CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The population of the United States has changed significantly over the past 40 years. In 1960, the U.S. population was 180 million people. There was steady growth in the population between 1960 and 1990. By 1990, the U.S. population had reached 248 million people (Bureau of the Census, 1990).

The racial composition of the U.S. also changed substantially. The minority population in 1960 was 23.5 million people. This accounted for 13% of the entire U.S. population. Between 1960 and 1990 the minority population increased to reach 61 million. In 1990, minorities comprised 24.7% of the population (Bureau of the Census, 1990).

All groups of racial minorities in the U.S. have increased their numbers between the 1960 census and the 1990 census. The two largest minority groups in the U.S. population are African Americans and Hispanics. Asian Americans and Native Americans are the two smaller minority populations in the country (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993a & U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993b).

Of the four minority populations, African Americans have historically comprised the largest percent of the U.S. minority population. The U.S. African American population in 1960 was 18.9 million, or 10.5% of the U.S. population. By 1990, the African American population had grown to 30 million and they represented 12.1% of the U.S. population (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993a).

The second largest population of minorities, Hispanics, has made the most substantial gains in population between 1960 and 1990. The census designates individuals from any Spanish-speaking country as Hispanic. Given that definition, in 1960, the U.S. Hispanic
population numbered 3.5 million people, or 1.9% of the entire U.S. population. Over the next 30 years, the Hispanic population grew to 22.4 million people. In 1990, they constituted 9% of the U.S. population (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993b).

Growth among the smaller minority groups in America has also occurred. The U.S. Asian American population totaled 600,000 in 1960. This represented 0.3% of the U.S. population. By 1990, the Asian American population had grown to 6.9 million people. Although the number of Asian Americans in the U.S. in 1990 increased by 900% between 1960 and 1990, they still only account for 2.8% of the U.S. population (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993c).

Native Americans have historically been the smallest minority population. In 1960, there were 550,000 Native Americans. Although this was almost equal to the Asian American population, the Native American population did not show similar gains in population over the next 30 years. In 1990, the almost 2 million Native Americans constituted only 0.8% of the entire U.S. population (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993d).

These changes in population have led to changes in the nation’s social institutions, including primary and secondary education. From 1965 to 1994, primary and secondary education enrollment grew from 48.4 to 49.7 million. By 1996, the racial composition of students within primary and secondary education had grown significantly. White, non-Hispanic students accounted for 64% of the population. African American students comprised 17% of the students in primary and secondary education. Hispanic students were 14.1% of the student population. Asian American students and Native American students made up 3.7% and 1.2%, respectively (U.S. Department of Education, 1998c).

Higher education has also experienced an increase in enrollment. From 1955 to 1995, enrollment in institutions of higher education grew from 2.6 to 14.9 million students (U.S.
Of the approximately 14.9 million students in higher education, 24.2% are minority students. Although this percentage is not far from the percentage of minorities in the entire U.S. population (24.7%), the distribution of minorities enrolled in higher education is significantly different than the distribution of minorities in the nation’s population (U.S. National Center for Education Statistics, 1995).

The percentage of African Americans and Hispanics in the general population is higher than their representation in higher education. African Americans account for 12.1% of the U.S. population but only 10.1% of students enrolled in higher education. Hispanics comprise 9% of the U.S. population but only 7.3% of the students enrolled in higher education (U.S. Department of Education, 1996).

The percentage of Asian Americans in the general population is lower than their representation in higher education. Asian Americans account for 2.8% of the U.S. population but 5.4% of students enrolled in higher education are Asian American (U.S. Department of Education, 1996).

The percentage of Native Americans in the general population is equal to their representation in higher education. Native Americans account for 0.8% of the U.S. population and 0.8% of students enrolled in higher education (U.S. Department of Education, 1996).

There are several factors that might influence the disparity by race between the general population and the population of students enrolled in higher education. Standardized test scores and socioeconomic status are two of these factors.

Standardized test scores, like the Standardized Achievement Test (SAT) are used as admission criteria at most colleges and universities in the U.S. However, research suggests that there are significant differences in standardized test scores by race. For example, in 1997, White
students scored an average of 526 on the verbal section of the SAT and 526 on the math section of the SAT. Their combined average score, therefore, was 1,052 out of a possible score of 1600 (College Board, 1998).

African American students had the lowest SAT scores in 1997. African Americans scored an average of 434 on the verbal section and 423 on the math section. This combined score of 857 was 195 points lower than the average combined score of White students (College Board, 1998).

Hispanic students had the second lowest SAT scores in 1997. Hispanics scored an average of 466 on the verbal section and 468 on the math section. This combined score of 934 was 118 points lower than the average combined score of White students (College Board, 1998).

Native American students had the third lowest average SAT scores in 1997. Native Americans scored an average score of 475 on the verbal section and 475 on the math section. This combined score of 950 was 102 points lower than the average combined score of White students (College Board, 1998).

On the other hand, Asian American students had a higher combined score than White students. Their combined average score of 1,056 was four points higher than the average combined score of White students. Asian Americans, however, scored an average of 496 on the verbal section, which was 30 points lower than the average score for White students on the verbal section (College Board, 1998).

Another fact that might influence minority enrollment in higher education is socioeconomic status. There is an unequal distribution of enrollment in higher education based on socioeconomic status. Of the 18 to 24 year old high school graduates from the top family income quartile, 86% enroll in college. Families in the top quartile have incomes above $50,000. Only 52% of the 18 to 24 year old high school graduates from the bottom income quartile enroll
in college. Families in the bottom quartile have incomes below $15,000 (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

The disproportionate representation by race and socioeconomic status in higher education prompted questions about equal access to postsecondary education. In an effort to provide equal access to higher education, campuses across the country have developed a variety of precollege programs. These programs encourage students who are disadvantaged by race or socioeconomic status to attend institutions of higher education. They provide such students with the resources and academic skills needed to become successful in college (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

One-third of all institutions of higher education provide at least one precollege program for disadvantaged students. Of the participants in the precollege programs, 68% come from low-income families. Fifty-nine percent of participants in precollege programs are female. In addition, 39% of the participants are African American and 29% are Hispanic (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

Many of these precollege programs were created as a result of a federal initiative. The federal government established the TRIO programs in 1965 to ensure equal educational opportunities for students from all racial and socioeconomic groups (National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations [NCEOA], 1998a). The TRIO programs originally consisted of Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

The Upward Bound program is a precollege program that serves high school students aged 13 to 19 years. Upward Bound is designed to encourage disadvantaged students to graduate
from high school and pursue higher education (National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations [NCEOA], 1998b).

Upward Bound is more intensive than other precollege programs. Students spend approximately 433 hours a year in Upward Bound activities, compared to 166 hours in other programs (U.S. Department of Education, 1995). Upward Bound programs provide students with instruction in math, science, foreign language, English, composition, and study skills. They also offer academic and personal counseling, tutorial services, and information about financial assistance and career options.

These services are provided on weekends or after school throughout the academic year (NCEOA, 1998b). In addition, students can participate in a six-week summer program. The summer program can be residential and is typically offered at a college campus. Participants take courses to prepare them for the academic courses in which they will be enrolled during the upcoming high school year (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

Talent Search, the second TRIO program, is an early intervention program that targets students in grades six through 12. Participants in the Talent Search program are provided with information about their educational opportunities and options. This might include information about admission requirements for higher education, scholarship information, or student financial aid programs (NCEOA, 1998c).

Student Support Services assists disadvantaged students stay in college and persist to graduation. Participants are provided with tutoring for academic courses. Remedial instruction is also provided to participants. In addition, counseling services are extended to participants in Student Support Services programs (NCEOA, 1998c).
In 1972, the federal government expanded the TRIO programs to include three other programs. These three additional programs include Educational Opportunity Centers, Training Program for Special Services Staff and Leadership Personnel, and the Ronald McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

Educational Opportunity Centers are located throughout the U.S. and primarily serve unemployed or under-employed workers from low-income families. The primary goal of the program is to increase the number of adult participants who enroll in institutions of higher education. Educational Opportunity Centers provide participants information on how to select a college and find financial aid to support their education (U.S. Department of Education, 1998a).

The Training Program for Special Services Staff and Leadership Personnel provides funding for staff development. These staff development programs enhance the skills of project directors and other staff members employed by TRIO programs. Specific training areas include student retention and graduation strategies, counseling services, and legislative and regulatory requirements (U.S. Department of Education, 1998b).

The Ronald McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program targets disadvantaged students enrolled in graduate programs. The primary goal of the Ronald McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is to increase the number of disadvantaged graduate students earning graduate degrees. Participants are provided with mentoring, counseling, and internship opportunities to encourage their success (U.S. Department of Education, 1998a).

Nationally, 700,000 individuals are served through the 1,900 TRIO programs offered in the U.S. These TRIO programs must meet certain criteria in order to receive federal funding. These criteria include the family’s educational history and family income (NCEO, 1998b).
In terms of family’s education history, TRIO participants must be first generation college students. First generation students are students who come from families where neither parent has graduated from college (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

The family income of TRIO participants must be under 150% of the poverty level (U.S. Department of Education, 1995). The poverty level for a family of four is $16,036. The family income of TRIO participants must be less than 150% of the poverty level. Therefore, a participant in a family of four must have a family income less than $24,054 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1996).

Two-thirds of TRIO participants must meet both of these criteria. They must be first generation students and have a family income under 150% of the poverty level. The other one-third can be either first generation or have a family income under $24,054 (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

A high percentage of TRIO program participants are minorities. The two largest minority populations participating in TRIO programs are African Americans and Hispanics. Thirty-six percent of TRIO participants are African American and 16% are Hispanic. Of the remaining TRIO participants, 4% are Asian American, 5% are Native American, and 39% are White (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

Precollege TRIO programs, like Upward Bound, emphasize increasing high school completion rates and increasing college attendance among disadvantaged students (NCEO, 1998a). There are 12 services traditionally offered by these precollege programs including accelerated, supplemental, preparatory, and college-level courses. In addition, remediation, ACT/SAT training, and information for parents are provided to participants. Career counseling,
information about college, personal counseling, social skills development, and cultural activities are other services offered to students (NCEOA, 1998a).

Among these 12 services, staff at the largest precollege programs (based on funding) described 8 out of 12 services as very important. Of the staff members at the large precollege programs, 77% rated social skills development/confidence building as the most important skills offered to disadvantaged students (NCEOA, 1998a).

Upward Bound programs comprise 31% of large precollege programs. Similar studies of Upward Bound programs were conducted to identify which services Upward Bound staff members ranked as very important. Staff members of Upward Bound programs were more likely to rank accelerated courses, supplemental courses, and information about admissions and/or financial aid among the top three services they provided. In addition, they were less likely to list social skills development/confidence building among the top services provided (NCEOA, 1998a). This suggests that Upward Bound staff focus on academic performance skills rather than social skills when dealing with students.

If Upward Bound staff focus so closely on promoting academic performance among participants, it would seem they might be interested in the factors that affect academic performance among high school students. There are a number of factors that affect academic performance and high school completion. Three of these factors are the socioeconomic status of the student, the race of the student, and the self-esteem level of the student.

Socioeconomic status affects academic performance. Of students in the bottom 20% of all family incomes, only 73.2% complete high school. Students in the middle 20%-80% of all family incomes have a high school completion rate of 85.8%. Of the students in the top 20% of all family incomes, however, 96.6% complete high school (Bushweller, 1997).
Race is another factor that affects academic performance and high school completion. The percentage of White students between the ages of 16 and 24, who are high school dropouts is 8.6%. The percentage of high school dropouts among African American students between the ages of 16 and 24 is 12.1%. Hispanic students between the ages of 16 and 24, however, have the highest percentage (30%) of high school dropouts (Bushweller, 1997).


Brown and Alexander (1991) define self-esteem as the way individuals perceive and value themselves. Self-esteem has a number of dimensions, including family relations, academic competence, peer relations, and personal security. Each of these components directly affects the way individuals view themselves. Self-esteem also affects the way individuals achieve academically.

Although self-esteem affects academic achievement, only 26% of Upward Bound staff ranked services to promote self-esteem (i.e. social skills/confidence building) among the top three services their programs provide to students. Among the other large precollege programs, however, 51% rated social skills/confidence building among their top three services (NCEOA, 1998a).

It would seem, therefore, that self-esteem is an important influence on academic success. Upward Bound staff report a primary focus on promoting academic success among participants but do not rate programs designed to build self-esteem as important to their programs. If self-esteem is important to academic success, it may behoove Upward Bound staff to spend more
time on building self-esteem among participants. To that end, staff may need data about the self-esteem levels among Upward Bound participants. The present study sought to elicit such data.

Purpose of the Study

This study examined self-esteem among Upward Bound students by race (majority versus minority) and gender. Data were collected using the Self-Esteem Index (SEI) (Brown & Alexander, 1991). The SEI measures overall self-esteem as well as four dimensions of self-esteem: Perceptions of Familial Acceptance; Academic Competence; Peer Popularity; and Personal Security. The overall self-esteem scores of participants as well as results on each of the four scales were analyzed to investigate self-esteem by race and gender.

Research Hypotheses

The present study gathered data to test the following statistical hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in overall self-esteem among Upward Bound students by race and gender.

2. There is no significant difference in the perception of familial acceptance among Upward Bound students by race and gender.

3. There is no significant difference in the perception of academic competence among Upward Bound students by race and gender.

4. There is no significant difference in the perception of peer popularity among Upward Bound students by race and gender.

5. There is no significant difference in the perception of personal security among Upward Bound students by race and gender.
Significance of the Study

The results of this study were significant for several constituencies. The directors of Upward Bound programs might learn more about the self-esteem of Upward Bound students. This might enable them to better assess whether additional programs designed to promote self-esteem were needed.

Upward Bound students may benefit from the results of this study by learning more about their own self-esteem. The self-report nature of the SEI instrument allows participants to think about the items and how they affect their self-esteem.

The directors of the Federal TRIO programs may learn more about the self-esteem of Upward Bound students in general. The data from this study may provide them with baseline information about the self-esteem of the students participating in Upward Bound programs.

This study could also lead to further research. Scholars may wish to compare the self-esteem scores of Upward Bound participants and self-esteem scores of other precollege program participants. Differences by type of program might suggest shifts in what services programs emphasize in working with participants.

Other studies may wish to explore the effects of the Upward Bound program on students’ self-esteem. Such a study might compare the self-esteem of students who qualify to participate in the Upward Bound program but are not participants with those students who are involved in the Upward Bound program. Results might reveal the differences in self-esteem between participants and non-participants.

Another study might compare the effects of the type of higher education institution on self-esteem of Upward Bound students. Such a study might compare Upward Bound programs at small liberal arts schools and Upward Bound programs at research I institutions. This study
might lead to results that would reveal the effects of different institutional settings on the self-esteem levels of Upward Bound participants.

Limitations

As with all research, the present study was not without some limitations. First, the study relied on self-reports from participants. The self-report nature of the instrument creates the possibility that participants responded in a less than candid manner. If respondents were less than candid, the results might have been skewed.

A second limitation of this study related to the sample. Participants were selected from only one Upward Bound program. Although the participants came from several high schools, they all were participants of the same Upward Bound program. It is possible that this common Upward Bound experience skewed the results in some unforeseen way.

Third, all participants were volunteers. Although all students in the selected Upward Bound program were eligible to participate, only those who volunteered were included in the sample. It was possible that these volunteers differed in some significant way from non-volunteers. If so, the results might have been influenced.

Despite these limitations, the present study provided important information about the self-esteem of Upward Bound participants. The results offered staff at Upward Bound programs useful data about the participants they serve.

Organization of Study

This study is organized around five chapters. Chapter One introduced the topic under study, the purpose of the study, its research questions, and the significance of the study. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature relevant to the topic. Chapter Three describes the methodology used in the study, including sampling procedures, a description of the SEI
instrument, and the procedures employed to collect and analyze the data. Chapter Four reports the results of the study while Chapter Five discusses those results and their implications for future practice and research.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The present study looked at self-esteem of Upward Bound students. In order to explore the topic, it was necessary to examine several bodies of literature. First, the literature on self-esteem in general is examined. Then, the literature on self-esteem among adolescents is examined. Next, studies that explore differences in self-esteem by gender are reviewed. Finally, studies that explore differences in self-esteem by race are reviewed.

Self-Esteem

Brown and Alexander (1991) define self-esteem as the way individuals perceive and value themselves. Self-esteem stems from life experiences and interactions with others. Most researchers assess self-esteem through self-report inventories and scales. This allows the researcher to gather data about how individuals describe and view themselves.

There are several factors that influence self-esteem. Some of these factors are familial acceptance, academic competence, peer popularity, and personal security (Brown & Alexander, 1991). It is important to examine these factors because individuals place different values on each of these areas. Depending on an individual’s views, these factors can have a range of influences on overall self-esteem (Flansburg, 1991).

Familial acceptance includes individuals’ perceptions of themselves as members of a family and the family as a source of comfort and support. Students with low familial acceptance might not feel included in the family or family activities. They might not feel that their family supports them or cares about them. Students with high familial acceptance often view their families as a major source of encouragement and comfort (Brown & Alexander, 1991).
Academic competence involves individuals’ perceptions of their school performance and the value they attach to intellectual achievement. Students with low academic competence often have difficulties meeting expectations at school. They also do not feel competent to meet requirements in academic situations. Students with high academic competence have positive views of themselves as learners and achievers (Brown & Alexander, 1991).

Peer popularity includes the way individuals perceive their social skills and what their friends and classmates think of them. Students with low peer popularity are often socially inexperienced or immature. They might also be students who move frequently and, therefore, do not have a consistent peer group. Students with high peer popularity have positive images of themselves and their position within their peer group. They might also have an image of themselves as leaders within these groups (Brown & Alexander, 1991).

Personal security measures individuals’ perceptions of their psychological and physical well-being. This includes their general health and physical condition. Students with low personal security are often anxious and withdrawn from others. They might feel threatened or unprotected in a number of settings. Students with high personal security report a high level of personal satisfaction with themselves and their surroundings. They feel comfortable with themselves and others (Brown & Alexander, 1991).

Self-Esteem and Adolescents

Self-esteem is directly related to well-being. Adolescents with high self-esteem are more equipped to deal with problems and frustrations. Because of the number of developmental challenges occurring during adolescence, self-esteem is important to help individuals cope with these changes. It is important, therefore to examine the self-esteem levels of adolescents during high school (Deihl, Vicary, & Deike, 1997).
Chubb, Fertman, and Ross (1997) studied adolescent self-esteem throughout high school to determine whether or not there was a change in self-esteem as students progressed from ninth grade to twelfth grade. The researchers surveyed 174 students each year for four years. The longitudinal data revealed that adolescent self-esteem did not change significantly over the four years that the students were in high school. Of the students in study, 95% were White. Of the remaining 5%, a significant portion was African American. The results, however, were not analyzed by race.

In a similar study by Hagborg (1993), 150 adolescents were surveyed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) and the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1988). Of the 150 participants, 75 were male and 75 were female. They ranged in age from eighth grade to twelfth grade. Unlike Chubb et al. (1997), Hagborg found that adolescent global self-esteem increased between eighth grade and twelfth grade. All of the participants in the study were White. Therefore, analysis by race was not feasible.

There have been a number of studies conducted on self-esteem among adolescents that look specifically at the source of self-esteem. Knox, Funk, Elliott, and Bush (1998) studied 212 high school students, 127 females and 85 males. The sample was 96% Caucasian. The students completed the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents Global Self-Worth Scale (Harter, 1988). In addition, they also completed the Hoped-For Possible Selves Questionnaire (Cross & Markus, 1991). This questionnaire elicits information about the student’s perception of themselves and their future through responses to items on a 7-point, Likert-type scale. The researchers found that there was a positive correlation between the two instruments. This suggests that students with high self-esteem have more positive views of their future.
Self-esteem and intimacy with parents has also been explored (Field, Lang, Yando, and Bendell, 1995). Participants completed a questionnaire that included items related to self-esteem, intimacy with mother, and intimacy with father. The participants ranged from age 14 to 19 and 54% were female. The researchers found that adolescents with high self-esteem felt more intimate with their parents. Although there was some examination by socioeconomic status, only 17% of participants were from low to low middle income families. Fifty percent of respondents came from middle income families, and 33% from upper middle to upper class families.

Rivas Torres, Fernandez, and Maceira (1995) studied the relationship between self-esteem and personal safety. There were 100 adolescents who completed a self-esteem instrument, the Gordon Personal Profile (Gordon, 1978), and the Rivas-Torres Health Behavior Questionnaire (1991). The Rivas-Torres Health Behavior Questionnaire contains 31 questions that cover six aspects of health, nutrition, personal health, mental health, drug abuse, and safety. The researchers found a correlation between self-esteem and safety among the 16 to 17 year-olds in the study. Safety, in this questionnaire, was defined as respect for physical integrity.

A number of the studies (Chubb, et al., 1997; Hagborg, 1993; Knox et al., 1998) on adolescents and self-esteem have been conducted on predominately White participants. The present study, however, sought to examine differences in self-esteem by race.

Self-Esteem and Race

A significant amount of the research on self-esteem has involved primarily White participants. The results of these studies reveal only the experiences of Whites and are therefore, not generalizable to other races (Flansburg, 1991). Studies that examined self-esteem by race are limited, but offer some general insights into the issue.
An investigation of 12,386 adolescents from various racial backgrounds revealed that the greater the ethnic identity, the higher the level of self-esteem among participants. The researchers found African American and Hispanic adolescents have higher ethnic identity levels than White and Native American adolescents. Asian American adolescents had intermediate levels of ethnic identity (Martinez & Dukes, 1997).

Research on adolescent females revealed similar findings regarding self-esteem and race. Orenstein (1994) found that during adolescence, African American females maintain a higher level of overall self-esteem than White or Hispanic females. Among the females, Hispanic females have the most significant drop in self-esteem during adolescence.

A similar study of females and race, as reported by Murray (1998), was Erkut’s study of self-esteem among 150 adolescent females. Of the females studied, 40 were African American, 41 were Caucasian, 40 were Chinese American, and 29 were Latina. Erkut found that African Americans females had the highest levels of self-esteem. They were followed by Latinas and Caucasian females. The Chinese American females had the lowest levels of self-esteem.

There were differences, however, in the predictors of self-satisfaction among the females in Erkut’s study. Two of the predictors examined were social acceptance and physical attractiveness. African American females scored highest in the area of social acceptance. Chinese American females scored lowest. Caucasian females, not Latinas, scored second highest in the area of social acceptance (Murray, 1998).

When Erkut examined the females’ scores in the area of physical attractiveness, Caucasian females scored the highest. Erkut commented that Caucasian females were obsessed with their looks. Latinas scored second highest followed by African American females. Once again, Chinese American females scored lowest in this area (Murray, 1998).
Although there are differences in self-esteem by race, this is not the only way that self-esteem has been examined. There are also differences in self-esteem by gender. Since the present study was designed to examine differences in self-esteem by gender, it was important to examine this body of literature.

Self-Esteem and Gender

Research on self-esteem and adolescents reveal that females score consistently lower on self-esteem instruments than males (Chubb et al., 1997). Flansburg (1991) found that although self-esteem among both females and males decreases during adolescence, females, as a group, start out with lower levels of self-esteem. The levels of self-esteem among females decrease significantly more than levels among males during adolescence.

Chubb et al. (1997) found that adolescent self-esteem did not change significantly over the four years that students are in high school. Block and Robins (1993), however, found different results in their longitudinal study on self-esteem. They studied 91 students, 47 females and 44 males, during their first year of high school, their last year of high school, and again five years following high school. Female self-esteem was consistently lower than male self-esteem. Block and Robins, however, found that males tended to increase in self-esteem over time, whereas, females tended to decrease in self-esteem over time. The disparity between the genders increased over time.

In a similar study of self-esteem over time, Block (1991) studied students at ages 11, 14, 18, and 23. Of the 95 participants, 50 were female and 45 were male. The self-esteem of females and males at age 14 was the same. Block found a difference in female and male self-esteem among the participants during the time period between age 14 and 18. The female participants showed no change in self-esteem, whereas the males reported an increase in self-esteem.
Between the age of 18 and 23 both females and males experienced a decrease in self-esteem. The females, however, suffered a larger drop in self-esteem.

Martinez and Dukes (1991) studied students in grades 7 through 12. The participants completed a questionnaire twice, with a four-year span between the two administrations. The questionnaire included items on perceived intelligence that respondents ranked on a 7-point Likert-type scale. There were also questions on satisfaction with self that respondents ranked on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Results were analyzed by race as well as gender and revealed that females scored lower than males on the perceived intelligence and satisfaction with self in all racial groups. The only exception to this was African American females during the first administration of the questionnaire. They scored higher than their male counterparts on both sections.

There are also self-esteem studies that have looked at self-esteem and gender among a single age group. Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford (1994) studied self-esteem and gender among 363 high school seniors. Among participants, 153 were female and 208 were male. The results allowed researchers to divide the students into three categories: high, medium, and low self-esteem. Among the male students, 60% were included in the high self-esteem category, whereas, only 46% of females were included in the same category. There was an almost equivalent percentage of males and females in the medium self-esteem category. Nineteen percent of males and 20% of females were rated as having medium self-esteem. The final group, low self-esteem included 21% of the males and 34% of the females.

Schwalbe and Staples (1991) studied 514 college-age females and males. Participants were asked to respond to nine items on a four-point Likert-type scale. Three of the items on the survey related to perceptions of how others view you. They found that females attached more
importance to perceptions of others than did males. This data might suggest that females derive a larger portion of their self-esteem from the way that others perceive them than do males.

The research on self-esteem and adolescents includes studies on self-esteem throughout high school. The data suggest that there is conflicting information about the correlation between age and self-esteem. Chubb et al. (1997) found no change in self-esteem throughout high school. Hagborg, however, found that global self-esteem increased throughout high school. Both of these studies primarily examined White students. Knox et. al (1998) found that students with high self-esteem have more positive views of their future. Their study too looked only at a sample of participants who were primarily Caucasian.

In a study done by Field et. al, (1995) researchers found a correlation between high self-esteem and intimacy with parents. Their research did not include a large percentage of students with low socioeconomic background, however. Only 17% of their participants were from a low or low to middle income family.

Rivas Torres et al. (1995) studied adolescent self-esteem and personal safety. The data in their research suggests that there is a correlation between self-esteem and respect for physical integrity. There is, however, little generalizability because of the small number of participants in their study. Participants included 12 to 13 year-olds and 16 to 17 year-olds.

As shown in the literature review, there is a limited amount of research on self-esteem and race. Martinez and Dukes (1997) studied both males and females with regard to ethnic identity and self-esteem. Their findings suggest that African American and Hispanic adolescents have higher levels of ethnic identity, and therefore self-esteem, than Asian American, White, and Native American adolescents.
Orenstein (1994) and Murray (1998) studied only female adolescents. Their data on self-esteem and race suggested similar findings. Both researchers found that African American females had the highest levels of self-esteem. Orenstein’s research suggested that Hispanic females suffered the most significant drop in self-esteem during adolescence.

In Erkut’s study of self-esteem (as cited in Murray, 1998), social acceptance and physical attractiveness were also analyzed by race. The researcher found that African American females had the highest level of social acceptance. Latinas, however, reported the highest level of physical attractiveness.

All of the researchers that examined self-esteem and gender found similar results. Females consistently scored lower on indicators of self-esteem. There are differences, however, in what the researchers found with regard to gender differences over time. Chubb et al. (1997) and Block (1991) found no change in self-esteem for females or males over time.

Flansburg (1991) and Block and Robins (1993) argue that female self-esteem decreases throughout adolescence. They differ, however, on whether or not male self-esteem decreases over time. Flansburg found that male self-esteem also decreases, whereas Block and Robins found an increase in male self-esteem.

In conclusion, there is little, if any research on self-esteem that has examined both males and females and has analyzed self-esteem by race. The present study sought to address this gap in the existing body of literature on self-esteem among adolescents by analyzing results by race (minority versus majority) and gender.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This study examined self-esteem among Upward Bound participants by race (majority versus minority) and gender. The data were collected from Upward Bound participants at one institution who completed the Self-Esteem Index (SEI) (Brown & Alexander, 1991). The items on the SEI (Brown & Alexander, 1991) yield an overall measure of self-esteem. The instrument also measures self-esteem on four subscales: perceptions of familial acceptance, perceptions of academic competence, perceptions of peer popularity, and perceptions of personal security. The study gathered data to answer the following statistical hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in overall self-esteem among Upward Bound students by race and gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the perception of familial acceptance among Upward Bound students by race and gender.
3. There is no significant difference in the perception of academic competence among Upward Bound students by race and gender.
4. There is no significant difference in the perception of peer popularity among Upward Bound students by race and gender.
5. There is no significant difference in the perception of personal security among Upward Bound students by race and gender.

Sample Selection

The sample was selected from Upward Bound participants at one institution. The institution was chosen for its proximity to the researcher. The selected institution is a research I,
land-grant university that enrolls 25,000 students. It is located in a rural area of a mid-Atlantic state.

The selected institution sponsors an Upward Bound program that has been in existence for 32 years. Though data for the 1998/99 academic year were not available at the time of this writing, statistics from 1997/98 suggest the general composition of 1998/99 participants by race and gender. There were 156 high school students served by the program during the 1997/98 academic year. Of these, 63 were males, who accounted for 40% of the participants. The remaining 93 females comprised 60% of the participants (E. Wilkinson, personal communication, September 30, 1998).

During the 1997/98 academic year, the Upward Bound program at the selected institution served 66 minorities. The five Asian Americans, 60 African Americans, and one Hispanic made up 42% of the Upward Bound participants. There were no Native Americans served during the 1997/98 academic year (E. Wilkinson, personal communication, September 30, 1998).

The Upward Bound program serves students from 23 high schools in the area surrounding the campus. These schools are located in 11 counties and 3 cities. The schools have requested assistance from the Upward Bound program. The schools are all located in areas that have lower incomes, lower rates of students pursuing higher education, and high dropout rates (E. Wilkinson, personal communication, September 30, 1998).

The students participating in the Upward Bound program were selected through an application process. The application included information on family income and academic need. In addition, applicants submitted two teacher recommendations and interviewed with the Director of the Upward Bound program. Once selected to participate in the program, students
must maintain a 2.0 GPA, attend weekend tutorials, and participate in monthly school visits with Upward Bound counselors (E. Wilkinson, personal communication, September 30, 1998).

There were 13 weekend tutorials held by the Upward Bound program throughout the 1998/99 academic year. A schedule of these sessions is provided in Appendix A. These tutorials were held on Saturdays from 9:40 am to 1:30 pm. The tutorials provided several study sessions. The study sessions focused on five core subjects: math, science, foreign language, English, and composition. Upward Bound students are required to attend the math study session. There is also a study hall session where students can work on assignments for classes other than these five core subjects, an SAT preparatory session, and a session at the university library (E. Wilkinson, personal communication, September 30, 1998).

Upward Bound participants are expected to attend all weekend tutorials. There are, however, exceptions made for students who participate in sports teams or have other school-related commitments. On average, 90 students attend each weekend tutorial (E. Wilkinson, personal communication, September 30, 1998).

In order to solicit participants, the researcher had to take several steps. Since Upward Bound participants are all in high school, therefore under the age of 18, the researcher first had to secure permission from parents of Upward Bound students to have them participate in the study.

The researcher designed a letter to be sent to the parents of the Upward Bound participants. The letter encouraged parents to give permission for their students to participate in the study. The letter included a description of the study and the researcher. It also contained information about how the data would be used and assured parents that their students’ confidentiality would be respected in reporting the results of the study. A pre-addressed, stamped envelope was included for the parents to return the permission slip. Parents were asked to return
the permission slip to the researcher by November 30, 1998. A copy of the parental permission letter and consent form can be found in Appendix B.

To secure parental permission, the researcher sought the assistance of Upward Bound counselors. Upward Bound counselors visit every high school included in the program once per month. The researcher used these school visits to disseminate information about the study to parents. The Upward Bound counselors distributed a copy of a parental permission letter and consent form to students during the November school visits. Students were asked to deliver these letters to their parents.

The researcher requested time to collect data during the December 5, 1998 tutorial. This tutorial was the last tutorial before the students’ winter break. In addition, this tutorial had a dance scheduled after the standard study sessions. Because of the dance, this tutorial was projected to have the highest participation rate by students of any of the tutorials scheduled for the fall semester. Therefore, the researcher decided to collect data during that tutorial. The Upward Bound interim director agreed to allow the researcher 45 minutes to collect data from the Upward Bound students who had received parental permission.

All students whose parents had completed the parental permission slips and who were present at the December 5, 1998 tutorial were asked to complete the SEI. Of those students, those who completed the SEI in full were included in the final sample.

Instrumentation

Data for the study were collected by administering the Self-Esteem Index (SEI) (Brown & Alexander, 1991). The SEI is designed to measure the way 7-18-year olds perceive themselves. The pencil and paper self-report instrument takes 30 minutes to complete and can be administered individually or in a group. There are instructions at the beginning of the SEI that
are to be read aloud by individuals administering the survey to groups to ensure that all participants receive the same instructions.

The SEI consists of 80 items to which participants rank their responses on a 4-point Likert-type scale that ranges from “always true” to “usually false”. Half of the items are designed so that a response of 1 means “always true” and a response of 4 means “always false”. The other half of the items are designed so that the scale is just the reverse: a response of 1 means “always false” and a response of 4 means “always true”.

The items on the SEI are designed around four scales: Perception of Familial Acceptance Scale (FA), Perception of Academic Competence Scale (AC), Perception of Peer Popularity Scale (PP), and Perception of Personal Security Scale (PS) (Brown & Alexander, 1991). For purposes of this study, the researcher added a section that elicited demographic information from respondents.

The FA Scale measures self-esteem within the family unit. The 20 items on this scale relate to respondents’ perceptions of their abilities, attitudes, interests, relationships, and values with respect to family activities and interactions. Examples of items from the FA Scale include: “My parents don’t listen to me,” “I am an important member of my family,” and “My family doesn’t trust me” (Brown & Alexander, 1991).

The AC Scale measures self-esteem in intellectual and academic pursuits. The 20 items on this scale relate to participants’ perceptions of their abilities, attitudes, interests, relationships, and values with respect to education, learning, academic skills, and intelligence. Examples of items from the AC Scale include: “I like going to school,” “I’m not doing as well in school as I’d like to do,” and “I do as little work at school as I can get by with” (Brown & Alexander, 1991).
The PP Scale measures self-esteem in interpersonal relationships and social situations with peers. The 20 items on this scale measure respondents’ perceptions of their abilities, attitudes, interests, relationships, and values as they pertain to importance, quality, and nature of relationships with peers. Items like “I learn a lot from other people,” “My friends think I have pretty good ideas,” and “I’m not shy” are typical of those on the PP scale (Brown & Alexander, 1991).

The PS Scale measures self-esteem as reflected in respondents’ feelings about their psychological and physical well-being. The 20 items on this scale relate to the individual’s perceptions of safety, vulnerability, confidence, or anxiety. They ask respondents to respond to two types of questions. The first describes specific situations and the second identifies distinctive traits of character, body, conduct, temperament, and emotions (Brown & Alexander, 1991). Examples of items from the Personal Security Scale include: “Sometimes I pretend to know more than I really do,” “I get a lot of headaches and stomach aches,” and “I am often afraid” (Brown & Alexander, 1991).

For purposes of this study, a demographic section that included two forced-choice questions was added to the instrument. These questions were designed to obtain data on the respondents’ gender and race. The addition of these two items was necessary in order to enable the researcher to analyze results by race and gender. A copy of the SEI as amended for this study is provided in Appendix C.

Reliability and Validity

The reliability and validity of instruments used in research are important. Reliability refers to whether an instrument consistently measures a phenomenon over time and populations (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). One of the ways that the SEI has been examined, in terms of
reliability, is internal reliability. Internal reliability measures an instrument’s degree of interrelation among test items (Brown & Alexander, 1991). This ensures that an instrument accurately measures what it is intended to measure. Brown and Alexander (1991) calculated internal reliability of the SEI using Cronbach’s coefficient alpha. Any coefficient at or above .80 is accepted as evidence of internal reliability (Gall et al., 1996). The alpha coefficients for the overall self-esteem quotient on the SEI and the instrument’s four sub-scales range from .80 to .93 (Brown & Alexander, 1991). This suggests that the instrument is highly reliable.

Validity refers to whether an instrument measures what it is designed to measure (Gall et al., 1996). There are three types of validity relevant to the SEI. These include content validity, criterion-related validity, and construct validity.

Content validity measures whether an instrument’s items are representative of the construct that the instrument is designed to measure (Brown & Alexander, 1991). Brown and Alexander examined the self-esteem literature and other self-esteem scales and inventories, and consulted with a group of professionals before designing the SEI. The group of professionals consisted of psychologists and counselors in private practice, professors in university-level psychology and special education programs, and school personnel responsible for working with emotionally disturbed students. This enhanced the content validity of the SEI.

Criterion-related validity evaluates the relationship between the instrument and external measures (Brown & Alexander, 1991). The criterion validity of the SEI was measured by calculating correlation coefficients that compared SEI scores and scores on other self-esteem scales as well as scores on personality inventories. The correlation coefficients between the SEI and scores on the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale, Revised (Piers, 1984) ranged from .29 to .77. The correlation coefficients between the SEI and the Index of Personality
Characteristics (Brown & Coleman, 1988) ranged from .10 to .96. Coefficients larger than .35 are statistically significant. These results, therefore, suggest that the SEI has evidence of criterion-related validity of self-esteem as measured by the Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale, Revised (Piers, 1984).

Construct validity focuses on how well an instrument assesses the construct it was designed to measure (Gall et al., 1996). The construct validity of the SEI was measured by examining the intercorrelation between the four subscales and the overall self-esteem scale. A Telegen and Briggs’ modified part-whole correlation index resulted in correlation coefficients ranging from .31 to .83. Coefficients larger than .35 are statistically significant. These results, therefore, suggest that the SEI has evidence of construct validity of self-esteem.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher gained consent from the Institutional Review Board for Research Using Human Subjects (IRB) at the institution where the study was conducted before proceeding with data collection. IRB approval ensured that the risks to participants associated with this study were minimal.

The researcher contacted the director of the Upward Bound program at the selected institution. The interim director agreed to assist the researcher in the study by providing a list of scheduled tutorials. There were 13 tutorials scheduled for the 1998-99 academic year. All of the tutorials were held at the selected institution and lasted approximately four hours.

The interim director of the Upward Bound program provided an alphabetical roster of all Upward Bound students to the researcher. The researcher used this roster to check off names as parental permission forms arrived in the mail. Any students whose parents did not return permission slips to the researcher by November 30, 1998 were eliminated from the study. The
final list of participants, therefore, contained only the names of students whose parents had given permission for them to participate in the study.

The researcher used this final list to identify participants for the study at the December 5, 1998 tutorial session. The researcher called out all of the names on the list and asked that those students remain in the room following the lunch break. All those Upward Bound students whose parents had not given permission for them to participate in the study went to another room for a study hall.

The students whose parents had given permission for them to participate in the study remained in the room. Participants were asked to complete the participant consent form. A copy of the participant consent form can be found in Appendix D. If students were not willing to sign the consent form, they were eliminated from the sample and directed to join their peers in the study hall session.

The researcher then administered the SEI to all participants who had signed consent forms. The researcher reminded the participants that their answers would remain confidential. Participants were told there would be no way for the researcher to match answers with respondents. Participants were encouraged to honestly answer all questions on the instrument.

The researcher reviewed the completed instruments as they were submitted by participants to ensure that they had responded to all items. In the event that items were left blank, the researcher asked the participant to respond to those items and resubmit it. This maximized the number of instruments that could be included in the final sample.

Data Analysis

Once data were collected, the researcher began to analyze those data. The researcher coded the demographic section of the SEI in order to group responses by race and gender.
Responses from participants who indicated their race as Caucasian were coded with a 0. Completed SEIs from participants who reported their race as African American, Asian American, Hispanic, or Native American were coded with a 1. Responses from participants who reported they were female were coded with a 0, while responses from participants who indicated they were male were coded with a 1.

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Services (SPSS) (Kellough, 1985). The researcher calculated the overall self-esteem scores and the four subscale scores for each participant using SPSS.

Data analysis consisted of a series of two-way analysis of variance tests (ANOVAs). All ANOVAs were tested at the p<.05 level of significance. First, an ANOVA was conducted on the overall self-esteem scores to determine if there was any difference in overall self-esteem by race or by gender. This also allowed the researcher to determine if there was a difference in overall self-esteem due to the interaction between race and gender.

Next, the researcher explored the differences on each of the four subscales of the SEI. A two-way ANOVA was conducted on the FA Scale scores to determine if there was any difference in familial acceptance by race or by gender. This also allowed the researcher to determine if there was a difference in familial acceptance due to the interaction between race and gender.

Then, a two-way ANOVA was conducted on the AC Scale scores to determine if there was any difference in academic competence by race or by gender. This also allowed the researcher to determine if there was a difference in academic competence due to the interaction between race and gender.
A two-way ANOVA was conducted on the PP Scale scores to determine if there was any difference in peer popularity by race or by gender. This also allowed the researcher to determine if there was a difference in peer popularity due to the interaction between race and gender.

Finally, a two-way ANOVA was run on the PS Scale scores to determine if there was any difference in personal security by race or by gender. This also allowed the researcher to determine if there was a difference in personal security due to the interaction between race and gender.

In summary, the present study was designed to examine the self-esteem levels of Upward Bound participants. The methodology described in this chapter was deemed sufficient to elicit data about the hypotheses posed in the study.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

To examine self-esteem among Upward Bound students by race (majority versus minority) and gender, data were collected using the SEI. Results from the study are presented in this chapter. The chapter begins by describing changes to the procedures, including changes in sample selection and data collection procedures. Next, a description of the sample is provided. Finally, the results from the two-way ANOVAs conducted on overall self-esteem scores of participants as well as results on each of the four sub-scales of the SEI are presented.

Changes to the Procedures

There were four changes made to the original data collection plan due to suggestions made by the Institutional Review Board on Research using Human Subjects (IRB) and circumstances surrounding the participation in tutorials for Upward Bound students.

The first change related to materials included in the packet to potential participants. Originally, the researcher planned to include only the parental permission form in the packet sent to potential participants. Then, the participants would sign a student assent form on the day of the tutorial. Instead, the researcher included both the parental permission form and the student assent form in the letter to potential participants. The letter informed parents and students that both forms must be returned in order for the student to participate in the study. This change was made to ensure that both the parental permission form and the student assent form were signed prior to the day of data collection and assuaged concerns expressed by the IRB.

The second change in procedures related to the way in which participants were distinguished from non-participants on the day of the tutorial at which the SEI was administered. The changes were prompted by another suggestion from the IRB. Originally, the researcher
planned to compile a list of students who had obtained parental permission. These names would have been read out during the beginning of the tutorial. All those on the list would have been asked to remain in the room following the lunch break. Students not on the list would have been instructed to go to another room for a study hall. Instead, at the January 30, 1999 tutorial, all Upward Bound students were given a schedule at the beginning of the day. The schedule informed participants to report to the researcher’s room and non-participants to report to their first period tutorial. This change was made to ensure that participants did not feel uncomfortable participating in the study. With these changes, non-participants were not aware of who participated in the study.

The third change in procedures related to the data collection process. Data collection occurred according to the procedures outlined in Chapter Three with two exceptions. The first data collection date was moved to January 30, 1999. Originally, the data collection date was December 5, 1998. Due to delays in receiving approval by the IRB, the researcher postponed the data collection date to January 30, 1999. While 37 Upward Bound students had returned the parental permission form and student assent form by January 29, 1999, there was an unusually low turnout at the January 30, 1999 tutorial. Only 32 students completed the SEI that day. To increase the response rate, the researcher asked the Upward Bound counselors to administer the SEI during their school visits to those students who had returned both parental permission and student assent forms but who were not at the January 30, 1999 tutorial. The Upward Bound counselors administered one survey on February 9, 1999 and another two on February 10, 1999. The researcher scheduled another group administration, which occurred at the February 20, 1999 tutorial. The final two participants completed the SEI at this time.
The fourth change in procedures related to the significance level at which the two-way ANOVAs were run. Originally, the researcher planned to use a $p < .05$ significance level. The researcher, however, found no statistically significant findings at the $p < .05$ significance level. Because the students were from a homogeneous group, all from low socioeconomic backgrounds, the data were re-analyzed at the $p < .10$ significance level.

Description of the Sample

The final sample included 37 of the 96 Upward Bound students enrolled in the Upward Bound program during the 1998/99 academic year. Overall, the sample reflected 40% of the entire Upward Bound population. In the total Upward Bound population there are 51 (55%) majority students and 41 (45%) minority students. Of the 37 participants, there were 23 (62%) majority students and 14 (38%) minority students. In the overall Upward Bound population there are 60 (65%) females and 32 (35%) males. Of the 37 participants, there were 22 (60%) females and 15 (40%) males. Table 1 describes the sample by race and gender.

Results

The study gathered data to answer five research hypotheses. The five hypotheses focused on differences by race and gender in overall self-esteem scores and scores on each of the four sub-scales. Two-way ANOVAs were conducted on the total score and the four sub-scale scores. There were no significant interactions on any analyses. All significant differences were due to main effects.
Table 1

Characteristics of the Sample (N=37)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Female n/%</th>
<th>Male n/%</th>
<th>Total n/%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>14/38</td>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>23/62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>8/22</td>
<td>6/16</td>
<td>14/38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22/60</td>
<td>15/40</td>
<td>37/100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two-way ANOVAs revealed no statistically significant differences in overall self-esteem, familial acceptance, academic competence, peer popularity, or personal security scores by race. The results are summarized in Table 2.

The two-way ANOVAs revealed no statistically significant differences in overall self-esteem scores or familial acceptance scores by gender. There were, however, statistically significant differences on three of the sub-scales. Those scales included the academic competence, peer popularity, and personal security scores. Females scored higher on all three of these sub-scales than did males. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Overall, the results suggest some limited differences in self-esteem by gender, though no overall differences in self-esteem by race. These results and their implications for future practice and research are discussed in the final chapter of this report.
Table 2

Results of Two-Way ANOVAs by Race (N=37)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>m</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>253.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>242.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familial Acceptance</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>59.38</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>56.46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Competence</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>64.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Popularity</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>64.71</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>63.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Security</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65.38</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>62.00</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Results of Two-Way ANOVAs by Gender (N=37)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>m</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>255.77</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>241.13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familial Acceptance</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>58.82</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>57.67</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Competence</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>65.23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>59.93</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Popularity</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>65.95</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>61.67</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Security</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>61.87</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* significant at the p<.10 level
The purpose of this study was to examine self-esteem among Upward Bound students by race (majority versus minority) and gender. Data were collected using the SEI. The results and implications of this study are discussed in this chapter. This chapter is organized around three sections. First, the results of this study relative to findings of previous research are presented. Second, implications of these results for practice and future research are discussed. Finally, the limitations to the study are examined.

Results

Results by Race

A number of previous studies on self-esteem included primarily White participants. The studies that examined self-esteem by race are limited, but offer insights into the issue. All of the studies revealed differences in self-esteem by race (Martinez & Dukes, 1997; Orenstein, 1994; Murray, 1998).

Martinez and Dukes (1997) studied adolescents from various racial backgrounds. The researchers found that among participants, the greater the ethnic identity, the higher the level of self-esteem. According to the researchers, African American adolescents have higher levels of ethnic identity than White adolescents. Therefore, African American adolescents have higher levels of self-esteem than White adolescents.

Orenstein’s (1994) research on adolescent females revealed similar findings. The researcher found that African American females maintain a higher level of overall self-esteem than White females. Erkut’s study, as reported by Murray (1998), also revealed differences in
self-esteem based on race. African American females scored higher in the area of social acceptance. White females, however, scored higher in the area of physical attractiveness.

The present study found no statistically significant differences in self-esteem among Upward Bound students by race. This contradicts the literature on self-esteem and race. There were, however, distinctive trends regarding self-esteem and race. These trends suggest some pragmatic differences in terms of self-esteem and race. Pragmatic differences are those that are not statistically significant but may have implications for practitioners (Suskie, 1992).

For example, majority Upward Bound students scored consistently higher on measures of self-esteem. This included overall self-esteem scores and the four sub-scale scores (see Table 2). In this study, majority Upward Bound students scored higher on the FA scale. Although this finding was not statistically significant, it might suggest that majority students are more likely to name family as a source of comfort and support. Minority students, however, might not feel included in the family. They might also look outside of the family for encouragement and support.

On the AC scale, majority Upward Bound students also scored higher than did minority Upward Bound students. Although this finding was not statistically significant, it might suggest that majority students perceive themselves as academic achievers. Minority students however, might have difficulties meeting expectations at school. They might have negative views of themselves as learners and achievers.

Majority Upward Bound students scored higher than minority students on the PS scale as well. Although this finding was not statistically significant, it might suggest that majority Upward Bound students have more positive images of themselves and their role within their peer
group. Minority students, however, might be less likely to view themselves as leaders within their peer groups.

Finally, on the PS scale, majority students’ scores were higher than minority students’ scores. Although this finding was not statistically significant, it might suggest that majority Upward Bound students have a higher level of satisfaction with themselves and their surroundings. They might also feel more comfortable with themselves than do minority students. Minority students however, might view themselves as threatened or unprotected in a number of situations. They are also less likely to feel comfortable with themselves and their environment.

Overall, the results suggest that majority students have higher levels of self-esteem than do minority Upward Bound students. While not statistically significant, the fact that majority participants scored higher on the overall self-esteem score and all four sub-scales suggests some pragmatic significance in the results.

Results by Gender

The literature on self-esteem and gender reveals that females consistently score lower on measures of self-esteem instruments than do males (Chubb et al., 1997). Flansburg (1991) and Block and Robins (1993) studied self-esteem among adolescents over time. These studies found that adolescent females report lower levels of self-esteem than do males. Females also report a significant decrease in self-esteem during adolescence.

Block’s (1991) research is consistent with these findings. In this study, females again reported lower self-esteem than did males. Furthermore, females suffered a larger drop in self-esteem over time. In a similar study by Martinez and Dukes (1991), the longitudinal data revealed that females scored lower than males on perceived intelligence and satisfaction with self.
Raymore, Godbey, and Crawford (1994) studied self-esteem among only high school seniors. The researchers found that among male students 60% were included in the high self-esteem category. Only 46% of females were included in the high self-esteem category.

Among Upward Bound students in the present study, there were statistically significant differences in self-esteem by gender on three sub-scales. Females scored significantly higher on the Academic Competence scale, Peer Popularity scale, and the Personal Security scale. These findings contradict previous research on self-esteem and gender.

Academically competent individuals do not have difficulties meeting expectations at school (Brown & Alexander, 1991). They also feel competent to meet academic requirements. On the AC scale, female Upward Bound students scored significantly higher than did male Upward Bound students. This finding suggests that female participants worked harder at school and like being called upon in class. It also suggests that female Upward Bound students do more than a minimal amount of school work and do not feel belittled by their teachers.

Individuals with high peer popularity scores have more positive images of themselves (Brown & Alexander, 1991). They also feel comfortable with themselves and their role within their peer group. On the PP scale, female Upward Bound students scored significantly higher than did male Upward Bound students. This finding suggests that female participants believe they will grow up to be important people and that they are valued by their friends.

Participants with high personal security scores perceive themselves as psychologically and physically well (Brown & Alexander, 1991). They also feel safe and confident in their surroundings. On the PS scale, female Upward Bound students scored significantly higher than did male Upward Bound students. This finding suggests that female participants are comfortable in groups of people and do not mind talking in front of a group.
The present study found no statistically significant differences in overall self-esteem or the Familial Acceptance scale among Upward Bound students by gender. This contradicts the literature on self-esteem and gender. There were, however, distinctive trends regarding these self-esteem scales and gender.

Female Upward Bound students scored consistently higher on measures of overall self-esteem and the FA scale. Individuals with high familial acceptance scores perceive themselves as an integral part of their family (Brown & Alexander, 1991). They also have positive relationships with their parents. On the FA scale, female Upward Bound students scored higher than did male Upward Bound students. Although this finding was not statistically significant, it might suggest that female participants believe they are important members of their families and that their parents are proud of them.

Implications of the Study

The results of this study provide sufficient data to make some recommendations about future practice and research on the topic of self-esteem. Although all Upward Bound students could benefit from increased levels of self-esteem, male students have lower self-esteem in the areas of academic competence, peer popularity, and personal security. Therefore, Upward Bound counselors may wish to implement some practices to improve self-esteem among their male students.

One such practice might focus on the issue of familial acceptance. Upward Bound counselors might increase levels of familial acceptance among male participants by increasing contact with parents of those students. Newsletters could be published to keep parents informed about what is going on in the Upward Bound program. Personal letters updating parents about their students’ progress would encourage discussion between parents and students about the
students’ grades and schoolwork. If Upward Bound counselors focus on achievements and accomplishments of male students when communicating with parents, this might improve students’ relationship with family members and therefore lead to a greater sense of acceptance by family among Upward Bound male participants.

A second implication for practice relates to academic competence. The results of this study reveal lower levels of academic competence among males. Richardson & Rayder (1987) found that low self-esteem directly correlates with low school achievement. Increasing self-esteem in relation to academic competence among Upward Bound students, especially males, might lead to higher levels of academic achievement.

Upward Bound counselors might improve academic competence among their male students by increasing contact with teachers in the schools serviced by the Upward Bound program. Providing teachers with schedules of the Upward Bound tutorials would inform teachers as to when Upward Bound students would be receiving assistance with assignments. This would enable teachers to schedule major assignments or tests around these dates and this might lead to increased sense of accomplishment among males.

Increasing contact with teachers might lead to increased communication regarding assignment and test schedules. One of the items on the AC scale in the SEI is “I’m proud of my school work”. If Upward Bound counselors checked in with students following tests this might improve student’s perceptions of their academic competence.

In addition to increasing contact with teachers, Upward Bound counselors could establish a homework hotline for male students. Because most Upward Bound students come from low socioeconomic backgrounds, a toll-free hotline would provide them academic support at no cost to the family. Upward Bound alumni who are currently enrolled at the university or work study
students could run the hotline. This would also allow Upward Bound counselors to keep in
contact with students who are not succeeding academically without incurring large expenses.

Upward Bound counselors could also encourage students to form study groups. Students who attend the same schools could benefit from the support that study groups provide. In
addition to offering students a network for academic questions and concerns, study groups would encourage students to interact with each other outside of Upward Bound events. This could lead
to increased self-esteem with regards to peer popularity, the topic of the third implication.

A third implication for practice relates to peer popularity. Upward Bound counselors could increase peer popularity among male Upward Bound students through other initiatives, like providing nametags for students at tutorials and other Upward Bound events. The students in Upward Bound attend a number of different high schools in the area. By providing name tags for students at tutorials, Upward Bound counselors would encourage students to meet each other and learn each others’ names. Knowing each other’s names would increase the level of interaction between Upward Bound students. Self-esteem with regards to peer popularity is directly related to feeling comfortable meeting new people and talking with peers (Brown & Alexander, 1991).

To maintain contact between Upward Bound students outside of tutorials and other events, Upward Bound counselors could create a student roster. Having the names and addresses of other Upward Bound students would allow students to communicate with one another throughout the year and not just at Upward Bound functions. If students have access to technology in their schools, e-mail addresses could be added to the list so students could communicate without any cost. Since feeling comfortable with peers is an important component of self-esteem, such a program might enhance self-esteem among Upward Bound students.
Another way for Upward Bound counselors to increase contact among students would be to provide team building exercises at tutorials. These could be conducted during the lunch period or in addition to the traditional schedule. Activities that require students to achieve a goal through group work encourage collaboration and compromise. Feeling like you’re a part of the group and learning from others is essential to higher levels of peer popularity and peer popularity is a major component of self-esteem.

In addition to providing students with opportunities to interact with other students in group settings, teambuilding exercises would increase Upward Bound students’ personal security. Two of the main components of personal security are feeling confident in oneself and feeling comfortable in one’s surroundings. Public speaking is an area where students can feel uncomfortable. Upward Bound counselors could increase personal security among Upward Bound students by giving students an opportunity to share their solutions or findings from these group activities with the larger group.

While there are several implications for practice, the results from the present study also suggest ideas for future research. Future scholars may want to investigate the effects of class standing (e.g. freshmen, sophomore) on self-esteem among Upward Bound students. Such a study might reveal if self-esteem among Upward Bound students changes throughout high school. In addition, results could be analyzed by race and gender to determine if there were any differences in self-esteem throughout high school related to race or gender.

Future researchers might also want to examine self-esteem among Upward Bound students over time. This type of longitudinal research would require students entering the Upward Bound program to complete the SEI. Subsequent administrations every year would
allow researchers to determine the effects of the Upward Bound program over time on students’ self-esteem.

While this study provided information about African American and Caucasian students, future researchers may want to investigate self-esteem among other racial groups. The national enrollment in TRIO programs is comprised of 36% African American, 16% Hispanic, 4% Asian American, and 5% Native American (U.S. Department of Education, 1995). Administering the SEI to a more representative sample of the national enrollment might offer more insight into racial differences in self-esteem among Upward Bound students.

The Upward Bound students in this study live in predominately rural areas. Another suggestion for future research would be to investigate self-esteem among Upward Bound students in rural and urban areas. This study might reveal if there are differences in self-esteem of Upward Bound students based on environmental differences.

One of the sub-scales of the SEI is familial acceptance. Future researchers might also want to examine self-esteem among Upward Bound students in various types of households. This type of study might reveal how Upward Bound students in two-parent households compare to students from single-parent households or households where other relatives are considered the head of the household.

Limitations

As with all research, the present study was not without some limitations. Some of these were noted in Chapter One. The first limitation involves the language used throughout the SEI. A number of the phrases used were unfamiliar to the participants. For example, a number of participants needed clarification on the word “klutz” which appeared in one item. If participants
were unclear about the meaning of items in the SEI, they may not have been able to respond candidly. If this occurred, the results might have been skewed.

In addition to out-dated phrasing, the use of the word “parents” raised a number of questions from participants. Some Upward Bound students’ parents are divorced and therefore, they only live with one parent. Other participants don’t live with either parent; they live with another relative or guardian. Minority students in particular, have strong connections with extended families that might not include parents. Because the word “parents” was interpreted in different ways or not applicable, the results might have been influenced.

Another limitation was the low response rate of participants. Because most Upward Bound students are under 18 years of age, the researcher was required to gain both parental permission and student assent. The IRB required the researcher to use language in the parental permission and student assent forms that might have discouraged participation. For example, the forms acknowledge that there is a potential risk for students to experience some negative feelings after completing the questionnaire. This may have influenced the number of Upward Bound students who participated in the research. A higher response rate might have yielded different results.

Due to the low response rate, there were unequal cell sizes in some cases. For example, there were 24 majority participants and only 13 minority participants in the sample. In addition, 22 females, as compared to 15 males participated in the study. A larger and more equally distributed sample might have produced different results.

The sample included Upward Bound students who completed the SEI in a group setting and participants who completed the SEI in an individual setting. Additionally, the researcher administered the SEI in the group setting but both Upward Bound counselors and the researcher
administered the SEI in individual settings. It is possible that these different approaches to administering the instrument influenced the results in some unforeseen way.

Despite these limitations, the results of this study revealed findings that contradict the literature on self-esteem with regards to race and gender. Unlike previous research on self-esteem and race, there were no statistically significant differences in self-esteem by race in this study. There were, however, trends that suggest that majority students have higher levels of self-esteem than do minority students. Because the minority population consisted of predominately African American students, further research may be needed to examine whether the findings of this study hold true over different groups of minorities (e.g. Hispanics).

Previous literature on gender and self-esteem revealed that men consistently score higher on measures of self-esteem than do women. The present study, however, does not support that literature. In fact, the present findings contradict previous research. In this study, there were statistically significant differences by gender on the AC scale, PP scale, and PS scale with females scoring higher than males. Although there were no statistically significant differences in overall self-esteem or the FA scale by gender, there were trends that suggest females have higher levels of overall self-esteem with respect to familial acceptance. This suggests that further research on gender and self-esteem is warranted, especially studies that examine gender and self-esteem among Upward Bound students.

Upward Bound is a precollege program that is designed to encourage disadvantaged students to graduate from high school and pursue higher education. The pursuit of higher education requires high levels of academic achievement and academic achievement is closely associated with self-esteem.
Upward Bound staff historically have emphasized on academic achievement in their programs but have not valued programs and services that promote self-esteem. Because self-esteem is essential to academic success, it might behoove Upward Bound counselors to spend more time on building self-esteem among participants.
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