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**BLACK STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES
ON A PREDOMINANTLY
WHITE COLLEGE CAMPUS:
AN ETHNOGRAPHY**

presented by

Shirley Anne West

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Major professor
Dr. Max R. Raines

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ON A PREDOMINANTLY
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AN ETHNOGRAPHY

By

Shirley Anne West

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

BLACK STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES
ON A PREDOMINANTLY
WHITE COLLEGE CAMPUS:
AN ETHNOGRAPHY

By

Shirley Anne West

    This study was conducted for the purpose of determining and describing the perceptions Black students have of their experiences in one predominantly White college environment. The researcher attempted to determine the strategies and the social knowledge that Black students employ to function successfully in the college setting. In other words, the intent was to determine the critical factors that cause some Black students to continue their education in a predominantly White college and others to drop out. The study focused on a particular group of Black students, junior and senior level students who had survived at least two years in one educational institution where the majority population is White.

    This examination was accomplished through ethnographic methodology. Four specific means were used to collect, record, and organize data. They were (1) selected student and staff interviews; (2) a questionnaire; (3) analysis of documents and statistics; and (4) participant observation. The interviews emerged as the major source of data and an important means for clarifying and reinforcing the data gathered from the questionnaires, observations and, fieldnotes. The

questionnaire provided the researcher valuable background information on the Black student population at the college. Certain documents were used, much like informants, to establish facts about events which the researcher was unable to observe directly.

The findings support the notion that successful Black students in a predominantly White college environment have clearly defined career goals, strong self-concepts, and the determination to persevere. Although the students in this study initially expected to become integrated into the college setting, this integration did not occur. Black students found more prejudice, more discrimination, and less social integration than they expected to encounter. The findings reveal several strategies that they employed for adapting. The most salient was to accept the reality of their isolation and alienation and the potential barriers to their success. The students learned to give less priority to social involvement even though they desired it. They gave greater priority to developing academic competence. Crucial to the development of academic competence were supportive services including tutoring, counseling, and adequate financial aid.

Most important, the researcher discovered that the successful Black students in this study were able to adapt to the college environment more because of their own initiative to achieve rather than because of the availability of any institutional components.

To my daughter, Kelli, and son, Jeffrey
Black college students

and

To all Black college students
in their struggle
to achieve
complete equality of opportunity

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about Black student life on their campus, I will be eternally grateful. They made the research possible.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout this nation's history, attempts have been made to control access to educational opportunity. Advantaged Americans have systematically and deliberately manipulated the educational system to stifle the aspirations of lower-income citizens (Green, 1977). Only through a long and hard struggle have minorities and other poor people gained access to equality of educational opportunity. One area for this gain has been higher education. It is general knowledge that prior to the past two decades, the higher education of Blacks was virtually ignored by major universities and was left primarily as a responsibility of four-year Black colleges and universities. The unique role of higher education gives it extraordinary leverage either to help or hurt minorities' chances for equality of opportunity. When colleges and universities deny minorities the chance to gain skills and credentials, they increase the likelihood that minorities will not receive equal opportunities in all other social institutions for the rest of their lives.

By exploring the experiences of successful Black students in one such environment, this study can assist college educators with identifying two factors: (1) a stronger recognition of impediments to Black students' academic progress, and, (2) the identification of strategies that can enhance and reinforce the students' survival in the college environment. Sensitivity to these two factors can be

crucial to the institution devising means for assisting the students to adapt.

American higher education enrollment more than doubled during the decade of the 1960's. In fact, according to the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, college and university enrollments increased more rapidly during the period from 1959 to 1969 than at any other time in the history of higher education. This rapid increase in student enrollments was partially due to the egalitarian position that many colleges and universities advocated. The decade of the sixties saw the doors to predominantly White institutions open to minority and low-income groups (Jackson, 1978). Many of these "new students" were Black. They came to the environments of academe with high hopes and career aspirations. Many were the first in their immediate families to enroll in a college or university. But, for large numbers of them, this open door opportunity soon became a revolving door and their happiness and excitement turned to apprehension and disappointment (Cope, 1975; Cross, 1976; and Maxwell, 1979).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine and describe the perceptions Black students have of their experiences in a predominantly White college environment, thereby revealing ways of improving the quality of the campus environment and the educational experience of Blacks.

The researcher sought to determine the strategies and the social knowledge that Black students employ to function successfully in the

college setting. Such a study has potential value, not only for discovering ways of improving their campus environment and educational experiences, but also for to a better understanding and appreciation of Black student culture as a whole, as well as an understanding of individual attitudes, motives, interests, responses, and conflicts.

The Research Problem

There were more Black students in American colleges and universities in the decade of the 1970's than in previous decades. For the first time, a majority of them were enrolled in predominantly White institutions (Fleming, 1981). Even though their presence has become more salient, these students face both social and academic adjustment problems which colleges must recognize and accommodate for if they are committed to providing equal opportunities for minority students.

We do not know enough about what Black students are experiencing in predominantly White environments, or how they interpret their experiences. One aspect of the problem lies in the widespread attrition and failure among Black students in spite of the special programs on traditional college campuses throughout the country. For almost two decades special academic support for minorities has been offered through remedial courses, tutoring, and counseling. Yet, researchers have consistently proven that these corrective solutions have been largely ineffective (Davis and others, 1975; Gordon, 1973; Jason and others, 1977, Roueche and Kirk, 1973). Now more than ever before, high attrition and failure continues to plague programs

created specifically for minorities as they continue to drop out of school, disillusioned about the educational process and considering themselves failures for not having adapted to college. Despite the many problems and difficulites in meeting the needs of high risk students, there are some successes among the failures. Blacks are taking advantage of opportunities for education beyond high school in increasing numbers. Many are seeking and achieving better jobs, professional advancement, and greater fulfillment in their lives, conditions that come in large part from better and higher education. There has been some success and as more is learned about the experiences of the deprived and underachieving student, more success will become visible. Thus, researchers continue to probe for newer and more effective ways to describe the students who succeed despite inadequate academic backgrounds and poor test scores.

The problem consists of determining whether there are common identifiable experiences, adaptive behaviors, feelings, and attitudes among Black students that can be categorized as strategies for success.

Related Background

Black students on White college campuses are a relatively recent phenomenon. Thirty years ago, over 90 percent of Black college students (approximately 100,000 in 1950) were being educated in traditionally Black institutions, excluded from other institutions by law, custom, or financial barriers. In the South, segregation barriers made it impossible for Blacks to attend White colleges. At the same

time, few Northern institutions were willing to enroll Black students, partly because of stereotypical beliefs that Blacks were unable to benefit from higher education and partly because of the social stigma attached to the Black presence in White society (Gurin and Epps, 1975). Up until the Civil War, only 28 Blacks had graduated from American colleges (Gurin and Epps, 1975), and by 1936 only 143 Blacks had earned B.A. degrees from northern White institutions. Even by 1964, only about 20 percent of the baccalaureate degrees awarded to Blacks were earned at predominantly White colleges (Gurin and Epps, 1975).

According to some recent estimates, about two-thirds to three-fourths of the Black students now in college are in predominantly White educational settings (Boyd, 1974: Gurin and Epps, 1975). As of 1967 there were estimated to be 133,000 Black students in White colleges and nearly 95,000 of them in colleges outside the South (Bowles and DeCosta, 1971). Gurin and Epps report that 278,000 Black students were in non-Black institutions in 1968, representing 144 percent increase from the 114,000 enrolled in 1964. By 1970, the U.S. Census Bureau was reporting that 378,000 Black students were attending predominantly White colleges and universities. But, while the absolute numbers seem large, Blacks are still underrepresented in college, particularly in private and four-year public institutions, since about one half of all Black college students are enrolled in two-year colleges. Approximately 25,000 Black students were enrolled at selective White colleges by 1970 (Levitan, Johnson, and Taggart, 1975). Between 1960 and 1970, the percentage of Black students had increased from less than one percent of the total student population,

to more than five percent on some major college campuses (Gibbs, 1974). Nevertheless, on most campuses the number of Black students remain quite small.

The degree of underrepresentation of Blacks may be determined by computing the relationship between Black student enrollment in college and the total Black population. Statistics from the latest Bureau Current Population Surveys (CPS) and the 1980 Census show that between 1970 and 1980, the Black population increased by 17.3 percent, from 22.6 million to 26.5 million. Although Blacks represented approximately 12 percent of the total United States population (226,545,805) in 1980, they made up only 2.6 percent of all doctors, 2.9 percent of dentists, 2.3 percent of pharmacists, and 1.6 percent of veternarians.

The U.S. Census Bureau reported that about one million Black students, 18 to 34 years of age, were enrolled in college in 1981, double the number enrolled in 1970. Most of the increase took place in the early 1970's. In 1981, Black enrollment in colleges constituted about 11 percent of the college population as compared to 7 percent in 1970.

In 1982, the proportion of Blacks who had completed 4 years or more of college was about one-half the proportion of Whites who completed the same level, 13 percent and 25 percent, respectively. The enrollment of Blacks tends to be disproportionately concentrated in the early undergraduate years, both because of the increase in Black freshman enrollments and because academic survival rates continue to be lower for Black students than for Whites, and hence

relatively few of them are able to complete baccalaureate studies and embark on graduate and professional training (Crossland, 1971).

Major American colleges, having had so little contact with Black students until recently, thus have had little experience in meeting their needs (Bowles and DeCosta, 1971). Many Black students in these institutions are there by virtue of recruitment efforts that began on a large scale in the 1960's. During this same decade, the formerly segregated institutions of the South first opened their doors to Black students. The prospects for these students seemed bright. The students were said to be motivated and scholarships were available for the well-qualified. More importantly, they were taking advantage of opportunities that had been denied Blacks until this time. The larger number of Black students enrolled suggested that these students would not suffer the isolation their counterparts had experienced just a decade before. Davis and Borders-Patterson (1973, p. 8) reported that incoming Black students "seemed to be reasonably confident and unapprehensive, to be excited about their eventual opportunity to get a job, and to be open-minded to the prospect of a pleasant new experience."

However, while some researchers present a positive picture of Black student adjustment in spite of racism and relative social isolation (Boyd, 1974), others point to notable academic failure, demonstrations and revolts as indications of considerable dissatisfaction (Sowell, 1972). Furthermore, colleges have frequently been unable to retain Blacks, especially in the advanced years of higher education, or to graduate them in the traditional two-year or four-year period of time (Davis and Borders-Patterson, 1973). These

are some of the indications that the simple enrollment of Black students merely means the beginning of new adjustment problems, and that there is a need to take a closer look at what these students are experiencing.

The Significance of the Study

A study is needed to determine the critical factors that cause some Black students to continue their education in a predominantly White college and others to drop out (Jackson, 1978).

The researcher recognizes that students' frame of reference certainly influences what they perceive to be true about the college environment. This frame of reference is determined by the students' background and their experiences in the college setting. The researcher also realizes that, individually, Black students respond differently to White environments. Therefore, to gain an understanding of how individual Black students make sense of their college lives, the researcher sought to see and understand their world as they see and understand it.

In addition to the examination of the normal academic program of college level course work, this study included an examination of:

1. Special academic courses such as remedial and developmental.

2. Athletic, social, cultural and recreational programs.

3. Relationships with peers and campus mentors.

4. Available student services such as counseling
    and tutoring.

5. Attachment to a "community" within the
    institution or to the entire institution as a
    community.

Up to this point, the great majority of the major studies
affecting Blacks in America have been conducted by White social
scientists and educators. Gunnar Myrdal's An American Dilemma, James
Coleman's Equality of Educational Opportunity, Earl McGrath's The
Predominantly Negro Colleges and Universities in Transition, and
Christopher Jencks' Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family
and Schooling in America, to name just four of the most widely quoted,
were all conducted by White investigators. And except for the work
done in the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy at Howard
University, supported in large part by the Ford Foundation, the
situation has changed very little over the years. A major study of
Black colleges was recently conducted by Dr. Morris Keeton, and the
staff work of the Commission on the Higher Education of Minorities was
conducted by Dr. Alexander Astin. Both Keeton and Astin are White
(Wright, 1979). Some of the most critical elements in such research
are influenced, if not determined by the researcher's concerns,
prejudices, biases and beliefs. This is by no means a new
observation. Gunnar Myrdal made a similar observation almost 40 years
ago (Myrdal, 1944):

> In the light of the history of scientific writings
> on the American Negro problem, the biased notions
> held in previous times...stand out in high relief
> against the better controlled scientific views of

> today...<u>Full Objectivity, however is an ideal
> toward which...we can never reach. The social
> scientist, too, is a part of the culture in which
> he lives and he never succeeds in freeing himself</u>
> entirely from dependence on the dominant
> preconceptions and biases of his environment.
> (Emphasis supplied.)

Black social scientists and educators, too, undoubtedly, bring their concerns, preconceptions biases and beliefs to research on questions relating to the educational needs of Blacks, but the high probability is that they would also bring very different preconceptions, perspectives, and more sensitive backgrounds to the total research effort, as well as different insights and perhaps different interpretations of the data and, therefore, quite possibly different recommendations for dealing with the stubborn educational problems that confront Blacks.

Of equal importance is the imperative need for Blacks to participate in the solution of educational problems that affect them. One of the most important ways to do so is in the research which so frequently provides information that is the foundation of educational policy designed to deal with those problems. Beyond the special insights and perspectives that Blacks bring to policy research affecting their education, there is an urgent need for more concerned researchers to investigate the many factors that impede the progress of Blacks toward real equality of opportunity in all phases of higher education.

As expressed by one Black sociologist/educator:

> When you have grown up in an urban American school
> system, it is difficult to view it objectively. If
> you're Black and poor, too many memories get in the
> way--memories of having been sorted out and labeled

in racially isolated schools; memories of daily
exposure to textbooks that ignored your existence
and denigrated your ancestors: and memories of
confrontations with teachers who, although often
poorly prepared themselves, remind you every day of
your shortcomings and convinced you that you really
didn't belong (Green, 1977).

This quotation very aptly describes the researcher's feelings
relative to her early years of schooling. In the meantime, she has
come to realize from reading, from formal study, and from encounters
with other Blacks that memories are a part of the social conditioning
of many Black Americans; and that education can be one of the most
liberating forces in the world, but it can also be one of the most
oppressive, especially for minorities.

From this study, a descriptive analysis prepared by one whose
insights, in part, have commonality with other Blacks familiar with
traditional college settings, it is hoped that the information gained
will add to the limited knowledge about Black students' experiences in
White colleges and aid these colleges in making their environments
more relevant for all students. Such a study has useful implications
for anyone involved in education. When we are forced to re-evaluate
our assumptions about students and how individuals achieve personal
and academic satisfaction, we may better understand both individual
and organizational responsibilities.

Research Questions

Ethnographic research is highly generative in nature. Because of
this, broad conceptual questions that the researcher brings into the

study must continually be focused and redefined as the researcher explores the day-to-day experiences of a particular individual in a particular setting. The research questions for this study were based on two objectives:

1. To determine and describe the perceptions Black students have of their experiences in a predominantly White college environment.

2. To determine the critical factors that cause some Black students to continue their education in a predominantly White college and others to drop out.

The major research questions which guided the study were:

I. What do Black students see as components of a successful experience at this institution?

    A. What is the nature of the expectations that instructors place on Black students?

    B. What expectations do Black students have of themselves?

    C. What strategies do they employ to succeed and with what results?

    D. What are the educational outcomes valued highly by Black students?

II. What are the experiences and perceptions of Blacks regarding relationships between Blacks and Whites at this institution?

    A. To what extent do Black students see the institutions as promoting interracial campus contacts?

    B. To what extent do Black students see a need for such contacts?

    C. What is the nature of the formal and/or informal networks of acquaintance and

communication which facilitate contacts
between the two racial groups?

Conceptual Framework

In discussing the logic and social psychology of field research,
Schatzman and Strauss (1973) contend that:

> The discovery process and the questions raised by
> the researcher need not be related to any
> "received" or prior theory. Such theory is not
> necessary to inquiry in the field, except when the
> researcher specifically wants to test one or
> explore the limits of its usefulness. The
> researcher is free to think of any or all pertinent
> theories and assumptions about his subject matter,
> and thereby frees himself from substantive
> orthodoxy. What he does need is some theoretical
> perspective or framework for gaining conceptual
> entry into his subject matter, and for raising
> relevant questions quickly. His framework need be
> no more elaborate than a scheme of general but
> grounded concepts commonly applied by his
> discipline (p.12).

Theoretical considerations, however, generally underlie category and
rating systems that serve to describe behavior.

Investigating Black students' experiences in a predominantly White
college required learning the working definitions used by them to
order their behavior. Because the fieldwork coincided with the
college's opening, the central ethnographic effort was to discover
those factors that most influenced the development of these working
definitions. To understand better what is meant by "working
definitions," it is necessary to consider both the theory (symbolic
interaction) that claims their existence and effectiveness and the
method (participant observation) by which they are uncovered.

As developed by George Herbert Mead, John Dewey, Charles Horton Cooley, and Robert Park (1964), symbolic interaction focuses on the shared meanings of actions and how people organize or mesh their activity with reference to those shared meanings. The central theoretical concept is that an individual can imagine how his actions will be interpreted by others and is thus able to continually organize and reorganize his behavior by taking into account the anticipated and actual responses of others. Interaction is seen as symbolic, as, through this role taking, actions are infused with a shared meaning that they otherwise do not have.

Collective actions flowing from this process and the attitudes people come to have concerning them do not exist in a vacuum, but emerge in and are part of larger social networks. In other words, whatever people do they are constrained by situations, circumstances, and events not entirely of their own making. Their actions may influence and change a given social world, but complete freedom and autonomy of action are incompatible with symbolic interaction.

Meade (1964) states that, "when people orient their behavior in response to the constraints or demands posed by various social agencies and circumstances, that is, when people see themselves sharing similar goals and problems in a common situation, there develops a 'working definition' or 'perspective'."

The concept of perspective has been used by many theorists and researchers. Karl Mannheim (1936) defines perspective as "the subject's whole mode of conceiving things as determined by his historical and social setting."

Although not explicitly using the concept of perspective, the researcher attempts to show how perspectives and actions flowing from them were created during the course of daily life in response to problems and needs experienced by Black students.

The concept of self-perception has also been significant in this study. How an individual views himself in his world, and reacts to or interprets the experiences encountered in that world, are significant to that individual's perception of self. Understanding how students perceive themselves is important to understanding how they behave, what choices they have made and continue to make, how they survive within the institution, and how they achieve or exist in their environment.

Self-concept, self-perception, life space, and perspective were all significant concepts in this study, and offered numerous possibilities for shaping the naturalistic observations.

Literature relevant to these theoretical underpinnings in the study is reviewed in Chapter Two.

Background of the Study

This section briefly traces three aspects of the background for this study. First the researcher's background and rationale for the choice of topic is described. Second, the research site and demographics are briefly discussed. Third, the process of negotiating entry is presented.

The Researcher's Background

Wolcott proposed that "the field-worker himself serves as the key instrument in the research" (1973, p. 18). This researcher's background includes experience in education as a public school teacher and counselor, and more recently as a community college counselor. She was awarded the B.A. degree in Home Economics from Albion College (1954) and the M.A. degree in counseling from Michigan State University (1962).

Prior to her present position as counselor and division chairperson for Counseling and Academic Support Services at Grand Rapids Junior College, the researcher served as a secondary school teacher (1954-1964) and secondary school counselor (1964-1974). Personal experiences combined with professional work with students and a lifetime of experiences as a Black in a predominatly White environment is the basis of the interest in this study.

The Research Site

The study was conducted at a fully accredited, state supported, four year and graduate degree granting institution with a current undergraduate enrollment of more than 6,000 men and women.

The Black student population at this institution is low. The fall (1983-84) enrollment data lists 437 minorities of which 260 are Black. There were 79 Hispanics, 66 Oriental/Asians, and 32 American Indians and Alaskan Natives.

The administrative staff of 125 includes 10 Blacks. The full-time faculty of 200 includes 8 Blacks (see Appendix A).

A major concern expressed often in conversation with Black faculty and staff at this institution is the lack of Black student enrollment in several academic programs and nontraditional career areas.

The Affirmative Action Report for the fall of 1982-83 listed 54 of the approximately 288 Black students in either general business, education, social work or criminal justice. Forty-three were enrolled in developmental skills; 70 were undeclared; 17 majors were unknown, and all other areas of the college listed no more than one or two Black students.

In addition, there is widespread concern about overall low academic achievement, high attrition and infrequent graduation. College officials recognize the need to be more effective in recruiting, retaining and educating these nontraditional students.

Entry Negotiation

A wide range of strategies were used to gain support and cooperation for the study. The three essential ingredients were acceptance by the administration, faculty, and students; openness and candor on the part of the investigator about the purpose and procedure of the research, and the high degree of energy necessary to complete the study.

The process of negotiating entry presented no problems. However, because of the sensitive nature of the project, the researcher deemed it important to discuss plans and objectives with the Dean of

Students. She received a positive response and an invitation to share

information about the proposed research with the Minority Advisory

Council. The President of the college chairs the council; co-

chairperson is the Affirmative Action Officer, a Black female.

Numerous other representatives from the minority faculty and staff

comprise the council, the purpose of which is to:

1. Monitor policies and procedures specifically
   affecting minority students and staff.

2. Serve as a resource for recruitment and
   retention of minority students.

3. Serve as a crisis intervention body utilized by
   minority staff and students as well as all other
   college personnel for expression and redress.

This was an important group from which to seek acceptance and

cooperation.

Other steps toward entry included approximately twelve hours of

informal conversations with students and observations of their

behavior and activities in residence halls, the cafeteria, classrooms,

corridors and the student lounge. A questionnaire was distributed to

Black students, the purpose of which was to determine the degree of

interest that students would have in participation, and to select key

informants. Some responses to the questionnaire were useful in

structuring interviews. Many students were enthusiastic about

participating in the study.

As Schatzman and Strauss (1973) point out, "entree is a continuing

process of establishing and developing relationships, not alone with a

chief host, but with a variety of less powerful persons." It was a continuing process for the researcher to establish rapport with as many Black students as possible in order to discover and describe their everyday experiences from their point of view.

Research Methods

The general method of research used for this study is briefly described here. A more in-depth discussion of the methodology and procedure is covered in Chapter Three.

Traditionally, educational research has relied heavily on quantitative methods to supply answers to its questions. Black students have been numerically counted and statistically analyzed in numerous studies. As valuable as this information may be, it does not present the essence of the Black student's experience nor does it provide insight into the interrelationships found in the social, cultural, and academic environment in which the student lives everyday. Bogdan and Biklen (1982, preface) contend that:

> Educational research is changing. A field once dominated by measurement, operationalized definitions, variables, and empirical fact has had to make room for a research approach gaining in popularity, one that emphasizes inductive analysis, description, and the study of people's perceptions.

Qualitative research, also known as naturalistic, human science, or ethnographic research, is the approach used for this study.

The qualitative research design is based on theoretical assumptions (that meaning and process are crucial in understanding

human behavior, that descriptive data is what is important to collect, and that analysis is best done inductively) and on data collection traditions such as participant observation, interviewing and document analysis. These provide the parameters, the tools, and the general guide for how the researcher is to proceed. The design is flexible with design decisions made throughout the study. Although the most intensive period of data analysis usually occurs in the later stages, the data analysis is an ongoing part of the research.

While it does not replace quantitative research, qualitative research offers a different focus. It adds a dimenison of information which quantitative research does not measure. Harry F. Wolcott (1973), in the preface to The Man in the Principal's Office, explains that ethnographic accounts deal with human beings and actual human behavior. In such studies the researcher is not concerned with the quantitative questions of the measurement of phenomena, but rather with the qualitative questions of the phenomena of meaning. The focus moves to the experience itself, and from that experience comes meaning. In this approach, the researcher does not define meaning through the manipulation of variables or through a controlled experiement, but rather centers on what is being experienced and describes what happens from the perspective of the person living through the experience. This approach can be particularly beneficial in describing and clarifying daily activities, procedures, and interactions taking place in the educational process.

"Qualitative research also has the natural setting as the direct source of data" (Bogdan and Biklen, p. 27). Fieldwork, in the natural setting, can uniquely provide a close look at experience and meaning

in the participants' everyday lives. One of the unique aspects of employing fieldwork methodology for conducting research in schools is that the opportunities for observing and recording events in their natural setting are almost unlimited. Schatzman and Strauss (1975, p. 14) describe the fieldwork method as "an umbrella of activity beneath which any technique may be used for gaining the desired information and for the process of thinking about the information."

Because this study required a close examination of Black students' perceptions, attitudes, and expectations, and a look at how those perceptions, attitudes, and expectations are translated into behavior, the qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate. With its traditional focus emphasizing test scores, grade point averages, and retention figures, quantitative research could not sufficiently explain or account for what was actually occurring in the daily lives of the students, nor could it account for the meaning they give to their behavior.

> Qualitative research illuminates the inner dynamics of situations, dynamics that are often invisible to the outsider (Bogdan and Biklen, p. 30).

The investigator's major concern was with accurately capturing the participants' own way of interpreting significant experiences. A combination of methods employed for data collection provided information for checking and testing ideas, which led to the process of triangulation. Fetterman argues that "triangulation is a basic tool used in ethnographic research -- testing one source of

information against another from various perspectives, to arrive at a balanced interpretation of reality" (1980, p. 39). Throughout the research and data analysis phase, the data collected from a questionnaire, observations, interviews, and documents were used to not only verify, wherever possible, that the information was accurate, but also to suggest new or further directions for research efforts. The utilization of these various data sources is explained in detail in Chapter Three.

Research Assumptions

Assumptions which underlie the naturalistic inquiry process employed in this study include the following (Denzin, 1978):

1. In order to understand how people interact to accomplish goals within social events, those events must be studied as they naturally occur.

2. During the social interaction, individuals interpret and assign meanings to behavior in order to guide their own behavioral responses.

3. In order to understand the behaviors which occur during an interaction, the behaviors must be examined from the perspectives of the participants in the interaction.

4. The interpretations and meanings that individuals assign to events and behaviors can be discovered by examining the talk and actions of those individuals.

5. A holistic understanding of the event requires that an inductive, open-ended inquiry approach be taken to examine the event in its totality and within the context in which it occurs.

Definitions

Attrition: Refers to students who do not complete courses for which they enroll in a particular term or who do not enroll for the next term (Lenning, Beal, and Sauer, 1980, p. 10).

Developmental Education: A process through which students must go, extending beyond academic subjects into basic decisions about life direction and purpose. Developmental education emphasizes a series of major life choices and processes, which are expedited by academic skills but also are dependent upon interpersonal skills and life coping skills (Clowes, 1982-1983, p. 5)

Emic: The view from within the culture, the folk view, in terms of native categories (Spindler, 1982, p. 7).

Etic: The outsider's point of view (Agar, 1980, p. 191).

Ethnography: "An ambiguous term, representing both a process and a product. The collection of data in the field through observation and interviews is the

process and the reporting of findings in a book or paper is the product" (Hymes, 1980, pp. 3-8).

Fieldnotes: "The record of an ethnographer's observations, conversations, interpretations, and suggestions for further information to be gathered" (Agar, 1980, p. 112).

High Risk Students: Those individuals who, because of poor high school academic records and low SAT/ACT scores, would not be admitted to college under regualr admissions policies, but who show potential for success in college through intangible qualities (Moore, 1970).

Key Informants: "Subjects who are more willing to talk, have a greater experience in the setting or are especially insightful about what goes on as compared to other subjects" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982, p. 63).

Minority: One who differs from the "majority" image, which is still predominant among those who are White, middle-income, Anglo-Saxon (McLeon, 1979, p. 28).

Naturalistic Research: Most simply referred to as
"...investigation of phenomena within and in
relation to their naturally occurring contexts"
(Williams and Raush, 1969, p. 3).

Participant Observation: "In practice the term is
used to refer loosely to a variety of activities,
ranging from living among the people studied to
engaging in the same activities in which the people
studied are engaged" (Phillips, 1982, p. 202).

Perspective: "A way of looking at the world, the
assumptions people have about what is important,
and what makes the world work" (Bogdan and Biklen,
1982, p. 30).

Qualitative Research: Also known as naturalistic
inquiry, is an investigative approach which does
not formulate hypotheses but searches for "truth"
through information that "emerges" from the study
(Rist, 1980)

Remedial Education: Concerned with the correction
of faulty study habits and the raising of a pupil's
general competence; remedial education focuses on
academic skills using a medical model. Specific
weaknesses are diagnosed, appropriate treatments

are prescribed, and the student's progress is evaluated to determine the effect of the treatment. If the treatment is inadequate, then the prescription is revised and the process is repeated (Clowes, 1982-1983, p. 4).

Retention: That which occurs when students continue, complete, or resume their studies (Lenning, Beal and Sauer, 1980, p. 10).

Strategy and Social Knowledge: Conscious and organized activities for seeing, hearing and understanding major requirements. Skills and abilities for managing, planning, recognizing and organizing ways of getting along and living with other human beings.*

Triangulation: The use of various data collection methods may give totally different kinds of information that can supplement each other. Information from one source coupled with information from a second or third source allows for cross checking and testing to verify the validity of all information (Gorden, 1980, p. 12).

*As defined by the researcher.

Concluding Summary and Overview

Chapter One, the Introduction, has set the stage for what is to follow. Beginning with an explanation of the nature and purpose of the study, it discusses the problem and its significance, background factors and the site of the research. The chapter concludes with a brief explanation of qualitative research as a legitimate method of inquiry and definitions of related terms.

Chapter Two is devoted to a review of the literature pertinent to this study. The first section reviews prior research on Black students at White colleges and universities throughout the United States. The second section is a review of theoretical models and concepts which underlie this naturalistic/qualitative study.

Chapter Three furnishes an in-depth description of the research design and methodology employed for conducting the study. The chapter contains an outline of the procedures and techniques of data collection and analysis used in the study.

Chapter Four focuses on the research setting and subjects. A brief history of the college and its objectives are discussed, followed by a profile of the students. The balance of this chapter presents an overview of the collegiate environment, the academic support services and student activities, the geographic significance of the college, and the signifiance of the time during which the study was being conducted.

Chapter Five reports the results of the study. A presentation of the data collected is related in descriptive form. The students'

experiences at the college and the meanings of these experiences to them, as viewed from their wide variety of viewpoints are reviewed.

Chapter Six, the final chapter, contains an analysis and summary of the data presented in Chapter Five, conclusions of the study, and suggestions for further research which might sharpen the concepts presented here and determine the degree to which the findings of this study may apply to other settings.

In order to give the interested reader some additional relevant information, there are several appendices.

Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

Educational literature includes many studies that shed light on Black students in White educational settings. In this chapter the literature review is divided into two major parts. The first discusses literature and previous studies about Black students in White colleges. The second part focuses on the theoretical models and concepts which underlie this naturalistic study.

Introduction

Studies of Black students attending predominantly White colleges and universities commonly incorporate one or a combination of three central concerns: (1) their social and economic characteristics, (2) their levels of adjustment, and (3) their academic failures or successes in these institutions. The literature's discussion of these topics implies a casual ordering among factors viewed as having definite implications for the experiences and outcomes of Black students in desegregated post-secondary settings. In what is essentially a socio-psychological model, student characteristics are assumed to determine student adjustment to the college setting, which in turn influences student performance. It is further assumed that

Black student academic achievements suffer because of the difficulties Black students experience adjusting to the foreign environments presented by White colleges. These models also assume that the colleges in question experience commensurate difficulties adjusting their norms, structures, and practices to incorporate Black students. A major premise derived from this set of assumptions is a poor fit exists between Black students and predominantly White colleges and universities. Some of the literature on Black students in White colleges is useful for determining the extent to which this premise is true. It contains much to indicate that Black students encounter a myriad of problems and conflicts upon enrollment at small colleges or large universities.

Claerbaut's (1978) work on alienation highlights difficulties attendant to the role of Black students in predominantly White institutions of higher education. His study relates to an underresearched group of Black students attending small, private, liberal arts colleges. He contends that an individual performs in a variety of roles. For example, one person may encompass the roles of female, mother, Catholic, White American, employee, and so on. Another may encompass roles of male, student, protestant, Black American, father, etc. Sometimes performing in a given role can be difficult as its demands may be in conflict with the individual's personality or the demands of another role. In such cases, alienation related to the problematic role may be experienced. This type of alienation, arising from role strain and conflict, is germane to the purpose of this study which is to examine Black students' experiences in a predominantly White college.

Characteristics of Black College Students

One major question never adequately answered in the initial efforts to increase enrollment of Black students at integrated institutions was: Who comprises the potential pool of Black students and what are their characteristics? Because the question was not posed so that it could be answered with empirical data at the crucial stage when many special admission programs were instituted, many myths quickly emerged and became entrenched as dogma about the Black students who aspired to attend college.

These myths were examined by Boyd (1974, 1979) in his nationwide survey of more than 800 Black college students in forty integrated colleges and universities in 1973, with a follow-up in 1975. Although Boyd found that the majority of these students came from families where the parents were not college educated and financial need was a major concern, 72 percent of the students still expected to complete their college education.

As a group, 90 percent were graduates of public high schools and 91 percent were single. Over half of the group rated their academic preparation for college as "fair" or "poor", while 71 percent felt that they had some type of academic deficiencies.

Regarding their attitudes about integration, these students reported more positive experiences in 1975 than in 1973. Just over one fourth cited "race" as a major factor in their choice of friends and activities, but only 8 percent said they preferred all Black housing facilities. Although over one-fourth of the students were admitted under special admissions criteria, over two-thirds obtained

G.P.A.'s of B or better. Finally, students from private preparatory schools adjusted better academically and socially to highly selective colleges than did students from public schools.

These results contradict a number of widely held assumptions about Black students: that they prefer to have segregated social relationships and segregated housing facilities, that lowered admission standards will result in lowered academic achievement, and that all Black students have problems of acadmic and social adjustment to an integrated academic environment.

Other studies of Black students have emphasized the diversity rather than the homogeneity of the group, noting that they are from all socio-economic levels; live in all regions of the United States; attend public, private, and parochial high schools; have varying levels of academic ability and potential; engage in a wide variety of athletic and extracurricular activities; and express a wide range of educational and occupational aspirations. (Peterson and others, 1978; Jones, 1979; Burlew, 1980; Smith, 1979.) On the other hand, higher proportions of Black than White students come from economically disadvantaged families, with parents who did not attend college, and are probably the first generation in their family to attend college (Erikson, 1979). In addition, as compared to White students, Blacks are more likely to have deficient academic backgrounds, lower G.P.A.'s, and lower scores on standardized achievment tests according to Boyd, (1974).

[However, in spite of these educational handicaps, several investigators have found that the educational aspirations and career goals of Black students are equal to or higher than those of Whites]

(Thomas, 1979). In a large-scale follow-up study of 7,249 Black and White high school graduates Thomas found that, when family status and test performance are controlled, a higher proportion of Blacks than Whites attend four-year as compared to two-year colleges.

Data from this same study indicated that, contrary to expected findings, White students were more likely than Blacks to withdraw from college when the variables of socio-economic status, achievement, and aspiration were controlled (Fetter, 1978). Another study of dropout rates at Oberlin Collge found that a higher proportion of White students in groups from both regular and special academic programs dropped out than Black students in the same programs (Brown and Ervin, 1979).

As explained by Reed (1978), the educational aspirations and career goals of Black students tend to cluster around a more narrow range of options than do those among White students. For example, he notes that Blacks are more likely to select undergraduate majors in the social sciences, humanities, and preprofessional fields. Their career aspirations tend to be geared to professions traditionally valued as sources of high income, high status, and low risk within the Black community; professions such as law, medicine, and dentistry and, for women, social work and teaching. In recent years, there has been some increase in the number of Blacks entering graduate programs of engineering and business administration, but there has not been a comparable increase in their enrollment in the expanding fields of science and technology (Johnson, 1977).

Thus, although Black students constitute a heterogeneous group with diverse backgrounds, abilities, and interests, they can be

characterized, in general terms, as different from the model group of White students in their "average" family background, academic preparation, academic achievement, grades and test scores, and career aspirations.

Centra (1970) conducted a study of Black students at predominantly White colleges in which he utilized the "Questionnaire on Student and College Characteristiscs" (OSCC). The questionnaire was administered to 249 Black students at 83 traditionally White institutions in 1978. White students were matched with Black respondents on the basis of sex and major field of study. As expected, the results revealed that there were large differences in socio-economic background between Black and White students and that White students were heavily involved in organized campus-based activities while Black students were involved with activities aimed at improving the larger society in general and those aimed at improving the status of Blacks in particular. The author also found that more Black students than Whites planned to attend graduate or professional school. An analysis of the data, according to Centra, also showed more similarities than differences in Black and White students' perceptions of the college environment. However, Black and White students viewed the racial environment quite differently. The differences pointed toward the existence of a dual environment with minimal Black involvement in most on-campus activities.

Summary

The literature reviewed in this section compared characteristics of Black and White college students. Fewer similarities than differences were found. There are some similarities in their amounts of involvement in extracurricular activities and in their goals in college attendance, although the types of activities differed and the educational aspirations and career goals of Black students tend to cluster around a more narrow range of options than do those among White students.

Black students differ markedly on family characteristics such as parents' income, occupation, and education, along with pre-college experiences of an academically relevant nature. While they constitute a heterogeneous group with diverse backgrounds, abilities, and interests, Black students can be characterized, in general terms, as different from White students in their average family backgrounds, academic preparation, and academic achievement. Thus, Black students encounter many more and different problems and conflicts as they enter traditional colleges and universities. Some of the major problems discussed in the literature were financial difficulties, restricted academic competence, and problems with individual and group identity. Although the literature seems to indicate that Black students' plight is largely determined by factors outside the institution, the colleges and universities are not without responsibility and opportunities to improve the conditions for Blacks.

Problems of Black Student Adaptation and Retention

In their comprehensive study of thirteen fairly diverse colleges and universities, Peterson and his colleagues (1978) identified a period of "transitional trauma" and a period of "active accommodation" as two phases in the institutional response to increased Black student enrollment. In the period of transitional trauma, Black students made unanticipated demands, displayed uncharacterisitc behaviors, and created high levels of conflict within the institutions. The next phase, active accomodation between the college administrators and the Black students, was shaped by two major factors: the interracial attitudes of both groups and the structure of organized programs for Blacks. The authors point out that an overarching factor influencing both of these phases was the lack of congruency between Black students' expectations of college life and the institutional expectations that Blacks would fit into the mold of the traditional middle-class college student.

The specific dimensions of these incongruent expectations have been outlined by Gibbs (1973). She points out that college administrators shared a series of implicit and explicit expectations about Black students: (1) that they would be absorbed in the college community without any substantial modification of existing structure of programs; (2) that they would be able to compete effectively with White students whose academic preparation, achievement test scores, and study skills were generally superior; (3) that they would be assimilated into the campus's social, cultural, and recreational

activities without any consideration of socio-cultural differences; and (4) that they should be grateful for the opportunity to obtain an integrated education as passive recipients rather than active participants.

On the other hand, the Black students' expectations were less clearly definable, partly because they were primarily first-generation collegians and partly because their cultural experiences had not prepared them to negotiate with large impersonal bureaucracies. However, they also shared certain expectations: (1) that the institutions would be very flexible in responding to their individual and group needs; (2) that college academic work and standards of evaluation would be a continuation of high school courses and grading standards rather than qualitatively and quantitatively more demanding and competitive; (3) that there would be a greater diversity of and tolerance for a broad range of activities, interests, and life-styles, including those that reflected their own Afro-American cultural heritage and ethnic identity; (4) that they would have greater contact and involvement with the Black community near their institutions; and (5) that there would be a mutual process of adjustment and accommodation between Black students' interests and needs and institutional responses. These disparate expectations were the source of much of the tension and conflict generated in the period of transitional trauma and of the chronic problems of poor communication and lack of mutual trust in the period of active accommodation as described by Peterson and his colleagues (1978).

A number of authors have documented the problems of accommodation and adaptation of Black students during the 1970's in all areas of

student life: academic, social, and personal. In her three-year study of Black student utilization of mental health services at Standford University, Gibbs (1975) found that they expressed multiple complaints, most frequently concerning problems in heterosexual relations (48 percent); problems in interpersonal relationships with other students, staff, and faculty members (40 percent); ethnic-identity conflicts (46 percent); academic problems (35 percent); problems with parents and families (24 percent); feelings of depression, anger, or anxiety (74 percent); psychosomatic symptoms (25 percent); and career concerns (10 percent).

Studies of the psychological problems of Black students at a wide range of integrated institutions reinforce these findings that their socio-cultural marginality is a major factor in their ability to adapt to these institutions in a growth-enhancing manner. While attempting to establish secure psychosocial identities, adolescents may engage in behaviors to protect themselves against identity loss, such as immersion in adolescent subcultures, clannish and exclusive behavior, and testing others' loyalties. Although minority group membership could certainly serve to facilitate identity resolution, Gurin and Epps, (1975), suggest that minority students are prone to identity disorders and that the social atmosphere, whether one of acceptance or rejection, plays an important part in the developmental process during this period. Ideally, the college experience should provide an entree into a broader social area with new opportunities for making friends, dating, and learning. But in contrast to the general opportunity for social broadening, some Black students face more constricted social life than ever before. According to Boyd (1974), 60 percent of his

nationwide interview survey sample of Black students complained about the low proportion of Black enrollment. Jones and others (1970) found that Black students on four White campuses ranked inadequate social life as one of their more serious problems and attributed academic difficulties to these psychosocial factors. In a study of Black students admitted under a special program at the University of Michigan, Hedegard and Brown (1969) found that freshmen tended to feel intense loneliness and that Black women had a more difficult time socially on White campuses than did Black men.

In a study conducted by the Southern Regional Education Board (Institute for Higher Educational Opportunity, 1970), Black students on the campuses of five predominantly White junior colleges reported feeling isolated and expressed the desire for more opportunities to become involved in the full range of campus life. Thus, social isolation clearly seems to constitute a problem for many Black students, one that must frustrate the natural developmental needs at this age for interpersonal sharing.

Several studies report that Blacks come to integrated college settings expecting to be accepted by both Blacks and Whites and to establish friendships across as well as within racial lines. Sylvester Monroe (1973), in a personal account of his experiences at Harvard, writes that "Black students were coming to Harvard expecting to be accepted and absorbed into the mainstream of university life." However, few experienced close personal relationships with White individuals or groups. The sometimes harsh realities of interracial encounters seem to combine with initial expectations to produce a heightened sensitivity to racial rebuffs.

Black students react in different ways to their minority status on predominantly White campuses. Among students seeking counseling at Stanford, Gibbs (1975) describes four general modes of adaption: (1) withdrawal, (2) separation, (3) assimilation, (4) affirmation. All four modes appear to be responses that Black students employ in coping with identity conflicts. The mode of separation, in particular, seems to derive from sensitivity to racism or hostility to Whites and constitutes an aggressive stance akin to Pettigrew's (1964) "Movement-against-the dominant-group" response to oppression or perceived oppression. This mode is characterized by a withdrawal into an all Black subculture.

Willie and McCord (1972) note that the separatist movement of Black students on many White campuses appears to be a product of the racism encountered by individual students and is a phenomenon that increases rather than decreases with the degree of interracial contact. Many Black students experience instances of what they perceive as racial prejudice and traumatizing indigitites, which create the sense of being in a hostile environment. Willie and McCord describe Black student separatism as an adaptation to stress due to rejection, a form of self-protection.

There are actually indications in the literature that some Black students are spending more of their energies in learning interpersonal coping strategies than in pursuits conducive to intellectual growth.

Gurin and Epps (1975) found that informal contact with faculty outside the classroom is a critical factor in fostering high aspirations among Black students. However, Black students frequently find it difficult to establish rapport with their teachers. Boyd

(1974) reports that the major problems appeared to involve perceived assumptions by Blacks that professors view them as incompetent and dishonest and that professors question the validity of their outstanding work, ignore Blacks and are accessible only to White students. While specific incidents range from the overt to the covert, they appear to have similar effects on students.

In addition to the academic factors of underpreparedness and less than adequate remedial help, lack of demands for achievment can undermine Black students' performance. Gurin and Epps (1975) point out that one of the factors associated with aspirations and achievement is an institutional belief that every student can and will succeed. Katz, Henchy, and Allen (1968) found that among students needing approval, positive reinforcement goes a long way toward improving performance, while the lack thereof may depress performance. Although many Black students perform well in college, the consequence of academic failure for the individual must be considered. One of the patterns observed by Gibbs (1975) in counseling Black students was a withdrawal response associated with academic failure and feelings of inadequacy. Bowles and DeCosta (1971) also warn that, while adjusted admission policies will increase educational opportunity, there is also the risk of multiplying the personal tragedies of failure, which may lead to student discontent.

The problems Black students experience and the coping mechanisms they develop to handle their marginality in integrated institutions provide some clues to reasons for their retention or attrition. In studies where Black students were asked to identify their reasons for discontent, maladjustment, or failure at integrated campuses, the

following factors were mentioned: feelings of loneliness and alienation, financial problems, lack of adequate support services, problems of cultural differences, academic competition, hostility and prejudice of White students and faculty, racial discrimination, inadequate number of Black faculty and staff as role models (Smith, 1979; Willie and McCord, 1972; Boyd, 1974; Jones, 1979; Sadlacek and Webster, 1977).

One consistent finding in all these surveys is the Black students' perception that White faculty are indifferent, ambivalent, or prejudiced toward them. Faculty responses to Black students were characterized as condescending, demeaning, or depersonalizing. Many students felt they were strereotyped by the faculty as poorly prepared, culturally disadvantaged low achievers who were not worthy of their interest or time. Recent news reports from a number of highly selective colleges, including several prestigious Ivy League schools, indicate that even the most academically capable Black students perceive faculty members as remote, uncaring, and unwilling to treat them as individuals.

Empirical studies of factors correlated to retention of Black students from integrated institutions suggest that these factors vary according to the type of institution and the type of student enrolled. In their study of 103 large universities, Sedlacek and Webster (1977) point out that, along with a leveling off of Black freshmen since 1969, the number of special minority programs has decreased in public universities while remaining stable in private schools. They also note that the number of schools using different admissions criteria for minorities has decreased back to 1969 levels. They conclude from

their data that private universities are doing a more effective job of enrolling and retaining minority students than public institutions. In his survey of 800 Black undergraduates in 40 four-year colleges, Boyd (1979) reaches a similar conclusion.

Copeland (1976), in a study of the causes of Black student attrition at integrated colleges, found that dropouts entered college for nonspecific reasons significantly more often than the "stayers". In the group of dropouts, the decision to leave was related to experiences of racial discrimination but not to the level of financial aid.

In their study of dropout rates of Black and White students at Oberlin, Brown and Ervin (1979) showed that Blacks participating in special programs had significantly lower dropout rates than nonparticipating Blacks. Moreover, fewer Blacks in both regular and special programs dropped out as compared to White students in both programs.

Davis, Loeb, and Robinson (1970) studied Black and White college freshmen at the University of Illinois. The profile of the Black student which resulted was that of an individual with a relatively low academic preparation coupled with high aspirations. In addition, it was suggested that the Black student may need to work part-time in order to pay for his education. The authors recommend that financial aid be given to these students. They also suggest that modifications of the academic program be made in order to aid Black students in their efforts to overcome educational deficiencies. In addition, Hedegard and Brown's (1960) study of Black and White freshmen at a

large public university revealed that the two racial groups differed most markedly on family characteristics, i.e., parents' income, occupation, and education, along with pre-college experiences of an academically relevant nature.

In terms of Black-White attitudinal conflict, MacDonald and Sites (1972) studied Black and White freshmen attitudes toward Black power at a large Midwestern university. It was tentatively concluded that White students were not open to what Blacks most wanted and needed--a genuine basis of power. Whites were willing to go along to some extent, with less threatening aspects of Black power such as Black pride, identity, and traditionalism. However, issues such as Black community control, Black capitalism, and Black solidarity elicited a negative response from White students.

Bressler (1967) discusses the problems Black students encounter as they enter White colleges. He cites financial difficulties, restricted academic competence, and problems with individual and group identity. He states that economic stresses reduce the number of Black students while those Blacks who do go to college are faced with having to choose among such social options as assimilation, cultural pluralism, or separatism. Although Bressler allows that the Black students' plight is largely determined by extrainstitutional factors, he stresses that colleges are not without responsibility or opportunities to improve conditions for Black students. He recommends certain actions be taken in a number of areas including admissions policies, allocation of resources, teaching inventiveness and curricula.

Ginzberg (1970) studied Columbia University student protests of 1968 and predicted that colleges and universities would experience increasing Black activism in the decade ahead. He also stated that peace on the campus would depend both on the ability of administrators to treat matters involving Black goals and aspirations effectively, and on the White faculty and students' attitudes and actions toward Black students. Furthermore, Ginzberg said that urban institutions will have to create and maintain close relationships with their urban Black. neighbors, relationships which are beneficial to the interest of both parties.

Taylor (1970) also took a rather strident approach in condemning the educational establishment as not really wanting Blacks to be properly educated, especially on Black terms. He castigated the liberal-integrationist educational outlook as one which amounts to having Blacks learn White values and culture in order for their intergration to be permitted. Universities are viewed as middle class entities which aid individual middle-class achievment and mold new members for the professional-business elite. Taylor found the focus of United States education to be inadequate in terms of Black education, cultural identity, psychological acceptance, feelings of relevance, and cultural needs and goals. He said that a genuinely pluralistic atmosphere is required.

Kiernan and Daniels' (1967) study of lower-class Blacks in a community college indicated that attitudes and actions of a lower-class nature seemed to be a determinant of failure to finish college. The effort in making the transition from lower-class to middle-class status had negative psychological consequences including personal

anxiety, bitterness, self-hatred, and outward-directed hatred. Kiernan and Daniels found recurring value conflict as well. They conclude that social change is occurring but not as quickly as many sociologists believe.

Also from a small college perspective, Gaier and Watts (1960) studied Black and White freshmen at the predominantly White Macalester College and the all Black Clark College. The findings suggest that college attendance may be associated with upward social mobility for a larger percentage of Blacks than Whites. Recalling Kiernan and Daniels' study, one realizes that this mobility is not without its attendant social and psychological costs.

From an institutional perspective, Leggett (1970) discusses the state of the small, private college. He sees a vital role for the small college in the educational scene, but also points to some problems. Leggett suggests that the small college is characterized as being of a single-purpose, non-metropolitan, and residential. Although these are regarded as virtues, Leggett says they are also seen as problems in that they render the small college vulnerable to the onslaught of contemporary social forces. Single purposeness frequently gives rise to a feeling that the curriculum is restrictive; the non-metropolitan aspect is often equated with irrelevance; and the residential dimension connotes barracks-like discipline to many. Leggett asserts that although the "in loco parentis" function of the small college is disappearing with no likelihood of returning, the small college cannot deny responsibility for the quality of the student environment. It might be pointed out here that such characteristics as singularity of purpose, non-metropolitan, and

residential, along with a lingering "in loco parentis" tendency, may prove stressful for urban Black students who attend these schools. This stress may in turn become manifest in one or more forms of alienation.

Finally, there appears to be a relationship between Black student retention and their perception of institutional racism. In a study at the University of Maryland, Black students expressed more serious problems as victims of racism and discrimination than Whites, Asians, or Hispanics (Webster, Sedlacek, and Miyares, 1979). In an earlier study at the same school, those Blacks who perceived the university climate negatively and reported experiencing more personal racism received higher grades and felt they had a greater chance of obtaining a college degree than other Blacks (Pheifer, 1976). One could interpret the findings of these two studies as support for the hypothesis that Blacks who can attribute their problems to external sources are able to avoid self-attribution of failure and, consequently, can overcome external barriers to their achievment.

The results of these empirical studies indicate a complex relationship between Black student retention and institutional variables.

More recent studies suggest that Black retention rates are as high as or higher than White rates. Earlier claims of high attrition rates among Black students probably reflected inappropriate recruitment strategies and admissions decisions of students who were ill prepared and poorly motivated for college. If current trends continue, Black retention rates will probably be more influenced by financial aid

factors and adequate support services than by any other institutional variables.

Summary

The studies reported here regarding adaptation and retention indicate that many students experience a number of problems in all areas of student life: academic, social, and personal. Although many of these problems are commonly associated with late adolescent development, Black students more frequently experience severe identity conflicts, which are intensified by membership in a minority group; by interpersonal difficulites, which are often related to their perceptions of discriminatory treatment; and by academic anxiety, which is linked to their feelings of insecurity about their ability to survive successfully in a very competitive academic environment.

This review of the literature also reveals that Black students react in different ways to their status on predominantly White college campuses. The four general modes of adaptation described include affirmation, a movement with the culture; assimilation, movement toward the culture; separation, movement against the culture; and, withdrawal, movement away from the culture. The studies view withdrawal as the most maladaptive mode in terms of the students' ability to cope with the college environment.

Academic Achievements

Much attention has been devoted in the literature to the alleged poor qualifications and alienation of Black students at White colleges. Although some of these students have been able to reach their educational goals without any special assistance from the institution in which they were enrolled, many others experienced total frustration and failure.

Recognition of this situation led to the establishment of programs designed specifically for the "high risk" student in colleges throughout the country. College programs and courses that assist students' development of entry level skills in reading, writing, math, speaking, listening, note taking, and studying are not new to higher education (Cross, 1976; Maxwell, 1979). Today the academic difficulties of an increasingly diverse student population are being met by college basic skills, remedial and/or developmental programs which are designed to help students make the transition to college-level work.

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, many colleges embraced open admissions policies and established remedial programs. The intent of these programs was to make a special effort to enroll students whose lack of preparation for college placed them at a disadvantage in competition with other students in college and to offer them an opportunity to overcome the difficulies of the past and succeed academically in the future. Each institution developed its own methods for dealing with the educational deficiencies of their low achieving enrollees. Programs ranged from requiring the

entire freshman class to take remedial English to quickly developing and implementing dozens of non-credit courses to a kind of benign neglect in which open-admissions students were treated like everyone else and it was assumed that they would seek help from faculty members when they needed it. Many of these attempts failed. Follow-up studies showed clearly that all programs that depended on large scale faculty support and involvement failed (Maxwell, 1979).

Despite admirable aims, at many institutions where special programs existed, faculty members seemed to lack a clear understanding of the high risk students and thus blamed them for their inadequate preparation for college life (Roueche and Kirk, 1973). Critics maintain that traditional college remedial courses are failures and are not the best way to help underprepared students gain the skills and knowledge they need. Some experts believe that such courses are the worst possible way to deal with the problems of academically weak freshmen because they kill student motivation (Jason and others, 1977). Remedial and developmental programs are invariably classified as "special" or "supportive" and are often founded in a climate of hostility with very little consideration given to making them a part of the academic mainstream (Jason and others, 1977). Students in remedial and developmental programs are always considered different from other students. They are labeled "slow learner" or poor achievers" and their motivation and strengths are overlooked, while the work they are assigned is obviously at the high school level which does not inspire them to learn.

The stigma attached to both taking and teaching remedial courses is important in discouraging students. If the program is viewed as a

salvage operation, both instructors and students suffer low morale. The situation is worsened when unwilling instructors are drafted to teach remedial courses. They may lack both interest and skills and be unable to relate to the students.

Another factor that has prevented remedial courses from succeeding is the impossible expectations for them. For example, most remedial problems cannot be eradicated in one term. Nor can any reading program raise students' reading ability four grade levels in ten weeks, yet this expectation is often implied in curriculum schedules.

If, for the reasons just cited, remedial college programs have failed to help underprepared students succeed academically, one might wonder why they are proliferating. The answer is that they may serve other functions. If they exist and are designed to discourage poorly prepared students from pursuing college goals, then they might be viewed as quite successful. Today many colleges faced with declining enrollments are re-examining their programs and are deeply concerned about student retention (Astin, 1975, 1977). Under these exigencies, institutions may have incentives to develop better ways of instructing students whom they formerly preferred to reject or condemn to ineffective remedial programs.

Underprepared students will not disappear from college classrooms, nor can most colleges expect to restrict admissions to the best prepared, there are too few of them, and average students' skills have deteriorated also. Under these circumstances, it is clear that colleges must continue to offer comprehensive and intensive academic support services to their students.

William Boyd (1979) points out that the findings from surveys conducted by A Better Chance, Inc. (ABC) in 1973, 1975, and 1977 each yielded quite different results. For example, the findings show that in 1973 only a small proportion (23%) of Black students in White colleges had poor academic backgrounds, and by 1977 this proportion had declined even further (12%). Also, in 1977 twice as many Black students had a college grade point average (G.P.A.) of "B-" or better as did students in 1973 (44% vs. 26%). Not surprisingly, the proportions of students admitted under special programs during this period decreased substantially.

Differences in students' family background often parallel and are reinforced by the different types of colleges which students attend. Boyd's surveys indicate that although Black students' experiences in public and private White institutions were very similar in 1973, they had become quite different by 1977. In 1977, twice as many Black students in private White colleges were graduates of private secondary institutions as were Black students in public White colleges (20% vs. 10%). Also, more Black students in private than public colleges felt that their academic preparation for college was good or excellent. In addition, twice as many Black students in private colleges majored in math, engineering, and the biological sciences as did Blacks in public White colleges.

An explanation for the better academic experiences of Black students in private colleges can be drawn from other observations revealed in this study. For example, more than three-fourths (76%) of students in private colleges identified the academic reputation of the college as an important factor in their choice of colleges, while only

about half of the students in public colleges did so. Boyd also found that a majority of Black public college students emphasized proximity to home as an important influence on their choice of college. Over 80 percent of these students enrolled at colleges in the same geographic region as their secondary schools, while only 60 percent of the Black students in private colleges attended secondary schools in the same region.

Boyd's most recent survey indicates some interesting trends regarding the academic experiences of Black students in White colleges. One very obvious trend is that the quality, type, and regional location of the predominantly White colleges which Black students attend differentiate their academic, social and racial experiences in these institutions. Black students' experiences in predominantly White colleges cannot be fully understood without taking these college characteristics into consideration along with the academic and social background of the students themselves. In considering all these factors, findings of more recent studies suggest that many Black students have postitive experiences in some White colleges, particularly in the private and more select colleges. In fact, Boyd (1979) concludes that if White institutions and higher education in general do not complete their mission of moving toward a more integrated and equitable society, it will not be the fault of Black students. Clearly, this generation of Black students does not appear to want two societies any more than previous generations wanted slavery or Jim Crow. In fact, one reason the current integration of colleges has occurred so rapidly is that a substantial number of Black

students and their parents desire the same types of academic opportunities available to Whites.

Summary

This section of literature review has focused on academic achievements and the many special programs that were created to provide services for minority or "high risk" students. It is clear from these studies that as a result of the lack of adequate planning and forethought, many college and university special programs were extremely inadequate and did not meet the needs of the students they were designed to serve. The literature tends to suggest that, by and large, whether remedial, developmental, or compensatory, these programs were often poorly conceived and lacking in scientific research to support their existence or to measure their effectiveness. At least, they seemed to have stressed many of the wrong components to insure the retention and academic success of a large number of minority students.

The more recent finding from surveys conducted by Boyd (1979) yielded more positive results in relation to the academic preparation and academic achievements of Black students as the proportion of students admitted under special programs decreased. In addition, Boyd found that Black students in private colleges seem to fare better than those in the public, less selective colleges. He concludes that the quality, type and location of the college one attends differentiates the academic, social, and racial experiences.

The literature thus far reviewed in this chapter has addressed the role and status of Black students in various White colleges. It is apparent that considerable research on the topic has been conducted; however, there is little material presented that explains why some Black students survive in predominantly White environments while others do not.

Models for Naturalistic Research

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to reviewing a number of theoretical models or constructs from basic behavioral science, all of which were particularly useful in this naturalistic investigation.

As described in Chapter One, naturalistic research is most simply referred to as an investigation of phenomena within and in relation to their naturally occurring contexts. It deals with human beings and actual human behavior. In this approach, the researcher does not define meaning through the manipulation of variables or through a controlled experiment, but rather centers on what is being experienced and describes what happens from the perspective of the person living through the experience.

Symbolic Interaction

George Herbert Mead's formulation in _Mind, Self, and Society_ (Mead, 1934) is the most cited, early source of what is now called symbolic interaction, the down to earth approach to the scientific study of human group life and human conduct.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) point out that no agreement exists among social scientists about the use or importance of various concepts of symbolic interactionism. Most use it synonymously with qualitative research, but there are a few social scientists calling themselves symbolic interactionists who do quantitative research (p. 35).

According to Herbert Blumer (1969), "symbolic interactionism lodges its problems in the natural world, conducts its studies in it, and derives its interpretations from such naturalistic studies..." Blumer goes on to explain that:

> Symbolic interactionism rests in the last analysis on three simple premises. The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meaning that the things have for them... The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.

Following these tenets of symbolic interaction, in order to understand the subject's world, the investigator must understand that process of interpretation. A suitable way to accomplish this is to accompany the subjects as they encounter others, interpret events, and construct their social reality.

Another important part of symbolic interaction theory is the construct of the "self". The self is the definition people create (through interacting with others) of who they are. As explained by Bogdan and Biklen (p. 35) in constructing or defining self, people attempt to see themselves as others see them by interpreting gestures

and actions directed toward them and by placing themselves in the role of the other person. In short, we come to see ourselves in part as others see us.

"Self" Theory

Lecky (1945) describes the core of personality as a constellation of attitudes, the most important of which are the attitudes of self regard. Behavior is thought to be consistent with one or more of these attitudes, and the preservation of the constellation is its major purpose.

Rogers (1961) highlights both the actual ideal-self congruency and the self-esteem dimensions. He points out that as people achieve improved mental health, their self pictures become more positive and more in line with their reflections about the kind of person they would like to be. He also indicates that persons become more self-accepting and more fully functioning primarily by being thoroughly accepted and trusted rather than being closely supervised and directed.

Combs and Snygg (1959) stress the idea that the major sources of all behavior are self-maintenance and self-enhancement. One emphasizes defense processes that operate when a person is frustrated or threatened. The other stresses response to challenging, interesting situations that the person feels generally capable of tackling.

Despite the extensive theoretical use of the self-concept, supportive research evidence is not so readily apparent in the literature as one might hope. One of the problems with research in

this area is the superficiality of much instrumentation. What one is willing to reveal about oneself on a questionnaire, or even in an interview is, among other things, a function of how trusting one is of the persons requesting the information, and how accepting of oneself one is. Especially because of the distortion between reported and true feelings about self, observation should be used much more extensively in self-studies.

Life-Space Concept

A key concept from field theory is summed up in Lewin's term "life space" (1951). This refers to the person and his perceived environment. Life space includes the psychological environment and the world as perceived by the individual, which is determined by his goals, needs, and other characteristics. It also includes the person himself, especially the perception he has of himself in relation to the rest of his life space.

As explained by Brandt (1981, p. 71) this concept calls for full scale appraisal of the individual's environment (particularly his perceived environment at the moment of action) if his behavior is to be predicted or even understood. It is in these two aspects of the environment that possibilities for especially useful data gathering exist, namely, the non-psychological milieu in which he is regularly immersed, on the one hand, and the perceived or psychological environment, on the other. Life space descriptions of the objective and the perceived environment lend themselves to analysis of various

patterns of living. They reveal features of one's world that serve both to stimulate and to coerce activity.

Perspective

Tamotsu Shibutani (1955) defines "perspectives" and stresses their functions as follows:

> A perspective is an ordered view of one's world --
> what is taken for granted about the attributes of
> various objects, events and human nature. It is an
> order of things remembered and expected as well as
> things actually perceived, an organized conception
> of what is plausible, it constitutes the matrix
> through which one perceives his environment...one's
> perspective is an outline scheme which running
> ahead of experience, defines and guides it.

As mentioned in Chapter One under "Conceptual Framework", Karl Mannheim defined "perspective" as the subject's whole mode of conceiving things as determined by his historical and social setting.

Although Mannheim and Shibutani do not include actions in their definitions of perspective, a number of researchers have investigated the relationship between the two. For examle, Everett Hughes, Howard Becker, Blanche Geer, and Anselm Strauss (1961) have analyzed perspectives and their relationships to group behavior in two student cultures, a medical school and an undergraduate college. Their conception is similar to Mead's in that perspectives are seen as providing views, motives, and strategies:

> We use the term "perspective" to refer to a
> coordinated set of ideas and actions a person uses

> in dealing with some problematic situation.."
> These thoughts and actions are coordinated in the
> sense that the actions flow reasonably, from the
> actor's point of view, from the ideas contained in
> the perspective. Similarly, the ideas can be seen
> by an observer to be one of the possible sets of
> ideas which might form the underlying rationale for
> the person's actions and are seen by the actor as
> providing a justification for acting as he does.
>
> A perspective, to be more precise, contains several
> elements; a definition of the situation in which
> the actors are involved, a statement of the goals
> they are trying to achieve, a set of ideas
> specifying what kinds of activities are expedient
> and proper, and a set of activities or practices
> congruent with them (p. 436).

As explained by Cusick (1973) the term "perspective" includes both
actions and beliefs about those actions. It assumes that a human
being is an active agent, constantly engaged in the process of
constructing his social self, and that what he does depends on how he
perceives himself in relation to various features of his environment.
In turn, his beliefs reflect an evaluation of his actions in terms of
their success or failure. It is this dynamic process of interaction
between self and environment and the resulting combination of an
indivudual's beliefs and actions in relation to that environment that
the term "perspective" attempts to explain.

Smith discusses self-perception in terms of a "competent self"
which he defines as an attitude which orients one to make the most of
one's opportunities in the world. Since this is a study of students
who have made use of certain opportunities, and are cognizant of the
lack of certain opportunities, it has been important to understand
exactly how they define themselves (1968, p. 28).

For the students in this study, self perception has been expressed in outward and inward manifestations of awareness and action that have been influenced by numerous factors. The institution itself possesses certain unique characteristics, and external dynamics influence the educational setting as well. Smith's explanation of self-perception include certain intrinsic factors. Among them are:

Personal myth and values - the inner, even secretive, belief about the nature of being which gives selfhood, direction, and focus to our expression.

Cultural and Historical Socialization- the social ethical, and ethnic constraints that make up the environment in which an individual has lived or continues to live and which has influenced a person's development and perceptions as well as influencing how others perceive the individual based on their acculturation, biases, and socialization.

Relationships - the personal experiences that grow out of communication and interaction with others.

Role - the status, either assigned or assumed, of a position in a particular environment.

<u>Skills</u> - the acquired or learned traits an individual develops as part of his/her life experiences.

<u>Style</u> - the individual's manner of expression of ideas and concepts to others, or the behavior expressed in relationships and toward tasks (p. 30).

Hopes, fears, wishes, and conflicts also contribute to a person's self-perception. Moreover, self-perception can change with time and circumstances. The students in this study were being observed at a particular point in time; how they perceive themselves must be understood as important to that time.

Summary

The literature reviewed in this final section relative to theoretical concepts for naturalistic study proved useful to the researcher as a source of ideas, questions to ask, and behavior to observe in investigating both the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of Black students' experiences in a predominantly White college environment. Those concepts can briefly be summarized as follows:

<u>Symbolic Interaction</u> - inner perspective - an approach to the scientific study of human conduct, based on the meaning a person gives to his/her situation.

<u>Self Theory</u> - attitudes of self regard - self

esteem - the definition people create (through
interacting with others) of who they are.

Life-Space Concept - the person and his/her
perceived environment.

Perspective - view of one's world - a set of
ideas, beliefs, actions, and attitudes a
person uses in dealing with some problematic
situation.

Chapter III

Methodology and Procedures

This chapter describes the various qualitative research methods and the way they were used to collect and analyze data for the study. By describing the way data was actually gathered and some of the practical problems and frustrations encountered, the investigator hopes to illustrate how human the process of field research really is.

Introduction

The term "qualitative research" is used as an umbrella term to refer to several research strategies that share certain characteristics. The data collected has been termed "soft" by Bogdan and Biklen (1982, p. 2). They explain that, "soft data is rich in description of people, places, and conversations, and not easily handled by statistical procedures." While people conducting qualitative research may develop a focus as they collect data, they do not approach the research with specific questions to answer or hypotheses to test. They are concerned with understanding behavior from the subjects' own frame of reference...They tend to collect their data through sustained contact with people in settings where subjects normally spend their time.

The best known representatives of qualitative research and those that most embody the above characteristics are participant observation

and in-depth interviewing. Procedures for this study included the use of a questionnaire and the analysis of several documents in addition to observation and interviews.

Bogdan and Biklen use the phrase "qualitative research", but others in the literature use different terms and conceptualize this brand of research slightly differently. Field research is a term that is sometimes used by anthropologists and sociologists, and its use derives from the fact that data tend to be collected in the field as opposed to laboratories or other research-controlled sites. In education, qualitative research is frequently called naturalistic because the researcher goes where the events in which he or she is interested naturally occur. And the data are gathered by people engaging in natural behavior; talking, looking, and listening. "Ethnographic" is a word that is applied to this approach as well. While some use it in a formal sense to refer to a particular type of qualitative research, one in which most anthropologists engage and which is directed at describing culture, it is also used more generally, sometimes synonymously, with qualitative research as defined here.

Other phrases are associated with qualitative research. They include "symbolic interactionists", "inner perspective", "phenomenological", "case study", "descriptive", and "human science". The exact use and definition of these terms, as well as fieldwork and qualitative research, varies from user to user and from time to time. While this researcher does not mean to suggest that they all mean the same thing, nor to imply that some do not have very exact meanings

when used by particular people, in this study the phrases are used synonymously.

The goal of the researcher was to describe experiences, record the participants' understanding of them, and analyze them to reveal their underlying meanings. Wilson (1977) describes this quest as "seeking theory grounded in the reality of the participants."

The major tool in ethnography is the researcher. He or she begins by adopting the role of participant observer and collects field notes as a means of addressing broad questions about complex social events.

Additional data are collected using multiple methods which may include audio and videotaped records of events, documents, and observational notes. Frequently interviews and questionnaires may be designed as a means of casting a participant in the role of informant. This method permits a closer examination of personal thoughts and feelings. Wilson (1977) classifies such data into five categories.

1.   Form and content of verbal interaction between participants.

2.   Form and content of verbal interaction with the researcher.

3.   Nonverbal behavior.

4.   Patterns of action and non action.

5.   Traces, archival records, artifacts, and documents.

The researcher examines the data and begins to develop tentative hypotheses from them. These working hypotheses lead to more specific questions and continued data collection in order to confirm or refute them. This continued search for evidence to verify hypotheses

and to correct for bias is known as "disciplined subjectivity." At this point, the multiple methods of studying the phenomena become part of a triangulation process (Denzen, 1978) which ensures that observed results are valid. Triangulation is accomplished when two or more distinct methods are found to be congruent and yield comparable data (Jick, 1980). The researcher also begins to move between the perspectives of the insider (emic) and the outsider (etic) to uncover the implicit guiding logic of the behaviors.

Procedures

This study focused on the experiences of selected Black students at Pearson State College. Designed to elicit their views regarding their experiences and strategies for success at a predominantly White college, the study explored their experiences in relation to environmental, academic and social factors. The students, faculty, administrators, and their college have been renamed to provide anonymity because the researcher was allowed entry into many facets of their personal lives. Attendance at both faculty and student meetings, extra curricular activities, conferences, and social times, as well as classroom visits, provided a rich look into the lives of the students.

Although preliminary negotiations for entry began early in May, 1983, interviews and observations made from August, 1983, through May, 1984, have provided the data for the study. Four specific means were used to collect, record, and organize the data. These included interviews, observations, the use of a questionnaire, and the analysis

of several documents. Gorden (1969) has suggested the validity of this multimethod approach, stating that:

> Often the nature of the problem under investigation demands a multimethod approach because the various methods give totally different kinds of information that can supplement each other, because we do not know how to interpret some of the information unless we can couple it with other information, or because we need a cross-check to verify the validity of our observations (p. 12).

Preliminary visits to the research site and entry negotiations were started in May of 1983. As a means of feeling the pulse of the institution and determining the feasibility of using this particular site for this particular study, the investigator made two separate trips to the campus to unofficially observe and informally talk to Black students and staff members.

Schatzman and Strauss (1973) refer to this technique as "casing and approaching." They support this strategy by pointing out three simple reasons:

> 1.   to determine as precisely as possible whether this site does, in fact, meet his substantive requirements--a question of suitability;
>
> 2.   to measure some of its presenting properties (size, population, complexity, etc.) against his own resources of time, mobility, skills, and whatever else it would take to do the job--a question of feasibility; and
>
> 3.   to gather information about the place and people there in preparation for negotiating entry--a question of suitable tactics (p. 19).

The first visit occurred near the end of the second semester of the 1982-83 school year. Students were very involved in preparing for

final exams. The second visit took place three weeks later at the beginning of the summer session. There were very few students on campus, especially Black students, but those that the researcher was able to talk to convinced her that there would be a sufficient number returning for the fall semester to make the study worthwhile. After the second visit, in which the researcher observed and talked to several Black students in the Student Center Lounge (watching soap operas), she stopped in the Dean of Student's office (also in the Student Center) to arrange an appointment to discuss the project. The appointment was set for one week later, on Monday, at 9:00.

Arriving the following Monday at the appointed time, the researcher discovered that Dr. McKenzie was not there. Her secretary, Mrs. Avery, explained that the Dean was ill and would not be in that day. She apologized for the inconvenience and offered to help in any way she could. She suggested a tour of the Student Center and provided directions to where Black students most likely could be found. This seemed like a good idea and after the appointment was rescheduled for the following week, the would-be researcher, who was beginning to feel that time was escaping and not much was being accomplished, wandered out of the Dean's office toward the snack bar located in the lobby of the Center.

A somewhat older looking Black female was purchasing coffee. She smiled and asked the researcher, "Are you a student here?" Her question provided an opportunity to explain the role of an ethnographer, the researcher's role as a student preparing to conduct research for a doctoral dissertation. Della seemed interested in hearing more about the study. Seated in an almost empty student

lounge (it was not yet 9:30 in the morning), Della talked for more than an hour. After explaining about the purpose of the study, emphasizing the goal of discovering ways of improving the quality of the campus environment and the educational experience for Blacks, the researcher asked Della how she happened to select Pearson State College to attend. She talked at length about how she had been a student there ten years earlier. She dropped out, moved away and attended another college for a short time. Now, after an unsuccessful marriage and several unrewarding, low-paying jobs, at age 36, she was attempting to earn a degree in social work.

Della offered to arrange a meeting with the three other "older" women and one man with whom she commuted from a near-by city. She explained:

> We all have some of the same problems. We drive out here together three days each week and talk about the way things are and how they could be out here. These kids out here, the White ones, (and some of the Blacks too) act like they just as soon not be bothered. They seem to look down on the older adult. It's like, what are you doing out here...or maybe it's the way I dress. I don't have the money for the kind of clothes they wear. Most of them are all dressed up most of the time. Me, I wear my polyester pants cause that's all I have and they're comfortable for me.
>
> The Whites especially are not at all friendly, but I just don't let it bother me. I usually go on to class and sit down next to the very ones that I know don't want me there. If the professor acts like he don't want to answer my questions, I just ask that many more questions. Maybe I get kinda boistrous sometimes, but if you don't, they all just ignore you.

Della admitted that much of what she was feeling had to do with her own self-consciousness about being older than the traditional college age student. But she did believe that there were things the college could do to make her and her friends more comfortable on campus. She noticed that it was time for her to go to class and asked if we could meet at another time in a few days when her friends could be there. She provided her phone number so that another meeting could be arranged. Della rushed off to class and the researcher, realizing she had not taken any notes, remained for a while to write up the first real field notes.

Negotiating Entry

The meeting with Dean McKenzie the following Monday revealed some useful facts about the college and its faculty, administrators and students. In spite of a severe case of laryngitis, the Dean "whispered" numerous details about the Black student and staff population. She expressed concern about the overall low academic achievement, high attrition rate, and infrequent graduation of Black students. She stressed the need recognized by college officials to be more effective in recruiting, retaining and educating minority students. Most of the morning was spent reviewing the proposed research and discussing the college's most recent Affirmative Action Report.

When the researcher inquired about others from whom she should seek permission or approval to conduct research on the campus, Dr. McKenzie explained that as Dean of Students it was her responsibility

to handle all such matters involving students at the college. She
did, however, suggest that the researcher share the information about
the proposed research with the Affirmative Action Officer, a Black
female staff person who also serves as the Director of Minority
Student Affairs, and co-chairperson for the Minority Advisory Council.

That same day the researcher traveled across campus with Dean
McKenzie to the Counseling Center to meet with members of the
counseling staff and to have lunch with the Director of Financial Aid
and the Director of Housing. Later, the researcher was introduced to
several additional student services staff members. Among them was Ms.
Howard, the Assistant Director of Housing, a young Black female who
immediately offered to assist in contacting students by distributing
the survey questionnaire in the residence hall where she was living.
She explained that in addition to resident assistants a college staff
member lives in each residence hall. Through these contacts she would
attempt to distribute questionnaires to Black students living in other
residences as well.

This ended the first full day in the field. And, for the first
time, the researcher began to feel some confidence and even a bit of
excitement about the study. The process of negotiating entry was off
to a good start. Approval of the study and access to the college
provided by the Dean of Students gave credence to the project in the
eyes of her student services staff and, thus, helped the researcher
gain their approval and cooperation. The next step was to make
contact and build credibility with the students.

Sampling Procedures

An explanation of the sampling procedure used for the study is described in the following paragraphs. The population for the study was, theoretically, all the Black students on campus. The sample, in actuality, was those who were classified as juniors and seniors and who were willing to participate in an interview.

> Unlike the procedures in many other types of research, sampling in participant observation studies is not designed and executed in advance of data collection, but is continually carried on throughout the study...as a consequence, participant observers can seldon prescribe their samples in advance but only describe and justify them after the fact...(McCall and Simmons, 1969, p. 64).

McCall and Simmons identify two general types of sampling procedures which relate to procedures used in this study.

> The first of these is some sort of quota sample, in which...the observer is aware of certain formal categories of organization members and he determines beforehand that he will interview and observe at least a few persons from each of these categories...(1969, p. 64).

This approach was employed for the study. The researcher determined three categories of subjects from whom relevant data for the study could be collected. They were: (1) Black upperclass students (junior or senior status); (2) former students of the college (graduates or dropouts); and (3) Black faculty and staff members.

> A second type of sampling procedure often employed in participant observation in the snowball sample.

> in which...choosing one informat may generate
> information about other persons which leads the
> observer to contact one of these others as a second
> informant, who in turn directs him to a third
> informant, etc., in an extensive chain of contacts
> (McCall and Simmons, 1969, p. 64).

The use of this type sampling is seen in the distribution of the questionnaires as well as the contacts made with students for interviews.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire composed of a series of items concerning opinions of campus life, impressions of classroom activities, impressions about self, and reports of the extent of their interracial contact, was used along with informal interviews and casual conversations at the beginning of the fieldwork (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was helpful for collecting some key data about Black students and for pointing the researcher in the direction of more data.

With the help of the Assistant Director of Housing, questionnaires were distributed to 28 Black students during the summer session; 25 were completed and returned. At the beginning of the fall semester, several summer school students distributed questionnaires to 60 Black students; 36 of these were completed and returned. The questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they would agree to an in-depth interview and futher involvement in the study. This provided the respondents with a degree of anonymity because only those wishing to do so signed their names and gave addresses, and phone numbers at which they could be reached. In addition, the

questionnaire provided the researcher valuable background information on Black students at the college and aided in determining what information was needed to answer the research questions. It also helped to determine who had the needed information, and who was most able and willing to give it.

Information from 61 completed questionnaires was analyzed and tabulated. Only 30 of the questionnaire respondents were selected to be interviewed because (1) they were classified as either juniors or seniors, and, (2) they were willing to participate in the study. Subsequently, 30 interviews were arranged and completed.

Interviews

The interviews conducted were an important means of clarifying and reinforcing the data gathered from the questionnaires and the on-site observations. Because of this need to clarify data, the interview approach was used throughout the study.

Following the analysis of the written questionnaires, interview appointments were scheduled by telephone calls to the respondents.

In selecting appropriate students for interviewing, a distinction was made between key informants who could provide strategy information on how to obtain more information, respondents who might have specialized types of information which could be obtained only from them because of their special role or status, and representative respondents who were chosen because they shared certain characteristics defining a group or category of students. An attempt was made to interview a wide variety of Black students.

During both interviews and group discussions, the researcher used questioning strategies to maintain the description process. (Three distinct types of questions were used in the following ways:)

> open-ended questions to stimulate descriptive responses;
>
> follow-up questions and probes to clarify meanings, intentions, and explanations; and
>
> factral questions to establish context, such as background of students.

Generally, questions that had emerged from the answers on the questionnaires provided a starting point for the interview. At other times, current situations and activities would spark the discussion. Copies of the two Interview Guides may be found in Appendix C. Guide number one was used during the initial interview and guide number two was used when a second interview was conducted with the same student. The important task was to let the informants express themselves in their own way. Rowles (1979) elaborates on this process:

> Concern for the person's existential reality dictates that participants be granted freedom to influence the duration of an inquiry and be encouraged to express themselves in their own way, however long this may take. Often problems with articulating complex or inchoate impressions are such that important themes are exposed only in fleeting moments of communion embedded within the flow of every day conversation (p. 20).

Both formal and informal interviews with students and staff members were conducted throughout the study. Those faculty and staff members interviewed were selected on the basis of their involvement

with Black students on campus and their expressed interest in the study. Some of the most insightful perspectives came in chance meetings with faculty members in the lunch room and students "hanging-out" in the lounge.

Following a number of on-site observations, a second interview was scheduled with a select few key students. This technique provided a useful means of clarifying observed events in terms of the students' reality, rather than that of just the researcher. With the exception of two interviews conducted over the telephone, most of the first, formal/structured interviews were audio tape recorded, transcribed, and added to field notes and written questionnaires. There were also audio-taped recordings of meetings, analysis of written documents and records concerning campus activities, and field notes from observations in classrooms and of out-of-class activities.

Participant/Observer

The research methodology which enables the researcher to get closest to the social situation from the actor's point of view is participant observation. According to Cusick (1973), this methodology works at two levels.

1.   Description: the researcher on the scene describes what he reads, sees, and hears and then expands his descriptions from accounts of the situation by his subjects.

2.   Explanation: the researcher attempts to make sense of his subjects' observations, and by further searching and questioning informants,

he obtains the explanation of the situation
from the actors (Cusick, p. 230).

Under the heading of participant observation are a number of
variations. Lutz and Lannaccone explain that "a researcher who
undertakes a participant observation study may assume one of thre
roles" (1969, p. 108):

1. "The participant as an observer": In this case
the researcher already has his group
membership before he undertakes a study and
therefore his role as observer or researcher
would be known to his subjects.

2. "The Observer as a limited participant": The
observer would join a group for the expressed
purpose of studying it. The members would,
perhaps more than likely, know of the
researcher's intent in joining the group.

3. "The Observer as a nonparticipant": That is
without group membership. Here the presence
of the observer may not even be known to the
group and if it were known, he would still be
outside the group.

The researcher played all three roles during this study and at
times during the course of one day would move from one role to
another. In the classroom the role was usually that of observer as a
nonparticipant. The researcher sat in the rear of a classroom to
observe and listen with the knowledge and permission of only the
professor. The role of complete observer was also played on those
occasions when the researcher stayed after class long enough for
overhearing to become eavesdropping. Another example of observer as a
non-participant were occasions when the researcher would find a seat
close to students in the lounge but not as part of their group and

pretend to read or take notes from a book when, in fact, she would be taking notes on their conversation. She also listened for students' whispered remarks in class and their comments on the way to and from classes.

On several occasions the researcher was invited by Black students to school-sponsored activities and social events. The Dean of Students, as well as some other faculty members and administrators,extended invitations to staff meetings and other college functions which involved Black students. For example, the researcher attended new student and parent orientation sessions prior to the first day of classes, an ice cream social to welcome new students, and a minority student reception. On these occasions the role was usually the observer as a limited participant. Later on in the semester when attending faculty meetings, student activities, and club meetings, the role became participant as an observer.

Instead of remaining aloof and apart, the researcher endeavored to establish viable, open relationships with those she was studying. The development of such a relationship was extremely important to this study of Black students. Actually the relationships formed quite naturally, perhaps because the researcher and the Black students shared the commonality of race.

Field Notes

Throughout the study the researcher carried a spiral notebook in which, using her own idiosyncratic shorthand, she jotted down observations and recorded conversations. Notetaking was done as

unobstrusively as possible even though her idently as a researcher was known and accepted. Observations were made and field notes recorded both in classrooms and during out-of-class activities. Because answers to the research questions could be found in a variety of places and situations, precise locations were determined as events unfolded in the field.

The first days in the field were especially exhausting and confusing because, seeing no patterns and not knowing what later might be significant, the researcher tried to absorb as much as possible. In most cases, insights came from rereading the field notes at night in the quiet of home.

In the methodological appendix to <u>Street Corner Society</u>, William Foote Whyte eloquently summarizes this process of discovery and, implicitly, the importance of good field notes:

> The ideas that we have in research are only in part a logical product growing out of a careful weighing of evidence... We study the data carefully, bringing all our powers of logical analysis to bear upon them. We come up with an idea or two. But still the data do not fall into any coherent pattern. Then we go on living with the data - and with the people - until perhaps some chance occurence casts a totally different light upon the data, and we begin to see a pattern we did not see before. This pattern is not purely an artistic creation. Once we think we see it, we must re-examine our notes and perhaps set out to collect new data in order to determine whether the pattern adequately represents the life we are observing or is simply a product of our imagination. Logic, then, plays an important part. But I am convinced that the actual evaluation of research ideas does not take place in accord with the formal statements we read on research methods. The ideas grow up in part out of our immersion in the data and out of the whole process of living. (1955, p. 279).

.ʎ Documents

Finally, document analysis was also a valuable source of information for the study. Most educational institutions are rich with potential data in the form of studies, reports, official statistics and journalistic accounts. Certain documents were used, much like informants, to establish facts about events which the researcher was unable to observe directly. Often such documents are superior to informants in that official reports and statistics cover sectors of the institution beyond the sphere of a particular informant.

McCall and Simmons believe that:

> one very important class of 'informants' or 'surrogate observers' are the various records and documents pertaining to the organization, such as budgetary records, rule books, minutes of meetings, personal files, diaries, etc., which record certain facts and events that the scientist was unable to observe directly (1969, p. 4).

Wolcott, when discussing his methods for gathering data to supplement his direct observations, notes that "collecting routine distributions of notices...collecting copies of school records, reports, and correspondence...provided especially valuable sources of information" (1973, p. 8). Documents collected and analyzed for this study included, but were not limited to, the college catalog, the 1982-83 Affirmative Action Report, the most recent North Central Association Accreditation Report, the Student Code, various issues of the campus newspaper, and numerous other documents shared by faculty members and students, including departmental studies and minutes of

meetings. Some documents were a major source of new data; others contained useful information to substantiate data collected through observation and/or interviews.

Data Analysis

> Probably the most fundamental operation in the analysis of qualitative data is that of discovering significant classes of things, persons and events and the properties which characterize them (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973, p. 110).

Data analysis was a continuing process from the beginning of the study; however, the more formal analysis was postponed until four weeks prior to leaving the field when most of the data were in and the researcher felt she was no longer discovering anything new. The researcher temporarily withdrew from the field to conduct more in-depth analysis of the data. The field notes from daily observations, interviews and documents were analyzed in an effort to discover significant categories of phenomena. In addition, an attempt was made to link the categories together by searching for overall patterns of events and behaviors of those students involved in the study. Data from one source were compared with data from other sources to insure accuracy of information. Based on the discovery of categories with insufficient data, the researcher returned to the field with additional or reworded questions designed to confirm and verify certain information.

✗ Reliability and Validity

The value of scientific research is partially dependent on the ability of individual researchers to demonstrate the credibility of their findings (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982).

While reliability is concerned with the replicability of scientific findings, validity is concerned with the accuracy of scientific findings. The results of ethnographic research often are regarded as unreliable and lacking in validity and generalizability.

> Cusick explains that: as one lives close to a situation, his description and explanation of it have a first-person quality which other methodologies lack. As he continues to live close to and moves deeper into that situation his perceptions have a validity that is simply unapproachable by any so called standardized method. Likewise, as his validity becomes better, so his reliability, which is an extension of his validity, becomes better. As the researcher is the actual instrument, as he becomes more aware, more valid, so he must of necessity become more reliable. (1973, p. 231)

To produce a worthwhile study, the researcher endeavored to tailor the study to the six indices of subjective adequacy as stated by Homans (1950):

1. **Time:** The more time an individual spends with a group the more likely it is that he will obtain an accurate perception of the social meaning its members live by.

2. **Place:** The closer the researcher works geographically to the people he studies, the more accurate should be his interpretations.

3. <u>Social circumstances</u>: The number and variety of social circumstances which the observer encounters within the social structure of the community increases his accuracy.

4. <u>Language</u>: The researcher and his subjects should share a common language.

5. <u>Intimacy</u>: The greater degree of intimacy the researcher achieves, the greater his accuracy.

6. <u>Consensus</u>: Confirmation that the meanings interpreted by the observer are correct.

Study Limitations

Ethnographic studies attempt to describe and explain events using field research methods which rely on the knowledge and cooperation of the participants and the skill and insight of the researchers. Therefore, such studies are limited by the conscious and tacit understandings of their subjects and by the abilities and perceptiveness of their authors. This study shares these general limitations as well as several others.

This study was exploratory in nature and its major purpose was to determine and describe the perceptions Black student have of their experiences in a predominantly White college environment.

The design of the study was limited in several ways. First, the study was limited to an investigation of those students willing to participate. Second, the interview instrument used to collect data for the study, although designed to insure objectivity, inevitabley contained some bias. Third, the results of this study are generalizable only to this particular population; however, they may have useful implications for similar college populations.

The amount of time spent in the field was limited. Because the researcher did not actually live on campus twenty-four hours a day for any period of time, the opportunities to observe and to learn about some of the more personal facets of the students' lives that they did not freely discuss were somewhat limited. Consequently, such subjects as sexual activities, cheating, and the use of drugs and alcohol, are missing from this descriptive report. Nevertheless, the researcher counted 500 hours spent in the field, based on the following breakdown.

Early in May, 1983 and continuing through June, while attempting to determine the suitability of the site and to gather general information about the place and the people, the researcher made six trips to campus spending approximately four hours each time. During July and August thirty hours on-site were used in distributing and collecting survey questionnaires, in informal conversations with staff and students, and attending orientation sessions for new students and their parents and various other Welcome Week events.

From September, 1983 through March 1984, the researcher averaged two days (12 to 16 hours) each week in the field. In addition, there were frequent trips to campus for evening and week-end activities. This schedule, of course, excluded two weeks when students were away for Christmas vacation and one week during Spring break. For a period of time during February and March, less time was spent interviewing students with correspondingly more time spent observing in classrooms and interviewing faculty and staff members. The researcher withdrew from the field near the end of March to concentrate on analyzing and interpreting the data and writing up the results. Attendance at some

special events was continued during this time. Finally, the researcher returned to the field at the end of April, 1984, for some additional interviews and to attend several end-of-the-year activities, parties and receptions, including graduation ceremonies.

Study Delimitations

The investigation was delimited in the following ways:

A. To but one college campus.

B. To only one academic year (approximately ten months) for the research phase of the study.

C. To focus only upon junior and senior (upperclass) Black students.

Summary

This study employed an inductive approach and emphasized subjective beliefs held by the participants. It was conducted in the natural setting and employed methods of qualitative research: in-depth interviewing, and limited participation in the activities being investigated. The researcher was able to obtain first-hand knowledge, in some instances, about events and the participants" interpretation of them, in order to analyze reality, meaning and behavior from both the observer's and the participants' perspectives (Rist, 1977). Through these activities, new phenomena, relationships, and hypotheses were discovered.

The descriptions resulting from these inquiries are intended to

contribute to an understanding of the experiences and behaviors of
Black students attending predominantly White colleges.

Chapter IV

The Setting and Subjects

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research setting. It contains a description of the college and its objectives, a profile of the student body, and a discussion of the resources available for students in the collegiate and the community environments. Information in the chapter was collected through observation and interviews of faculty, staff and students. In addition, the analysis of several documents contributed to the contents. The documents used included the college catalog, the campus newspaper, the North Central Association Accreditation Report, and a student profile study done during the summer of 1983 by a member of the Student Services Division.

The College and Its Objectives

Established in 1960 as a four year liberal arts college, Pearson State College stresses not only the skills students will need to adapt to a variety of careers but also the value of intellectual achievement and personal fulfillment. Although this coeducational institution primarily serves the needs of the west-central part of the state most Black students come from the state's south-eastern border. Student demographic information suggests that the student body is diverse in composition and is representative of the culture and values of many

midwestern states. According to the college catalog, the state legislature established Pearson State as a self-governing, coeducational institution dedicated to the following objectives:

> Graduating students who are responsible members of our modern society; knowledgeable of our western heritage and appreciative of other cultures, conversant with science, concerned with social problems and respectful of human values; skillful in the process of analysis, able to judge between competing claims and creative in their thinking; alert and fluent in defence of fundamental rights, and courageous in their beliefs.

Pearson State opened its doors for the first freshman class consisting of approximately 226 students in the fall of 1963. Most of these students lived within a thirty mile radius of the college.

The academic program inititated in the first year of the college's operation was one of pure liberal arts. Its uniqueness was that this was a tax supported, state institution dedicated to "true" liberal arts. This was considered to be a remarkable experiment because ordinarily tax-supported, state institutions had specialized practical missions to train students in applied vocations such as agriculture, technology or teacher education. Also, a foundation program [1] required all students to take a highly structured course load during their freshman year. The concept which shaped the thinking of the

[1] The Foundation Program consisted of basic distribution requirements in Mathematics/Science, Social Studies, and Arts/Humanities. The program included 45 term hours of mandatory courses in the Freshman year.

founders of this college was that the best kind of education takes place between professor and students in a small group environment. To protect this concept, separate "collegiate societies", not exceeding 1,500 students, were organized. According to the plan, this decentralization would be physical as well as organizational. Each "collegiate society" would have its own general classrooms and faculty offices. Excluded from decentralization were the more expensive specialized facilities, such as the physical education building and the library.

Albeit theoretically laudable, the original program had to be modified because the college was not attracting a sufficient number of students and, consequently, the operation of the college was more expensive than the state legislature found acceptable. Pearson State had to choose between lowering the entrance requirements or broadening the program. The latter was the only acceptable direction and its implementation was begun by January 1, 1967.

Although the original program was modified, the concept of decentralization was not forgotten. In the fall of 1968, a School of General Studies was established as a second collegiate society. The older or basic college unit became known as the College of Arts and Sciences. Between the fall of 1968 and 1973, Pearson State College grew from 2,200 to 5,920 students. Because of this rapid growth, there was need for more academic structure. In an effort to respond to this need, the faculty governance system was revised and the administrative organization was streamlined in the spring of 1973.

The third major reorganization was started in 1980 and involved a

complete revision of the academic structure into a more traditional unified four-division model which included Arts and Humanities, Business and Economics, Science and Mathematics, and Social Science.

Student Profile

This information regarding the student body profile at Pearson State College was gathered from a written report by Dr. Marcus, a counselor and member of Pearson's student services staff. Dr. Marcus explained that the information was about new students enrolled at Pearson. Data were collected and compiled through the administration of questionnaires on four different occasions during the summer of 1983. Students completing the questionnaires were participating in new student orientation programs. More than 590 students completed the survey. Dr. Marcus stressed that the data collected should be viewed as descriptive, not definitive. And, that although the information was gathered from new students, it is characteristic of the overall student body. He further indicated that for the purposes intended in this project, the term profile referred to the characteristics, needs, and opinions of new, incoming, first year students at Pearson State College. What follows is a summary of <u>his findings</u>.

Age: The average age of new students enrolling at Pearson State College is 18.4 years with a range in years from 17 to 39.

Sex: There are considerably more female than male students for the second consecutive year.

Disability: Few students identified personal disabilities. The most frequently cited disability was visual. Surprisingly, a minimal number of students identified "learning disabilities" as a category of anomalies.

High School GPA: The majority of students identified their high school grade point average at 2.50 or higher. A few reported G.P.A.'s below the required 2.50 but did not admit to being "special admits."

Parental Education: Fifty-five point three percent of the fathers and 44.7 percent of the mothers of the students had attended college. This suggests that approximately 45 percent of the students are "first generation" college students.

Parental Income: Forty-seven percent of the students estimated their parental income between $20,000 and $40,000. Seventy-two percent exceeded $20,000 and fifteen percent came from parents whose yearly total income are less than $15,000.

Political Preference: Most students indicated they would not get involved in a political problem or issue. While consciously aware of today's salient issues, most are more concerned with tuition fees, cost of books and materials, making ends meet, and developing marketable skills.

Religious Preference: Seventy-one percent expressed an interest in either the Catholic or Protestant church. Only 13 percent said they had no religious preference. Eight percent were Jewish and the remainder were classified as 'other'.

Highest Degree Perceived:

Bachelor's degree	- 47%
Master's degree	- 33%
Beyond the Masters degree	- 1%

Needs and Concerns: The 1983 freshmen expressed a variety of self-improvement needs:

academic achievement and study skills	- 52%
improving self-confidence	- 31%
clarification of values and attitudes	- 30%
educational planning	- 28%

           substance abuse   - 2%

Student Opinions: Opinions were of changes likely to take place during college:

being satisfied	- 64%
receive Bachelor's degree	- 63%
making a B average or better	- 61%
getting part-time job	- 53%
graduate with honors	- 26%
elected to student office	- 11%
marrying	- 7%
change college major	- 6%
fail one class or more	- 4%
dropping out temporarily	- 3%

Reasons for Attending: The attractiveness of the academic program was the most frequently cited reason for attending Pearson State College. Fifty-nine percent of new students gave that reason. Special programs attracted 37 percent, and 37 percent said a varity of course offerings was their reson. Thirty-eight percent and 41 percent stated that reasonable tuition rates and the availability of financial aid respectively are what brought them there. Only 10 percent came because they had friends attending the same institution, and 21 percent came because of the general social climate.

In discussing the findings of his study, Dr. Marcus contends that the profile of new students was similar to that of the total student body. The overall student population is comprised of approximately 40 percent part-time students; 97 percent are residents of the state of Michigan; 57 percent transfers from other two and four year colleges; 70 percent financial aid recipients; 52 percent women; and 60 percent over 21 years of age. Of the toal 6,700 men and women enrolled at Pearson State College in the fall of 1983-84, only 6.5% were minorities and more than one-half of the minorities were Black. While the overall enrollment increased just slightly from the year previously, the minority student enrollment had declined.
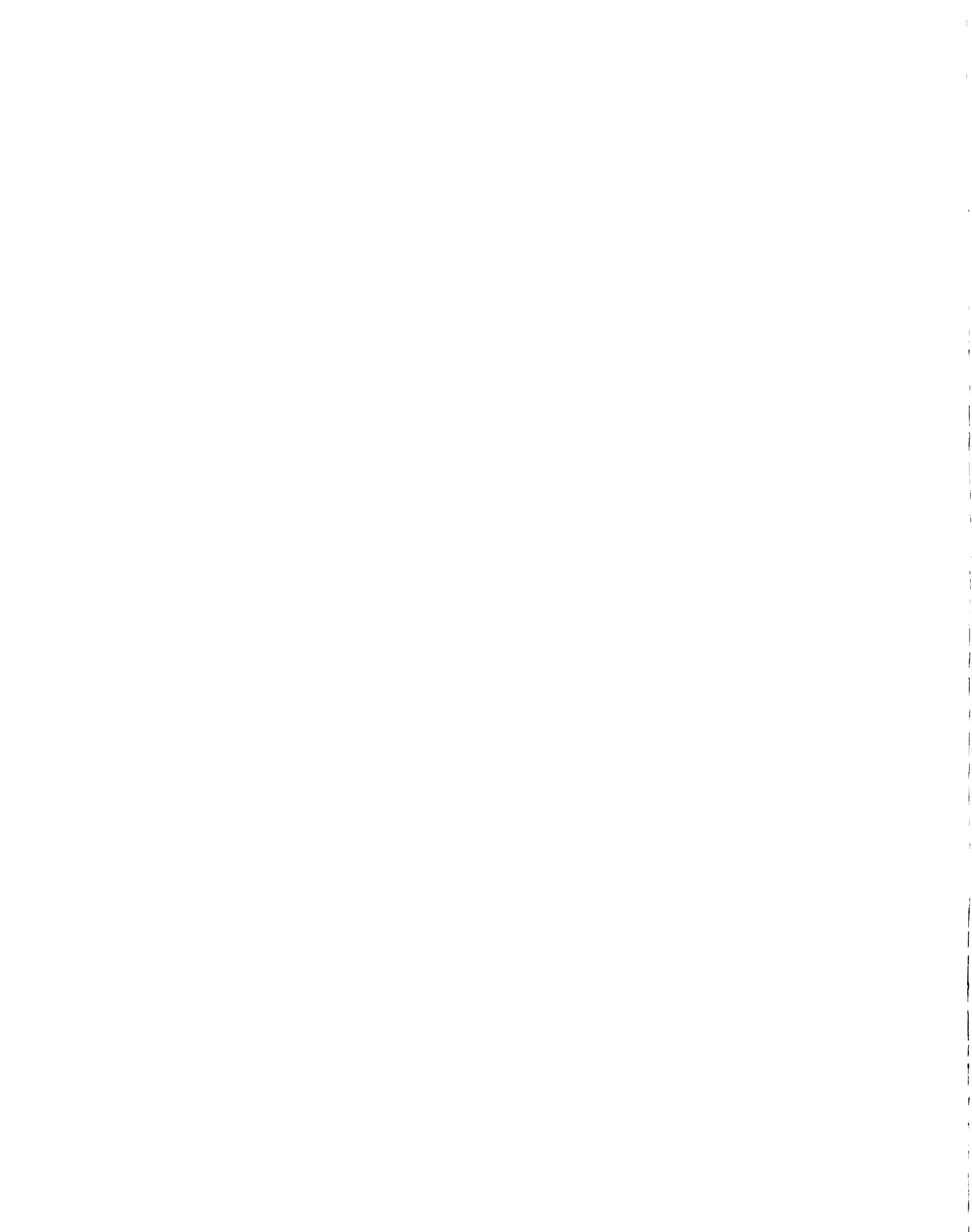
The profile of Black students at Pearson State differed from the profile of their White peers in several respects. On the average, parents of Black students had less formal education, earned less, and worked at lower status jobs. The consequences of such socio-economic status inequalities is a more pronounced need for financial aid. Black students generally scored lower on college boards and were from academically weaker high schools. Their aspirations were equal to and often exceeded those of White students. Black students concentrated on traditional major fields, such as education and social sciences, and often had different cultural orientations, life styles, behaviors, and values. Chapter Five contains a limited profile of the 30 Black students who made up the sample population for this study.

The Collegiate Environment

Pearson State College has a beautiful campus in a rural setting with wide open spaces and modern, well equipped buildings. Located near the small village of Riverview, the natural land structure of Pearson's 876 acre campus is formed by deep, wooded ravines penetrating a high bluff overlooking a river and gently rolling, open fields. The campus is designed to take advantage of the area's scenic wooded ravines and its open meadowlands. Automobile traffic is routed along a main campus drive to parking lots at the edge of the academic areas. Travel between the buildings is on winding walkways that connect with a series of natural trails along the river bank.

The physical plant has been expanded with the future in mind. The first three buildings were constructed in 1963-64. These contained

classroom and office space. The campus now has 17 buildings including

a fine arts center and auditorium, a campus center for student

activities and conferences, a library, a physical education building,

additional classroom and administrative buildings, and residential

facilities which accomodate 1,400 students.

The campus library system houses more than 300,000 volumes, 2,000

periodicals, 13,000 reels of microfilm and other materials necessary

to effectively support the instructional programs at Pearson State

College.

Having interviewed several faculty and staff members and read

numerous documents about the college, the researcher began

observations by touring the campus and chatting with students. One of

the first observations was that the 250 Black students among 6,000

White students were not very visible on this campus. The researcher

walked around in several buildings and did not see a single Black

person--student, faculty or other staff member. One or two Blacks

could occasionally be seen walking across campus between classes and

in the library. Few Black students took advantage of the many campus

facilities - including the library and athletic complex. Black

students said that they saw no other Blacks, neither other students

nor Black faculty and staff in most places on campus, and,

consequently, they felt uncomfortable and out of place. They went to

the buildings where their classes met or where they were employed and,

for the most part, returned to their rooms or apartments to study.

The heart of the campus is the modern Student Center where one can

find a game room with billiards, ping-pong, and other recreational

tables, two TV lounges, the campus bookstore, a large snack bar, and a

music listening lounge which contains a large library of tapes for use at no charge. The Center also contains meeting rooms, lounge space, the Student Senate offices, and the student newspaper. It became apparent from both observation and interviews with faculty and students that the Student Center is the popular gathering place for Black students between classes. Especially during the noon hour; the researcher discovered, as many as 20 to 25 Black students could be found in the Student Center Lounge standing around talking and/or watching television. White students also gathered in the same area to watch television and meet their friends, but the Black students tended to gather in one area nearest the main entrance to the Center.

Some of the students in this study reported that since entering college, for the first time they had become acutely aware of their minority status. Such is especially the case with those Blacks who came from a ghetto environment to enter this traditional, overwhelmingly White college.

As new students, they confined their activities to their classrooms and residence halls where they were known and knew what to expect. This pattern had continued for most of them. As a result, they experienced more social and personal isolation.

Academic/Instructional Support Services

Pearson State is a teaching rather than research oriented college. Fully 75 percent of the more than 200 full-time faculty members hold doctorale degrees. Faculty interest and activities support and expand the learning opportunities of students. The instructional offerings

encompass over one hundred academic and career preparation programs leading to fully accredited college degrees in 78 major areas. Independent study, field experience, international studies, and internships have been given increased attention in recent years. The teaching methods employed are broad and faculty make extensive use of an unusually sophisticated audio-visual technology available on campus. The quality of instruction is enhanced further by small class size, individual student advising and career counseling. The quality of the faculty at Pearson State was judged "impressive" by the last North Central Association evaluation team.

Similarly, the evaluators cited the non-teaching professional staff as an institutional strength. During interviews with both faculty and professional staff members with whom Black students are most likely to come into contact at Pearson State, the researcher asked them to describe how they felt about the college in general and their own department and position in particular. Their responses illustrate the range of responsibilities faculty and professional staff assume at Pearson State for meeting the needs of non-traditional students.

Many Black students at Pearson major in Social Sciences and Education, are recipients of financial aid, and may be required to use the Academic Resource Center.

During an interview, Dr. Jackson, a Black Associate Professor of Sociology, made the following comments about the advantages of having a wide range of ages represented in the student body:

What makes this institution an attractive place to teach is that we get an interesting mix of students. There is a wide range of ages in the colleges which still have mostly 18 to 22 year olds. The average age of students in my classes is always close to 30. They come with a great deal of experience and insight that blends very well with our younger freshmen. In night classes, especially, you get more older students. They are intellectually sharp with a clear vision of what they want to do; they don't fool around. I think they are a healthy influence on everybody.

I think we do a better job of attracting older students because we offer so many evening classes. That's helpful for people who work days and take a couple of classes at night.

His comments illustrate the type of flexibility he is willing to have to meet the instructional needs of different groups of students. Dr. Jackson also remarked:

They provide a sharp contrast with the younger students who come right from high school, and that blend almost always works positively in class. It has made me adapt my ways of teaching. I find myself making more of an effort to synthesize theoretical work in the field with practical experience.

Several of the Black students in this study cited Dr. Jackson as a professor in whose classes they feel comfortable and from whom they are comfortable seeking advice.

Dr. Brown, a Black who is a Professor of Education, praised the diversity and accessibility of courses offered by the School of Education:

For the past eleven years, I have been a faculty member at the School of Education. During that time I have seen it evolve into a position of pre-

eminence in several fields. We offer a high quality, personalized instructional sequence of study for both graduate and undergraduate students.

The goals of the School of Education go far beyond teaching students "how to teach", they include directing preservice and in-service educators in the design of individualized instructional programs. A particular strength of the School of Education is its program in educating children with developmental, educational, and learning deficits. We have been able to offer breadth and depth of background, at the undergraduate level, by building on a strong base of liberal arts instruction. Our graduate-level courses are taught by full-time faculty members who are recognized experts in their respective fields, supplemented by adjunct faculty who are educational leaders in the area.

We make our programs very accessible by providing year-round classes, by offering them morning, afternoon and evening both on and off the main campus. In addition to traditional lecture classes, we offer T.V. classes, workshops, seminars, independent study, and practicum classes where students accomplish directed activities in their instructional positions.

While Dr. Brown cited personalized instruction as a priority of the School of Education, none of the students in this study cited him as a professor with whom they identify even though he is Black.

The Director of Financial Aid, Mr. Black, a White, stressed the sincere effort of the college to meet all financial aid committments through scholarships, grants, loans and/or jobs:

At Pearson, at least 90 percent of the minorities and about 80 percent of our overall student body receive aid in a combination of scholarships, grants, low-interest loans, and jobs. Scholarships are based on merit and need. What's more, if the students is available for employment, we'ss work with him or her to find a job to help pay for their education. We intend to meet all financial aid committments.

The Director of Academic Resource Center, Mrs. Green, a White, emphasized the vitality and enthusiasm for teaching and learning that she sees at Pearson State College:

> When I came to Pearson in 1965, there were 1,100 studenta and 64 faculty members. The college has grown and expanded its programs over the years but still retains the features that attracted me initially. Classes are taught by a highly qualified enthusiastic faculty, and are small enough that students can get to know each other and the faculty members.

The Academic Resource Center incorporates among other programs, the Developmental Skills classes, career counseling and placement and the honors program into one organization. Free peer tutoring is provided to students who voluntarily avail themselves for this service. As has been stated earlier in this chapter, the researcher learned that Black students tend to avoid using the services of the Center.

Student Services

The primary objective of the student affairs staff is to contribute to student development through a diversified program of educational services and objectives. Opportunities are offered for students to receive assistance regarding personal and social problems, to experience group living, to share in student government, and to participate in cultural, social, and intellectual activities that are supportive of the students' academic development.

The two major units of the student services staff are Career Planning and Counseling and Student Activities. The Career Planning and Counseling Center staff handles academic counseling and advising, including career counseling, personal counseling, and orientation. The Student Activities area is responsible for organizations, student government, residence hall programs, and all other student activities.

Student activities programs vary from year to year, as changing student interests determine the strength and scope of existing campus organizations as well as inititation of new clubs and groups. The student services program begins with a student's orientation to the college prior to his/her enrollment and continues throughout the student's academic career.

The Dean of Students bears the responsibility for maintaining the quality of student life on campus by administering various service programs and by serving as a problem solver and resource person for individuals and organizations. She pointed out that adjacent to her office in the Student Center is the Director of Student Activities' Office. Posted outside was a student life schedule for the entire first semester. Beginning with activities scheduled for "Welcome Week", each week of the schedule listed three or four planned events. Included were weekly movies, athletic events, concerts, conferences, family days, and numerous other programs. Dean McKenzie stressed that there was no lack of social life opportunities. "There is something for everyone. We have a ski hill with a rope tow, rental equipment, and night lights. There are groups who do everything from skydiving to sailing, from karate to jazz."

Dean Mcoenzie feels that Pearson State College and her staff reach far beyond the typical college activity list to make life on campus exciting and enjoyable for their students. She explained that all the major fraternities and sororities were very active on campus with frequent parties and dances occurring on weekends. In addition, she pointed out that for those students not inclined toward Greek organizations, the catalog lists over 50 different clubs and organizations.

Beside student organizations, intramural and intercollegiate sports, the college offers a number of regular campus social activities. In the evenings there are concerts, foreign films and recent American movies, guest lectures, performers, and theatrical productions staged by both students and professional touring companies.

From observations and conversations with Black students, the researcher learned that very few Blacks are involved in activities or organizations at the college other than the Black Greek Letter fraternities and sororities and the Greek Council which acts as a communications medium for social and service-oriented fraternities and sororities on the Pearson State campus. The council advises and coordinates member organizations toward the betterment of the Greek system.

Prior to 1980, most of the Black students at Pearson State were active members of the Afro-American Association, an organization formed primarily to unify Black students and encourage them in active participation at the college. When Greek Letter Organizations became popular for Blacks at Pearson State, interest in the Afro-American

Association dwindled and the remaining members graduated or left the college by 1982. During the same period of time, one Black professor's attempt to start a campus chaper of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) was also abortive.

On the several occasions that the researcher attended activities at the college, few if any Black students were present. One such activity was the opening Convocation on August 30, 1983. Although Convocations have been part of the opening ceremonies of Pearson State throughout its history, this was the first time the senior class had been included in the ceremony. And, although this senior class contained the largest number of Blacks in the history of the college, the researcher observed not one marched in the opening ceremony. There were three Black students present. One played in the band and the other two were scholarship recipients. There were also three Black staff members in the procession. The Dean of Students was part of the platform party along with two male staff members; one of whom served as Mace Bearer and the other served as a Student Marshall.

About two weeks later, the researcher attended the first annual Student Organization Night. Highlighting the occasion was the appearance of comedian Skip Stephenson, co-host of the television show "Real People." "Real People Get Involved" was the central theme for this event and all student activities for the year. More than fifty student organizations, including all sororities and fraternities, had display tables set up and attempted to increase their memberships with banners and publicity releases. The six Black sororities and fraternities were well represented at the display tables in the rear

of the field house. None of the Black students appeared to be involved in any other organizations.

Unfortunately, due to delayed charter arrivals, Stephenson's performance did not begin as scheduled. He arrived nearly two hours late, and although the majority of the 1,500 campus and community people in attendance waited the two and one-half hours for the program to begin, few Blacks were still around by this time.

The researcher also observed that few Black students attended Welcome Week events. Figure One is a copy of the schedule.

WELCOME WEEK EVENTS
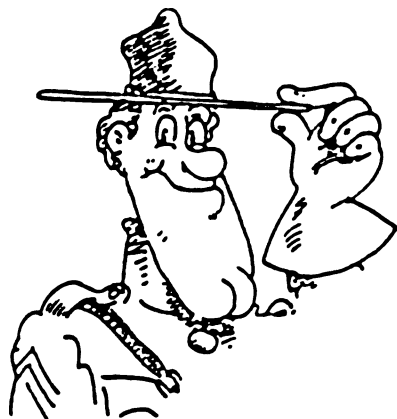
Sunday, August 28, 1983
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Presidents Welcome	Fieldhouse Arena
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Movie "Jaws"	CFA/LAT
9:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Movie "Jaws"	CFA/LAT

Monday, August 29, 1983
4:30 pm -	Western Cookout/Country Music/ Dress Contry	Commons Hall - (Residence Hall Meal Plan only)
9:30 pm -	Housing Dance/DJ-Chuck Lord	SC - Eaton Deck
10:00 pm - 12:00 pm	Movie "Jaws"	Movie Hall

Tuesday, August 30, 1983
9:15 am -	Convocation Reception (Seniors)	SC Union Lounge
10:30 am - 11:30 am	Convocation Ceremony	Fieldhouse Arena
4:00 pm -	Graham Cookout	Graham Center (Residents only)
8:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Mini Concert-Bobby Blue	North Commons
8:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Open Hours Swimming Pool	Fieldhouse Pool - (on campus housing only)

Wednesday, August 31, 1983
11:30 am - 1:30 pm	Outdoor Mini Concert-Bobby Blue	SC - Front Lawn (Rain Lounge)
1:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Outdoor Mini Concert-Billy Budd FREE ICE CREAM SERVED	Site - Same as above

Thursday, September 1, 1983
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Open Bowling (Free van service from Riverview Apts/Field-house and Austin)	Riverview Lanes

Friday, September 2, 1983
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Movie "California Suite"	CFA/LAT
9:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Movie "California Suite"	CFA/LAT

Saturday, September 3, 1983
10:00 am -	Bennet Park Trip (Bus leaves at 10:00 am from Austin for housing students)	Lonely Lake Beach - (on campus housing only)

Figure 1

The events are typical of those sponsored to make Pearson State students feel comfortable in their new environment and to give them the chance to meet each other. The researcher noted that while the movies and bowling events could be of interest to Black students; the performers at the concerts and a cookout with a Western motif including country music are culturally specific. They are not common to the native environments of many Black students.

Housing and Food Service

Curving in an "S" along the winding rim of a ravine are three residence halls, each named after a founding member of the college's governing body. Accomodating 900 students, these residences are coeducational units with separate wings for men and women connected to central lounges. Although Pearson State does not require on-campus residence for any classification of student, the college does consider residence halls to be particularly beneficial in helping students become oriented and adjusted to college life. A college staff member living in each hall and resident assistants arrange educational and recreational programs. No more than two students are assigned to a room, and, whenever possible, students are allowed to choose their own roommates. Black students usually choose to room with Blacks; White students choose White roommates. It is not uncommon for many students to come to campus already having selected a roommmate. Often this is a friend from their hometown or someone they had previously met and arranged to live with before arriving on campus. All of the Black women in this study who lived on campus had Black roommates. One had

a White roommmate for the first year but now shared an apartment with three other Black women. Two of the Black male students had White roommates.

Despite the fact that two out of every three Black students room with other Blacks, as a group, students are divided as to their preferences. Some Black and White students are able to communicate and form friendships. However, the general impression is that there has been a breakdown of communication. Most Black and White students engage in little dialogue and, therefore, have limited understanding and involvement with each other. On the other hand, cliques form among Blck students, especially the females, which tend to divide them from each other.

Probably the best summary of the perceptions of Black students about housing and living arrangements on Pearson State College campus comes from a tape recording of an informal discussion with several Black women. Excerpts from that discussion follow:

> Gloria, who had a White roommmate, said:
>   I don't think living with all Blacks is right
>   because there are too many personality clashes -
>   differences.

> Crystal, agreeing with Gloria, commented:
>   I live in an apartment with three other Black girls
>   and at times its a hell house. Throughout history,
>   women have never goten along well together and
>   Black women, being the way they are, can't make it.

> Leslie, also in support of mixed roommates, observed:
>   I live with another Black, and we run into quite a
>   bit of difficulty due to personality conflicts.

> Lisa, appearing to disagree, noted that:
>   You may find many of the White girls pretending
>   that they like you, when really they can't stand
>   you. Whereas, with Black girls, they tend to more

or less let you know how they really feel about
you.

Person State also provides apartments. The apartment buildings, a
townhouse style complex built along another scenic ravine nearby,
accomodates 500 students in efficiency and one-or-two bedroom units.
This on-campus apartment complex provides housing for students who
have completed at least 30 semester credit hours of study. The
apartments are arranged in a village-style cluster around a community
building. Each apartment has a stove and refrigerator, beds, dresser,
desks, chairs, and a sofa. Students provide other furnishings to suit
their tastes. Other living accomodations near the campus including
rooms, apartments, houses, and mobile homes are available. The
college does not involve itself in negotiations for off-campus rental
property but does provide, solely as a service to students, a listing
of available housing.

The majority of the Black students at Pearson State College live
on or near campus. Almost all of them start out as freshmen living in
the dormitories but move into apartments, either on or off campus, as
soon as they are eligible and can afford to do so. This practice
seems to be universal. Both Black and White students on most college
campuses prefer the privacy of apartment living.

In discussing housing and living arrangements, all the students
seemed to have found the best arrangement for themselves, whether with
Black or White roommates. The important thing seemed to be whether or
not one could get along with the other person. Those who said they
had White roommates and got along "okay" said it was because they

could be cordial and not become too involved in each other's business, something which is sometimes difficult with another Black.

When discussing their impressions of dormitory life, the Black women students complained about the residence halls being noisy, dirty, and lacking in privacy. They also did not like having to leave their residence and go to another building, often in the rain and snow, for meals that they said: "never are very good anyway." Meals are served in the Commons, another building near the residence halls.

The researcher spent time in both the residence halls and the Commons dining area. When interviewing the residence managers in the dormitories, the researcher was given tours. The managers pointed out that there are never more than two or three students assigned to a room. The researcher noticed that several of the students had left their rooms in disarray. Unmade beds and clothes lying on beds and floors contributed to the general cluttered appearance. In one dorm, Sandy, the manager, seeing an overflowing trash barrel in the restroom remarked that the janitor had not cleaned yet. The researcher noted the time - 2 p.m. - and recalled the students' complaints about the residences being dirty.

Sometimes, the researcher interviewed informants in the Commons. The cafeteria is a large dining room with round tables each seating eight. From 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., when dinner is served, meals cost $4.00, except for students who have meal cards. Food is served cafeteria style -- all one can eat with no food taken out. There is a choice of three entrees with both fruit and vegetable salads, several hot vegetables and various desserts, including ice cream available.

One evening the researcher sat with Gloria during the dinner hours. Gloria, a junior, is one of the few upper level Blacks who still lives in a dormitory and who eats meals in the Commons. She and the researcher sat at the one end of the cafeteria where Black students usually gather. There were four tables occupied, two by males and two by females. Two White female students were seated at one table with the Black females and one White male sat with the Black males. All other Whites were at the other end of the cafeteria. Gloria explained this was the usual arrangement.

The male students went back several times for more food. After finishing their meal, they continued to visit and soon began making balls out of napkins and tossing them into each other's empty cups and glasses. On one occasion a White student yelled across the room for them to "keep it down."

Remembering the complaints some students had made about the food, the researcher commented to Gloria that the food was pretty good for cafeteria food. Gloria responded:

> Fortunately, this is one of the better meals. They
> are horrible most of the time. Sometimes, when I
> go home for the weekend, I bring back some of my
> mother's good home cooking.

Athletic Facilities, Activities and Involvement

The Athletic Complex dominates the northwest campus with its playing fields, baseball diamond, tennis courts, the stadium for football and track, and the filedhouse, which includes a multipurpose arena with a seating capacity of up to 5,000 spectators. The arena

houses a 200-meter track, three basketball courts, three volleyball courts, two tennis courts, four badminton courts, and complete indoor track facilities. Other facilities in the complex include an Olympic sized swimming pool with seating for 300 spectators; handball, squash, and racquetball courts; weight-lifting, exercise and training rooms; a gymnastics room; a human performance laboratory; and instructional areas for programs such as dance and physical therapy. The Student Health Center is also located in the fieldhouse.

Black students' use of the athletic facilities had until recently been almost entirely limited to the few who participated in intercollegiate sports. When discussing the use of these facilities with Vince, one of the resident managers, the researcher learned that he was able to involve many of the Black male students in intramural sports, especially basketball.

> They practically dominate the league in basketball now. Black males that is. The females, no. I haven't had much success with getting them involved. There's usually a couple who show up as spectators. That's because they have friends playing on the teams. Other than that we don't see them much in the fieldhouse. You know how Black women are; they don't want to get too hot and sweaty; they don't swim because they don't like to get their hair wet. When I came here four years ago none of the Blacks were playing in the intramural leagues. I'm sure being Black myself and living here in the residence hall where I get to know many of the guys as freshmen has helped me to get many of them involved. And, as a result of them being in the fieldhouse for games and for frequent practices, they have been using the pool and other facilities more too.

Active participation in sports has typically been an important part of many Black students' educational experiences. In view of

their limited involvement in most campus activities at Pearson State, the researcher expected to find a larger number of Black students, especially Black males, involved in inter-collegiate sports.

Table 1 reveals that the largest number of minority athletes were footaball players and no minority women were involved in any of the sports since 1980. These figures did not change during the 1982-83 academic year.

TABLE 1

INTERCOLLEGIATE SPORTS

	1978-1979		1979-1980		1980-1981		1981-1982*	
	#	MINORITY	#	MINORITY	#	MINORITY	#	MINORITY
MEN								
Baseball	28	0	35	2	33	1	28	1
Golf	12	0	22	0	9	0	*	0
Tennis	7	1	7	1	8	1	*	0
Track	19	2	34	5	24	6	24	6
Basketball	14	1	13	1	14	2	12	4
Wrestling	26	0	35	0	23	0	40	1
Cross Country	8	0	11	0	8	0	11	0
Football	103	12	112	13	104	23	114	36
Crew	18	1	18	1	18	1	*	0
	235	17	287	23	241	34	229	48
WOMEN								
Volleyball	22	1	15	1	21	0	12	0
Basketball	18	0	26	0	11	0	14	0
Field Hockey	15	0	14	0	14	0	*	0
Tennis	7	0	9	0	10	0	*	0
Softball	24	0	19	0	18	0	18	0
Crew	19	0	19	0	10	0	*	0
Track	0	0	23	1	18	0	18	0
	105	1	125	2	102	0	62	0
Total	340	18	412	25	343	34	291	48

* Program reduction

The recruitment of student athletes at Pearson is state-wide. High school athletes are contacted each year by telephone, letter and coaching visitations to the athletes' homes. The men's program is governed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association. The women's program, until 1983, was governed by the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women which did not allow coaching visitations for women's programs. Instead, auditions were held at the college at the students' expense. This has had the effect of reducing the opportunity for low-income women, including many minorities, to attend the auditions. The women's program was changed to match National Collegiate Athletic Association regulations during the 1983-84 academic year. Home visitations for the purpose of recruiting women may increase the numbers of minority women in the future.

Athletic Grants-in-aid

Pearson State awards aid as a financial package. The Financial Aid Office detemines the student-athletes needs, then awards such aid as may be appropriate. The athletic grant-in-aid is then based upon the remaining need. This enables the college to meet the educational needs of students from a variety of economic backgrounds. Table two reveals a drastic reduction in the number of White men and women athletes in 1981-1982 as compared with the number in 1979-1980 due to the cut in athletic grants-in-aid the previous year. The number of Black athletes, however, increased during this time period.

TABLE 2

GRANTS-IN-AID
BY SEX AND RACE

	1978-1979		1979-1980		1980-1981		1981-1982*	
	#	AMOUNT	#	AMOUNT	#	AMOUNT	#	AMOUNT
Men	235	$115,649	287	$115,220	273	$142,284	114	$112,672
Women	105	13,670	124	27,670	112	44,808	29	30,440
Total	340	$129,319	411	$142,890	385	$187,092	143	$143,112
Spanish	1	$ 2,466	2	$ -0-	2	$ 600	0	$ -0-
Oriental	0	-0-	1	-0-	0	-0-	0	-0-
American Indian	0	-0-	0	-0-	0	-0-	0	-0-
Black	12	3,124	18	7,576	23	16,558	27	23,171
White	327	123,729	390	135,314	360	169,934	116	119,942
Total	340	$129,319	411	$142,890	385	$187,092	143	$144,112

*The 1981-82 figures reflect a $43,980 cut in athletic grant-in-aid from the previous year

Ken, a former football player at Pearson State, told the researcher that he thought most of the Balck athletes at Pearson were fast becoming disgusted with sports and the coaches at the college. As he explained:

> Most of the Blacks get cut from the teams. Both football and basketball. It's like they don't want too many on the team, even if they are the best players. They don't want us to get all the exposure and publicity. And, the ones that are kept on the team are on the bench most of the time. There were four Black guys on the basketball team this year and I never saw more than one of them on the floor at the same time. If they put one Black in, they always take the other one out. The same thing happened in football. It's like they keep the Black guys competing against each other for positions rather than playing together.

Ken came to pearson State as a freshman. He said he had played a little footaball the first two years but was cut early in the season of his junior year. He completed the last two years and graduated this year, May, 1984, with a degree in Criminal Justice. Ken told the researcher that he planned to return to Pearson for the summer to attend the Police Academy.[2]

Two other athletes who discussed their experiences with the researcher confirmed Ken's opinions about Blacks being cut from the teams, however, they thought that often the Black athlete was off the team because he became academically ineligible to play. John, a basketball team member, revealed that although he remained eligible and on the team the entire season, he did not get into a game once.

[2] The Police Academy is a summer training program for Law Enforcement Certification. It is an option Public Service studentshave beyond the Bachelor's Degree.

Rodney, a baseball player, thought that he played more this season than last, probably because he was the only Black on the team.

The Geographic Significance of Pearson State

Pearson State College is situated in a rural area near Riverview, a small community founded in 1848. According to statistics from the local township office, in the 1970-1980 decade, Riverview's population grew 71 percent, from 3,544 to 6,080. Planners projected it would reach 12,935 by the year 2000. Many lifelong residents of Riverview Township were dairy farmers. Although some newcomers also farmed, the majority worked in cities nearby. Retirees as well as people who worked in the surrounding communities were attracted to the area because it offered the conveniences of a city without its congestion.

According to an article published in 1982 in a local newspaper discussing the expansion of the community, commercial growth began booming in 1963 when Pearson State College was established in Riverview. From the original four corners, a business district now sprawled east, sprouting pizza parlors, hardware stores, condominium developments, trailer parks, and bowling alleys. The article was also reported that besides the commercial growth, Riverview was seeing a housing boom. Two condominium developments had begun, and two more were planned.

One hundred and seventy acres near the college were expected eventually to provide 550 housing units. The development plan included single and multi-family housing, rentals, ownerships and business. In the meantime, growth brought problems. Major needs

included municipal water, sewer extensions, larger school facilities, police protection and ambulance service. (The township had only an emergency unit which provided aid until an ambulance could arrive). Also needed were road improvements, public transportation, and industry to broaden the tax base.

Riverview retained much of its rural atmosphere and preserved prime agricultural land by concentrating commercial, industrial, institutional and residential development in one area of the county. The biggest event of the year was the Fourth of July country-style parade, tractor pull and fireworks.

Of importance to the study was the fact that Riverview offered very limited resources for the Black students who attend Pearson State College. There are many part-time job opportunities available for White students but no Black students are employed in the community. Many of the Black students work on the college campus. They have clerical jobs in college departments such as the television studio and the computer center, or as faculty assistants within student activities, and the intramural program. Some work for the physical plant, others are employed as building managers, food service assistants, and residence hall aides. The majority of these job opportunities come through the federally funded Work-Study Program as part of the student's financial aid package.

Intensive recruitment programs by the college in the 1970's brought Black students to this area where traditionally there had been almost none. This was a new experience for the Black student as well as for the White community.

The absence of Blacks in the area is one of the major complaints of Black students attending this college, especially students who come from larger urban areas. Thus, on weekends, Black students go home or go to other nearby urban areas for recreation. Those who do not have access to transportation for weekend trips away from campus feel as if they are trapped and isolated. Several students talked about their feelings of isolation during the interviews.

Typical statements made by students included: "nothing to do," and "nowhere to go out here in the country."

On the subject of the location of the college, Dr. Wilson, Associate Professor of Public Service made the following comments during an interview with the researcher:

> This is not the best place to be if you're Black. I'm not necessarily pointing a finger or saying it's anyone's fault. It's the location, this country, being twelve miles away from the city. I doubt if you could find a dozen indigenous Black folk within a five mile radius. There is no social life whatever outside the campus itself. If you have ever noticed, most colleges usually have a cluster of businesses around them; gift shops, bookstores, and at least a pub, tavern, watering hole, whatever you want to call them. Places where people can go. Apartment complexes, gathering places. All that's missing here; and, if you don't have transportation you're in trouble. The bus stops running at ten minutes after five.

The researcher asked several students if they attended a church in the community or were involved in any religious activites on campus. Several students said they had on a couple occasions attended the worship services on campus offered by the Inter-denominational Campus Ministry Council. This they found unrewarding and quite different

from the type of worship services to which they were accustomed. None
had ever attended at church in the local community. In response to
the survey question about religious preference, most of the students
had answered that they were either Baptists or Methodists. One
student said, "Well, I'm used to preaching in church, not just this
talking or what they call 'dialog', and most of all I miss the gospel
music." Another student said: "Out here if you're not Christian
Reform, you get nothing in the way of religion."

During the evening that the researcher visited with Gloria at
dinner in the Commons Cafeteria, Gloria mentioned that she had
attended church in the city about twenty miles from campus. She
explained that one of the Black Baptist Chruches at one time offered
free bus service to and from the campus for students. As Gloria
recalled:

> The problem was, the bus came to pick us up by 9:00
> in the morning and did not return to campus until
> after evening services, about 9:00 p.m. or later.
> Most of the students stopped going because they did
> not like to stay that much time in church. Many
> times I work on Sunday night at the desk in the
> lobby of the residence hall. If I'm not working I
> always need to spend some time on Sundays studying.
> Not enough students regularly took advantage of the
> free bus service so it was discontinued.

Recalling that Gloria had mentioned earlier in the conversation
that she owned a car, the researcher asked why she did not drive
herself and friends to church in the city. Her response was:

> College students don't have any money. It cost too
> much to run that car. Gas is too much. Most of
> the time that car is parked. I use it mainly to

drive home and back to campus. That's why my
mother gave me the car, so I can come home more
often. She gets really up-tight if I don't come
home at least once a month.

Significance of the Time

This study of Black students in a predominantly White college

setting was conducted during a specific period of time from August,

1983 until May, 1984. Understanding the time is important to

understanding the individual's perception of his/her experience and

the circumstances surrounding it. Often, it is the intensity of the

time or the circumstances surrounding an event or events as perceived

by the experiencing person that gives meaning to the event itself. In

the months during which the study was conducted, Pearson State College

was in a period of transition. During the previous year, the college

had experienced a complete reorganization of its academic structure

into a more traditional one, the third such major reorganization in

the college's short history.

Instead of four separate and autonomous colleges, Pearson State

College now has a unified four division model. According to Dr. Lowe,

the Executive Assistant to the College President, the college decided

to reorganize for several reasons. Dr. Lowe was quoted in the student

run campus newspaper as saying that one reason was the duplication of

classes. The administration and faculty did not see the sense of

having English, for instance, taught in three different colleges with

one college having a large number of students and another only a few.

The second reason given was that the college had been experiencing a

decline in student enrollment since the late 1970's (that coupled with

state cuts in the college's appropriation amounting to three million dollars in 1982 alone). The third reason given for reorganization was that alternative education, on which the federation model was based, is not as popular as it once was.

Federation was an idea born when the college began in 1963. The idea was to have four colleges with 1500 students in each. Each college would teach the same subjects but in different ways. The federation, though, did not turn out that way.

Dr. Lowe made the following statement during an interview regarding the reorganization:

> Studens now are more interested in the professional studies such as business, engineering, public health and nursing. When the college first started, 70 percent of our students were interested in the liberal arts and 30 percent in professional studies. Now the trend has reversed itself (Campus News, October, 1983).

One argument voiced in the newspaper was that the college was abandoning its original idea of being a unique liberal arts institution. Lowe disagreed.

> We felt for some time that the federation model wasn't working. In the late 1960's and early 1970's there was a demand for alternative education. We noticed in the late 1970's that the demand lessened. We were not attracting the students. Yes, we are changing the college's academic structure, but we are not abandoning the original concept of a liberal arts education. All students will still be required to take liberal arts classes in the four division model, Arts and Humanities, Business, Science and Mathematics and Social Sciences.

Today, Pearson State can be described as a comprehensive coeducational institution providing a curriculum that integrates liberal arts and professional studies. The college awards the Bachelor of Arts, Science, Business Administration, Fine Arts, Philosophy, Music, Music Education, Social Work, and several Applied Science degrees. In addition, it awards the Masters of Business Administration, Public Administration, Taxation, Social Work, Health Sciences, and Education degrees. A faculty of 308 (full and part time) gives an overall faculty student ratio of approximately 1-21. The students have the opportunity to combine depth of study in a major field with breadth of study in the liberal arts. As printed in the college catalog from the college's mission statement:

> The general education program is designed to develop critical thinking, self expression, and tradition of humane values and the heritage, problems and prospects of their own and other cultures (College Catalog, 1980-81).

In the meantime, recent trends in higher education have caused Pearson State to become more concerned about cost effectivness and fiscal accountability. These trends include reduced revenues, high rates of inflation, decreased levels of financial aid and decreased funds for special programs. Thus, those special programs that have always been most vulnerable, because of their lack of integration into the institutional organization or their controversial status, were the easiest to eliminate from the budget. One such program at Pearson State was the Developmental Skills Institute (DSI).

As a result of the most recent reorganization at Pearson State, the DSI program was eliminated. From its inception in 1969, the mission of the Developmental Skills Institute had been two-fold: (1) to serve as a referral unit for non-traditional students who had deficiencies in the basic skills areas of composition, reading, and mathematics which made them temporarily inadmissible to one of the degree-granting programs at the college, and (2) to serve as a testing and referral unit for students already enrolled at the college who were experiencing difficulty in one or more of their courses. DSI's primary goals were to test students who had skills deficiencies and offer services to remedy those deficiencies.

Through DSI, students who did not meet the admissions requirements of Pearson State could still start their college education. By testing for enrollment in DSI, completing the prescribed curriculum and earning 24 to 36 credits with a minimum GPA of 2.0, they could transfer into a degree program. Many Black students entered the college through this program. While it may not have been the intent, several Black students viewed this part of the reorganization at Pearson State as having a negative effect on them. As one student interviewed for this study said:

> Now when students don't meet the admissions requirments for grades and test scores, they will just be turned away. That's going to affect a lot of Blacks. I know I never would have gone to college here or anywhere else if it hadn't been for this program.

Another student said:

> College was the last thing on my mind when I was a
> senior in high school. In fact, I was skipping
> class one day, sitting in my counselor's office,
> and she said the recruiters were there testing that
> day. She suggested that instead of just sitting
> there wasting time I should take the tests just to
> see how they turn out.
>
> I was shocked when I got the letter saying I had
> been admitted to the DSI, and so was my mother.
> She had been wanting me to go on to school and when
> she saw the letter she said, O.K., you're going
> now.

Not all of the students spoke positively about the DSI. Several

students considered it a waste of their time and a way of prolonging

the time it takes to graduate. However, one Black female student did

say that may students made the mistake of thinking that the classes

would be easy; some ultimately failed because they thought there was

no need to study for or attend remedial classes.

Dr. Thomas, the former director of the DSI, supported the

students' opinion that the demise of the institute negatively affected

Blacks. He explained that DSI was replaced by a Learning Center which

incorporates among other programs, DSI, The Career Counseling and

Placement Center, and the honors program into one organization. As

Dr. Thomas showed the researcher around the Center, he continued to

talk about the merits of the former DSI program in a separate facility

as compared to the present Academic Resource Center. In the course of

conversation, Dr. Thomas mentioned several times, "I am not the

director of the Academic Resource Center, but . . . When I was the

director of DSI, . . .," implying that since the reorganization, his

job responsibilities had changed and he was no longer in a position to

operate the program the way he believed it should be. He said:

Theoretically, the idea of an academic learning
center is fine, but it does not appeal to Black or
other non-traditional students because there is
simply too much activity here; too many people and
different programs in the same area. Look around
you. The tutoring must take place out in an open
area. There are people coming and going all the
time. No privacy. People with problems, whether
academic or personal, don't want to advertise them
to the entire college. I see fewer and fewer of
our Black students coming here voluntarily. Some
come because they are required to because of
academic probation. They come just long enough to
accomplish that and then we don't see them until
they are in trouble again.

The researcher observed that on this particular day, one week
before the beginning of final exams, there were several one-on-one
tutoring sessions in process at tables in a large open area. The
private rooms designated for reading and mathematics laboratories were
empty. There were no Blacks present. Dr. Thomas suggested that
usually they were much busier; however, he did see a distinct
reduction in the number of Blacks availing themselves for tutoring and
other support services since the institute had been dissolved, and
those services merged with several other student service programs.

Another faculty member, when discussing the reorganization of the
college, also supported the students' perception that while some
changes may have been necessary because of the economy in the state,
the negative effect is more pronounced for Blacks at the college than
for any others. She cited the following examples as evidence:

Raising admissions standards and requiring higher
college board scores and high school grade point
averages effectively restricts the enrollment of
Black students.

> The emphasis on scientific and technological fields
> has led this institution and others to allocate a
> greater proportion of their faculty, courses, and
> equipment to these fields at the expense of the
> social sciences and humanities. Although this
> trend reflects the general direction of the society
> toward high technology, it is not congruent with
> the educational backgrounds and career aspirations
> of the majority of our Black students.

The faculty member also cited the elimination of the Office of Minority Affairs as another result of the reorganization. Her perception of that change was that it too has had a negative effect on the attendance of Blacks at Pearson State.

> During the previous reorganization in 1980, the
> Office of Minority Affairs was eliminated. They
> got rid of the one Black who was the greatest
> advocate for Black students by eliminating his
> position and office. This happened at the time
> when the Black student enrollment was at its
> highest in the history of the college, more than
> 500. The enrollment has gone down ever since. We
> have about 200 Black students now. So, you see
> that the changes not only reduced services to Black
> students, they generally have resulted in a
> reduction or demotion of Black staff.

The researcher learned that initial plans to eliminate the Office of Minority Affairs created an intense controversy. According to the college's newspaper, shortly after the fall term began in 1980, the President of the college outlined plans to reorganize. The plan included an $828,000 reduction in administrative costs, including cutting his own salary and retirement benefits. According to an article in the newspaper:

> Twenty professors and more than thirty other
> employees were to be cut from the college payroll.
> Also to be eliminated were one of the three vice-
> presidents, the Performing Arts Center, the Center

for International Studies and the Minority Affairs
Office.

Many Black students protested the wording of the plan and the
threat to the status of the Minority Affairs Office.

Sarah, a recent graduate, recalled the controversy that had
occurred during her first term at Pearson State. She explained that
Black students objected to the reduction of student support services
and the proposed reassignment of the responsibility for minority
affairs to a student services staff member.

Sarah explained that approximately 60 minority students spoke out
at a student Senate Meeting in December, 1980 to disapprove of the
elimination of the Office of Minority Affairs.

Articles in the college's newspaper covering the controversy
reported the concerns of Black students and responses to those
concerns. One Black student Senator, Robert Gaines, said, "We realize
it is easy for minority students to get lost in the shuffle" during a
college-wide reorganization. Under the new plan, "we would have to go
to five or six people to get a problem solved," one student
complained. "Before there was one person and that person was there
all the time."

Another student said he felt that the college was recruiting Black
students under "false pretenses" if it does not have an Office of
Minority Affairs.

The provost said "the institution remains concerned about minority
students"; however, at the same time the students were pointing out
that the Minority Affairs Office was being dismantled. Services for

minority students were to be "coordinated" by someone who already had a <u>full-time job</u>.

In addition, the coordination of women's programs would be assimilated by the college. Black and White students were concerned about the way services to women and minorities are always first in White-male-dominated institution.

During the years that Pearson had a Minority Affairs officer, 1974-1979, the minority student population swelled from just a handful to nearly 500. The Black students believed that this increase was the result of the director's hard work and they attributed higher retention rates for minority students to the support and sympathetic counsel of the former Director of Minority Affairs. He was an advocate for minority students. Students stressed the fact that he assisted them in relationships with White professors and helped with campus judiciary referrals which they said were always handed out to Black students in greater volume and with more vigor than they were to White students. He supported them in an atmosphere which often led to lowering of the Black students' self-image, as well as a high drop out rate for them.

On December 11, 1980, Sarah reported, six representatives of minority student organizations held a heated discussion with the president of the college and presented him with a plan to salvage the Office of Minority Affairs by cutting the college budget in other areas.

"In our seven-page report," she related, "we promised to undermine Pearson's attempts to recruit minority students, if a full-time Director of Minority Affairs was not present on campus."

"It is . . . a grave injustice to increase minority student enrollment at this institution while denying adequate support and services," the report said. "To prevent this from happening, protests will be launched with and from minority leaders in the home towns of all Black students."

Black students not only picketed but also protested by dropping all their classes before leaving for Christmas vacation. News coverage of the incidents was made in area newspapers and televised news broadcasts in nearby communities.

In the meantime, efforts to distribute responsibilities for minority affairs to student services units were abortive.

Mrs. Pacer, the only Black counselor at Pearson State, shared with the researcher her reaction to being asked to coordinate the services of the Office of Minority Affairs in addition to her full-time counseling job.

> I really didn't want to take on that responsibility especially since I strongly objected to the elimination of the office and the director's position. There was a great deal of controversy about this whole thing and the Black students were really upset. Plus, the services of that office included the International Students and I didn't have the background to deal with cross-cultural problems. The Career Planning and Counseling Center had just the year prior been reorganized to emphasize career over personal counseling. I was just getting accustomed to this and building up a Black clientele of students. I did spend a couple hours a day trying to coordinate the services. This lasted only a couple months and was not a very effective job.

Mrs. Pacer also indicated that in November 1981 responsibilities for the Office of Minority Affairs were assigned to the Director of

Special Services, who is also responsible for Affirmative Action and International Student Affairs. In Mrs. Pacer's words:

> That's one of the problems here. The few Blacks on
> staff are always overloaded with several different
> jobs.

Summary

Established in 1960 as a four year liberal arts college, Pearson State College has experienced three major reorganizations since 1967. The first reorganization of the academic structure was for the purpose of broadening the academic program. Between 1968 and 1973, the student body grew from 2,200 to more than 5,000, resulting in the need to revise the faculty governance system and streamline the administrative organization; the second reorganization. Between 1973 and 1980, the Black student population grew from only six students to approximately 500, by far the largest number of Blacks to attend Pearson State in the history of the college.

Since 1980, the picture with respect to the recruitment and retention of Black students, faculty, and staff has been less than dramatic. Affirmative action demands have fared poorly in the face of general academic entrenchments. Minority-oriented programs, considered adjunct rather than integral to the institution, were the first to be dropped. Black students, faculty, and staff, although never a major focus at Pearson State, were beneficiary of affirmative action initiatives during the 1970's. Today, affirmative action at Pearson State has been reduced to a state of stagnation relative to

Black presence and participation. Generally, neither the culture nor existence of Blacks has been reflected in the educational goals and objectives of the college. Other than the Louis Armstrong Theater located in the Fine Arts Center, none of the campus buildings, monuments, or streets are designated or named in honor of Black or other minority persons. Between 1981 and 1983, the Black student population at Pearson State declined from 500 Blacks in a total student body of more than 6,000 to approximately 250 Blacks in a total student population of 6,700. Among more than 500 faculty and staff persons at Pearson State only 19 are Black.

Pearson State can be described as a beautiful 876 acre campus in a semi-rural seting with wide open spaces and modern, well equipped buildings. The attractiveness of the academic programs and the fact that small classes are taught by highly qualified, enthusiastic faculty were the most frequently cited reasons White students gave for attending. Black students, however, more often cited their admission through the Development Skills Institute and their recruitment by Black faculty, staff, and other Black students.

The college has also been described as not the best place to be if one is Black. The institutional setting reinforces the preexisting class biases of a White middle class student body. The college has been designed with their educational and professional socialization in mind. The predominantly White student and staff population, as well as the overwhelmingly White community surrounding the campus, results in Blacks, for the most part, feeling isolated in a hostile, alien environment.

Chapter Five contains additional findings of the study relative to factors that affect Black students' success and the strategies they employ to adapt, adjust and function in spite of their isolation and other problems in this college setting.

Chapter V

Presentation of Findings

Introduction

This study focused on the experiences of selected Black students at Pearson State College. Designed to elicit their views regarding their experiences and strategies for success at a predominantly White college, the study explored their experiences in relation to environmental, academic and social factors.

For this descriptive investigation, in-depth personal interviews were employed to collect information from 25 Black junior and senior level students, five former students, and 18 faculty and staff persons. Specifically, information was obtained from several sources. A questionnaire survey of Black students was composed of a series of items concerning opinions of campus life, impressions of classroom activities, impressions about self, and reports of the extent of their interracial contact. There were also audio-taped recordings of meetings conducted by Black students; analysis of written documents and records concerning campus activities; and fieldnotes from observations in classrooms and at out-of-class activities.

To present the finding of this investigation, this chaper is divided into three sections. The first section gives a limited profile of the sample population. The second and third sections contain information that responds to the two main research questions:

1. What do Black students see as components of a successful experience at Pearson State College?

2. What are their experiences and what are their perceptions of the relationships between Blacks and Whites at Pearson State College?

The researcher selected the examples and excerpts used in this study after a careful analysis of the detailed field-notes and audio-taped interviews. The perceptions presented are representative of those expressed by the students and other informants interviewed and observed during the study.

Demographic Profile of Sample Population

In this section a brief overview of the Black students in the study is presented. Specific statistical information on Black students was not generally available to the researcher through reports and documents at the college. As indicated in Chapter Three, most available data were not categorized according to predominant ethnic background or race. The researcher could not have access to much of the data that were available because of the privacy rights of students.[3] Therefore, the researcher relied on the information gained from questionnaires and interviews to formulate a general profile of the sample population in the study. The population for the study was, theoretically, all the Black students on campus. The sample, in

[3] Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (states in essence that) institutions may not disclose information about students nor permit inspection of their records without their permission unless such action is covered by certain exceptions as stipulated in the Act.

actuality, were those Black students who were willing to participate. The sample for the interview portion of the study consisted of 25 currently enrolled and 5 former students. Based on the research objective to discover the students' strategies for success, only third year and fourth year students were interviewed.

The students interviewed included 18 women and 12 men. The average age was 22 years, with the youngest being 19 and the oldest 36. The self reported high school grade point average ranged between 1.9 and 3.5; the college grade point average ranged between 2.2 and 3.2 at the end of the students' sophomore or junior year. All 30 students were from various urban areas within the state with the majority coming from the southeastern corner of the state.

During the interviews, students were asked questions regarding their experiences at the college and the strategies they believed helped tham most in their success and/or survival at a predominantly White college. For example, the researcher asked students to identify the expectations White instructors have of Black students; the expectations Black students have of themselves; the educational outcomes valued highly by Black students; and their experiences and perceptions regarding inter-racial relationships at the institution.

Students were initially contacted by the investigator informally as they were encountered on campus. Later, with the help of several students, the researcher distributed questionnaires throughout the residence halls. A list of names of Black students who indicated they were willing to participate in the study was compiled and appointments were made by telephone for interviews.

Three of the former students were graduates and two were dropouts. The researcher was introduced to the three graduates at a "Welcome Reception" for minority students in the fall prior to the beginning of classes. All three are females who are now employed in a nearby city. Having graduated just three months earlier, they attended the reception to visit former classmates and instructors and to offer friendly advice to the incoming freshmen.

One of the graduates was instrumental in putting the researcher in contact with the two former students who had not graduated. Both of these students were males who had withdrawn after their freshman year. One had left for "financial reasons." He ran out of money and could not qualify for financial aid. His plans were to work for a year and complete his studies at some later time and most likely at some other college. However, at that time he had been unable to find a job. The second young man had withdrawn near the end of his freshman year for what he described as "a lot of reasons." He said that he really wasn't "making it" academically; he didn't really know what he wanted to study; and, he was about to be married. The researcher found that interviewing these former students added a valuable perspective to the study. Their stories were especially helpful in view of the fact that the freshman year of study is considered to be the most difficult and that the juniors and seniors being interviewed most likely had already passed the critical dropout stage.

The purpose of this study was to determine strategies and critical factors for success and to describe Black students' perceptions of their experiences. To identify strategies and factors for success, the researcher attempted to compile and organize the data collected in

terms of the success strategies students identified as being most important on the questionnaire (see Table 3). The strategy cited most frequently was to study; however, the students mentioned several other strategies related to studying and study habits and compensations for being academically underprepared. These are also presented in this chapter. The researcher also observed students' classroom behavior and other activities. The students' perceptions of their experiences were determined primarily from analysis of notes from interviews.

TABLE 3

MOST IMPORTANT STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS
n = 30

RESPONSES[1]	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
1. Study	16	12	28
2. Develop good study habits	14	10	24
3. Attend classes	9	11	20
4. Get help before too late	9	7	16
5. Find a support group	11	4	15
6. Get involved on campus	5	8	13
7. Choose friends carefully	8	2	10
8. Set some priorities	6	2	8
9. Know what is expected	5	2	7
10. Make good use of time	3	2	5
11. Use the library	2	2	4
12. Learn to be competitive	1	3	4
13. Don't give up	2	2	4
14. Stand up for your rights	0	1	1
15. Worry about learning, not grade	1	0	1
16. Check everything out	0	1	1

[1]Respondents mentioned more than one

The researcher asked each student interviewed for the study what he/she thought was the most important strategy that Black students at this college need to develop in order to be successful. Table 3 summarizes the respondent's most important strategies for success.

In addition, the researcher discovered both academic and non-academic factors that affected the success of these students. The balance of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of these factors as viewed from a variety of student and staff viewpoints.

Academic Factors

Underpreparedness

A careful review of fieldnotes from observations and interviews revealed that achievement of successful academic performance is probably one of the greatest challenges for the Black students at Pearson State. One problem is that many seem to be academically underprepared. More than fifty percent of the students interviwed for this study said they were underprepared for their course work when they entered the college. These studens had been admitted through the former Developmental Skills Institute (DSI). Most of them were admitted with less than a 2.0 grade point average and had lower than average reading, writing and/or math test scores.

Even those who had earned good grades in high school said they were underprepared for college level courses and that their grades during the first and second years were much lower than they had expected. As one student told the researcher:

> I got pretty good grades in high school, maybe because I took the courses I liked. I avoided taking math and science except for what was required to graduate. Now I wish I had taken more of them.

A Black faculty member interviewed for the study was asked to identify critical factors that cause some Black students at Pearson State to drop out. Among those he cited were:

1. Poor writing skills
2. Weakness in skills for mathematics and science.
3. General academic deficiencies.

The significance of the deficiencies can be noted in their choice of majors. Another Black faculty member, Dr. Wilson, also noted that after Black students enrolled, they did not major in the hard sciences.

Several of the students said they had not been enrolled in college preparatory courses in high school and were quite surprised at the lower grade point average that resulted when the college admissions officer recomputed their grade point omitting many of their elective courses. These students felt that it was through the tutoring, refresher courses and other support services of the DSI that they were able to improve their basic skills and survive the introductory college courses. Some said they continued to use those services throughout their college years.

Tyrone, who had been recruited to play baseball for Pearson State, explained that he discovered as soon as he received his first semester grades that he needed help and began then to use the free tutoring service.

> Yes, I use the tutoring service. They have really
> helped me. You see, the first semester here I did
> not really do anything but party. I thought I
> could get by with glancing at the books once in a
> while. Then, after I got my grades back; well, it
> looked pretty bad. And I didn't like being on
> probation. I decided to start studying a little
> more but found out that I was really behind. I
> realized my skills from high school were not up to
> par and I was spinning my wheels and getting no
> where. That's when I started going to the tutoring
> center for help. Now I go right at the beginning
> of every term before I get behind. This helps me
> get the jump on the stuff before I get into trouble
> and they have helped me learn to balance my time
> between work and play.

Diane, the only married student in the study, suggested that new

students should not be afraid to ask for help; she said she encourages

Black freshmen to seek help before they "get too deep into academic

difficulty". Diane had attended another college for a few months

right after high school graduation. She dropped out, married, and

started again after two years. Her husband also attends Pearson

State. She told the researcher:

> At first, I thought I could do it on my own. But I
> found out that I couldn't compete with these White
> kids. I got pretty good grades in high school and
> then got here and really felt like a dummy.
> Sometimes I didn't even know what the professor was
> talking about. So, yes, I got some tutoring and I
> started going to the professors after class and
> during their office hours for help...once I worked
> really hard on a term paper for this one class and
> found later I had done it all wrong...I didn't
> understand what the prof wanted. After that I
> started asking questions right in class. Now I am
> sure of what I'm supposed to be doing before I
> waste a lot of hours on something. It's really
> different from high school, much harder.

In another discussion about the achievements and aspirations of Black students at Pearson State, the Acting Director of Admissions pointed out that Black students seem to experience their greatest difficulty in academic performance during the freshman year. She noted that

> ...as Black students become second and third year students, we see some improvement in their grades. However, while there is improvement in their performance over the freshman year, they nevertheless still lag behind their White classmates. But by the fourth year, many Black students have caught up with and sometimes surpassed their White peers in grades.

Thus, as she surmised, fourth-year Black students seem to have overcome many of the impediments that tend to interfere with their academic performance during the first years of college.

As Sarah, a graduate of Pearson State, explained:

> The freshmen are just so lost out there. When I was there, we just put our arms around the new ·studens...now the juniors and seniors don't do that...juniors and seniors now don't go to the dorms and to the dining hall and introduce themselves and teach the freshmen and sophomores about the system. Introduce them to the Black professors and all that...show them around.

Sarah also cited success factors for the Black students in her graduating class:

> The ones that graduated with me were a strongly motivated bunch to begin with and had a really good sense of values. They were not here to party. It's all right to party...have fun...but we thought academics were more important and that we should

spread what we called our "campus awareness" to
other students.

Having been involved in the Black student protest against the
elimination of the Office of Minority Affairs, Sarah recalled that
even such an intensely time-consuming activity did not detract her
from her course work:

> All the time I was involved in that coalition, and
> I was busy day and night, but I kept up with my
> classwork. Sometimes I didn't go to class but I
> sent the work or had another student go and take
> notes in the classes where the teachers knew and
> approved of what we were doing. There were a
> couple of classes I had to go to, because the
> teachers were totally against what we were doing.
> One class I didn't get to for five or six weeks but
> I got all my work done and I passed the class.

In the meantime, the researcher also noted that while Sarah was
talking about Black students being self-motivated, she also saw pride
as a deterrent to the success of some:

> ...and their pride...sometimes our pride gets in
> the way...especially when we won't admit we need
> help. Many times students would drop out, move
> into the city, get a job, all without telling their
> parents; parents think they are still in school.
> Some were required to sit out for a term or for
> even a year, sometimes they were required to take
> classes at Junior College to establish a grade
> point. Their parents may know nothing at all about
> it because they just wouldn't want the parent to
> know that they came all the way here and spent all
> that money, and just couldn't hack it.

One of the questions the researcher asked students during their
interviews was: Can you remember which academic experience you have
had since coming to college that made you feel very good about

yourself? In almost every instance, the student told about a course, an examination, a paper or class project in which an unusually good grade was earned. One student said:

> My first quiz was an A. That made me feel pretty good. I had just started my major courses and didn't know the subject or the professor.

Another student talked about her first accounting test; she recalled that she was extremely anxious:

> I had such an anxiety about accounting because everybody kept telling me 'it's gonna be hard' and 'not many Blacks can make it; they just don't have the discipline for accounting.' Well, I decided to try a major in accounting anyway; and, miraculously...and I had...or at least I was told I had the hardest professor in the department, but I got a B on my first test.

Selecting a Major

Another factor involved in the challenge to achieve academically is the selection of a major area of concentration. The students in the study reported being enrolled in some major areas that are non-traditional for Blacks, however, the majority of them continue to follow paths which traditionally have been more open to Black people. One student said she felt good when she finally decided that accounting just wasn't for her and changed to a social work major. She recalled that:

> My sociology class was my first A. After two years in college...and a year of struggling in math and

> business courses...I finally changed to
> sociology/social work major. For the first time I
> really felt good going to classes. I enjoyed doing
> the assignments, the readings, the class
> discussions. I felt that I was really learning
> something.

Ten of the twenty-five currently enrolled students interviewed were enrolled in non-traditional areas such as business-related majors in Accounting, Marketing, Public Administration, Hospitality-Tourism Management, or Legal Administration. The remaining students indicated major in Criminal Justice (six), in Sociology/Social Work, Journalism and Special Education (two each), and Health Sciences, Nursing/Sports Medicine, and Psychology (one in each area) see Tables Four and Five.

TABLE 4

FEMALE STUDENTS INTERVIEWED FOR STUDY

NAME	AGE	MAJOR AREA OF STUDY	CLASSIFICATION
Allison	22	Journalism	Senior
Carol	26	Social Work	Graduate
Crystal	21	Sociology/Social Work	Senior
Cynthia	26	Social Work	Graduate
Della	36	Social Work	Junior
Diane	24	Nursing/Sports Medicine	Junior
Gloria	21	Special Education	Junior
Kathy	21	Hospitality-Tourism/Management	Junior
Leslie	21	Accounting	Junior
Letti	20	Legal Administration	Senior
Leslie	21	Accounting	Junior
Marianne	21	Journalism	Junior
Natalie	20	Criminal Justice	Senior
Pamela	21	Health Sciences	Senior
Sally	20	Criminal Justice	Senior
Sarah	25	Public Relations/Advertising	Graduate
Tiffany	21	Psychology	Senior

TABLE 5

MALE STUDENTS INTERVIEWED FOR STUDY

NAME	AGE	MAJOR AREA OR STUDY	CLASSIFICATION
Bob	21	Criminal Justice	Senior
Clarence	21	Special Education	Junior
Emitt	22	Business Administration	Junior
John	21	General Business	Junior
Kenneth	24	Criminal Justice	Senior
Lionel	21	Business Administration	Junior
Rick	21	Marketing	Junior
Rodney	23	Social Studies	Dropped-out
Stan	20	Criminal Justice	Junior
Terry	19	Accounting	Junior
Tyrone	20	Marketing	Senior
Willie	25	Special Education	Dropped-out

An analysis of a list of major educational areas for Black students at Pearson State College for the 1982-83 school year compiled by the Records Office for the Affirmative Action Office revealed that major choices of the students in the study were typical of those of other Black students at the college. The area listing the largest number of Blacks was General Business with eighteen. There were eleven in Criminal Justice, eight in General Education, seven in Special Education, and six in Special Education/Psychology. There were five majors in Social Work, four each in Hospitality/Tourism Management, Computer Sciences, Arts and Media, BioMedical Sciences, and General Psychology. Only one, two, or three were listed for several other areas of Business, Social Sciences and Humanities.

There were at least thirty additional academic degree programs listed which had no Black students enrolled.

Dr. Wilson, a Black Assistant Professor in Public Service (criminal Justice) in which a large number of Black students are enrolled, made the following observations about the students' academic involvement and their choices of major fields of study at Pearson State:

> I see no significant difference in Black students' scholarly endeavors than in the majority students. You find some are very good students, some average, and some poor. And, that's consistent with the mainstream or majority of students that we have here.
>
> We have never had a completely open door policy but until just a year ago, we had as close to an open door as you can have without completely having one. So, we got students that completely run the gamut. Whether you are talking about Black or White...I don't see a significant difference.
>
> One of the things that does surprise me about Black students, and I don't know why it should because I would fall into this category myself. We don't see any Blacks in the hard sciences, which is strange because that's the one place that racism can't weed you out. In mathematics you either know it or you don't. Nobody can use their subjective judgment and say this answer is not quite what I had in mind...not quite what I wanted. They can do that with an essay answer. They can say 'you don't have quite the flavor' or 'you didn't put enough emphasis on this or that'. But we just don't see us in those areas.
>
> During the days of segreatation, and I grew up in the south, we saw Black doctors. They had to have some kind of scientific background before they got into medical school. We see Black doctors, but no Black engineers...no Black people in physics..It seems that segregated society needed Black teachers and Black preachers. How can one be a doctor and not be an engineer???But, we see very few Blacks coming through here in the hard sciences. I cannot

think of one off-hand. There must be some...but
very few.

One of the principal problems in selecting a major seems to be the
lack of career counseling. The researcher noticed that on the list of
major educational areas for Black students at Pearson in the academic
year of 1982-83, for 130 of 245 students or 53 percent, no majors were
indicated. Seventy were undeclared majors; forty-three were enrolled
in DSI and seventeen were listed as unknown.

Dr. Thomas, Director of Trio Programs (Upward Bound, Talent Search
and Special Services) and the former Director of Developmental Skills
Institute, also spoke to the researcher about Black students' career
aspirations. He said it is not unusual for both minority and majority
students to take as long as two years or more to decide on a major.
He agreed that all too often Black students confine their choices to a
more narrow range of career fields, those in which they see other
Balcks. He suggested that

> ...most Blacks value education because that's one
> of the ways out of the ghetto. Some, too many,
> look to sports and entertainment. I think sports
> and entertainment takes away from education. Too
> many of our kids don't realize that we can't all be
> a Michael Jackson or a Patrick Ewing. But that's
> hard to realize when you see a Moses Malone, who is
> still learning to read, making two million dollars
> a year.[4]

[4] Michael Jackson is an internationally acclaimed musician, vocalist
and entertainer. Pawrick Ewing (Georgetown University) and Moses
Malone (Philadelphia 76ers) are both famous basketball stars.

> We are seeing more...if you look in <u>Ebony</u>
> Magazine...because you don't see
> Blacks...professional, successful Balcks in the
> media. <u>Ebony</u> Magazine has been my tool of
> inspiration to see what Black people are really
> doing. That's why I still buy them and pass them
> around and let kids look at them.

Several students said they were not encouraged while in high
school to prepare for non-traditional careers, in fact, in some cases
they felt they were discouraged. And, as Crystal told the researcher,
even some college advisors discourage Black students. She said she
was warned by her advisor, the professor, and "some guys in the School
of Business" that she should not attempt an accounting major:

> They said it was too hard; that I would never make
> it. The professor said I probably couldn't pass no
> matter how hard I tried, and he didn't even know
> me. It's true, I had not done real well my first
> year, but he didn't know that. My advisor, who had
> never been much help, tried to talk me into another
> major and several guys in the business division
> warned me that it would be too hard. But, it
> seemed like the more everybody said I couldn't do
> it, the more I wanted to prove I could. It has
> been hard. I really bombed on the firs test, but
> it's getting better now. I changed advisors; I
> went to a Black advisor in the business department
> and he helped me a lot. He is very encouraging. I
> also got help, tutoring from special services. It
> took me a year or more but now I have a B average.
> I'm glad I stuck it out. I think it will be okay
> now. I really like it.

Faculty/Student Relationships

Another significant factor in the students' survival/success is
faculty student relationships. It is obvious from the literature that
faculty play a key role in the college experience. The Black students

interviewed for this study, for the most part, did not find it difficult to establish rapport with one or more of their major professors. The key seemed to be in exhibiting a sincere interest in the course work and a desire to do well. Actual contact with faculty outside classes was low, however, several students stressed the importance of approaching professors after class, during office hours, and even calling them at home if necessary.

The researcher asked questions relative to the expectations of professors, as well as, what expectations Black students have of themselves. The majority of the students thought that their professors did not expect them to be able to do the work in the classes without special assistance.

Crystal expalained that she thought all Blacks were treated as if they were all "special admits" and did not belong:

> Well, it's like, if you don't understand what's gong on, maybe you shouldn't be in this class. Maybe it was because I asked so many questions, but this one professor started ignoring me and not calling on me when I raised my hand. So I went to talk to her after class and she was nicer after that. Although I could see that she really didn't think I could do the work. I did B work all semester and got a C out of her class.

Sarah, the recent graduate quoted earlier, recalled an experience she had while at Pearson State:

> This professor gave me a failing grade which I knew I did not deserve. I tried to discuss it with him and he just said 'that's what I gave you and that's it!' So I told him that I had talked to my mother and father before coming to him and they said to call them if I had any trouble with him, and they

would come right out to campus. I also told him
that my mother was an English teacher and that she
had said this wasn't failing work.

Well, his eyes got really big and he turned red. I
guess he was surpsised that a college student would
call her parents. He said, "No, no, you don't need
to call your parents. Let me look over the
material again, maybe I did not judge it fairly."
Well, he took all my papers back and when I did get
them back again, I got a C out of his class.

Sarah told the researcher that she believed that many times White

professors think of all Blacks as only average or below.

They just have that mind-set. They just see your
color and never get beyond that to get to know the
person. Maybe they don't mean to but they don't
judge you fairly...sometimes they don't even read
your papers...they glance over them and give you a
C or D for getting them in. One of the things we
learned early at Pearson was to zerox all your
papers, even the rough drafts...keep a file of all
your work. Then, in the end you can take them all
back to the professor. The funy thing was,
sometimes they acted like they had never seen some
of the papers before. But, all our grades went up
when they realized we meant business..

Not all the students interviewed for the study blamed their

problems on the professors and racial discrimination.

Pamela agreed that often the White professors do not have very

high expectations of Black students, but she refused to allow this to

discourage her:

What I expect of mlyself is the most important
thing. And I know that my parents have high
expectations of me. I can't disappoint them. Once
you understand exactly what your profs expect and
how they want the work done, it is up to you...I
had to ask myself: Why are you here? That's when I
began to set some priorities. I started spending

my time with students whose goals were similar to mine and not being influenced by others who waste their time. When I fail a test or something, I don't let it get me down: I just try harder the next time.

For Terry, two factors contributing to success were living on campus and receiving help from his professors. Terry, who lived off-campus at home during his freshman year, moved to campus because in that way he could make better use of the college resources. He perceived professors as very willing to assist students. He told the researcher:

> I lived at home the first year because it didn't make sense to spend the money for the dorm when I lived so close. That might have been okay if I had a car, but as it was I was spending a lot of time waiting for the bus. The buses don't run at night, so I would have to leave campus at least by five o'clock, sometimes even earlier, because I had a part-time job near home in the city. I didn't mind missing social activities or games and things because I'm really not into that, but I did mind not being able to use the library, studying with classmates and talking with professors after class. I moved out here on campus the second year, last year and that made a lot of difference in my work and grades. I still don't spend much time socializing but I do find it helps to discuss classwork with other students and to talk to the professors. I found that most of them are really willing to give you time and help if you just show that you are interested. In fact, most professors go overboard to help if you show some initiative and interest.

Both Drs. Wilson and Thomas alluded to low expectations that White faculty have of Black students. While the students attributed professors' behavior to racism, Drs. Wilson and Thomas mentioned "elitism" as a primary motivator. In response to the researcher's

question relative to faculty expectations and their relationships with
Black students. Dr. Wilson replied:

> That's a pretty difficult thing to
> assess...because...at an institution like this you
> are not going to see overt racism. If it's here,
> it's sopisticated, and it's too sophisticated to be
> picked up by casual observation. You really have
> to look at it over a period of time.
>
> One thing that I have noticed, what some Black kids
> have termed racist, with respect to a particular
> professor, is not so much racist as it is...what
> shall I say? Elitism...Classism...all too often I
> have seen the situation where a White professor
> just could not wait to tell me about this 'great
> Black kid that he or she had in class. I exemped
> him from my final exam, He is just such a great
> kid.' I remember the situation when I had an office
> next to this White professor. One Black student
> came to ask him a question and he read the riot act
> at this kid. I guess I assumed it was
> racist...racially motivated; but about two days
> later, another Black kid came in, he was entirely
> different. He took this kid around and introduced
> him to everybody in the department, 'this is so and
> so, one of my best students'. He was somebody.
> Somebody's son or nephew or something.
>
> I can't accuse that man of being racist, I can
> accuse him of being an elitist. So, that's the way
> I see it. I'm sure it (racism) does exist. But, I
> think it can be overcome. I think that in many
> instances White professors look at Black students
> as being lazy and unwilling to work.
>
> I don't think racism is a problem to the extent
> that it would be a deterrent to getting an
> education here. In the time that I have grown up,
> I have seen a hell of a lot worse.

Dr. Wilson told the researcher that he often had Black students
come to him and say that some professor was a racist; usually it was
the result of their getting a C or D when they should have received an

A or B. Dr. Wilson said he was not always convinced of this, but, as he explained:

> It is a funny thing...I have also seen some White professors give Black students higher grades than they deserve; it goes the other way too...White man's burden...and I've seen Black people play on this too.

Dr. Thomas made a similar evaluation of the situation at Pearson State when he said:

> I think there is a certain amount of elitism involved as far as the faculty and minority students are concerned. But, if you are a bright student, a scholarship winner or something, there's no way you can fail here. If they hear about you, know you are somebody, there is no way you can fail. We hear faculty talking all the time about so and so who is such and such a person's son or daughter. I think it goes back to the reputation preceeding the person, however, with Blacks, they kinda lump us all into one category unless he or she is someone special...good credentials.

Role Models

Another of the key variables that seem to make a difference is the availability, or lack, of significant role models, particularly models who exhibit some interest and concern for the struggling Black student. Many of the Black students come to Pearson State from a large urban area and for them the quiet, wooded, country life and dormitory restrictions are difficult to accept. As one young Black male said:

> This is really what you call 'cultural shock'. And
> to find practically no Blacks on the faculty or
> staff, nobody to talk to except other kids who are
> having the same problem; man, it was rough at
> first. Without a doubt the person who has done the
> most to serve as a role model for me had been Mr.
> Williams. Not only has he personally helped me,
> but a lot of my friends talk to him, too, when they
> get down in the dumps.

Mr. Williams, a Black administrator, is employed at Pearson State

as an Assistant Director of Special Services and Financial Aid

Assistant. According to a number of Black students, he is their

friend and advisor.

During an interview with Mr. Williams, the researcher learned that

his time was divided almost equally between the two jobs: mornings in

Financial Aid and afternoons in Special Services. Mr. Williams told

the researcher that the most enjoyable part of his day was the hour

between the two office responsibilities, because he often spent that

hour chatting with students in the lounge. In his words:

> I really get a kick out of discussing the issues
> with these kids. Gives them something to think
> about, and if I help one or two along the way to
> solve a problem or something, thats all well and
> good. Every now and then I invite a couple of them
> home with me for Sunday dinner. My wife and kids
> enjoy that too.

In a discussion with the researcher about the sparse enrollment of

Black students in mathematics and "the hard sciences" at Pearson

State, Dr. Wilson pointed out the importance of Black role models to

the students' choice of majors and careers.

He indicated that it is important for Black students to see Black

faculty in a particular department or major:

> I do think that the presence of Black faculty tends
> to be a magnet for Black students. Especially for
> those who are undecided about what they want to
> do...if they don't have a definite direction in
> which to go, the presence of a Black faculty person
> in a particular department or major can be the
> deciding factor.

As an illustration, Dr. Wilson described for the researcher the increased enrollment in Criminal Justice, the department in which he teaches. He explained that Criminal Justice majors has increased threefold since his arrival on campus seven years ago. He estimated that out of about 350 majors in the department, at least 50 of those are Black. And, they are getting a number of Black females going into the Criminal Justice field which was not the case before he came.

The students emphasized that much depends upon with whom Black students become acquainted during their first few weeks at school. If they get to know supportive individuals who are serious students and faculty or staff who are concerned and interested, they generally settle down and adjust to the environment. Black role models on campus are so few in number that many students say they never see them or get an opportunity to meet them.

The names of Black administrators and faculty members were mentioned frequently during interviews. Even though the students emphasized talking to their professors about classwork and academics, when asked who they would go to with a problem, in every instance a Black faculty member or staff person was named. The important counseling function that a Black advisor performs on a White college campus is perhaps best described by Rick's comment to the researcher.

When explaining why he seeks advice from Mr. Williams, Rick said:

> I know I can trust him not to screw me. He tells
> me which classes to take and what teachers to avoid
> or to choose. He's really concerned. You can stop
> in his office anytime and he will always take time
> for you.

Another student related the need for more Black faculty and staff
this way:

> We definitely need more people like Mr. Williams
> around here, somebody for Black kids to identify
> with. Everybody likes him because he spends a lot
> of time talking to kids on campus, discussing the
> issues and so forth. A lot of the time you will
> find him in a lounge just "rapping" with a group of
> the guys and girls, too. The thing is, there are
> about 250 or 300 Black students here and only about
> 15 or 20 Black teachers or administrators, I guess.
> I don't know that many; some of them we never see.

Similar advisor/counselor roles are played by Black faculty.
Another function they fullfill is to indirectly influence students'
career choices. Dr. Howell, an Associate Professor of Management in
the School of Business, told the researcher that at one time he spent
a lot of hours, often on his own time, recruiting Black students at
the local high schools for Pearson's School of Business.

> The headcount in 1980 at Pearson State was the
> highest in the history of the college. That was
> the year we had the highest number of Blacks also
> and most of them I recruited for the Business
> Division. We have several graduating this year.
> Some good kids...some really sharp kids that I got
> to come here. Some didn't make it through the four
> years, but, I would guess there are at least eight
> or ten graduating in various business majors; six
> of them I could name right now because I have

practically held their hands for the last four
years.

Another Black faculty member told the researcher that one of the
reasons he felt good about being at Pearson State was knowing that he
had intervened in some Black students' lives. In his words:

Perhaps I only convinced them to stick around a
little longer or showed them some things they could
do differently or better. I don't know...but I
wonder what would have happened to them had I not
been here.

Black faculty members sometimes encounter disappontment and

frustration when working on students' behalf, especially if the

students don't attach the same value to what is being done. Dr.

Wilson had tried to start a college chapter of NAACP. He said his

frustration came about three years ago during Black History Week:

I had put together what I thought was a culturally
rich and rewarding program. We had two speakers
out of Detroit; some dancers from the Lansing area,
professional dancers that did traditional African
dances, and a local pianist doing some things with
the origins of Black music. Only about 40 students
showed up.

Saturday night...and only 40 students showed up.

Later on that night they had a dance and 300 of
them showed up for the dance. That hurt me. I
guess that should not have dissuaded me from
further involvement, but it did...it stopped me for
a while.

The dance wasn't until eleven o'clock. The program
was over by then. They could have still gone to
the dance. I bet we spent $1,500 on that two hour
program, and it was good.

Black students' attitudes toward Black faculty and administrators

were somewhat ambivalent. On the one hand, most students expressed

the strong need for more Black faculty and administrators. On the other hand, Black faculty and administrators were criticized for not spending time with Black students. Several students contended that most of the small number of Black professors on campus do not interact well with Black students.

At the same time, Black students seemed to understand the dilemma facing Black faculty: "they are also few in number and have limited time and major academic responsibilities, but it seems that some of them neglect the Black students." This was the feeling expressed by one young man who told the researcher that the Black administrators were more often available to Black students than were Black faculty.

By contrast, discussions and interviews with Black faculty and staff revealed that they are aware of the academic and socio-racial pressures on Black students and are concerned about their welfare. What Black faculty and staff do to help students deal with such pressures is quite another matter, however. Except for three administrators whose names were often mentioned by students, none have any regular or formal duties to help Black students with their problems. The three administrators, by virtue of their job assignments or personal interest, worked closely with Black students. Generally, the faculty members said they were available to students. One, however, told the researcher that it was up to the students to come to him and indicated that few did so.

Interviews with Black faculty members and administrators revealed that their perceptions are similar to those of Black students in areas such as academic problems and characteristics of the college which have negative impact. They differ, however, in their opinions of

Black students' adjustment to their college experience. Seven out of ten Black staff members thought the majority of the students were not participating as fully as they should in classes and campus activities. The researcher did perceive from the Black faculty members responses that the amount of time required for them to deal with the multitude of problems presented by either the institution or the individual Black student is so overwhelming that usually one or the other gets slighted: as one professor stated, the job for which the college pays him a salary must take precedence:

> Too many of our students are caught up in the social life. I'm not going to be an advisor or sponsor or anything like that for their social organizations. My main interest is to do what I can to help students walk across that stage. And, that's what I tell them. That's a commitment I have made; maybe that is why I'm a Student Marshal at graduation. I like to see them walk across the stage. They wave to me, and that's a kind of intrinsic reward for me. They come back later to say 'thank you' for being so hard on them. This is true for both minority and majority students.

Black/White Relationships

The majority of the Black students interviewed said that they had not expected the fierce academic competiveness and that they often felt enormous academic pressure. Even the ones who had attended primarily White and racially mixed high schools had never experienced as much academic competition. Lionel, a senior student majoring in Business Management, told the researcher that he came to Pearson State prepared mentally for tough academic standards but he was not prepared

for the hostility and alienation. He told the researcher during his interview:

> I graduated from a high school where I was in the minority. I thought I was prepared to handle any racist remarks and discrimination that I encountered. But I wasn't prepared for the majority of the White students who made me feel like I had no right to be here. I thought I would make White friends as well as Black friends. The White students here are very unfriendly...superior acting. It seemed to me that they were unable or unwilling to see a human being beneath this Black skin.
>
> My first two days here were very frustrating. I expected students to be more open and friendly; instead I was overwhelmed by the sense of superiority that many Whites have in their relations with all minorities. I hadn't met any Black students. I was in a room with two White roommates who did not believe that I had not come here to play basketball...after all, doesn't every Black male play basketball?
>
> I hated being the only Black in most of my classes; eating meals in the dining hall, because White students stared at me constantly. It seemed as though I was on exhibition all the time. By the third day I was angry, tired and ready to leave. I even started packing. Then I called home and talked to my mother. She convinced me to stay; to try a little longer. I temember telling her how unreal it was here. She said, 'No Lionel, that is the real world.' And, of course she told me how I must be tough and patient to succeed in this world. So, I stayed. It has never been easy here, I have never felt totally accepted here, but I've adjusted, I've learned to cope. I've made some friends, Black and White friends. My close friends are all Black.

Separatism in the Academic Setting

Dr. McKenzie, Dean of Students, emphasized that there are many opportunities for Blacks to mingle without fear of rejection and that

there are things that both Blacks and Whites can learn from each
other. She added, "As a matter of fact, it would be very difficult
for most of us to make it without some contributions from them
(Whites)". Throughout the study, observations the researcher made in
classrooms, as well as out-of-class activities, revealed very little
mingling between Black and White students.

In two of four classes observed by the researcher, there was only
one Black student. Another class had two present and one absent.
In both the classes that had only one Black student, neither student
spoke up during the class. After one class the English instructor
said the student almost never contributed to class discussion; however
the student indicated to the researcher that he was never called upon
to do so by the instructor. The second class with one Black female
student was a laboratory situation in which the Black student worked
on a Biology project along with two White classmates. She told the
researcher that in most of her classes she was the only Black.
Majoring in Health Sciences, she had become accustomed to being the
only one and worked very well with the White students.

In the accounting class that the researcher visited, the two Black
students did not sit together or work together. Although some
students in the class worked in twos and threes on their problems,
these particular students worked alone.

The fourth class, a sociology class with a Black professor, had
six Black students. The researcher observed this sociology class for
two consecutive class periods. The Black professor was one that had
been described as "very good" by several students. The course was
Social Problems and the topic being discussed on both days was

prejudice and racism. As it turned out, Dr. Jackson, the professor, lectured for most of the first period but did stimulate some discussion and interaction near the end. The researcher observed that comments were being made only by three Black females in the class. When the researcher mentioned this observation to Dr. Jackson after the class, he suggested that Black students typically were outspoken in his classes on the topics such as prejudice and racism. Dr. Jackson said, "This is a subject they can relate to." He explained:

> For one reason they know from personal experience
> all about this subject. For them this is a real
> and relevant issue. My classes are probably the
> nearest some of these students ever get to Black
> studies on this campus.

As suggested by the professor, the researcher returned to his class the next day and heard a very lively discussion of prejudice and racism, this time involving several White students as well as the Black students in the class. It was evident that Dr. Jackson had good rapport with his students, both Black and White, because those involved in the discussion seemed comfortable in speaking up and expressing themselves on this subject. During the class discussion, one of the Black students said she thought the major problem between Black students and White faculty members at Pearson State was that many White professors view them as incompetent. She cited the example of a professor telling her she would probably need special help without knowing anything about her or her abilities.

Another Black student reported that a professor told her she probably would not pass his class no matter how hard she tried. These

students felt that this kind of prejudice evoked the self-fulling prophecy, if not outright inequality, into the grading process.

Dr. Jackson agreed that one major problem between Black students and some White faculty members involve assumptions about all Black students. He explained to the class that often both Blacks and Whites who have not experienced a relationship, or have experienced an unsatisfactory relationship with a person of the opposite race, assume that all Blacks and Whites have incompatible tastes.

Separatism in the Non-Academic Setting

Outside the classroom, in social and leisure-time activities, infrequent mingling of Black and White students at Pearson State is also infrequent.

Black students in the study described their campus relationships as basically separate from those of White students. Black faculty and staff persons interviewed seem to concur with students' perceptions of race relations on campus. One of the residence hall managers said that even in situations where Black and White students room together there is very little association between them outside the room. As he stated: "They respect each other's privacy in the room and go their own separate ways, with their own separate friends outside the room."

A Black professor said:

> Socially we are separate. I don't see that
> changing. If you go into the cafeteria, people are
> usually seated accouring to race; out of choice.
> Every now and then you see some mingling. There
> are certain interactions on campus that mandate

socialization between the races, some clubs and
organizations, the football team, basketball team
or something like that. But very little of that
comes out of associations in classrooms, or
studying together, or because you live in the same
dorm.

People simply prefer to be with their own kind.
What we wanted as Black people was the right to
mingle if we so desired, but we don't want it
mandated. There is a great difference between the
two.

One professor, a White, simply said: "The situation here at
Pearson State has societal implications. Colleges and universities
are mirrors of society. If it's not there, it's not going to happen
here."

Another staff members, a White administrator, explained the
problem from a different perspective:

The problem with this institution is not that it
fails to promote interracial contact. The
structure of this institution does not lend itself
to social contact, period! The faculty lives in
towns and cities 20, 30, or 40 miles away. There
is no faculty housing. No housing development
around here where people can congregate. Our
student body in terms of age probably looks more
like that of a community college. The average age
of a student here, I think is about 26 years of
age...that's pretty old for a traditional four-year
Liberal Arts College. So we have a lot of
commuters. Except for a few people who live here
on campus, dormitory managers; and a few apartments
around for students, there is no one around after
dark. There's little social contact period; not
just between races. All the faculty and half of
the students live miles away.

The researcher did discover that some Black students had come to
the campus expecting to participate in an integrated environment.
Several Black students mentioned that they had changed from desiring

integration to desiring separatism since leaving their hometowns and living day and night with Whites. Because of what they perceive as ridicule, rejection, insensitivity, and insincerity of some Whites; they have learned by direct experience that acceptance as an individual is no guarantee against rejection because of one's race.

Clarence, a Black male student, related his experience of rejection by a White study group which convinced him that many Whites are untrustworthy and insincere.

> A group of us always studied together for exams in this one course. When I found out they had already studied and did not call me, I asked why and was told that one of the guys objected to me being in the group so they thought it would be best (for my sake) not to include me.

The tension of racial conflict was introduced into the study group by a White member, yet the group decided to deal with the tension by rejecting the Black rather than the White member. This was viewed as a racist solution. Incidents similar to this were experienced by many Black students and, in large part, are responsible for Blacks withdrawal from frequent interaction with Whites.

Sally is a third-year student who grew up in a middle class family in a large city. Here is some of what she said about her experiences and change of attitude about integration:

> I came from a pro-Black family and almost all Black neighborhood. I went to a integrated high school, about 50-50, but my friends were all Black and we had separate activities and interests outside school. We didn't have any racial problems because we never spent that much time with Whites.

My first two years I lived in the dorm. My roommate was White and we got along okay. But after a while you just get tired of their phony liberalism. You try to overlook some of the things they say but you really get tired of the stupid questions. When you are in a situation like that, exposed every day to some kind of racist remarks, it begins to work on you...I don't particularly like being questioned about my hair or my lifestyle. There are certain foods you like to eat that they don't cook (or can't cook) in the dorms. And you never really feel you have any privacy. I guess I came here expecting to be accepted by Whites and to establish friendships with both Blacks and Whites.

I have established no close personal relationships with White individuals or groups. In fact, the racial prejudice here has resulted in a growing dislike and distrust of White people.

My tendency now is to avoid any unnecessary contact with Whites.

I've changed a lot since my freshman year. Then I had hopes that Black people could move into the mainstream. I came to school here with the attitude that my parents and friends at home were wrong about not being able to get along with Whites. Now most all of mly friends are Black and I have become more or less militant. That is, I speak out whenever I hear someone saying something about Blacks and they don't know what they are talking about.

Alison, a journalism student, voiced disappointment in campus life and told the researcher how she was able to reconcile this disappointment and use it to an advantage:

It has not been as much fun as I thought it would be because the work is harder and there is nowhere to go around here. There are very few activities for the Blacks, and the Whites have their own parties. There are so few of us and we are scattered all over. We never all get together. I think there are fewer Blacks here now than when I started three years ago. I know that most of those who started when I did are gone.

It can really be sort of depressing. But then you tell yourself you are here to get an education and the social life can wait. Actually being here has slowed me down a lot, coming from the big city...and that has been good for me and my grades and studies.

Tiffany came to Pearson State on an academic scholarship and found the professors helpful:

You know, it is really a good school and the professors that I have are all willing to help you if you show you are interested.

I haven't experienced any racism except some remarks from guys driving by in a car occasionally. They know you can't reach them so you just ignore.

When questioned about the strategies employed for dealing with racial pressures so that they don't interfere with their academics, most students stated that their Black friends were their source of support. Black students appeared to associate primarily with other Black students. A few experienced the desire to become involved in more intergrated campus activities; however, they generally felt that both Black and White students at Pearson State were more comfortable with their separate activites.

During the time of the interviews for this study, some racial tension existed between Blacks and Whites on the Greek council. Crystal who had served on the council for two years explained that:

Last year all the officers of the council were White. This year they are all Black. Now the Whites want to split council. It was akay as long as they were running things, but now that we are in charge, so to speak, they are pushing for two separate councils. All the sororities and

fraternities have always been under one council before, but now that more Blacks are involved they want out.

In a separate interview with Rick a couple of weeks later, he also mentioned the problem of the Greek council:

> Most of the Blacks here belong to a fraternity or sorority because that is the main social outlet for Blacks on this campus. The problem last year was that the council always gave the Blacks a hard time about using the college facilities for parties and dances and things. Even after going through all the paper work and red tape for reserving a place and hiring security, something would come up so that they could cancel the Black group and give the facility to a White group, a technicality of some kind. So this year we all got together and elected Black officers. That was one time the Blacks really stuck together. Now they want to separate. I don't know if legally they can, but they sure are trying.

Rick explained that he believed that White students pushed for separatism far more than do Blacks:

> There are no Black dining rooms or even tables. No Black dormitories or all Black floors. We don't even have Black studies at this college and nobody is pushing for them either. The fact that most Blacks have Black roommates or share apartments or sit toghether at meals is because we are uncomfortable doing otherwise. After all, there are many more Whites than Blacks on this campus. They make no effort to integrate with us. Nobody thinks anything of seeing a group of them together, but they frightened and suspicious when a few Blacks get together. Why should we make all the efforts to change things and at the same time risk rejection by other Blacks as well as Whties?
>
> As for the Black fraternities and sororities, well, I guess that's one reason they got started in the first place because they were not asking us to join theirs.

Social Activities

Sororities and fraternities provided the primary vehicle or social activity among Black students on campus. The first Black Greek Letter organization was formed at Pearson State only four years prior to the study and all the six functioning chapters at the time of the study had very few active members. One group was struggling to maintain itself with only three members, and not one of the groups had more than twelve members. This situation placed a burden on a very few to keep the organizations alive.

A part of the problem is that more than one-half of the Black students at Pearson State are classified as freshmen. Sorority and fraternity members are primarily upperclass students. Very few pledge during their first year and some of those who do, sometimes don't return for the second year. So memberships fluctuate from year to year; sometimes from one semester to the next. Members become inactive for a number of reasons: the lack of finances, academic probation or dismissal, as well as loss of interest. This leaves a very few students from whom the six organizations have to select, and, of course, not all of these students are interested or academically eligible. The important factor is that most of the social activities sponsored by these organizations are open to the whole student body, so, any student can attend and many do enjoy the functions without ther responsibilities of membership.

Dean McKenzie, who is an advisor to the undergraduate chapters of a sorority on campus and who is also an active member of a graduate chapter of that organization, talked about Greek Letter organizations

in general and Black Greek Letter organizations in particular. The following is what she told the researcher:

> Contemporary sororities and fraternities are a uniquely American development that adds the elements of a friendship and close association to the academic traditions of college.
>
> In the Black experience, sororities and fraternities have certain characteristics which further distinguish them. Social action and service programs responding to the needs of the day are integral parts of the structure, character and personality of every Black Greek organization. Black students at Pearson State College have found that membership in one of the sororities or fraternities offers them an opportunity to develop their potential in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual supportive stimulation.
>
> Undergraduate membership in Greek organizations is supposedly open to those of high ethical and scholastic standards who are pursuing a course of study leading to a degree. Undergraduate Blacks at Pearson State College say that belonging to one of the sororities or fraternities affords them many advantages and meets some of the needs not otherwise provided-for at a predominantly White college.
>
> Like most Black Greek Letter organizations, those at Pearson State have no sorority or fraternity houses, but the organizations serve as support groups for their members. The pledge period itself teaches cohesiveness, humility, group loyalty, endurance and perseverance. These teachings are continued beyond the pledge period and emphasized throughout the membership. For many Black students, sororities and fraternities have been their salvation both socially and academically.

While most students spoke highly of their involvement in fraternities and sororities, Black faculty and staff members, for the most part, saw them as detrimental for some students at Pearson State. Dr. Thomas said:

> Not that I have anything against fraternities and
> sororities, but for our students whose averages are
> low to begin with...and the time it takes to
> pledge...they go lower. The standards need to be
> higher to start with. I've seen a 3.0 go below 2.0.
> I'm not against them...I am against what I see
> happening to students who get caught up in that
> social life too early.

Dr. Wilson had much the same opinion although he was an advisor to

one of the fraternities. He said he was an advisor simply because he

knew some of the members and they prevailed upon him for help. All

organizations on campus are required to have a faculty advisor to

function and to sponsor some activities. He told the researcher:

> They do some good things. But I'm really opposed
> to the Black fraternitiess on this campus because
> it has promoted divisiveness. It has speread the
> Blacks apart. Since they started two or three
> years ago, there have been several incidents of
> violence involving Black fraternities. I guess
> they need something to identify with. They need to
> belong to something, and to have an identity with
> other students from othere campuses. It helps to
> develop a sense of brotherhood or sisterhood. But
> I see it as being a real detriment on this campus.
>
> You know, the big problem I see is that too often,
> on this campus, students join fraternities and
> sororities for a different reason than they did on
> the campus where I attended. They join to be
> somebody, and it seems to me in other places you
> were in a different fraternity because you were
> somebody. You didn't join to become somebody, you
> already were somebody.

Dr. Wilson said that the better students on campus have nothing to

do with the fraternities and sororities, and although he was not

"anti-fraternity", he was "anti-what" he sees happening to the

students at Pearson State. To make his point clear, Dr. Wilson

related the following to the researcher:

We haven't had any serious racial incidents in
quite a while. We had a couple when I first came
here. One night, right outside this building, a
mob of White people were surrounded by about fifty
Black students. The Blacks had broken bottles,
sticks and chains; and the mob was afraid. There
was a lot more togetherness in those days than we
have now. Blacks tended to stick together more.
Maybe thw Whites are not as afraid now as they were
then. Maybe that's why Blacks are so divided...why
they're going after each other.

Something happened last year that just made me
sick. It was the first time I had seen anything
like that on this campus. Two fraternities, Black
fraternities, got into a fight. That was unheard
of; Black folk just didn't fight Black folk...you
know...we do it back in our own communities because
we are safe there. So, I don't know whether that
is a sign of progress or what. Are we feeling so
safe out here in the outside community that we can
now band together and form our own little cliques
and at the same time go after one another? That
was a really ugly thing to me.

On many college campuses with a number of Black students, there
are organizations variously called 'Black Students' Union', 'Afro-
American Students' Union', 'The Black Caucus', or 'Afro-American
Association'. At Pearson State College there is no longer such an
organization; apparently the interest dwindled about the time Blacks
began to become involved in fraternities and sororities. Several
students expresseed the desire for such an organization saying that it
could serve as an affiliation and support group for the students who
were not members of a fraternity or sorority. It could also serve to
bring members of those organizations together in one group.

Kenneth, however, seemed to be expressing a different viewpoint:

At first, my whole life was football...when I was
cut from the team I almost dropped out of
school...then I decided to give it my best shot, to

> hit the books and make the best of the
> situation...you know, not everybody wants to be a
> Greek and I try to tell these guys, and the girls
> too, that they can do for themselves what that
> organization does for them. Most of them feel like
> they need that to be involved in parties and
> things. But since there ain't no Black independent
> group like they used to have, some people feel left
> out. I personally don't need a club or group; I
> think I'm better off making it on my own.

The researcher noticed that while Black fraternities and sororities do contribute to social segregation, at the same time, they do provide a vital support system for many Black students. Those who do not belong to a fraternity or sorority sometimes feel isolation and rejection by other Blacks in addition to that from Whites. Gloria, feeling this type of isolation, pledged Alpha Kappa Alpha during her junior year. Most Black students pledge during their sophomore year. She told the researcher she had not planned to become ivolved in any of the undergrad Greek Letter organizations but found that "everything here socially seems to revolve around them." There have been attempts to close the gap between Black and White Greek Letter organizations. Gloria talked to the researcher about working with the Greek Council and the attempt they made to have an integrated dance. The Greek Council is an organization composed of representatives from all the Greek letter groups at Pearson. The result, she said, was disappointing.

> The idea was to have something that would bring all
> the chapters together, Black and White. The
> planning committee was made up of a representative
> from each of the groups. The dance started at
> about 8 p.m. and all the Whites came early. When
> the Blacks arrived at about 10 or 10:30 p.m., all
> the Whites left.

The researcher attended two dances given by Black sororities on campus. On both occasions, those in attendance were all Black except for two White females and one White male. The researcher learned that these three White students regularly associated with Black students and attended their functions. Otherwise, most social activities on campus are racially separate.

In discussing racial separation and discrimination, Black students distinguish overt discrimination from the more subtle types. Overt discrimination included such things as name calling, ("nigger" and other names, usually from a distance); vulgar remarks about mixed couples, and refusal to accept a Black roommate or lab partner.

Subtle discrimination did not involve direct confrontation or exchange but concerned such things as "coldness and condensation" and "a general attitude of White supremacy".

Emitt expressed this feeling about having White friends:

> They are okay some of the time, like in the dorm
> and in class. But when you see them later, out
> somewhere, they act different, like they don't know
> you or don't want to be bothered, especially if
> this White dude is with a girl.

Black students who come to Pearson College from urban areas say there is "nothing to do" for Blacks. One student talked about the limited opportunity to see Black artists in such a small community.

Another Black student estimated that approximately three-fourths of the Blacks at Pearson College go home on the weekend "to socialize." "Nothing to do," "nowhere to go": these were sentiments

expressed by many Black students. Tyrone, a senior at Pearson College, summed up the situation this way:

> My first year here I felt trapped, imprisoned, and isolated, in this White town with no access to transportation for weekend trips home or away from campus. No matter where you go, you are surrounded by Whites.

Tyrone explained that: "after a while you realize that your'e here to get an education and the socializing is less important. So you spend your weekends studying."

Natalie, a senior psychology major, says:

> It is like, you put your social life on hold for four years. I have been here three years now and that was two summers included. I learned that I had to get my education first and the rest could wait. I have friends here, both Black and White friends, but there are so few Black guys that I don't expect to meet my dream man here.

When asked about the many college sponsored activities (concerts, speakers, movies, plays, dances and parties) on campus every week, most of the Black students agreed that they could find things to do but most of these activities were not geared to their interest. Several Black students described "our kind of music" as soul music, jazz, music with rhythm, good dancing music with a consistent beat and lots of bass. They expressed dislike for "too much guitar and loud pop-rock". "White parties" were said to be "keggers" with lots of beer drinking and "fooling around" whereas Blacks enjoy dancing. "The music at White sponsored parties and dances does not appeal to most Black students," says Rick, a football player for Pearson State. "I

go to some of the dances and parties after games. So do most of the
Black athletes, but we never stay more than a few minutes. They don't
play our music and there is no one to dance with. The Black girls
aren't there. Some of the guys date White girls, but not many, and
you don't want to spend too much time rapping with your White team
mate's lady because you could lose frienship over that."

During an interview with Kathy, a Black senior majoring in health
administration, the researcher asked how she would describe herself as
a student. Kathy mentioned setting high goals for herself and going
after whatever it took to reach those goals. She also mentioned that
she had benefited from a mentor relationship provided by the Dean of
Student Services who serves as the undergraduate advisor to the
sorority of which Kathy was the chapter president. This experience
helped her learn to get along well with everybody. This is the way
she described herself to the researcher:

> I guess I just like people. I haven't had any
> problems here. I treat everyone the same and if
> they don't want to be bothered, that's okay. I
> just speak and go on about my business. I guess
> what really helped me was being involved; I am a
> cheerleader and a tutor for special services. I
> just keep busy, helping other students, and working
> in the sorority. Most of my close friends are
> Black, my sorority sisters; they are my support
> group. But I also have some White friends or
> acquaintances.
>
> In my field, health administration, there are no
> other Blacks in most of my classes. So I spend a
> lot of time with the kids who take the same
> classes. We work in the lab together and study
> together. We get along fine.
>
> I found that most of the Whites are friendly.
> Blacks just don't give them a chance. They are

just as uncomfortable as you at first, until you get to know each other.

When I first became a cheerleader some of the girls were cold and made some remarks that hurt my feelings, but I decided they had to learn and I wasn't going to let them discourage me. It took a while but we get along fine now. I think sometimes they just don't know any better and other times they are just trying you out.

The Black guys here seem to have more interracial relationships than the Black girls because of sports; and some date White girls, but White fellows don't often date Black girls.

Dr. Wilson summarized his feelings on separtism for the researcher this way:

I don't think there is anything wrong with some separatism. I don't think there is anything wrong with White people deciding that they want clubs that no Blacks are in; that's their right as long as they are not supported by public funds; by taxpayers money. That's your right to associate with whomever you desire.

I also think that any Black person who has to work or go to school in a predominantly White environment, finds it quite relaxing sometimes to get back to their own kind. And, I'm sure that anybody else, Black or White, could say the same thing. It is nice to mingle..with whomever you want. And, I would say that probably on this campus, the greatest barrier to that kind of cohesiveness and associations, is probably the Blacks themselves. They have no desire, because what you are talking about is acquiring the ways and values of another group. That includes not only speaking, but music, dance. Where are you gonna go? Listen to some bluegrass music? You gonna guzzle some beer. Most Black people don't drink much beer. You go to a White party that is all they drink is beer.

We're talking about more than just associating with somebody. We are talking about assimilation of another groups values and I think when it comes right down to that, Black people are saying, I

don't see anybody else's ways that I like better
than I do my own.

What prevents Blacks and Whites from enjoying integrated relationships? Sarah answered this question by saying:

> It stems back to our roots. I have White friends, but we treat each other with a long handle spoon, as far as getting close...it stems from our past, the way we were brought up...the way they were brought up. Different cultures, different ways, different values. Our life styles are different.
>
> When I see White people and Black people being really buddy-buddy, I know it is for some reason; political or something. There has to be something in it for them, both of them or they are not being for real. Society has structured us so, we have no choice.
>
> That is also true with my job. I work with a lot of White people, professionally, but, when it comes to socializing, forget it...there is some other reason. They never come to my home nor me to theirs. Professionally we have to work together, otherwise, we don't, and that's our choice.

Summary

This investigation revealed that although many Black students entered Pearson State College academically underprepared, those who had the will to persevere were able, through the use of tutoring and other support services, to catch up and sometimes surpass their White peers in academic performance by the fourth year of study.

The significance of these students' academic deficiecies is reflected in their choice of majors. The majority of them had avoided or not performed well in math and science courses in high school. They, therefore, avoided majors related to these subject areas in

college. The presence of Black faculty members in a particular discipline appeared to attract Black students. There were Black professors in the Public Service, Education, Sociology, Business, and Music departments at Pearson State. The majority of the Black students were enrolled in these departmental majors.

A few students in the study said that their White professors were willing to assist them and offer time and attention both in and outside the classroom. Others, however, felt that their White professors lacked sincere interest in their welfare, had low expectations of their abilities to do the work, and generally viewed Blacks as lazy and incompetent. Racial discrimination was not mentioned by thirty percent of the Black students interviewed for this study. Seventy percent did report incidence where they felt that they were victims of racial discrimination. The reported incidences most often involved treatment by faculty members rather than other students. Two Black professors interviewed for the study characterized the attitudes and behavior of their White colleagues as elitism rather than racism.

Black students who complained about the small number of Black faculty and staff members expressed a need for more Blacks who could understand them and who would exhibit interest and concern for their problems. Role models for them appeared to be persons who had made it through the system and were willing to help them do the same.

The students also complained about the isolation they experienced at Pearson State, while at the same time, most voluntarily separated themselves from White students in alsmost all social activities. Although some of the isolation they experienced was due to the semi-

rural, predominantly White environment of the college, their choice to not participate in most campus activities resulted in further isolation. Their social life was limited almost entirely to parties and dances sponsored by their own Greek Letter organizations. Those students who chose not to belong to a sorority or fraternity, as well as those who were not chosen, sometimes experienced further isolation because they were separated not only from White students but from some Black students as well.

The students' belief in themselves was strong enough to keep them motivated and determined the strategies they used to survive. They learned to make use of the support services, developed effective study methods and habits, selected friends with goals similar to their own, and sought support and advise from Black faculty and staf personnel. These factors are reviewed in more detail in Chapter Six.

Chapter VI

Summary, Conclusions

Implications and Recommendations

Introduction

This study was conducted for the purpose of determining and describing the perceptions Black students have of their experiences in a predominantly White college environment and the strategies that they employed to function successfully in this setting. The study focused on twenty-five Black junior and senior level students who had survived at least two years in one such institution.

An ethnographic method of research was used, employing an inductive approach and emphasizing the subjective beliefs held by the participants. The four specific means used to collect, record, and organize data were: (1) selected student and staff interviews, (2) a written questionnaire, (3) analysis of several documents, and (4) observations. For the period of one year (1983-1984), the researcher interviewed and observed Black students, faculty and staff members at Pearson State, a coeducational institution established in 1960 as a four-year liberal arts college. During this time, observations were made of the students in their classroom, as well as, their out-of-class activities. Interviews were used as an important source of information and a means for clarifying and reinforcing the data gathered from observations and the questionnaires. Certain documents

were used to establish facts about events which the researcher was unable to observe directly.

The principal problem consisted of determining whether there were common identifiable experiences, adaptive behaviors, feelings, and attitudes among Black students that could be categorized as strategies for success.

This chapter contains a summary and discussion of the major findings and the conclusions drawn from these findings. The findings are organized and presented according to the initial research questions which guided the study.

Research Questions

I. What do Black students see as components of a successful experience at this institution?

A. What is the nature of the expectations that instructors place on Black students?

B. What expectations do Black students have of themselves?

C. What strategies do they employ to succeed and with what results?

D. What are the educational outcomes valued highly by Black students?

II. What are the experiences and perceptions of Black students regarding relationships between Blacks and Whites at this institutions?

A. To what extent do Black students see the institution as promoting interracial campus contacts?

B. To what extent do Black students see a need for such contacts?

C. What is the nature of the formal and/or
informal networks of acquaintance and
communication which facilitate contacts
between the two racial groups?

The conclusions represent generalizations derived only from this study population and are based primarily on information from personal interviews and observations. In addition, the chapter contains a discussion of the implications of the findings for practice in higher education and recommendations for further research.

Summary of Major Findings

1. The researcher discovered that successful Black students at Pearson State have had clearly defined career goals, strong self-concepts, and the determination to persevere. This investigation revealed that although many Black students entered Pearson State College academically underprepared, those who had the will to persist were able, through the use of tutoring and other support services, to catch up and sometimes surpass their White peers by the fourth year of study. Crucial to the development of academic competence were supportive services including tutoring, counseling/academic advising and adequate financial aid.

2. The significance of the students' academic deficiencies was reflected in their choice of majors. The majority of them had avoided or not performed well in math and science courses in high school. They, therefore, avoided majors related to these subject areas in college. The presence of Black faculty members in a particular

discipline appeared to attract Black students. There were Black professors in the Public Service, Education, Sociology, Business, and Music departments at Pearson State. The majority of the Black students were enrolled in these departmental majors.

3. **Although the students in this study initially expected to become integrated into the college setting, this integration did not occur.** Instead, the students found more prejudice, more discrimination, and less social integration that they had expected to encounter.

While the college boasts about its beautiful campus located in a semi-rural setting with wide open spaces, natural land structure, wooded ravines, modern, well equipped buildings and enthusiastic, highly qualified faculty, Black students complained about the isolation and rejection they experienced in the overwhelmingly White environment of an institution which they perceived to have been designed for the educational and professional socialization of a White middle class population.

A few students in the study said that their White professors were willing to assist them and offer time and attention both in and outside the classroom. Others, however, felt that their White professors lacked sincere interest in their welfare, had low expectations of their abilities to do the work, and generally viewed Blacks as lazy and incompetent. Racial discrimination was not mentioned by thirty percent of the Black students interviewed for this study. Seventy percent did report incidences where they felt that they were victims of racial discrimination. The reported incidences

most often involved treatment by faculty members rather that other students. Two Black professors interviewed for the study characterized the attitudes and behavior of their White colleagues as elitism rather than racism. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the investigator found that White faculty members tended to favor the "good" student and to lend unsolicited support to those who entered with strong academic records and high grade point averages. "Elite" Black students with good credentials received this "red carpet" treatment the same as did White students.

Black students who complained about the small number of Black faculty and staff members expressed a need for more Blacks who could understand them and who would exhibit interest and concern for their problems. Role models for them appeared to be persons who had made it through the system and were willing to help them do the same.

The students also complained about the isolation they experienced at Pearson State, while at the same time, most voluntarily separated themselves from White students in almost all social activities. Although some of the isolation they experienced was due to the semi-rural, predominantly White environment of the college, their choice to not participate in most campus activities resulted in further isolation. Their social life was limited almost entirely to parties and dances sponsored by their own Greek Letter organizations. Those students who chose not to belong to a sorority or fraternity, as well as those who were not chosen, sometimes experienced further isolation because they were separated not only from White students but from some Black students as well.

4. ⎰ The students' belief in themselves was strong enough to keep them motivated and determined the strategies they used to survive.⎱ The findings revealed several strategies that they employed for adapting. The most salient was to accept the reality of their isolation and alienation and the potential barriers to their success. The students learned to give less priority to social involvement even though they desired it. They gave greater priority to developing academic competence. They learned to make use of the available support services, developed effective study methods and habits, selected friends with goals similar to their own, and sought support and advice from Black faculty and staff.

5. Whether these Black students left a predominantly White or predominantly Black high school and/or community to continue their education at Pearson State College, new adjustments were necessary for all of them. Many had to learn new sets of coping skills and, at the same time overcome academic deficiencies. The majority of the first-year students fared poorly in their course-work while making these adjustments. Some became discouraged and left. Those who struggled through and were eventually successful developed and used a variety of coping mechanisms or strategies in order to survive within this institution. They generally learned to live in two worlds.

Discussion of Findings

Ideally, there are at least five institutional components that are crucial in the successful adaptation of Black students to a

predominantly White institution: (1) institutional commitment and recognition of the Black experience (Willie and McCord, 1972), (2) adequate financial assistance (Boyd, 1977), (3) academic and personal counseling and support services (Gibbs, 1982), (4) Black faculty and staff models of achievement, and (5) an organized program of Black cultural/social activities and organizations (Smith, 1980). An examination of factors that Black students at Pearson State believed were related to their successful matriculation revealed that <u>academic support services</u> were the most effective components available to them. These services included financial aid, counseling, and tutoring. Of these three, tutorial services seemed to contribute the most to the students' success.

Financial Aid

Most Black students need financial assistance (Smith, 1980). While Pearson State provides financial assistance based on need, some students complained of the inadequacy of the aid package, which usually consisted of a combination of grants, loans, and job earnings. Several students indicated that without financial assistance they would not have been able to remain in school and that for some former students, large loans and the lack of contigency funds to help meet financial emergencies had caused them to drop out. Among such students were those whose parents were unemployed, or had low-paying jobs, or the responsibility of supporting other younger children in their future educational endeavors.

Counseling

The use of counseling services by Black students was a more difficult area to assess because of the diversity among Black students in academic preparation, prior experience with integration, and level of social and psychological awareness. Students from integrated, middle-class backgrounds who were relatively comfortable at this predominantly White institution and who were able to cope successfuly with the college pressures did not require any special counseling. The majority of students in this study, however, were not from these backgrounds, nor were they responsive to the traditional counseling approaches used at the college. The Career Planning and Counseling Center is the only counseling center at the college and those services were used by the students for career planning assistance rather than for personal problems. As explained earlier in these findings, Black students indicated that when they had a personal problem they discussed it with their close friends and family. Problems relating to academics and/or instructors were discussed with a Black faculty member or administrator.

Tutorial Services

Many students in the study began college with low academic skills. Most expressed feeling academically underprepared as beginning freshmen. At the time of this study, as juniors and seniors, they had basically overcome the impediments that tended to interfere with their academic performance during the first years of study. They credited

tutorial services at Pearson State as being partly responsible for their academic improvement. They did, however, express dissatisfaction with a recent change in the procedures for providing tutorial services.

Pearson State had a special program to promote academic achievement of students whose admissions credentials (test scores, class rank, grade point average) did not qualify them for regular admission. Several of the students in this study were admitted under that program. The program has since been discontinued although many of the support services remain. Some Black students see the abandonment of this program as a move to limit Black enrollment and a weakening of the college's commitment to them. Even though the students interviewed praised the support services that were still available to them, especially tutoring services, they still perceive that by reducing opportunities for under-achieving Black students to enter, the college could ultimately limit its Black admission to an elite group of high achievers.

The findings show that Black students' feelings of alienation and academic anxiety (and presumably their negative effects on academic performance) are greatly reduced when Black students perceive that the college is committed to providing them with the necessary supportive services.

Faculty Expectations

One significant factor in the adaptation of Black students to the college environment is the lack of congruence between institutional

expectations that Black students will fit into the mold of the traditional middle-class college student and the students' expectations of college life (Peterson, et. al., 1978). In this study, the faculty's low expectations of most Black students made the students' adaptation more difficult.

The general perception of the subjects of this study is that the White professors viewed the majority of Black students at Pearson State as incompetent "special admits" who did not belong in college. Even before coming to know the students' abilities, they seemed to expect them to need special help. Both the subjects and Black faculty mentioned to the investigator that those Black students entering with the reputation of being "good" students are viewed more positively and are welcomed with more encouraging attitudes. Those White professors whose classes were observed by the researcher pointed out that many of the Black students tended to lack proficiency in basic skills. These professors seemed to concentrate too much on negative stereotypes and terminology such as "disadvantaged," "deprived," "underpriveleged," and an assortment of terms that focused on the weaknesses, the liabilities, and the shortcomings of minority students rather than to accentuate the positive.

Black Students' Self Expectations

Initially, the subjects in the study perceived themselves as capable of successful academic performance. They reported arriving at Pearson State expecting to integrate themselves fully into college life. They did not perceive their academic underpreparedness until

after unsuccessful academic encounters such as failing examinations, or being placed on academic probation. These encounters illustrate the period of tension and conflict that Gibbs (1978) asserted occur because of Black students' expectations that academic standards and requirements in college would be similar to those in high school.

For students in this study, the key variable for managing such tension and conflict seemed to be positive self concepts. Those who survived did so because they valued a college education enough to work to overcome the gaps in their academic preparation and because they continued to believe in their ability to succeed academically. At no time did the juniors and seniors interviewed for this study exhibit a loss of self-esteem. In fact, several students suggested that the Black students who had low opinions of themselves and their abilities did not last long at this institution.

The students' belief in themselves determined the strategies that they used to survive and succeed at Pearson State College.

Strategies for Success

The strategies employed by the students were generally reactive in nature. While the study did not focus on the underclasmen, it was apparent from observation and the reports of upperclassmen that most freshman- and sophomore-level Black students were constantly reacting to the problems presented by the predominantly White environment. Their strategies gradually became more proactive as they became adjusted to the college environment. Della (p. 70), for example, began to sit next to the very classmates that she knew resented her

being there. When she realized that she was being ignored by the professor, she would raise her hand more often and ask more and more questions. Another strategy that several students reported using was to seek assistance and advice from Black professors. Crystal decided to change from a White to a Black advisor in order to get the help she needed.

Tyrone became proactive when he decided to seek tutoring assistance at the very beginning of each term even before he needed it; the Black members of the Greek Council (p. 170) were proactive in banding together to get Black officers elected to the council; and Sarah (p. 142) reported that the members of her senior class frequently went into the residence halls and dining areas to give the freshmen the benefit of their "campus awareness."

As has been noted, the students cited the availability of tutorial services as the most significant component at Pearson State that contributed to their success. In addition to using those services, they cited developing effective study methods and habits as their primary strategy. The decision to study more effectively seemed to be self motivated. The stimuli for their motivation differed. Tyrone didn't like being on academic probation; Diane felt like a "dummy" in class. These situations helped them to recognize and to admit their deficiencies and prompted them to seek help and to prioritize academics before social life. Several students mentioned that they made the decision to spend more time studying instead of going home every weekend. Experiences such as failure and academic probation, at least for the juniors and seniors in this study, served as a challenge for them to prove that they were capable of better academic

performance. For some, the desire to achieve academically became more important than socializing.

In addition to studying and developing good study habits, crucial factors in Black students' success at Pearson State included finding a support group and selecting friends with goals similar to their own. They seemed to be locating faculty and friends who were supportive of them and had knowledge of the college system.

Black staff members and a few Black students suggested that Black students with the ability to mingle with White students found that to be a helpful skill. The majority of the Black students, however, said that their close friends were all Blacks and that when they had a problem they always went to a Black friend, Black professor or Black administrator for advice or counseling.

Another very significant factor in their survival was learning to seek help from the Black faculty and staff. The researcher discovered that specifically, Black faculty and staff members helped address both the students' academic and psycho-social problems while providing reinforcing support. Almost all students interviewed for the study named a Black person on campus who had served them as an advisor, mentor, and/or friend. The person was someone they felt was trustworthy, to whom they could go with their problems, and who would give them time and attention.

There were some Black students who did not need to seek such support from faculty. There appeared to be a built-in support system for "good" Black students. Those who enrolled with high-grade point averages or reputations for academic excellence and scholarship automatically received a more cordial welcome from White professors.

These were the students who found their White professors accepting and willing to assist them.

The characteristic of the college noted most often as having a negative impact on Black students was the low percentage of Black student enrollment and especially the small number of Black faculty and staff members. Black students' evaluation of faculty and administration at the college did not necessarily become more positive from their freshman year to their junior or senior year, but their ability to cope and to locate those faculty members who were helpful improved. The students felt there was a definite need for a larger more diverse group of Black faculty and staff members to whom they could turn for advice about ways of adapting to the college system.

The most significant strategy the students employed was continuing to beleive that they had the capability of achieving academic success. While Black students complained about the predominantly White environment and the racially biased treatment they received from some faculty, at the same time they did not believe that the environment would change. Instead, they sought ways to adjust and adapt their own behaviors and activities. For example, several of the students experienced difficulties with their White professors which caused them to feel they were being discriminated against. A few White professors and White administrators were referred to by the students as "ok", "straight," or "cool" in their relationships with Black students. These professors were perceived to be fair. In the meantime, those students who recognized that some White professors' low expectations and lack of demands for achievement could undermine their performance and make academic competition more difficult, worked

harder to achieve and to prove those attitudes invalid. One strategy was to seek advice and counsel from others. More importantly, they confronted their disapointments about college life and continued to bolster their own egos and self-esteem by believing more strongly that they could achieve their academic goals and objectives. Even after negative encounters, it appears that they achieved success because they continued to perceive themselves as capable. They sought to identify means for accomplishing what they desired. At no time did they suggest resorting to feelings of low self-esteem. As a result, through their own initiative they learned to cope with their environment.

Educational Outcomes

A common goal for the subjects of this study was preparation for a secure future. In their terms, security meant "getting a good job." A good job was perceived as one which "paid well." Some spoke of desiring a better way of life and generally interpreted that to mean having a job with sufficient remuneration to afford them more material goods than their families currently possessed. Some spoke of going to graduate school. The researcher found, however, that the students were giving greater priority to their present and immediate concerns of getting through school rather than dealing with educational outcomes.

Institutional Promotion of Interracial Contacts

Students interviewed for this study said the opportunities were provided for interracial contacts at most campus-wide activities. Through the Student Activities Office, numerous clubs and organizations, and student government, Black students had the opportunity to participate along with White students. Few chose to do so. Given different interests and concerns, most spent their spare time in activities with students of the same race. The lack of involvement can be accounted for to some extent because of the small numbers of Blacks on campus. To a great extent, Blacks voluntarily separated themselves in most social activities. Attempts to offer racially mixed affairs or activities such as the one sponsored by the Greek Council met with little success.

In spite of the belief of some students and faculty that mingling with White students can be a very helpful skill for Black students, most Black students seememd to feel that they had sufficient contact with White students as a result of their day-to-day encounters in classes, residence halls, and elsewhere on campus. Surrounded by Whites twenty-four hours a day, they felt the need for a place to ocassionally escape this overwhelmingly White environment. They felt that some separatism can be beneficial both psychologically and intellectually, and desired a place where they could gather and talk freely, discuss their problems, talk of frustrations, plan, promote, and conduct academic and cultural activities and seek help without being misunderstood, misinterpreted or appearing to confess inferiority.

Black students at Pearson State appeared to be very much aware of their minority status and to perceive the college as a place where race determines their friendships and associations. The data revealed that most of the students came to Pearson State expecting to find less prejudice, less discrimination and more social integration than they actually encountered. Both Crystal and Sarah thought that Black students were often prejudged by White faculty as incompetent and "special admits" and treated as if they did not belong. Lionel and Clarence related negative experiences which involved what they perceived as racially motivated, discriminatory treatment by insincere, insensitive, and superior-acting White students.

Social isolation constitutes a major problem for many Black students on predominantly White college campuses (Boyd, 1974; Jones, et. al., 1970; Hedegard and Brown, 1969; Monroe, 1973; Willie and McCord, 1972). Peettigrew, (1964) and Willie and McCord found that Black students sometimes separate themselves by withdrawing into an all Black subculture.

From the researcher's observations and by their own admission, Black students at Pearson State were isolated and limited in their social, cultural, and academic activities at the college. The college as well as the predominantly White, semi-rural community environment, lacked support systems geared to the cultural tastes and different interests of the Black students. Negative experiences in the college community in most cases seemed to lead Black students toward an increasing consciousness of their blackness and toward an identity almost exclusively with Black people. Since support from White students usually was not dependable, Black students were increasingly

turning toward themselves. They were less often risking friendships with Whites. Paradoxically, this voluntary self-segregation was construed by some faculty to be self-defeating and discriminatory because it limited the students' opportunity to grow socially and intellectually.

For Black and White students alike, the desire to mingle appeared to be lacking. Other than through occasional interactions in classes and classroom projects and among team members during and after sports events, very little interaction of a meaningful nature was observed or reported as existing between Black and White students. As one professor observed, the structure and location of the college does not lend itself to social contact for most of its population because almost all of the faculty and at least fifty percent of the students live from twenty to forty miles away from the campus. The other half of the students who live on campus, included most of the Black students. The college groups divided along racial lines because both Blacks and Whites have been socialized to be more comfortable with that kind of division.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. For the students in this study, the key to their success seemed to be in establishing clearly defined career goals, maintaining positive self concepts, and the determination to persevere.

2. The White faculty's low expectations of most Black students appeared to make the students' adjustment more difficult but did not lead them to lower their expectations of themselves.

3. The heavy demand by Black students for assistance from the few Black faculty and administrtative staff employed at Pearson State College added to the already heavy work load of this group of college professionals. Still, the students were willing to accept consequent limitations in scheduling appointments and the amont of time Black "advisors" could spend with them, believing that the overall value of the advice received was better for them than that generally available from Whites.

4. Although Black students demonstrated a range of opinions regarding their desire to have regular contact with White students, their strategies for success did not involve actively seeking such contact.

Implications for Practice

This study raises several questions for college administrators and other personnel concerning the status of Black students on predominantly White campuses.

1. Who is responsible for assuring the adaptation and subsequent success of Black students attending a predominantly White college?

As has been stated, the researcher discovered that most successful Black students at Pearson State have to learn to identify their own strategies for coping and survival. They especially had to learn to manage themselves in the college environment if they were not "exceptionally good students."

2. What specific support systems should be institutionalized for assisting Black students in predominantly White colleges? Effective intervention at Pearson State, for example, cannot occur when the only institutional resource especially provided for them is the Office of Minority Affairs and the Director of that office is also responsible

for the administration of the college's affirmative action program as well as the special Student Services Program. The researcher discovered that affirmative action recruitment has not been a recent priority.

3. Should college addministrators and staff direct efforts toward projects or activities to generate more involvement of Black students in college life and to encourage Black and White students to intermingle? The Student Activities Office at Pearson sponsored a variety of events throughout the year, apparently with the assumption that all students would participate. There was little Black student participation because the Black students generally chose to isolate themselves from many events. It seems they knew the opportunities for involvement exist, but decided not to avail themselves of them.

The choice not to participate is an adaptive behavior. It is an insular approach which protects Black students from negative discriminatory encounters with White students. Black students at Pearson State perceive open events as a pseudo approach to egalitarianism. Several subjects in this study expressed their concern about not knowing which White students they could trust or when they could trust them.

Many Black students also expressed their distrust of some White faculty. With so many more White faculty than Black, this distrust presents a tremendous barrier for Black students' success.

4. In order to eliminate this barrier, should Black faculty and administrators be expected to assume leadership to effect changes within the institution even when doing so is not a part of their job assignment? Are they to seek to establish channels of communication

with their White colleagues to initiate institutional concern and commitment for acting affirmatively to create a setting more conducive to the positive development of Black students? Because Black students tend to distrust White faculty, Black faculty can help to cement trust between them and the institution. The students interviewed for this study were all either juniors or seniors. One factor in their survival was the help received from Black staff members. Almost every one of the Black students mentioned finding a Black person on campus who served as an advisor, confidant and mentor. More Black faculty and administrators are needed at Pearson State. When Black students can see, through the presence of a sizeable, more diverse Black faculty and staff that they can approach a range of choices that is equivalent to that range of choices available to White students, they will then have reality-based rationales for aspiring to roles to which they have not typically aspired.

An overall concern is whether a more viable and concerted effort needs to be focused on the plight of Black college students as they seek to adapt to the predominantly White college system.

Racial discrimination is the fundamental difference in the Black and White experience in America (Willie and McCord, 1972). Black students at Pearson State College feel that recognition of this difference and its consequences is crucial to their survival and success at any predominantly White college.

Examination of how and why Black students fare as they do on White campuses is often distorted by assumptions of egalitarianism (Gibbs, 1982). Such assumptions ignore the current and historical oppression that Blacks have experienced. To treat Blacks as if their interests

and concerns are the same as those of Whites is a mistake. Too often White college officials take the position that students are students and, thus, reject the need for support systems geared to the cultural tastes and differences of Black students. They base this position on the opinion that, in the best interest of all students, race should be downplayed. Black students at Pearson State were asking that they not be expected to find their heritage in a counterpart of White society. The Black professors also rejected the notion that a student is a student whether he is Black or White. What is posed as a substitute for the doctrine of color-blindness is a view which recognizes that skin color has an enormous consequence in the U.S. and that if one is defined as Black, then such a person's condition is significantly different from that of any White immigrant or native.

Black students feel that recognition of the Black experience is one of the most important components of a successful experience at a predominantly White institution.

When examining Black students' special problems and needs, faculty and staff of other colleges may wish to address three dimensions of their institutions: structural, attitudinal, and professional (Gibbs, 1982). First, they should examine the effectiveness of current structural arrangements in dealing with the problems of Black students. In view of increasing financial constraints and decreasing levels of commitment from within and without higher education, it may be necessary to incorporate special programs for Black and other minority students into the regualr administrative structures. An important factor in the success of the consolidation process will be the degree to which flexibility can be

maintained in these programs, so that Black students can continue to perceive options which take into account their socio-cultural background and experiences.

Three examples of this type of flexibility are: (1) "drop-in" counseling services, whereby appointments do not have to be made weeks in advance; (2) peer counseling services, where students who have experienced similar problems are available for informal discussions; (3) financial aid officers who are responsive to short-term financial crises, which Black students are more likely to experience than White students(Gibbs, 1982). If these offices are organized along functional lines, it will continue to be relevant to have integrated staffs, so that Black students will perceive that there are understanding and sympathetic persons to whom they can turn, even if these staff members do not have a specific responsibility for serving their needs.

Second, the attitudes of administration, faculty and professional student services staff are significant elements in the successful adjustment of Black students to predominantly White campuses. As noted, White faculty and staff attitudes were perceived by Black students as negative. There was no indication by staff or students in this study that organized efforts had been made to alter the negative attitudes of these groups. Nevertheless, because this is a major source of Black student discontent, institutions must begin to take the initiative in promoting changed attitudes. It is not enough for presidents to make cliched commencement addresses or to issue annual reports that reaffirm administrative support for equal opportunity and affirmative action programs. These efforts are perceived as primarily

directed to various external constituencies of educational institutions; the internal groups largely ignore or discount these pronouncements as propaganda and public relations. If Black students are ever to become an integral part of the academic world, all faculty and staff must become more sensitive to their historical, social, and cultural background; to their patterns of behavior and communication; and to their values, goals, and aspirations. The shared experiences of racial prejudice, discrimination, and for some, economic disadvantage has inevitably shaped the social and psychological development of Black students. Without understanding the dimensions of these experiences, White faculty and staff will continue to behave toward Black students in demeaning, condescending, and discriminatory ways.

It is obvious that administrators cannot issue edicts to compel faculty and staff to change their attitudes and behavior toward Black students, but there should be mechanisms established to foster such changes, such as human relations workshops, departmental seminars, and perhaps incentive awards for extraordinary service to minority students. Additionally, increased informal and social contacts between Black students and faculty/staff may reduce tensions and improve relationships. If there are substantial reports of faculty/staff discrimination against Black students, there should be channels for processing complaints, such as an Ombudsman's office, where students can be assured of obtaining a fair and impartial hearing to redress their grievances. If institutions are committed to continued enrollment of significant numbers of Black students, they must be willing to reassess their responsiveness to the problems and

needs of these students and to institute modifications in structural, attitudinal, and professional areas. Some institutions may need to improve their recruitment strategies, clarify their admissions criteria, provide adequate levels of support for Black students and monitor their internal climate to foster an environment that encourages interracial communication and contact at all levels.

Finally, institutions should neither encourage nor reinforce Black separatism because that stance will not prepare students to deal with the complexities of a mlultiracial society or to compete successfully in their future careers. If predominantly White and historically Black colleges can become truly integrated institutions, they will not only establish a more stimulating and diverse academic environment, but they will also make a lasting contribution to increased economic opportunities for Blacks, resulting in greater benefits to the society as a whole.

Recommendations for Further Research

Although the findings and generalizations of this study were based on a small sample population at one college, they were, nevertheless, helpful in revealing the strategies for survival and success of a few Black juniors and seniors. Further studies on Black students at other colleges are needed to discover why some survive and achieve while others do not:

1. A study that compares success strategies of Black and White students.

2. A study that compares success of Black students at a predominantly White college

to Black students at a historically Black college.

3. A study of Black underclassmen experiences and coping skills as compared with those of upperclassmen.

4. A study of the factors that differentiate between persisters and dropouts among Black students attending predominantly White colleges.

These studies would add to the knowledge and understanding of the strategies and social knowledge necessary to achieve in an integrated setting. In addition, such research could contribute to understanding of the complex processes of interaction between Blacks and Whites in the larger social, political and cultural environment, especially since colleges provide training grounds that prepare students for real-life interactions.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BREAKDOWN OF REGULAR FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME
FACULTY AND STAFF BY RACE AND SEX
JULY 1, 1983

A. ALL FACULTY AND STAFF

Total Number . . . . 533 . . . . . . 100.0%

1.	Number of White Males	286	53.7%
2.	Number of White Females	205	38.5%
3.	Number of Black Males	14	2.6%
4.	Number of Black Females	14	2.6%
5.	Number of Asian-American Males	5	.9%
6.	Number of Asian-American Females	0	.0%
7.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Males	5	.9%
8.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Females	2	.4%
9.	Number of Native American Males	1	.2%
10.	Number of Native American Females	1	.2%
11.	Total Number of Males	311	58.3%
12.	Total Number of Females	222	41.7%

B. FACULTY

Total Number . . . . 200 . . . . . 100.0%

1.	Number of White Males	137	68.5%
2.	Number of White Females	48	24.0%
3.	Number of Black Males	7	3.5%
4.	Number of Black Females	1	.5%
5.	Number of Asian-American Males	4	2.0%
6.	Number of Asian-American Females	0	.0%
7.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Males	3	1.5%
8.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Females	0	.0%
9.	Number of Native American Males	0	.0%
10.	Number of Native American Females	0	.0%
11.	Total Number of Males	151	75.5%
12.	Total Number of Females	49	24.5%

C. EXECUTIVE, ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Total Number . . . . 125 . . . . . 100.0%

1.	Number of White Males	80	64.0%
2.	Number of White Females	32	25.6%
3.	Number of Black Males	4	3.2%
4.	Number of Black Females	6	4.8%
5.	Number of Asian-American Males	0	.0%
6.	Number of Asian-American Females	0	.0%
7.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Males	0	.0%
8.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Females	2	1.6%
9.	Number of Native American Males	0	.0%
10.	Number of Native American Females	1	.8%
11.	Total Number of Males	84	67.2%
12.	Total Number of Females	41	32.8%

D. CLERICAL, OFFICE AND TECHNICAL STAFF

Total Number . . . . 141 . . . . . 100.0%

1.	Number of White Males	17	12.1%
2.	Number of White Females	119	84.4%
3.	Number of Black Males	0	.0%
4.	Number of Black Females	5	3.5%
5.	Number of Asian-American Males	0	.0%
6.	Number of Asian-American Females	0	.0%
7.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Males	0	.0%
8.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Females	0	.0%
9.	Number of Native American Males	0	.0%
10.	Number of Native American Females	0	.0%
11.	Total Number of Males	17	12.1%
12.	Total Number of Females	124	87.9%

E. MAINTENANCE, GROUNDS AND SERVICE STAFF

Total Number . . . . 62 . . . . . . 100.0%

1.	Number of White Males	48	77.4%
2.	Number of White Females	5	8.1%
3.	Number of Black Males	3	4.9%
4.	Number of Black Females	2	3.2%
5.	Number of Asian-American Males	1	1.6%
6.	Number of Asian-American Females	0	.0%
7.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Males	2	3.2%
8.	Number of Spanish Surnamed Females	0	.0%
9.	Number of Native American Males	1	1.6%
10.	Number of Native American Females	0	.0%
11.	Total Number of Males	55	88.7%
12.	Total Number of Females	7	11.3%

F. SAFETY AND SECURITY STAFF

Total Number . . . . 5 . . . . . 100.0%

1.	Number of White Males	4	80.0%
2.	Number of White Females	1	24.0%
3 - 10		0	.0%
11.	Total Number of Males	4	80.0%
12.	Total Number of Females	1	20.0%

The figures exclude employees on layoff status.

APPENDIX A-2

MINORITY STAFF REPORT

Year	Total Staff	Minority Staff	Breakdown
1983 (August)	536	44 - 8.2%	307/25 Males
		(15 Faculty)	229/19 Females
		(15 E.A.P.)	29 Blacks
		(5 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(9 M.G.S.)	8 Hispanics
		(0 S.A.F.)	2 Native Americans
1983 (January)	549	44 - 8.0%	319/26 Males
		(15 Faculty)	230/18 Females
		(15 E.A.P.)	31 Blacks
		(5 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(9 M.G.S.)	7 Hispanics
		(0 S.A.F.)	1 Native American
1982 (July)	537	45 - 8.4%	314/28 Males
		(16 Faculty)	223/17 Females
		(14 E.A.P.)	31 Blacks
		(6 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(8 M.G.S.)	7 Hispanics
		(1 S.A.F.)	2 Native American.
1981 (August)	547	44 - 8.0%	322/29 Males
		(17 Faculty)	225/15 Females
		(13 E.A.P.)	31 Blacks
		(6 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(8 M.G.S.)	7 Hispanics
		(0 S.A.F.)	1 Native American

APPENDIX A-2

MINORITY STAFF REPORT

Year	Total Staff	Minority Staff	Breakdown
1983 (August)	536	44 - 8.2%	307/25 Males
		(15 Faculty)	229/19 Females
		(15 E.A.P.)	29 Blacks
		(5 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(9 M.G.S.)	8 Hispanics
		(0 S.A.F.)	2 Native Americans
1983 (January)	549	44 - 8.0%	319/26 Males
		(15 Faculty)	230/18 Females
		(15 E.A.P.)	31 Blacks
		(5 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(9 M.G.S.)	7 Hispanics
		(0 S.A.F.)	1 Native American
1982 (July)	537	45 - 8.4%	314/28 Males
		(16 Faculty)	223/17 Females
		(14 E.A.P.)	31 Blacks
		(6 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(8 M.G.S.)	7 Hispanics
		(1 S.A.F.)	2 Native Americans
1981 (August)	547	44 - 8.0%	322/29 Males
		(17 Faculty)	225/15 Females
		(13 E.A.P.)	31 Blacks
		(6 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(8 M.G.S.)	7 Hispanics
		(0 S.A.F.)	1 Native American

MINORITY STAFF REPORT (continued)

Year	Total Staff	Minority Staff	Breakdown
1980 (July)	597	40 - 6.7%	352/30 Males
		(19 Faculty)	245/10 Females
		(11 E.A.P.)	27 Blacks
		(3 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(7 M.G.S.)	7 Hispanics
		(0 S.A.F.)	1 Native American
1979 (October)	591	44 - 7.4%	366/34 Males
		(20 Faculty)	225/10 Females
		(13 E.A.P.)	29 Blacks
		(5 C.O.T.)	5 Asians
		(8 M.G.S.)	9 Hispanics
		(0 S.A.F.)	1 Native American
1978 (July)	585	56 - 9.6%	354/39 Males
		(21 Faculty)	231/17 Females
		(16 E.A.P.)	38 Blacks
		(9 C.O.T.)	6 Asians
		(10 M.G.S.)	11 Hispanics
		(0 S.A.F.)	1 Native American

E.A.P. - Executive, Administrative and Professional
C.O.T. - Clerical, Office and Technical
M.G.S. - Maintenance, Grounds and Service
S.A.F. - Safety and Security

APPENDIX A-3

STAFF REPORT
MALE/FEMALE BREAKDOWN

Year	Total Staff	Males	Females
1983 (August)	536	307	229
		57.3%	42.7%
1983 (January)	549	319	230
		58.1%	41.9%
1982 (July)	537	314	223
		58.5%	41.5%
1981 (August)	547	322	225
		58.9%	41.1%
1980 (July)	597	352	245
		59.0%	41.0%
1979 (October)	591	366	225
		61.9%	38.1%
1978 (July)	585	354	231
		60.5%	39.5%

APPENDIX A-4

POSITIONS FILLED FROM THE OUTSIDE
BY EMPLOYEE GROUP AND RACE
FOR THE PERIOD
JULY 1982-JUNE 1983

Faculty (1982-83)	Total	8	
		6	White Males
		2	White Females
E.A.P.	Total	19	
		13	White Males
		5	White Females
		1	Black Male
C.O.T.	Total	12	
		3	White Males
		8	White Females
		1	Black Female
M.G.S.	Total	7	
		3	White Males
		2	White Females
		1	Black Female
		1	American Indian Male
S.A.F.	Total	0	

Of the 46 positions filled by outside applicants:
    4 (8.7%) were minorities
    27 (58.7%) were males
    19 (41.3%) were females

E.A.P. - Executive, Administrative and Professional
C.O.T. - Clerical, Office and Technical
M.G.S. - Maintenance, Grounds and Service
S.A.F. - Safety and Security

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is part of a study being conducted to learn how Black students feel about their experiences in one educational institution where the majority population is White. Knowledge obtained from the study could be of value to college personnel who plan programs and services for student development at the college.

If this study is to be helpful, it is important that you answer each question as thoughtfully and frankly as you can. Your identity and answers will be kept strictly confidential.

The information requested below is optional. If you would like to receive a summary of the results of this study, I will need your name and address. Also, if you are interested in being interviewed indicate this by checking the appropriate space below and providing a phone number at which you can be reached.

Please print:

_____   _____   ( )_____
Last Name   First Name   Phone #

_____
Address

_____
City   State   Zip Code

_____ Yes, I would like to be called for an interview.

_____ No, I would not like to be interviewed.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Age _____   2. Sex _____   3. Marital Status _____

4. Religion _____   5. College Curriculum _____

6. How long have you been at this college? _____

7. How many credits have you earned? _____

8. When did you graduate from high school? _____

9. Name and location of your high school. _____

10. What was your high school G.P.A.? _____

11. What is your current college G.P.A.? _____

12. List the classes you now have and give the number of Black students in each class.

Name of Class	Number of Black Students
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____

13. Are you employed? On campus _____   Off campus _____

14. Are you receiving financial aid? _____

15. How and why did you choose this college?

16. Current college classification:

Freshman _____   Sophomore _____

Junior _____   Senior _____

17. What do you like best about this college?

18. What do you dislike and how would you like to see the college change?

19. Do you have both Black and White friends?

20. What do you feel are the most improtant qualities to look for in a friend?

21. Do your professors encourage out-of-class contact about academic work?

22. Are professors friendly and accessible to Black students?

23. Do you feel comfortable talking to your professors on a one-to-one basis?

24. Where on campus do you study?

25. Are there places on this campus where you do not feel welcome and comfortable?

26. Which of the following things do you feel could most likely prevent you from getting a job you want. Why?

    a. your religion _____

    b. your sex _____

    c. your race _____

    d. family background _____

    e. lack of education _____

    f. lack of ability _____

27. Who or what do you feel has had the greatest influence on your life? Please explain why.

28. If you could do anything you wanted to and nothing stood in your way, what would it be?

29. What is your major source of fun and recreation?

30. What do you think are the most prevalent social problems at this college? Please explain why.

31. Have you personally experienced any problems of racism. Please explain in detail.

32. In what ways does the college differ from what you expected?

33. What are some major concerns and/or unmet needs of Black students at this college?

34. To what organizations do you belong?

35. Do you believe there should be more Black students enrolled at this college?

36. Would you recommend this college to your friends?

37. Please share any other thoughts, feelings, and opinions you have about being a Black student at this college.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE # 1

Openers:

1. Have you had any problems in adjusting to this college?

2. In what ways does the college differ from what you expected?

Faculty/Student Relationships

1. Do you feel faculty members treat students differently if the students are of a culture group different than their own?

2. Do you talk with your instructors? When? Where? And about What?

3. If you live on campus, describe your experience.

Student/Student Relationships

1. Do you and White students associate with each other on campus? In the cafeteria? Student lounge? Game room? Dances? Classroom? Residence Hall?

2. Are there places on this campus where you do not feel comfortable? Where? Why not?

3. Should the college do anything to increase the contact between students and faculty of different races? What?

4. Should there be more Black students enrolled at this college?

College Activities

1. What organizations do you belong to at the college?

2. Do you think the college should support separate activities for various racial groups? Why?

Closures

1. Who is accepted better socially on campus by students of other cultural groups?

   a. Black males
   b. Black females

2. Whom do you think this college is designed to serve?
   (Rank one to six, with one the highest)

   a. White students _____

   b. Black students _____

   c. International students _____

   d. Hispanic students _____

   e. Native American students _____

   f. The total college community _____

3. Whom do you think the college serves better?

   a. White students _____

   b. Black students _____

   c. International students _____

   d. Hispanic students _____

   e. Native American students _____

   f. The total college community _____

4. Is there any other opinions you want to share about being a Black student at this college?

APPENDIX C-2

INTERVIEW GUIDE # 2

Scale 1 to 10

College Satisfaction:

1. How would you describe your general feelings as a student here?

    (very dissatisfied - very satisfied) _____

Academic Anxiety and Alienation

1. How high would you rate your general anxiety with regard to academic pressures here?

    (very low - very high) _____

2. How much do you personally feel a part of campus life in-so-far as student activities and government are concerned?

    (not at all - very much) _____

Student Social Interactions

1. How do you perceive the general racial climate here on campus?

    (very poor - excellent) _____

2. How would you rate your White professors in regard to their service to Black students?

    (never - always)

    a. Open and willing to give Black students adequate time and attention? _____

    b. Have difficulty communicating with Black students? _____

    c. Avoid interaction outside the classroom? _____

    d. Provide encouragement to continue to study and go on for an advanced degree? _____

    e. Seem genuinely concerned about Black students' welfare? _____

<u>Black Support Networks</u>   Scale 1 to 10

1. To what extent do you participate in the extra-curricular activities of the Black Student Movement?

   (negative - positive) _____

2. How often do you have an opportunity to interact -

   with other Black students? _____

   with other White students? _____

3. How would you rate the quality of these interactions?

   Black student interaction _____

   White student interaction _____

<u>Institutional Support of Black Students</u>

1. How helpful has the academic advising been which you have received while here?

   (very poor - excellent) _____

2. How responsive or adequate have campus counseling services been to your needs?

   (poor - excellent) _____

3. Financial aid? _____

4. Tutorial services? _____

<u>Social Knowledge and/or Strategies for Success</u>

What would you say a Black student on this campus needs to know and/or do in order to be successful?

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

FACULTY AND STAFF CONTRIBUTORS TO THE STUDY

NAME	POSITION AT THE COLLEGE	PEB
Anne	Director of Upward Bound/Talent Search	B
Arlene	Upward Bound Counselor	B
Mr. Albert	Placement Director	W
Mr. Black	*Financial Aid Director	W
Dr. Brown	*Professor of Education	B
Mr. Burton	Associate Professor/Management	B
Dr. Cedar	Professor of Psychology	W
Mr. Davis	Associate Professor/Education	B
Mr. Green	*Academic Resource Center Director	W
Ms. Howard	*Assistant Housing Director/Apartment Manager	B
Dr. Howell	*Associate Professor/Management	B
Dr. Jackson	*Professor of Sociology	B
Dr. Love	Executive Assistant to the President	W
Mark	Minority Recruiter/Admissions Counselor	B
Dr. Marcus	*Senior Counselor	W
Dr. McKenzie	*Dean of Students	B
Mrs. Miller	Associate Professor of Music	B
Mrs. Neuman	*Office of Minority Affairs/Affirmative Action/Director of Special Student Services	B

NAME	POSITION AT THE COLLEGE	PEB
Mrs. Pacer	*Counselor	B
Phil	*Residence Manager/Housing Assistant	W
Ms. Reid	*Acting Director of Admissions	W
Mr. Rose	Professor of Sociology	W
Sandy	*Residence Manager/Housing Assistant	W
Scotty	*Student Activities Director	W
Dr. Thomas	*Director of Trio Programs	B
Vince	*Residence Manager/Housing Assistant	B
Patti	Talent Search Counselor	W
Dr. Ward	Provost/V.P. for Academic Affairs	W
Dr. Wilson	*Acting Director/School of Public Service	B
Mr. Williams	*Assistant Director Speciat Student Services and Financial Aid Assistant	B

* = Faculty and staff members interviewed for the study. Other names are those of persons the researcher talked informally to on one or more occasions.

PEB = Predominant Ethnic Background.   B = Black   W = White

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