

STUDIES OF TANZANIAN STUDENTS

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Summary

Reference: Vol.1 (1968) E3 (p13)

The purpose of the studies was to secure information concerning the abilities and interests of Tanzanian students at primary, secondary and university levels. The published reports of these studies have concentrated on the occupational interests of secondary school students, the levels of ability and what things they planned to teach their children.

Both Asian and African boys and girls were the subjects of these studies.

The studies showed a remarkable similarity in level of ability and patterns of response within Asian sub-communities and African tribal groups; but a better performance of Asian students generally on the ability tests. This reflected the environmental advantages held by Asian students generally. There was close agreement of African and Asian secondary school students on social and political values and issues, including attitudes towards child training, or the uses to which a 'windfall' would be put. At some points these attitudes and values conflicted with governmental procedures.

The author cautions that the results of these studies (1966-67) may by now be out of date, particularly those based on the questionnaire survey material.

Report

Introduction

The work reported on herein was initiated in 1966 in Tanzania, and most of the data for it were gathered in 1966 and 1967. Some reports of the research have appeared in the professional journals and are cited at the end of this summary. In addition, a longer and more detailed mimeographed report was rendered to the Ministry of Education of the United Republic of Tanzania in 1967 and may be available from that source (Klingelhofer, 1967c). Some information bearing on the cognitive development of primary school children (Standards II-IV) has been tabulated and analysed although it has not appeared anywhere in published form. Summaries may be secured from the author. In summarising this work, grateful acknowledgement is given to the Faculty Research Fund of the University College, Dar-es-Salaam which made it all possible.

The field research covered the groups, incorporated the measures and utilised the linguistic medium indicated in the following chart:

<u>Subjects</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Instruments</u>	<u>Linguistic Medium</u>
First year education students at the University of East Africa, Dar-es-Salaam	129	1) Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices	English
		2) Modified version of Gillespie and Allport's Questionnaire <u>Youth's Outlook on the Future</u>	English
Secondary school students (Forms 1-4) throughout Tanzania	3,692	1) Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices	English
		2) Modified version of Gillespie and Allport's Questionnaire <u>Youth's Outlook on the Future</u>	English
Upper primary school students (Standard VII) throughout Tanzania	937	1) Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices	Swahili
		2) Modified version of Gillespie and Allport's <u>Youth's Outlook on the Future</u>	Swahili
Lower primary school students (Standards II-IV) throughout Tanzania	666	1) Modified Harris' version of Draw-a-Man Test	Swahili
		2) Modified Bender visual motor Gestalt	Swahili

In addition, in a totally separate project an attempt was made to compile a list of all of the psychological research and writing dealing with sub-Saharan Africa. A first edition of this effort was published by the Scandanavian African Institute (Klingelhofer, 1967d) and has since been merged into a usefully complete bibliography under the senior authorship of Professor Sidney Irvine (Irvine, 1971). Copies of this document which, as noted, is a comprehensive listing of psychological and psychologically related work may be obtained from the publisher.

Summary of Results

The main objective of the field research was to get a better idea of the abilities and interests of Tanzanian students at the primary, secondary and university levels and to make the information available to those who would be able to use the data advantageously in the educational process. Not much was known about the pupils and the investigations we initiated intended to fill that void by providing descriptive statements. While some cross comparisons did result, they were incidental to the major purpose which was, quite simply, to secure information which was unavailable and necessary if the educational process were to be somewhat more aware of and responsive to the children and young men and women in the schools.

The published reports have concentrated on the occupational interests of secondary school students, the levels of ability as defined by Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices, and what things they plan to teach their children. In addition, a brief methodological paper evaluated the extent to which the language (Swahili or English) in which Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices was administered influenced the performance of Standard VII pupils.

The procedures and results of these investigations are, in brief, as follows:

1. Secondary school students were asked to rank, in order of preference or desirability, a number of occupations. Boys responded to a list of 20 and girls to one containing the names of 13 occupations. The results indicated that there is a fairly even level of interest on the parts of boys and girls in the various occupations ranked over the first three forms of secondary school. Asian and African boys show closely similar patterns of preference and girls drawn from those two groups also agree in their preferences. The data indicate that at that time the national needs and plans and the individual preferences of secondary school students were badly mismatched. The students were overwhelmingly oriented toward high prestige professional occupations while the country required clerks, skilled manual workers, teachers and nurses. These data suggested some modifications in national manpower planning and in the kinds of informational services available to secondary school students that would help to bridge this gulf (Klingelhofer, 1967a).

2. Secondary school students also completed Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices Test. Differences in mean level of performance were found to be associated with ethnic group (Asian or African), age, and sex of the student but were independent of tribe (African) or community (Asian) subgroupings. These findings were taken to support the contention of other authors that test performance is a function of environmental factors (Klingelhofer, 1967b).

3. The responses of secondary school students to the question "If you become a parent, what two things will you try to teach your children?" were analysed. While the overall distribution of responses was found to be related to the sex and ethnic group membership (Asian or African) of the respondent, the subgroups did not differ in the striking frequency with which they named obedience or manners as the first goal. This agreement was taken to mean that "obedience" was functionally synonymous for the two groups, the Asians stressing obedience in child training as a means of assuring the integrity and solidarity of their communities while the Africans emphasise the continuity of an historical, threatened and highly structured relationship of young to older groups. These results did not affirm the earlier data of Gillespie and Allport to the effect that child training is universally moving to independent or realistic training but they did seem to support the observation that cultural forms may persist after their functional meaning has been lost (Klingelhofer, 1971b).

4. In developing procedures for the administration of Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices Test to upper primary school children we evaluated the effects associated with the examiner, the school attended by the student, and the language in which the test was given. All the children in Standard (Grade) VII in two schools, one metropolitan, one rural, were randomly assigned to a language testing condition and to an examiner. The

complete analysis led us to conclude that language of administration had little or no effect on performance of the children on the Progressive Matrices Test; that examiner effects did not bear significantly on the results; and that school location or quality probably has less relationship to performance on tasks like the Progressive Matrices than other more educationally linked tests - as of attainment (Klingelhofer, 1971a).

Discussion

Since the investigations deal with separate questions or issues and were essentially information-seeking or descriptive in character they do not lend themselves to synthesis. The general trends or tendencies noted, both in the investigations summarised above and in the other reports which have not appeared in the professional journals, include:

1. Remarkable similarity in level of ability or in patterns of response to questionnaire items within ethnic subgroups. Asian communities are indistinguishable from one another in most of the tests of questionnaire items; so are African tribal groups.
2. Marked differences in performance of African and Asian students on the Progressive Matrices Test. The differences are taken to reflect the environmental advantages held by Asian students generally.
3. Positive relationship of performance of the Progressive Matrices Test to the educational level attained by the fathers of African boys and Asian girls. Moreover, the level of education attained by parents of secondary school children surpasses that of the population as a whole and emphasises the multiplicative effect of education on the intellectual attainments of a nation.
4. Remarkably close agreement of African and Asian secondary school students on many social and political values and issues, including attitudes toward child training or the uses to which a wind-fall would be put. These attitudes and values at some points clearly conflicted with governmental procedures, and changes in national educational and economic policy to take account of these differences were indicated.

While there are profound differences between individuals in a country like Tanzania - it is probably axiomatic to be struck by the discrepancies or contrasts which are so readily apparent - there are also many close similarities between the children in the schools and this congruence may be expected to have a significant positive bearing on the future developments in the country provided the common elements do not give way to rhetoric.

Finally, to sound a note of caution, the reader needs to be reminded that these results are five years old and that may mean that some of them are five years out of date. It seems likely that the information growing out of the use of devices like the Raven Progressive Matrices, the Harris Draw-a-Man or the Bender Gestalt tests would not be quickly invalidated but the questionnaire survey material in a country as young, as vital, as idealistic and as preoccupied with the welfare of all of its citizens as Tanzania might go stale very quickly.

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