one: Playmate preference varies directly with sameness of skin color, was not supported by the research data.

Table 2.

Skin Color Preferences

		Subjects Playmate Choice			totals
		light	medium	dark	
Subject's skin color	dark	14%	50%	36%	100% (14)
	medium	40%	30%	30%	100% (27)
	light	18%	36%	46%	100% (11)

$T_b = 0.00$ 
 $Z = 0.00$ 
 $N = 52$

In comparison of the modal choice of playmate by subjects according to the skin color of the latter, table 1 reveals dark skin subjects tend to prefer medium skin playmates (50%); medium skin subjects preferred light skin playmates (40%); and light skin subjects preferred dark skin playmates (46%). The modal categories for each skin color group, fail to fall in a linear category rank relationship. This implies no direct relationship between subject's skin color and subject's playmate choice.

In fact, application of Kendall's Tau ( $T_b$ ) statistic to the data shows that the association between subject's skin color and subject's playmate choice is not sustained; the measurement of association indicates no association (0.00) between the two ordinal variables.

However, it might be noted at this point, that visual inspection of the cells shows a pattern of dark skin subjects and medium skin subjects preferring playmates with the next lighter shade of skin; whereas, light skin subjects preferred playmates with dark skin. This point will be discussed later on in the discussion of the research findings.

Hypothesis number two: The older the child the less likely playmate choice will be determined by sameness of skin color. This hypothesis was also not confirmed.

Table 3a.

## Three Year Old Subjects Playmate Choices

		Subject's Playmate Choice			totals
		light	medium	dark	
Subject's skin color	dark	1	1	1	3
	medium	7	1	2	10
	light	1	2	3	6
		$T_b = -0.225$	$Z = -1.347$	$N = 19$	

Table 2a reveals, among three year old subjects, dark skin subjects were as likely to prefer light and medium skin color playmates as well as their own skin color;



medium skin subjects preferred light skin playmates; and light skin subjects preferred dark skin playmates. There is no consistent linear category rank relationship.

The statistical measure of association, ( $T_b = -0.225$ ) indicates a weak inverse relationship between subject's skin color and that of the playmates chosen by three year old subjects. The computed Z (1.347) for this level of  $T_b$  fails to reach the critical level; confirming there is no significant relationship between the two ordinal variables.

Table 3b.

## Five Year Old Subjects Playmate Choices

		Subjects Playmate Choice			totals
		light	medium	dark	
Subject's Skin Color	dark	1	6	4	11
	medium	4	7	6	17
	light	0	2	3	5
		$T_b = 0.075$	$Z = 0.614$	$N = 33$	

Among the five year old subjects, table 2b, reveals that dark skin subjects preferred medium playmate choices; medium skin subjects preferred playmate of their own color shade, and light skin subjects preferred dark skin playmate choices. Again, there is no consistent linear category rank relationship which would induce a significant  $T_b$  to support the hypothesis.

The  $T_b$  for table 2b ( $T_b = -0.075$ ) reveals a very weak

inverse relationship between subjects skin color and playmate choice. The computed Z of 0.614 points out that the  $T_b$  value is not one of significance and suggests that although there is an inverse relationship, the color sameness of subjects and their preferred playmates, has no significant influence on each other.

From these findings emerge evidence that fails to support hypothesis number two. The tables reveal random selection when the relation between the sameness of the skin color of subjects and that of their preferred playmate is controlled for age.

Hypothesis number three, female subjects are more likely to choose playmates with dark skin than males, was a control for sex. This hypothesis was not supported statistically by the research data.

Table 4.

Preference for Dark Playmates by Sex

	Females	Males
Playmate Choice		
Dark	39%	29%
Other	61%	71% N=52
Totals	100% (28)	100% (24)

$\epsilon=10$

Table 3 reveals 39% of the females preferred dark skin playmate choices and 29% of the males preferred dark skin playmate choices; also 61% of the females preferred

other playmate choices while 71% of the males preferred other playmate choices.

Percentage differences were computed for this particular hypothesis because of the nature of the data. The hypothesis called for a comparison between females' playmate choices and males' playmate choices. The emphasis was not on determining a category rank relationship but a "more than" comparison.

The low cell frequencies in the original table made it necessary to collapse it into a 2x2 table. This allowed for larger cell frequencies for statistical analysis. Tables were dichotomized into all possible combinations and chi-square was computed to determine if any attained a .05 level of significance. The computed chi-squares for the dichotomized tables ranged from  $X^2=.0004$  to  $X^2=.05$ ; none of which attained a significant level. Therefore, percentage differences was employed as the most useful statistic for analysis.

A 2x2 table analysis was constructed to show the sex categories and their playmate choice. The findings from the table indicates females preferred dark playmates 10% more than males; and males preferred other (medium and light) playmates 10% more frequently than females. The table shows female subjects are more likely to choose playmates with dark skin than males.

Unfortunately, a percentage difference for N=52

would have to exceed 10% to be significant.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the percentage difference of 10% would indicate there is not a significant relationship between females' playmate choices and dark skin color. Visually, however, female subjects prefer dark playmates more than females. This point will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Hypothesis number four; differential social settings have no affect on sameness of skin color, was a control for social setting. This hypothesis was not supported by the research data.

Table 5a

## Public Setting Playmate Selections

		Subjects Playmate Choice			totals
		light	medium	dark	
Subject's Skin Color	dark	14%	50%	36%	100% (14)
	medium	40%	30%	30%	100% (27)
	light	18%	36%	46%	100% (11)
		$T_b=0.00$	$Z=0.00$	$N=52$	

Table 4a reveals dark skin subjects preferred medium playmates (50%); medium skin subjects preferred light playmates (40%); and light skin subjects preferred dark playmates (45%). Whereas, in Table 4b, dark skin subjects preferred dark playmates (57%); medium skin subjects pre-

<sup>3</sup>For a further discussion on significant percentage differences refer to Kohout (1974:102).

Table 5b  
Private Setting Playmate Selections  
Subjects Playmate Choice

		light	medium	dark	totals
Subject's Skin Color	dark	14%	29%	57%	100% (14)
	medium	30%	26%	44%	100% (27)
	light	28%	36%	36%	100% (11)
		$T_b=0.133$	$Z=1.39$	$N=52$	

ferred dark playmates (44%); and light skin subjects preferred both dark and medium playmates (36%). These findings show that the modal categories of each table are not the same. This suggests that social setting has an affect on playmate choice. If this is the case, the data would not confirm hypothesis number four.

Though the measure of association ( $T_b$ ) does reveal no association (0.00) between sameness of subject's skin color and that of the subjects chosen playmates in a public setting, the measure of association in a private setting ( $T_b=0.133$ ) reveals some degree of association though quite weak. The measure of association, although weak, is one of non-significance. The computed Z (1.39) indicates that the measure of association ( $T_b$ ) is not significant; it failed to fall above the  $\pm 1.96$  criterion for significance at the .05 level.

Both visual inspection and data analysis fail to confirm hypothesis number four. This hypothesis along with the others will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

The following conclusions are at best tentative due to problems of analysis. Three shades of skin color were utilized in the research because of the three distinct colors of skin that comprise Black people in the United States. Therefore, the data was presented in 3x3 tables. As a result, the cell frequencies were low and the statistical analysis was affected by limited measurement analysis.

The use of Kendall's Tau ( $T_b$ ) and percentage differences was utilized. The nature of the data limited the researcher to employ these measures because both were about the most appropriate measures for analyzing the data, statistically. Therefore, because of these limitations, the research analysis permits the researcher to make only tentative conclusions which apply only to the sample involved in this research.

#### Hypothesis: Sameness of Skin Color

The most important conclusion for the sample under study and the statistics used; there is no relationship between the sameness of the subject's skin color and that of the playmate chosen. Hypothesis number one implies that preschool age children will select playmates who are the

same skin color as themselves. This was not confirmed by the data. What the data suggested was playmate preference was not contingent upon sameness of subject's skin color, and preschool age Black children demonstrated no preference for a particular shade of Black skin.

However, by looking at the modal playmate choice for each color shade of subject, there is a rather interesting pattern. Dark and medium shade subjects tend to prefer similar shade playmates. With light skin subjects, on the other hand, we see a preference in the opposite direction; towards playmates of darker shade of skin color. The design of this research does not allow for statistical analysis of this pattern, but it might be helpful to look at this pattern in relation to our controls for age, sex and nature of social setting.

The lack of evidence to support hypothesis number one could imply skin color preference among preschool age children is not an important issue today, or at least to this sample. It could very well be that preschool age Black children select playmates on another criteria (i.e., playfullness, strength, popularity, etc.) and not on the basis of skin color. Could it be that the "Black is beautiful" concept, as implied in the research of Hraba and Grant (1970), has taken its toll on this generation of Black children, and a particular shade of skin color does not take precedent in selecting a playmate? Maybe all shades

of skin are equally important. This question remains unanswered.

Hypothesis number two, which controlled for age also revealed no difference among preschool age children in selecting playmates who were of the same skin color. The same argument discussed in the previous hypothesis could support the reason for this finding. Age is not an important factor in determining if subjects select playmates on the basis of sameness of skin color. Hypothesis number two does not support the findings of past research. Porter (1971) found that younger children are more concerned with association or matching and will be more prone to select playmates who are more like themselves. Examination of modals suggests that older subjects are more prone in this direction. Asher and Allen (1969) discovered marked differences in skin color preferences as the child increases in age; there tends to be more variation of skin color preference among older children.

Examination of modal choices by each skin color of subject shows a rather cloudy picture regarding the previously noted tendency of dark and medium shade subjects to prefer lighter playmates. This appears to be the case for dark skin five year olds and medium skin three year olds only. However, for both three and five year old light skin subjects we see a continuance of the preference for darker playmates; age does not affect this tendency as reflected



in the modal choice.

Hypothesis number three was not confirmed by the research data, statistically. The percentage difference of 10% between females preference for dark skin and males preference for dark skin is not one of significance. Generally, percentage differences that are less than 10% may be considered small, while those over 20% are fairly strong (Kohout, 1974:75). For the number of subjects in the sample, the percentage differences would have to be greater than ten percent to indicate females prefer dark playmates more than males.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that this hypothesis was not supported by the data implies that sex has no effect on skin color preferences among Black preschool age children in the sample. Males and females demonstrate no significant differences in selecting dark playmates.

Hypothesis number four, was not confirmed by the research data. Analysis of the data implies that social setting does have an effect on subjects skin color preference. The pattern of playmate selection was different in each setting. Though the relation was not significant, Kendall's Tau ( $T_b$ ) shows a slightly greater tendency of subjects in a private setting to prefer playmates of the same skin color.

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<sup>4</sup>For a further elaboration on significant percentage differences see Kohout (1974:75).

However, an examination of the modal playmate choice for each shade of subjects suggests even a greater tendency for subjects in private settings to prefer not those of the same color but of darker color; dark skin subjects tend to prefer dark playmates, medium skin subjects prefer dark playmates and light skin subjects prefer playmates of darker shades (medium and dark).

In the public setting, or preschool, the selection is probably one that is influenced by peers and preschool staff. Thus subsequent research might attempt to determine if preschool staff attempts to encourage children to choose playmates without regard to color. The child may select a playmate because it might be the choice that may win the approval of both preschool staff and peers; thus giving the child the feeling of doing what is right. Whereas, in the private setting, home, it is one that is probably more important to the child than the public setting. In the private setting, playmate choice is more personal and based upon who the child personally prefers to be his playmate. Even though family influence exist at home, it could be the kind of influence that would allow the child to believe selection of a playmate that would be his/her choice would receive family approval. This sort of family approval would therefore give the child satisfaction in selecting a personal or private playmate choice that is comfortable with both the child and the child's family.

The rationale for this speculation is based on personal experience and observation. Originally, hypothesis number four was conceived as being one of an exploratory nature. It was not based on past research or theory because of the lack of social research in this area. The lack of support for hypothesis number four only confirms that social setting has an effect on sameness of skin color. However, from this hypothesis emerges an interesting and startling finding that could initiate further investigation of skin color preference and social setting. It is also important to investigate why social setting may have an effect on skin color preference among preschool age Black children. The understanding of these phenomena could very well contribute important knowledge to the field of sociology and social psychology, in understanding the behavior of the skin color preferences of preschool age Black children.

#### Hypothesis: Similarity of Skin Color

The research findings allows us to make speculations on the possible effects of similarity of skin color of subjects on playmate choice, as suggested by visual inspection of the following tables. Hypothesis number four, which examines playmate choices in a public setting in contrast to a private setting is of major concern.

Table 6a

## Public Setting Playmate Selection

## Subject's Playmate Choice

		light	medium	dark	totals
Subject's Skin Color	dark	14%	50%	36%	100% (14)
	medium	40%	30%	30%	100% (27)
	light	18%	36%	46%	100% (11)

N=52

Looking at the modal playmate choice for each skin color of subject, table 5a projects a rather interesting pattern. Clearly, our hypothesis, which pertains to the relation of sameness of skin color in playmate choices, must be rejected. However, we see some intriguing results when, through visual inspection, we examine similarity of skin color. In table 5a we find that dark and medium skin subjects tend to prefer similar shade playmates in the direction of lighter shades. With light subjects, on the other hand, we see a preference in the opposite direction, toward playmates of darker shade.

Table 6b

## Private Setting Playmate Selection

## Subject's Playmate Choice

		light	medium	dark	totals
Subject's Skin Color	dark	14%	29%	57%	100% (14)
	medium	30%	26%	44%	100% (27)
	light	28%	36%	36%	100% (11)

N=52

In contrast, playmate selection in a private setting still lacks evidence suggesting social setting has no effect on playmate choice. A visual inspection of the modal playmate choices for each shade of subjects, in table 5b, suggests even a greater tendency of subjects in private setting to prefer not those of same skin color, but of darker color. The swing is away from preference for playmates of lighter skin in public setting to preference for darker skin for all three skin color subjects in the private setting. Dark skin subjects tend to prefer dark playmates, medium skin subjects prefer dark playmates and light skin subjects prefer playmates of darker shades (medium and dark subjects).

Unfortunately, the design of this research does not allow for statistical analysis of this contrasting pattern of skin color selection in the social settings investigated. This visual finding surely supports the need for further research which focuses on skin color preferences and their relationship to differential social settings.

### Methodology

Methodologically, the research design was one that was similar to the one used by most researcher who investigated skin color preference among preschool age children. More specifically, it dealt with asking subjects questions concerning their skin color preference and having them select the skin color they prefer. The suggestions this researcher has are, in a study of this kind, the population

should be large enough to employ different sampling technique. Quota sampling is highly recommended. With a large enough population, a quota sample would probably produce more significant findings; because the ordinal variables would contain proportionate marginal frequencies. This information is based on a logical assumption that was formulated as a result of applying a different sample technique to this research problem.

The data analysis would probably have yielded more interesting findings if the cell frequencies were larger. In this research the cell frequencies limited the statistical analysis; statistically to Kendall's Tau and percentage difference and subjectively to visual inspection. In some cases, the cell frequencies were too small to really imply that a modal frequency existed in the ordinal categories. The movement of one case to a different category could alter the modal frequencies. This is another reason for selecting a larger sample.

Another methodological criticism that deserves comment is the possible lack of reliability on the interviewer's part when classifying the skin color of the respondents on the questionnaire. Even though the interviewers were utilizing the photographs as a guide for classifying skin color, it was the interviewer's judgement of skin color that was being recorded in the classification of subject's skin color and no effort to check the reliability of their judgement was made. Subsequent research should attempt to do this. For instance, if two interviewers were used in the classification process, agreement between interviewers on the classification of subjects' skin color could be checked, thus contributing to the reliability of classifying subjects by skin color.

Finally, as indicated earlier, the longer response rate to the two questions on "prettiness" in the interview schedule, led the researcher to assume that the shorter rate of response on the "playmate choice" questions indicated that subjects were responding to the latter in terms of skin color and not other physical characteristics. However, the researcher has to acknowledge scientifically that there could have been interaction between skin color and other physical characteristics in the responses of the subjects. This could be a rather important point for future research on this topic. A possible solution to this concern would be to allow subjects to select their skin color preferences from a pool of photographs grouped into three distinct skin color groups; light, medium and dark. By selecting their preference from this pool of photographs, the playmate choices of subjects would be equal in terms of social desirability as well as skin color preference. After this initial process, the interviewer can then proceed to ask the child questions about the photographs the child selected.

### Theory

Theoretically, it may well be appropriate to begin applying a more specific theory applicable to the social interaction of Black preschool age children. Though Homans' balance theory was utilized as the theoretical foundation for the research problem, the question of concern is; how applicable is Homans' theory to this particular research problem.

Homans explains that balance theory can get out of balance. Unbalanced relationships exist when there is inequities in social rewards, thus giving one person more power than the other. There can be dominance by one person in the two person relationship, eventually, it leads back to equilibrium. Homans does not explain how the unbalanced relationship can lead back to balance relationships. Thus causing one to speculate that a weakness exist in this portion of the theory.

Also, Homans believes that his theory is applicable to most small groups and their social behavior. There is no provisions for persons of different cultures and different societies. This is one point in the theory that can be criticized. It is not universal enough to apply to all societies, cultures and small groups. In the case of this study, this research focuses upon a group of children who are part of a unique culture in our society. This group of children also possess a unique pattern of behavior which is part of their culture. This unique pattern of social behavior could be of concern when applying Homan's balance theory. It is assumed that Homan's theory is addressed to all small groups. But is it really applicable to this research problem and the subjects under study?

The need for theories and methods applicable to Black people and their culture has been an issue among many Black social scientists. Sociologist Robert Staples (1973)



recommends a Black sociology. Staples describes Black sociology as being based on the premise that Black and White people have never shared, to any great degree, the same physical environment or social experiences (Staples, 1973:168). He also states, "people in different positions relate to each other and their physical environment differently." The result is a different behavior pattern, a configuration that should be analyzed from the view of the oppressed not the oppressor . . . such an analysis is Black sociology (Staples, 1973:168).

Black sociology could possibly lay the foundation for theory that would contribute to the area of skin color preference among preschool age Black children. Although it is an area that is not fully developed, Black sociology could produce a theory which investigates the historical events that pertain to the Black condition; studies the social behavior of Black children in public institutions; and investigates the influence of the family on the development of the Black child. Considering all these factors, an adequate theory to explain skin color preferences among preschool age Black children could possibly be formulated. One would also have to consider the social environment of the child and the influence it has on the child's behavior. This is only a speculation of a theory on the researcher's part. Hopefully, with more investigation into Black social life and behavior by Black social Scientists, a theory will be composed one day to explain the behavior and social interaction among preschool age Black children.

Finally, the advent of Black sociology will bring about a theoretical investigation of the present sociological theories used to describe the behavior of Black people and determine their relevance. In regards to the research problem explored in this study, not only

should Black sociology provide an elaboration of the "Black is Beautiful" theme, it should explain that white is not necessarily ugly. In order to do this, the process of how people in a society come to place positive or negative valuations on racial traits should be examined, and the role of political and economic factors in influencing those valuations considered (Staples, 1973:168).

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to discover and describe the type and degree of relationship that exists between Black preschool age children and their skin color preference. The subjects studied were preschool age Black children who attended selected Black preschools in the city of Omaha, Nebraska. An availability sample of 52 Black children was taken from three preschools and administered a questionnaire which measured skin color preference.

Four hypothesis, were formulated and were tested for their significance and degree of association. The analysis revealed that; Playmate preferences does not vary directly with sameness of skin color; age has no influence on skin color preference; female subjects are not more likely to choose dark playmates than males; and social setting has an affect on playmate preference. An interesting discovery was the non-confirmation of hypothesis number four. This hypothesis was an exploration into the sociological importance of skin color preference. It revealed that preschool age children tend to select different playmates in different social settings.

However, there are weaknesses in this research; it could definitely be improved upon. The need for a larger sample would have probably yielded more important findings. It also would have been less difficult to analyze the data if the cell frequencies were of a larger size. More importantly, the larger frequencies would have possibly prevented the data in the tables from being statistically characterized as random selections.

In terms of specific suggestions for future studies of this nature, there should be a perennial concern for methodological validity in attempting to measure skin color preference of preschool age children. This research has implied that the preference for a particular shade of skin is no longer a criteria for selecting playmates within race, particularly in public settings such as schools. The ideology of "Black is Beautiful" is so imbedded in Black culture that the preference for a certain shade of skin is not of importance. More specifically, there is a need to acknowledge the development of Black sociology. From the development of Black sociology will emerge theory that will be more applicable to the sociological analysis of Black children and Black people in general.

The results of this research, in spite of its limitations, will hopefully lend itself to "lighting the path" towards understanding the development of Black preschool age children and their reaction to various shades of Black skin.

The suggestions for a new direction in theory could help raise meaningful questions and also stimulate research that would possibly answer new questions.

Appendix .

## Appendix A

### Instructions for rating the photographs

The following photographs are of children with various shades of black skin colors. Please select a photograph of a child who you think is of dark skin color; light skin color; and medium skin color.

Now that you have selected the photographs that you feel represent the three skin color groups, place the remaining pictures of similar skin color under your first initial choice. You should end up with three groups of pictures; a group of dark photographs, a group of medium photographs and a group of light photographs.

(The photographs were coded and recorded on the "Skin Color Rating Chart," Appendix B).

SKIN COLOR RATING CHART

MALE PHOTOGRAPHS

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13
1	d	L*	m	m	m	M*	D*	l	m	m	l	d	l
2	D*	L*	d	l	m	l	d	l	M*	l	m	d	m
3	D*	L*	m	l	M*	l	d	l	m	l	l	d	m
4	d	L*	m	m	m	M*	D*	l	m	l	l	d	m
5	D*	L*	d	m	m	M*	d	l	m	m	l	d	m

L- Light  
M- Medium  
D- Dark

\*\*  
D L M D M D M L D

1- light  
m- medium  
d- dark

FEMALE PHOTOGRAPHS

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12
1	l	m	L*	l	M*	d	m	D*	m	l	l	d
2	L*	d	l	m	M*	d	m	D*	m	l	m	d
3	l	D*	L*	l	m	d	M*	d	m	l	l	d
4	l	d	L*	l	m	d	M*	D*	m	l	m	d
5	l	d	l	m	M*	d	m	D*	m	L*	m	d

\*\*  
L L M D M D M L D

\*First initial Choice  
\*\*Photographs Selected for Data Collection Instrument

## Appendix C

General Rules for Interviewing

## Suggested steps:

1. Make the respondent comfortable by asking preliminary questions, such as favorite colors, toys, T.V. shows, etc. (Interviewer should be pleasant if nothing else).
2. Be familiar with the questionnaire; study the questions carefully and practice reading aloud.
3. It is better to leave a given question unanswered than to spend five minutes probing the question.
4. Follow the wording of the question exactly.
5. Record all responses exactly as indicated.
6. Pay attention to any additional observations or responses.



## Questionnaire

Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I would like to talk to you awhile about your school and your friends here at school. We're just going to sit down and talk about each other for a few minutes and then I'm going to show you some pictures of some preschool children like yourself.

Part 1

1. What is your Name? \_\_\_\_\_ (not really necessary; first name only)

2. How old are you?       $\frac{3}{(1)}$        $\frac{4}{(2)}$        $\frac{5}{(3)}$        $\frac{6}{(4)}$       \_\_\_\_\_

3. Record the sex of the child.       $\frac{\text{Male}}{(5)}$        $\frac{\text{Female}}{(6)}$       \_\_\_\_\_

4. Record the skin color of the child as being either of:  
 $\frac{\text{Light}}{(7)}$        $\frac{\text{Medium}}{(8)}$        $\frac{\text{Dark}}{(9)}$       \_\_\_\_\_

5. These three boys (or girls) are about the same age as you are. Please look at each picture and tell me what child you would like to have as a playmate in your school?

$\frac{\#1}{(10)}$        $\frac{\#2}{(11)}$        $\frac{\#3}{(12)}$        $\frac{\text{no response}}{(13)}$       \_\_\_\_\_

6. Now tell me which child you would not like to have as a playmate in your school?

$\frac{\#1}{(14)}$        $\frac{\#2}{(15)}$        $\frac{\#3}{(16)}$        $\frac{\text{no response}}{(17)}$       \_\_\_\_\_

7. Which one of these children do you think is pretty?

$\frac{\#1}{(18)}$        $\frac{\#2}{(19)}$        $\frac{\#3}{(20)}$        $\frac{\text{no response}}{(21)}$       \_\_\_\_\_

8. Which one of these children is not pretty?

$\frac{\#1}{(22)}$        $\frac{\#2}{(23)}$        $\frac{\#3}{(24)}$        $\frac{\text{no response}}{(25)}$       \_\_\_\_\_

9. If you had a birthday party which one of these children would you like to invite to your home for your party?

$\frac{\#1}{(26)}$	$\frac{\#2}{(27)}$	$\frac{\#3}{(28)}$	$\frac{\text{no response}}{(29)}$	_____
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10. Which one of these children would you not invite to your house for a birthday party?

$\frac{\#1}{(30)}$	$\frac{\#2}{(31)}$	$\frac{\#3}{(32)}$	$\frac{\text{no reponse}}{(33)}$	_____
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