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# A Study of Psycho-social Behavior of College Freshmen – 1966-67

by

Lawrence C. Bryant

To determine psychological and social aspects of the behavior of 375 freshman students enrolled at South Carolina State College in the fall of 1966, the researcher designed a questionnaire and requested the freshman students of both sexes to react to it. The students' responses are reported in numbers and in percentages in the four tables which follow. All of the students did not react to every item in the questionnaire; however, data are presented for those items which they checked.

## Behavior Toward Integration

In Table 1, data are presented on student responses for thirteen items relating to integration. A casual observation of these statements, numbers of response, and percentages will reveal wide differences. It can be seen that, 249 freshmen (66%) believe in

**TABLE 1**  
**Behavior Toward Integration**

	Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%
Believe in integration	249	66	4	2
Attended integrated school	40	10	136	36
Desire white students attend State College	260	69	21	5
Father interested in integrated schools	296	78	58	15
Mother interested in integrated schools	192	51	43	11
Teachers urged you to attend a Negro school	15	4	241	64
Father attended an integrated school	5	1	251	66
You attended an integrated camp	58	15	214	57
You attend an integrated church	89	23	160	42
Integrated schools are better than segregated schools	158	35	74	19
Attended an integrated theater	224	59	19	5
Attended an integrated zoo	176	46	70	18
South Carolina State College should be integrated	201	53	17	4

integration, while only four students (2%) do not. Thirty-two per cent of the respondents left the item unchecked. The highest number of students, that is, 296 (78%) stated that their fathers are interested in integration of schools. Only slightly more than half of the participating students, 192 (51%) reported that their mothers are interested in mixed schools. However, 260 freshmen (69%) desire that white students attend South Carolina State College. Several items which were responded to by a very low number of college freshmen, fifteen students (4%), indicated that their teachers urged them to attend Negro schools, but 241 students (64%) indicated that their teachers opposed their attending segregated Negro educational institutions. As one may anticipate, only five fathers of 375 students (1%) had attended integrated schools, but 251 of these fathers (66%) had frequented segregated schools. Approximately one-half of the freshman students have attended integrated theaters (59%), and zoos (46%), but only a few have attended integrated camps (15%) and churches (23%). Fifty-three per cent of the students think South Carolina State College should be integrated, but four per cent do not think so.

### **Reactions to White People**

As shown in Table 2, the responses of the students pertinent to their reactions to white people vary widely for the fifteen items on the questionnaire.

The highest positive response was made by 294 students (78%) in regard to white friends. Two hundred and thirty-seven students (63%) indicated that they did not feel inferior to white people. It is interesting to note that 227 freshmen (60%) thought that they would like to teach white children. While sixteen students (4%) reported that they hate white people, 235 other freshmen (62%) indicated that they do not hate members of the Caucasian race. More than half of the respondents, 210 students (56%), are comfortable with white people; however, forty-four other students (11%) are not comfortable with these people. Although the following responses are low in number, they are significant because they indicate how some freshmen feel and think: Forty-nine beginning college students (13%) prefer white teachers; seventeen students (4%) feel inferior to whites; forty-eight students (12%) feel superior to whites; two students (1%) prefer to be white; and twenty-eight students (7%) feel that it is better to be born white.

### **Reactions Toward Self**

As presented in Table 3, the data pertinent to the students' reactions toward themselves reveal some fairly high positive and negative responses. Only two items received positive responses at approximately the 60% level. Two hundred and twenty-nine students (61%) think well of themselves, and 261 students (69%) chose to attend South Carolina State College. Two-hundred and seventy-two students (72%) feel adequate. Only twenty-one students (5%)

**TABLE 2**  
**Reactions to White People**

	Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%
Hate white people	16	4	235	62
Comfortable with white people	210	56	44	11
Worked with white people	222	59	32	8
Prefer white teachers	49	13	163	43
Feel inferior to white people	17	4	237	63
Negroes equal white people in intelligence	170	45	74	19
Feel superior to white people	48	12	198	52
Have white ancestors	67	17	130	34
Prefer to be white	2	1	236	62
Negro homes kept as clean as white homes	161	42	48	12
Believe in white supremacy	6	1	221	58
Better to be born white	28	7	212	56
Enjoy white people	198	52	191	50
Have white friends	294	78	76	20
Like to teach white children	227	60	72	19

are color-conscious, and only thirty-three freshmen (8%) regret that they are as dark in color as they are. It might be interesting to some readers to note that out of 375 students, sixty-nine (18%) stated that they believe in black power.

It is common knowledge that many college students do not like their subjects. Eighty-eight freshmen (23%) like their subjects, but 246, (65%) do not like the subjects in which they are registered.

Arthur Combs stated that students are at war with their teachers. In this study, forty-one respondents (10%) indicated that they hate some teachers who have taught them; however, 188 respondents (50%) stated that they do not hate any teachers. Out of a total of 214 students who responded, ten hate their color (2%), but 204 freshmen enrollees (54%) do not hate their color.

Finally, 104 respondents (27%) believe that prayer aids them in making adjustments, but 206 others (54%) do not have such belief.

#### Reaction to Others

The highest response to any item in the study is reported in Table 4. Three hundred and forty students (90%) feel a warm relationship

**TABLE 3**  
**Reactions Toward Self**

	Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%
Are you color conscious?	21	5	229	61
Regret you are as dark as you are	33	8	187	49
Think well of yourself	229	61	6	1
Believe in black power	69	18	140	37
Believe in militancy to achieve rights	62	16	162	43
Chose this college	261	69	19	5
Drink alcoholic beverages	70	18	155	41
Hate your color	10	2	204	54
Control your feelings	187	49	34	9
Hate a teacher	41	10	188	50
Kind of person you like to be	161	42	87	23
Feel adequate	272	72	52	13
Like all your subjects	88	23	246	65
Prayer aids adjustment	104	27	206	54

with others, and only six students (1%) do not feel a warm relationship with anyone.

It is significant that three Negro freshman students (1%) hate Negro people. Sixty per cent of the students of the study were reared in homes with their fathers, and 58% were reared in homes with their mothers.

Twenty-one freshmen (5%) said that they would steal money from their roommates. One hundred and sixty-six respondents (44%) reported that they would return a found wallet with money in it. One hundred and sixty-four respondents (43%) had a significant person, but sixty-three other students (16%) did not have such a person.

It is interesting that 232 freshmen (61%) desire to prepare to teach poor children.

Every freshman student at South Carolina State College has been assigned a counselor; however, only 217 of them (57%) feel free to talk over their problems with their college counselors.

**TABLE 4**  
**Reaction to Others**

	Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%
Hate Negroes	3	1	237	63
Reared in the home with father	227	60	39	10
Reared in the home with mother	219	58	15	4
Steal money from roommate	21	5	211	56
Return wallet with money	166	44	64	17
Significant person	164	43	63	16
Feel a warm relationship	340	90	6	1
Interested in teaching poor children	232	61	45	12
Talk over problems with college counselor	217	57	90	24

### Conclusions

1. Generally, the freshmen varied widely in their reactions to the forty-two items presented to them.
2. Some students responded positively and while others reacted negatively to every item.
3. With only one item was there a 90% response. It was that the students had a warm relationship with some other person.
4. Experiences make it necessary for wide responses on the items dealing with integration.
5. There is significance in a majority opinion.