Abstract

Title of Document:	AN EXAMINATION OF PARENTAL VARIABLES, ECOLOGICAL FACTORS AND THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE STUDENTS
	Erik M. Hines, Doctor of Philosophy, 2009
Directed By:	Dr. Cheryl C. Holcomb-McCoy, Associate Professor, Department of Counseling and Personnel Services, University of Maryland

The achievement gap between African American males and their peers has been documented in the literature. This research study examined the influence of parenting styles, parental variables, and ecological factors on the academic achievement of African American males. The sample was taken from two high schools in the northeast section of the United States and 153 African American male students between grades eleven and twelve participated in this study. The results of this study showed no significant relationship between parenting styles and the academic achievement. In addition, father's level of monitoring academic activities, mother expectations, and the number of parents in the home are significantly related to parenting styles. Moreover, results showed father's education level and two-parent homes are a positive predictor of grade point average while father expectations is a negative predictor of grade point average.

AN EXAMINATION OF PARENTAL VARIABLES, ECOLOGICAL FACTORS AND THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE STUDENTS

By

Erik M. Hines

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2009

Advisory Committee:
Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Chair
Dr. Julia Bryan
Dr. Vivian Lee
Dr. Marcy Marinelli
Dr. Sharon Fries-Britt, Dean's Representative

Dedication

I dedicate this research study to my ancestors on whose shoulders I stand on. Because of them, I was able to receive adequate education, the right to vote, and to attend graduate school to receive a terminal degree. I am forever indebted to the individuals who sacrificed their lives so that I can have the opportunities that are afforded me today.

Acknowledgements

Most important, I would like to acknowledge my wife, Mia, for her patience, encouragement and support through the doctoral process. Her attributes have allowed me to matriculate through graduate school with dedication and extreme focus. Also, I would like to thank my mother for instilling the principles of hard work, valuing education, and supporting me in all the endeavors I pursued. She has been a great supporter since the first day I started graduate school.

Secondly, I want to give thanks to a dynamic advisor, Dr. Cheryl C. Holcomb-McCoy, who started this journey of learning, conducting, and interpreting research with me. Because of her, my potential to conduct and synthesize research has been expanded beyond my belief. She has given me critical feedback followed by encouragement to show me that there is always potential for growth. In addition, I want to thank my committee members, Dr. Julia Bryan, Dr. Marcy Marinelli, Dr. Vivian Lee, and Dr. Sharon Fries-Britt. These committee members have challenged me to think about my research in ways that add to my skill sets as a research. They continue to assist me in developing my full potential.

Last, I would like to thank Drs. James Moore and Lee Jones. These individuals inspired me to pursue a doctorate degree when I was a senior in college. Their mentorship has helped me navigate through the graduate school process and has encouraged me to use my education to assist others like myself.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1

Introduction

Nationally during the 2005-2006 academic year, only 48% of African American males earned a high school diploma compared to 75% of White males earning a diploma (Schott Foundation, 2008). Further, the Maryland State Department of Education or MSDE (2006) noted that, "African American male youth have been branded violent, uneducated, uneducable, drug addicted, malevolent, deficient, defiant, recalcitrant, hostile, ungovernable, immoral, and amoral" (p. 18). Pedro Noguera (2003) indicated that African American males deal with a plethora of issues that affect their academic success in the K-12 school system. Some of these issues come in the form of teachers' low expectations of African American males, disproportionate attendance of African American males in schools that lack the necessary resources to facilitate African American male development and more glaringly, the overall societal image and stereotype of African American males as being violent and persons to be feared. Noguera noted that African American males experience higher incarceration rates, rising suicide rates, and higher unemployment rates than their racial or gender counterparts. He suggested that these environmental and cultural influences affect African American males' perceptions and attitudes toward education and their self-concept.

The National Center For Education Statistics (NCES; 2007) along with other researchers (e.g., Entwistle, Alexander, & Olson, 2004; Greene & Winters, 2006; Martin, Martin, Semivan-Gibson, Wilkins, 2007; Noguera, 2003; Taliaferro &

DeCuir-Gunby, 2008) have even reported that African American males take less rigorous courses (e.g., advanced placement courses) and graduate from high school at a lesser rate than their counterparts. In general, African American students are enrolled in schools that have lower numbers of certified teachers, few rigorous courses available, and schools with a "graduation-only" culture (Ford & Moore, 2004).

<div align="center">Parenting</div>

Parenting has been viewed as an essential component of a child's development (Hillaker, Brophy-Herb, Villaruel, & Haas, 2008). For this research study, the parenting of African American males is examined and the following parental variables will be utilized: parents' educational level, parents' monitoring of academic activities, parents' communication style, number of parents in the home, and parents' expectations toward education. It is well-documented in the literature and research that students who have parents with higher levels of education tend to complete more years of schooling (including college) than students with parents who have lower levels of educational attainment (Melby, Wickrama, Conger, & Conger, 2008). In addition to parental educational attainment, parental monitoring has been indicated as having a positive effect on African American academic achievement (Rath, Haynie, Solomon, Cheng, & Simmons-Morton, 2008). Rath et al. found that parental monitoring was a strong predictor of academic success among low-income African American students. Parental monitoring is defined as parents' knowledge of their child's academic courses (i.e., enrollment in a particular course, and ensuring student complete academic tasks such as homework), whereabouts, and involvement

in school activities which includes but is not limited to parents' involvement in parent organizations (e.g., PTA), and parents' knowledge of their students' extracurricular activities (Laird, Pettit, Dodge, & Bates, 2003; Simons-Morton & Crump, 2003).

Similarly, parent-student communication has been linked to positive effects on African American students' academic achievement, particularly African American males (Hillaker et. al., 2008; Stewart, 2007). Hillaker et al. (2008) found that supportive family relationships during adolescence promoted positive communication between the parent and child which led to higher prosocial values while Stewart (2007) found that parent-child discussions about academics was a predictor of academic success.

Family structure, such as single parent and two-parent households, have also been found to impact students' academic achievement (Boyce-Rodgers & Rose, 2001). Boyce-Rogers and Rose noted that two-parent headed households (e.g., married parents) have higher levels of parental monitoring and support and thus positively influence students' academic achievement.

Similarly, Flowers and Flowers (2008) conducted a study and found that parent expectations of their child's educational attainment affected their achievement in reading. Further, other researchers (Kaplan, Liu, & Kaplan, 2001) found a significant correlation between parental educational attainment and the expectations of their child's academic outcomes. In other words, parents with higher levels of education tended to expect positive academic outcomes of their students.

Parenting Styles

Diana Baumrind (1966; 1972) developed a typology for understanding differences in parenting behaviors. Baumrind examined four parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, indulgent and permissive. Authoritarian parents exhibit characteristics of being very demanding and require strict obedience from their children while authoritative parents are less restrictive and foster autonomy among their children (Baumrind, 1966, 1991; Darling, 1999). Indulgent parents display characteristics of "pleasing" their children by letting them engage in any activity of their choice and not regulating behavior while neglectful parents may reject their children and/or be uninvolved in their lives (Baumrind, 1966, 1991; Darling, 1999).

Research indicates that parenting styles have various effects on African American children (Baumrind, 1972; Mandara, 2006; Park & Bauer, 2002). For example, Baumrind (1972) reported that African American girls who displayed characteristics of self-sufficiency and high academic achievement tended to have mothers who displayed an authoritarian parenting style while Park and Bauer (2002) found that White/Caucasian students who had higher levels of academic success had parents who had an authoritative parenting style. Mandara (2006) suggested that African American parents have a modified version of the authoritative parenting style that is often viewed as authoritarian. She claimed that this modified version of authoritative parenting is effective in developing academic achievement in African American males.

Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner (1979) theorized that socio-cultural systems and environmental factors influence a child's development. Five systems encompass his

theory: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. The microsystem has a direct interface between the student and systems such as parents, school, friends and neighborhood. Next, the mesosystem connects the various systems to form a relationship; for example, a student can perceive attaining good grades as positive if reinforced by tutoring received by his/her local church. The exosystem does not have a direct effect on the student; however, it still has an influence. An example of this influence includes a parent losing a job, thus limiting funding resources that result in emotional stress or lack of basic necessities. Religious, philosophical and political ideologies of students or their parents are labeled as the macrosytem. Finally, the chronosystem is composed of life events that influence a student such as divorce, high school graduation, or pregnancy. Again, the range of influence for these socio-cultural systems included direct contact with the child (i.e., parents and neighborhood settings) to life transitions (i.e., sociohistorical conditions).

Stewart (2007) found that ecological factors played a role in the academic achievement of African Americans. She reported that positive peer influence, school cohesion and parent-child discussions had a positive effect on African American academic success. Note that parent-child discussions involve parents and students conversing about issues related to school such as course selection and school events (Stewart, 2007). All three of the aforementioned factors are a part of the microsystem which directly influences student development. Additionally, Shearin (2002) conducted a study on the achievement of African American males. She discovered

that ecological factors such as cohesive and supportive families contributed to higher levels of African American male achievement.

The ecological factors considered in this study are the frequency of church attendance and parental variables as discussed in the next section. With the exception of frequency of church attendance (mesosystem), all other parental variables (i.e., parents' educational level, parents' monitoring academic activities, parental educational level, communication style, number of parents in the home, parents attitude toward education) are considered to be a part of the microsystem. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979) these parental variables are connected to the microsystem because they directly influence the student. As for frequency of church attendance (mesosystem), research (Byfield, 2008; Sanders, 1998; Williams, Davis, Saunders, & Williams, 2002) indicates that the role of church-going positively influences the academic achievement of African American students. Tucker (1999) noted that church-related programs assisted African American parents in educating their children. Moreover, African American students that associate with relatives and peers who attend church are more likely to have positive academic outcomes such as high school completion and reduced negative behaviors such as suspension (Williams et al., 2002). Williams and colleagues (2002) suggest that relatives and peers may have a stronger impact and higher expectation on African American students' academic success than students' personal religious beliefs. In addition, Jeynes (2002) reported how attending religious schools as well as student personal religious commitment contributed to Hispanic and African American student success. Finally, Sanders (1998) found that church involvement has an indirect, positive influence on

the academic self-concept and school behavior (i.e., attitudes and conduct) of African American students which lead to higher levels of academic achievement.

Rationale for Study

As previously stated, African American males' experiences in schools are less than adequate. The literature is replete with data regarding the low achievement and lack of work preparedness of African American males (Entwistle, Alexander, & Olson, 2004; Mandara, 2006; Noguera, 2003; Schott Foundaton, 2008 U.S. Department of Education, 2004, 2008). Researchers (Entwistle, Alexander, & Olson, 2004; Martin et al., 2007; Pinkney, 2000) have also reported that White males are more likely than African American males to complete high school and that 52% of African American males dropped out of high school or did not receive their high school diploma during the years of 2003 and 2006 (Schott Foundation, 2008). Given these alarming statistics regarding African American males' academic achievement in this country, a systemic perspective is warranted in order to better understand how to assist this population of youth achieve greater academic success. This study offers a systemic perspective and uses Baumrind's parenting typology as well as Brofenbrenner's ecological theory as research frameworks. This study fills a void in the literature because it examines parenting, and parenting structure as a means to understand African American male achievement. The results will, in turn, assist parents and school personnel to better facilitate programming and interventions for African American males.

Statement of Problem and Research Design

This study will examine the relationship between the parenting styles of African American parents and African American male student achievement. More specifically, the researcher will explore the influence of parenting styles, parental variables (e.g., parents' educational level, parents' monitoring of academic activities, communication style, number of parents in the home and parents' expectation toward education), and ecological factors (e.g., community type, frequency attendance at church, synagogue, or temple) on the academic achievement of African American males. Using Brofenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Baumrind's typology of parenting styles as theoretical frameworks, this research study seeks to explore the following research questions:

1.   Is there a significant relationship between the parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's high school achievement?

       1a. Is there a significant relationship between the parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's enrollment in honor's courses, Advanced Placement classes or the International Baccalaureate program?

       1b. Is there a significant relationship between the parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's self-reported grade point average?

2.   Is there a significant relationship between African American parents' personal characteristics (e.g., parents' educational level, parents' monitoring of

academic activities, communication style, number of parents in the home, and parents' expectation toward education) and their parenting style?

3.   Which combination of factors best predicts African American male high school achievement (e.g., 1. parenting style, 2. parents' educational level, 3. frequency of attending church, synagogue or temple, 4. community type (i.e., urban, suburban or rural), 5. number of parents in the home, 6. parents monitoring of academic activities, 7. communication style and 8. parents expectation toward education)?

The design of this study is considered to be causal comparative because the researcher seeks to examine the relationship between the following variables: parenting styles (independent variable) and grade point average as well as Advanced Placement classes, honors classes, and the International Baccalaureate Program (dependent variables); parental characteristics (independent variables) and parent styles, (dependent variables); and parental characteristics (independent variables) and grade point average (dependent variable). In addition, the researcher does not have control over the independent variables and the relationships between variables are suggestive and not necessarily proven.

<div align="center">Definition of Terms</div>

African American

According to the United States Census Bureau (2000), Black or African American is defined as, "A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as Black, African American, or

<div align="center">9</div>

Negro, or provide written entries such as African American, Afro American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian" (p.1).

Academic Achievement

For the purposes of this study academic achievement will be defined by self-reported grade point average, enrollment in advanced placement classes, honors classes, and/or the international baccalaureate program.

Achievement Gap

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2004), the achievement gap is defined as, "The difference between how well low-income and minority children perform on standardized tests as compared with their peers. For many years, low-income and minority children have been falling behind their white peers in terms of academic achievement" (para 2).

Parenting Styles

Baumrind's typology of parenting styles are defined as the following:

Authoritarian. "The authoritarian parent attempts to shape, control, and evaluate the behavior and attitudes of the child in accordance with a set standard usually an absolute standard, theologically motivated and formulated by a higher authority". (Baumrind 1967, p. 890),

Authoritative. "The authoritative parent attempts to direct the child's activities in a rational, issue-oriented manner. She encourages verbal give and take, shares with the child the reasoning behind her policy, and solicits his objections when he refuses

to conform. Both autonomous self-will and disciplined conformity are valued by the authoritative parent" (Baumrind, 1967, p. 891).

Permissive or Indulgent. "The permissive parent attempts to behave in a nonpunitive, acceptant, and affirmative manner toward the child's impulses, desires, and actions" (Baumrind, 1967, p. 889).

Uninvolved. The uninvolved parent has low responsiveness and demandingness of their children. The parent can be considered to be both neglectful and rejecting of their children (Baumrind, 1991).

The instrument that will be used in this study, The Parenting Styles Index, measures parenting styles using Baumrind's typology. Furthermore, this is the second revision of the instrument which includes categorical scoring to determine the parenting style of the parent. Two sub scales, acceptance/involvement and strictness/supervision, are included on the instrument for a total of 18 items. The acceptance/involvement scale has 10 items with an alpha coefficient of .72, a mean of .81, a standard deviation of .11, and a range of .25 to 1.0. The strictness supervision scale has 9 items, with an alpha coefficient of .76, a mean of .74, a standard deviation of .13, and a range of .30 to 1.0.

Parental Variables

Parental variables are variables used to describe parental characteristics such as parental monitoring and socioeconomic status (Rath et al. 2008; Sanders, 1998). These variables are included on the Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire developed by the researcher of this study. The following parental variables are used in this study: parenting styles (Baumrind's typology), parents'

educational level, parents' monitoring academic activities, communication style, number of parents in the home and parents expectation toward education.

Ecological Factors

Ecological factors are taken from Bronfrenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, which is a socio-cultural view of child development. The following elements make up this theory:

<u>Microsystem</u>: The student has the most interactions with these agents. Examples of the agents include school, family and community. The contextual variables for this system are parenting styles, parents' educational level, the type of community in which the students resides, parents' monitoring academic activities, communication style, and number of parents in the home.

<u>Mesosystem</u>: The relationships that exist between contexts such as school experiences to church experiences. The variables being studied for this system is the frequency of attending a church, synagogue or place of worship.

<u>Exosystem</u>: The child does not have a direct relationship with the social agent but is nevertheless affected by it. An example of this social agent is government funding for transportation.

<u>Macrosystem</u>: For this system, the attitudes and ideologies shape the students worldview, for example religion and politics. No variables are studied for this system.

<u>Chronosystem</u>: Life transitions that impacts a child over his/her lifespan such as world events, marriage, and having children. No variables are studied for this system.

Summary

This chapter summarized the need to examine the relationship between parental and ecological factors and the academic achievement of African American males. Specifically, the rationale, the theoretical framework, the purpose of the study (including research questions), and the definition of terms were discussed and delineated.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Family involvement and/or parental involvement has been consistently linked to positive academic outcomes of K-12 students (Comer, 1976; Eccles & Harold, 1996; Esptein, 1995; Epstein, Sanders, Simon, Salinas, & Van Voorhis, 2002; Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Green, Wilkins, & Closson, 2005; Jeynes, 2005; Sanders, 1998). For African American students, familial/parental involvement is important to their academic success (Jeynes, 2005). Although the literature has well-documented the influence of family/parent involvement on African American achievement (Bradley, Johnson, Rawls, & Dodson-Sims, 2005; Comer, 1976, Jeynes, 2005, 2007; Mandara, 2006; Stewart, 2007), less attention has been given to the specific parental variables and ecological factors that contribute to African American student achievement. The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature and research on African American student achievement, Bronfebrenner's Ecological Systems theory, ecological factors, parental variables and how these dynamics impact African American students, primarily males and their success in school. Further, this literature review will focus on the history of the achievement gap, how parental variables and ecological factors, as well as how the school counselor's role affect the academic success of African American males.

African American Male Achievement

Research has shown that the achievement gap between African American students and their White peers consistently plague the U.S. educational system. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 43% of Whites

and 36% of Asian/Pacific Islanders scored at or above "proficient" levels on the

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment compared

to 16% of African American and 20% of Latino students (NCES, 2007). In

particular, Whites outperformed African Americans and Latinos in the 17-year-old

age category by 29 points in 2004 (NCES, 2007). Additionally, this report (NCES,

2007) noted that Whites scored higher on mathematics assessments in the same age

category by 28 points compared to African American students and 24 points with

Latinos.

Although students-of-color outnumbered White students in taking the

Advanced Placement (AP) exam (i.e., calculus AB, English composition and

literature, and U.S. History), African American students had the lowest mean grade

(NCES, 2007). NCES (2007) reported,

> Across all AP exams, Asian students had the highest mean grade (3.05),
>
> followed by Whites (2.99), Hispanic (2.52), American Indian/Alaska Native
>
> (2.45), and Black (2.01) students.....Asian students had the highest mean grade
>
> on English literature and composition (3.06), followed by White (2.95),
>
> American Indian/Alaska Native (2.44), and Hispanic (2.28) students. Black
>
> students had the lowest mean grade for calculus AB (1.95), English literature
>
> and composition (2.04), and U.S. History (1.87). (p.72)

In addition to the achievement gap, there is also an educational attainment

gap. The educational attainment gap deals with the disproportionately low numbers

of racial minorities attaining education (i.e., high school diplomas and college

degrees) compared to White and Asians (NCES, 2007). For instance, African

American students had higher grade retention and suspension rates as well as higher dropout rates than their White and Asian/Pacific Islander counterparts (NCES, 2003, 2007). According to research reports (NCES, 2003, 2007), only nine percent of Whites have ever repeated a grade as compared to 18 percent of African Americans. Also, the percentage of African Americans who have been suspended or expelled during their high school career totaled 35% while only 15% of Whites experienced the same consequence.

Although the enrollment of African American students in post secondary institutions has increased, they still lag behind their counterparts in enrollment and graduation (NCES, 2007). African Americans accounted for 11% of the population at four year institutions and 12% at two year institutions in 2000 (NCES, 2003). Ness and Tucker (2008) noted that college access for African Americans and other minority students have been regarded as an important issue in the United States and that race as well as socioeconomic status are factors that impact college access.

African American Males

African American male students are considered to be lagging behind all their equals including African American female students in all academic areas (Baker, 2005; Dallman-Jones, 2002; Entwstle, Alexander, & Olson, 2004; Martin, Martin, Semivan-Gibson, Wilkins, 2007; Noguera, 2003). In the academic area of advanced placement courses, African American males are underrepresented as compared to their White counterparts (Taliaferro & DeCuir-Gunby, 2008). The MSDE (2006) created the Task Force on the Education of Maryland's African American males and reported that out of 32,000 students taking AP examination in 2005, only 1,229 of

them were African American males. Although MSDE claimed that more African

American male students are taking AP examinations, the numbers are still low.

Moreover, educational attainment has been prevalent for African American males.

Nationally, the in the 2003 high school class, only 48% of African American males

received a high school diploma compared to 51% of White males and 59% of African

American females (Greene & Winters, 2006). Moreover, the Schott Foundation on

Public Education reported that 48% of African American males earned a high school

diploma when compared to 75% of White males earning a diploma during the

2005/2006 academic year (Schott Foundation, 2008). In other words, 52% of African

American males dropped out of high school or did not receive a high school diploma

in 2003 and 2006. Further, White males were more likely to complete their high

school credentials than African American males (Entwistle, Alexander, & Olson,

2004; Martin et al., 2007; Pinkney, 2000). Researchers (Entwistle, Alexander, &

Olson, 2004) have suggested that individuals with high school diplomas have more

job and career opportunities than individuals who have not obtained their diplomas.

Other researchers (Baker, 2005; Jackson & Moore, 2006) view education as a path to

social mobility and better opportunities for higher salaries. Moreover, the decline in

college attendance of African American males has declined (Noguera, 2003, Roach,

2001; Warde, 2007). African American females earned double the awarded degrees

(e.g., associate's bachelor's, and master's) than African American males in post

secondary institutions in 2004 (NCES, 2007). Additionally, higher suspension and

expulsion rates contribute to the problem of African American male academic

achievement (Martin et al, 2007; NCES, 2003; Noguera, 2003). NCES (2007)

ascertained that 24.1% of males were suspended in 2003 compared to 12.7% of their White male counterparts.

Comparatively, special education has a negative effect on the achievement gap of African American males. African American students were more likely than White students and other students-of-color to receive special education services (MSDE, 2006; NCES, 2003; Noguera, 2003). Specifically, African Americans males were disproportionally over represented in special education (Moore, Henfield, & Owens, 2008; Noguera 2003; Patton, 1998). According to NCES (2003), the number of African American students served by The Individuals with Disabilities Act was 15% higher than their White counterparts. In other words, African American students were more likely to receive more special education services than Whites. Researchers (Harry & Anderson, 1994; Moore, Henfield, & Owens, 2008; Noguera, 2003) have argued that the disproportionate number of African American males in special education is a result of biases from eligibility selection diagnostic processes that can influence school outcomes. Because of the subjective selection process, African American male students have been misclassified or inappropriately placed in special education classes (MSDE, 2006). Further, Harry & Anderson (1994) believed that some special education categories such as Educational Mental Retardation (EMR), Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED), Specific Learning Disability (SLD), and Speech Impairment (SI) have been misused because these criteria are considered a judgmental criterion rather than a biological criterion. Also, Moore and colleagues (2008) stated,… "African American males are frequently identified as seriously emotionally disturbed" (p. 909). Finally, African American males were more likely

to be placed in separate or restrictive classrooms, segregating them from the general school population (Patton, 1998).

<div align="center">Ecological Systems Theory</div>

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory posits that individuals' development is influenced by their environment. According to Bronfenbrenner, environmental influences determine a child's behavior and ultimately the child's academic and social progress. These influences are divided into five systems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. The microsystem is the immediate setting that affects child development. The family, peers, school, and the neighborhood are the structures that encompass the microsystem. Additionally, the microsystem is bi-directional which means the child can influence the environment as well. For example, the child can have a negative or positive influence on his/her parents. The mesosystem is the connection between the structures in the microsystem. Examples of the mesosystem include a child whose parents are going through a divorce and as a result of this issue, the child displays disruptive behavior in the school as a sign of disapproval over this action. The exosystem plays a passive role in the development of a child yet still has an influence on his/her environment. For example, home property taxes fund most school systems and the level of funding determines the quality of academic resources the child may receive in school. The macrosystem encompasses cultural norms, government laws, religious ideologies and customs which influence child development (Berk, 2000). Finally, the chronosystem is the transition of events that happen over a child's life through adulthood. These transitions include marriage, traumatic events, and socio-

historical events. These systems (i.e., microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem) were created because Bronfenbrenner (1979) argued,

> The understanding of human development demands more than the direct
> observation of behavior on the part of one or two persons in the same place; it
> requires examination of multiperson systems of interaction not limited to a
> single setting and must take into account aspects of the environment beyond
> the immediate situation containing the subject. In the absences of such a
> broadened perspective, much of contemporary research can be characterized
> as the study of development–out-of-context. (p. 21)

The researcher will use ecological systems theory as the overarching theory for this study and as an additional note, parental variables are included in the ecological systems theory.

Ecological Factors

Several ecological factors have been documented as to having adverse and positive effects on the academic success of African Americans (Horton, 2004; Krauss 2008; Mandara, 2006; Martin et al. 2007; NCES, 2003; Noguera, 2003; Roscigno, Tomaskovic-Devey, & Crowley, 2006; Stewart, 2007; Wooley & Grogan-Kaylor, 2006). These factors include school environment (i.e., teacher expectations, building infrastructure, etc) and the social environment (peer influence, neighborhood, parental characteristics, etc).

Stewart (2007) conducted an investigation using data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) database where she hypothesized that

20

individual and structural level variables were linked to academic achievement of African American students. The data used in her study was collected in two waves, the first in 1988 and the second in 1990. The sample consisted of 1,238 African Americans in which 52 % were female from 546 schools. Moreover, information about school characteristics was collected from both school personnel (i.e., administrators and teachers) as well as students.

Stewart characterized the individual level variables as student effort, school attachment, school involvement, school commitment, association with positive peers, parental school involvement, parent-child discussion, and controlling for the variables family structure, gender, and family socioeconomic status (SES). School structural levels included school social problems and school cohesion. The dependent variable consisted of student grade point average (self-reported) and coded on a five point scale with a value range 0 to 16. Students reported their grades for math, english and science. The statistical analysis yielded a .73 coefficient alpha. In addition, Stewart (2007) reported student effort as being measured by school attachment, school involvement and school commitment. For school attachment, "the students indicated the extent to which they care about and have positive feelings for school" (Stewart, 2007, p. 24). A seven-item scale was used to measure school attachment and provided statements such as "Most of my teachers care about me" (Stewart, 2007, p. 24). Some questions required reverse scoring; for example, "In my school I feel 'put down' by other students" (Stewart, 2007, p. 24). The items on the questionnaire were measured on a four point continuum with one as strongly disagree and four as

strongly agree with a coefficient alpha of .74 in addition to a values range of 7 to 28. Higher levels of school attachment were represented by higher values.

In regards to school involvement, questions about engaging in school activities were asked of students. Stewart (2007) reported that an index of questions were created for 16 school activities and included a question such as, "Do you participate in band, student government, sports, service clubs, honor clubs etc? (Stewart, 2007, p. 24). Also, scores were measured on a values range from 16-32 with the highest values being interpreted as the highest level of school involvement. A binary response format was used to collect response (i.e., 1 = did not participate; 2 = participate). A KR20 coefficient was used because the items were dichotomous and as a result the KR20 was .82 (Stewart, 2007). In addition, students were asked to respond to a set of items related to their commitment to education. The items were on a four-point scale with one (being strongly disagree) to four as (strongly disagree). Questions on this measure included "I get a feeling of satisfaction from doing what I'm supposed to do in this class" and "Education is important for getting a job later" (Stewart, 2007, p 24). Stewart (2007) indicated that .79 was the coefficient alpha. In the next sequence of questions, students indicated the importance of associating with positive peers who exhibited behaviors of engaging in education. On the three-item scale, students rated the importance by selecting from 1 (not important) to 3 (very important). The questions on this section included items such as "Among the friends you hang out with, how important is it for you to study, get good grades and finish high school?" (Stewart, 2007, p 24). Three to nine was the values range with the

highest value indicating higher levels of positive peer association with the coefficient alpha of .75 (Stewart, 2007).

Following the association with the positive peer scale, students completed a scale that asked them to rate their parents' level of involvement in the school. Six items were on the scale and they ranged from… "attending school meetings to acting as a school volunteer (1 = never to 3 = more than twice)" (Stewart 2007, p. 24). Moreover, .83 was the coefficient alpha and six to 18 was the values range with the highest value indicating more parental involvement (Stewart, 2007). Further, students completed a scale regarding discussions with school. The scale focused on questions regarding "selecting courses or programs at school" (Stewart, 2007 p. 24). This parent child discussion scale was composed of three items with responses of 1 equals never to 3 equals always. The coefficient alpha was .98 with three to nine as the values range with the highest value indicating more parent-child discussions. Stewart (2007) controlled for the demographic variables of family structure, gender, and family SES by making family structure and gender dichotomous variables (i.e., 0 = single parent family and 1 = two parent family; 0 = females). Family SES was determined by parents reporting their highest level of education and their income.

As for school structural measures, the value range for school size was 500-2,500, school poverty was interpreted as the number of students receiving free or reduced lunch, and the proportion of non-White students in each school was measured. These variables were based on school characteristics from students, teachers, and school administrators. In the same way, school location was represented as urban (1) or not urban (2).

The school social problems construct assessed the array of school behavioral problems within the school. Administrators had to indicate the extent to which they were experiencing various behavior problems by answering 13 items on this construct. Examples of the behavioral items included use of alcohol in the school, cutting class, and vandalism and the… "response format ranged from 1 = not a problem to 4 = a serious problem (Stewart, 2007, p. 25). As for the students, they answered a three-item construct regarding their experiences with social problems at school. The response format was 0 = never to 2 = more than twice and sample statements were "I had something stolen from me at school"(Stewart, 2007, p. 25) and "Someone offered to sell me drugs at school" (Stewart, 2007 p. 24). The values range for both the administrator and student responses were -2.35 to 5.21 in which higher scores represent more social problems and .84 was the coefficient alpha (Stewart, 2007). Next, the school cohesion construct assessed… "the extent to which there is trust, shared expectations and positive interactions among students, teachers and administrators" (Stewart, 2007, p.25). Teachers were asked to answer an 18-item questionnaire regarding their school environment. Some of the statements on the questionnaire included "There is a broad agreement among the entire school faculty about the central mission of the school" (Stewart, 2007, p.25) and "I usually look forward to each working day at this school" (Stewart, 2007, p. 25). In terms of the response format, teachers had the choice of selecting 1 as strongly disagree to 6 as strongly disagree. Similarly, students answered questions regarding school cohesion and their responses ranged from 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree. Questions on this scale included, "Students make friends with students of other racial

and ethnic groups" (Stewart, 2007, p. 25) and "My teachers care about me and expect me to succeed in school" (Stewart, 2007 p. 25). With both the teacher and student constructs, the values ranged from -2.91 to 4.95. Higher numbers indicated higher levels of school cohesion.

For the statistical analysis of Stewart's study, she had to create statistical models and use regression analyses because the African American students are nested in schools; therefore, STATA was implemented to adjust for correlated errors to yield "unbiased estimates of the coefficients and standard errors" (Stewart, 2007, p. 26). Model one encompassed individual level variables predicting g.p.a and model two examined school structural variables as predictors of g.p.a. According to Stewart (2007) results indicated,

> Two of the school effort measures, school attachment and school commitment were positively related to GPA. This indicates that students who display higher levels of effort in their schooling, as measured by school attachment (.42) and school commitment (.48), have higher GPAs. Further associations with positive peers (.12) and parent-child discussion (.20) were significant predictors. The direction of the effect suggests that frequent associations with positive peers and parent-child discussions are associated with higher GPA. (p.26)

Additionally, school cohesion (.14) was found to be a significant predictor of g.p.a. (Stewart, 2007). Although it was the only school structural level variable with significance, it suggests that schools with higher levels of cohesion affect student g.p.a (Stewart, 2007). On the other hand, parental school involvement, school

25

poverty, proportion non-white, school location, school size, and school social problems were not significant predictors of g.p.a. (Stewart, 2007). Parent-child discussion will be noted as communication between the parent and student.

Shearin (2002), conducted a study on the perception of parent-child interaction of African American males from an ecological perspective. For the sample, Shearin (2002) used 179 African American males and examined the impact of family process variables on their academic achievement and psychological well-being. Specifically, she drew on a stratified sample of seventh and eighth grade students who were born between 1985 and 1987. Three instruments were utilized for the study: The Demographic Family Profile or DFP (Shearin, 1997) and three subscales from Family Environment Scale or FES (Moos & Moos, 1974). The DFP, a questionnaire that contains 13 items, was employed to "assess the extent to which parents perceive their support and encouragement toward their adolescents" (Shearin, 2002, p. 131). The FES subscales measured the perception of adolescents toward their family/social environments. The 90 item scale consisted of a true/false format and included the following items on three dimensions: relationship dimension-cohesion, expressiveness, and conflict; personal growth dimension -independence, achievement orientation; intellectual-cultural orientation, active-recreational orientations, and moral religious emphasis; and system maintenance dimension-organization and control. Grade point average was measured in two consecutive semesters (1999-2000) and scores from the Stanford Nine Achievement Test (Stan 9) were used as measures of academic achievement. Stanford Nine Achievement scores ranged from four to six with a mean of 5.53 with a standard deviation of 1.54

(Shearin, 2002). Low academic achievement was determined by students who had a 2.49 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

Every African American male completed the FES. According to Shearin (2002), "Of all the total participants, 46.9 percent were 7th graders and 53.1 percent were 8th graders; the mean average was thirteen years, five months (13-5)" (p. 152). One hundred seventy-eight parents participated in the study by completing the DFP. Shearin used Pearson's correlation and discovered a correlation between the family process variables of "parents help with homework" ($r = .45$), "achievement orientation" ($r = .80$), and "intellectual-cultural orientation" ($r = . 82$) at $p < .01$, and participants academic achievement (Shearin, 2002, p132). "Family cohesion" was significant ($r = -.16$) at the $p < .05$ level of significance (Shearin, 2002, p132).

Shearin used stepwise regression to determine the strength of the aforementioned variables and found a significant correlation between academic achievement and parent interaction. She found that African American males' self-efficacy contributed to their psychological well-being, especially if they know that they have supportive families. Further, Shearin (2002) suggested that African American males who knew that they were successful and productive determined their psychological well-being. Also, having supportive, positive, and cohesive families was found within students who had higher levels of academic success.

Role of the Church

Research has shown that the role of the church in the African American community has a positive correlation with improving achievement among students (Adksion-Bradley, Johnson, Sanders, Duncan, Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Jeynes, 2002;

Sander, 1998; Williams et al., 2002). Historically, the church has been seen as a place where African Americans sought solace, a platform for social justice, and a location where African Americans can be true to themselves (Adksion et al., 2005). Likewise, African American students have seen an increase in academic success through the church by receiving mentorship by church members, having a committed relationship to their religion, having relationship with peers who attend church and engaging in church activities (e.g., choir member or usher).

Jeynes (2002) conducted a meta-analysis on Black and Hispanic students and whether religiosity or attendance to religious schools had a positive impact on their academic achievement. Jeynes searched several databases and synthesized 15 studies to produce the findings of this investigation. Jeynes (2002) found that attending religious schools for African American and Hispanic students was correlated with academic success. Specifically, the effect sizes for math and reading achievement tests ($SD = .25$, $p < .01$) were statistically significant where as social studies and science were not significant. Grade point average was not measured because of unavailable data (Jeynes, 2002). Likewise, Jeynes's (2002) research indicated that religious commitment (i.e., a personal relationship or dedication to church or worship services) of African American and Hispanic students had a positive impact on their academic achievement. Particularly, grade point averages ($SD = .21$, $p < .001$) had larger effect sizes than achievement tests. Also, data was not available to measure academic achievement on religious commitment (Jeynes, 2002). To note, academic achievement was shown at all grade levels in this study.

Williams et al. (2002) found that African American students who had family members or peers who attended church were more likely to graduate from high school than peers who have family who did not attend church. This research study contained a sample of 231 African American high school freshman (103 males and 128 females) taken from a midwestern city. The measure used to assess church attendance consisted of one question that asked about the frequency of peers and relatives attending church. Although Williams and colleagues (2002) found a correlation between academic success and peer/family church attendance, they did not find that individual i.e., (student) church attendance had a significant on academic achievement.

Sanders (1998) discovered that church, teacher perception, and parent support influenced academic achievement among African American students. The following instruments were utilized in this study: a teacher and parent support scale (Eggert, Herting, & Thompson, 1991), a church involvement scale developed by the author, a school behavior scale, and a self concept scale. Additionally, interviews were conducted to find out the impact of church involvement and parental support on academic self concept and how parent and teacher support affected school behavior. Sanders surveyed 827 African American eighth grade students with a 67% response rate and used multiple regression to analyze the data and to ensure that bias did not occur. Age, sex, poverty level and number of parents in the household were statically controlled (Sanders, 1998). The results showed that students' perception of parents and teachers' support of academic success increased children's value of education. Furthermore, church involvement was seen as a significant factor in predicting

academic concept while teacher support positively predicted school behavior and achievement ideology. Finally, in her study, Sanders (1998) observed that school behavior, academic ideology, and school behavior were impacted positively by parental support.

<div align="center">African American Parenting</div>

Parenting in the African American family has been examined and explored extensively (Abner, Villarosa, & Beal, 1999; Comer & Poussaint, 1992; Hopson, 1992; Stevenson, Davis, and Abdul-Kabir, 2001; Winbush, 2002; Wright, 2000). There are even popular books on African American parenting such as *The Black Parenting Book: Caring for Our Children in the First Five Years* (Abner, Villarosa, & Beal, 1998), *The Warrior Method: A Parents Guide to Rearing Healthy Black Boys* (Winbush, 2002), and *Stickin to, Watchin' Over, and Getting' With: an African American Parents Guide to Discipline* (Stevenson, Davis, & Abdul-Kabir, 2001). Nevertheless, there is limited empirical research on the intricacies and uniqueness of African American parenting when compared to other groups. Parental variables such as parent cohesion, parent monitoring, parent beliefs and perception of educations as well as family support play a significant role in the academic performance of African American students, particularly males.

Parenting Variables

Several researchers (Boyce-Rodgers & Rose, 2001; Rath, Haynie, Solomon, Cheng, & Simmons-Morton, 2008; Sanders, 1998; Woolley & Grogan-Kaylor, 2006) have noticed that various parental variables have a positive impact on the academic performance of African American students. Other, researchers (Gill &Reynolds ,

<div align="center">30</div>

1999; Seyfried & Chung, 2002) found that parental expectations influenced academic success.

Boyce-Rodgers and Rose (2001) conducted a study to examine personal, family, and school factors on academic achievement. They focused on achievement by family structure. Boyce-Rodgers and Rose's sample included 2,153 students in which 88% were White, 11% were African American, and 47% were male and 53% were female. The instruments used for this study included a three item parent support assessment adopted from the Parent-Adolescent Attachment Inventory (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987) and measured the perception of student-parent relationships; a parental monitoring measure that had nine items and evaluated if parents are aware of students' activities; and a school attachment assessment that consisted of three items which evaluated student's perception of their school. In their study, Boyce-Rodgers and Rose controlled for race, mother' level of education, family type and age. Using analysis of variance, Boyce-Rodgers and Rose (2001) found that parental monitoring and parental support were higher in intact families, (e.g., married) than in step families or single-divorced families. Additionally, Boyce-Rodgers and Rose (2001) concluded that parental monitoring and support were predictive of academic success in single, step, and intact families, but especially in single parent family structures.

Rath et al. (2008) found that perceived parental monitoring among low-African American students was positively related to academic success. The researchers used a cross sectional secondary analysis of data from a sample of sixth grade African American students between the ages of 10 and 14 from an intervention study entitled *Steppin Up*. Forty five percent were male while 55% were female and

31

most of the participants lived with at least one biological parent (Rath et al., 2008). Additionally, parents who consented for their children to participate in the study also took part in a telephone interview. Instruments used in this study were self reported data; therefore, a pilot study was needed for reliability. Eighteen students were surveyed to test the clarity and the consistency of the questions. Five scales were created for the questionnaire: friend's pro-social behavior, youth prosocial behavior, academic engagement, perceived parental support, and perceived parental academic monitoring. Friend's prosocial behavior scale consisted of five items and assessed the prosocial behaviors of the participant's closest friends such as staying out of trouble. The youth prosocial scale evaluated the frequency of activities that students participated in a period of 30 days such as religious services. Both the friend's prosocial and youth prosocial scales were developed by Simons-Morton, Crump, Haynie, Saylor, Eitel, and Yu (1999). The academic engagement scale measures the level of engagement of students in the classroom. Additionally this scale was adapted from the ADD Health Youth Interview and created by Midgley, Kaplan, Middleton, Maher, Urdan, Anderman, and Roeser (1998) and consisted of 18 items. In addition, the perceived parental support was an 11 item scale modified by Simons-Morton el. al. (1999) to the perception of youths' parents' supportive behavior (Rath et al. 2008). Last, the perceived parental academic monitoring scale was developed for the *Going Places Study* by Simons-Morton et al. (1999). This scale measures how youth perceive their parents monitoring academic activities.

Using logistical regression, Rath el at. (2008) found that higher levels of parental support were predictive of parental academic monitoring among low-income

African American students. The researchers reported that African American students who associated with prosocial friends and who exhibited prosocial behavior had higher levels of parental monitoring. Further, Rath et al. (2008) discovered that the more adults who lived in the same house with the students, the more likely that higher levels of parental monitoring would be present. Along with parental monitoring being a factor of academic success, parenting styles are also associated with academic achievement.

Parenting Styles

One of the most popular theories of parenting is Baumrind's (1966, 1967, 1978) theory of parenting styles typology. She includes four types of parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and neglectful or indulgent. Further, these parenting styles are classified on two dimensions (Baumrind, 1966; Mandara & Murray, 2002): parental demandingness (control and restrictiveness) and responsiveness (warmth and noncoerciveness).

Authoritarian parents believe that they have absolute control over their child's life and that the child should be totally submissive to parent demands. Moreover, authoritarian parents have high regard for tradition and order. According to Baumrind (1978), "The authoritarian parent values obedience as a virtue and favors punitive, forceful measures to curb self-will at points where the child's actions or beliefs conflict with what the parent thinks is right conduct (p. 245)". The authoritarian parent expects their child to conform to their rules and respect them. Authoritarian parents have high expectations for their children; however, they provide or show little warmth and support along with the expectations.

Conversely, authoritative parents have a balance of high expectations as well as the support and warmth needed for child development. They encourage autonomy and discipline in their children while having parental control over them (Baumrind, 1967, 1978). Additionally, authoritative parents view their child from a strengths-based perspective by acknowledging qualities, continually reinforcing standards of conduct, and providing the child with the tools needed for personal success (Baumrind, 1972, 1967, 1978). Further, Baumrind (1978) asserts that authoritative parents exercise discipline measures when a child is disobedient. In particular, the authoritative parenting style has been associated with positive outcomes for children (Durkin, 1995; Spera, 2006). The reasons for positive outcomes include the use of bi-directional communication between parent and child, a high level of emotional support provided by the parent while giving the child a certain level of independence, and parents providing explanations for all actions executed with their children (Durkin, 1995; Spera, 2006).

The permissive parent does not put any restraints on the child. The child is free to do what he/she wants and the parent disregards the child's action. Baumrind (1978) states,

The permissive parent sees him or herself as a resource for the child to use as he wishes, but not as an active agent responsible for shaping and altering the child's ongoing and future behavior. (p. 245)

In other words, responsibility for the child seems to be absent in the life of a permissive parent.

Neglectful parents are considered low in both responsiveness and demandingness (Baumrind, 1991; Darling, 1999). Neglectful parents are similar to permissive parents; they do not provide adequate support for their children. Common characteristics of neglectful parents are deviant behavior (i.e., drug abuse, criminal activities), low to no interest in the welfare of their children, lack of parental involvement, and no restrictions or limitations on the child (Baumrind, 1991; Darling, 1999).

Research has shown that these parenting styles have mixed effects on students of different cultural and racial groups, particularly African Americans (Mandara, 2006). For example, European/White American students tend to achieve higher levels of academic success when their parents have an authoritative parenting style (Baumrind, 2005; Mandara, 2006; Park & Bauer, 2002; Spera, 2005, 2006). On the other hand, authoritative parenting has not been consistently linked to academic success for African American students (Gonzalez, Greenwood, & WenHsu, 2001; Mandara, 2006; Park & Bauer, 2002). Moreover, researchers (Baumrind, 1978, 1991; Mandara & Murray, 2002; Mandara, 2006) have found that an authoritarian parenting style is linked to successful academic outcomes for African Americans students. Mandara and Murray (2002) developed a typology that suggests that African Americans use a type of authoritative parenting that is deemed as authoritarian, which is correlated with positive outcomes including academic achievement. Similarly, Baumrind (1972, 1978, 1991) found that African American girls asserted more social competence as a result of an authoritarian parenting style. Baumrind (1978) asserts that this type of authoritarian style in African American families is similar to the

authoritative parenting style exhibited by European American families. In other words, this style is an African American version of authoritative parenting. Mandara (2006) suggests that the African American version of the authoritative parenting style involves African American parents being more exigent and less resigned to child demands. Researchers suggest that the authoritarian nature of this parenting style is due to various factors that exert a higher level of control and discipline (Baumrind 1978; Bluestones & Tamis–LeMonda, 1999; Mandara, 2006; Simons, Lin, Gordon, Brody, Murry, & Conger, 2002; Spera, 2005). These factors include cultural norms, socioeconomic status, living in communities where students are more likely to be exposed to antisocial behaviors, protective factors from racism, discrimination and raising a child in a single parent home. To note, some of the research written in the parenting section is dated and is placed in this paper because of its importance to the topic.

Within the African American community, physical discipline as a component of parenting has been considered a "norm" and some have even documented that physical discipline decreases behavioral problems (Mosby, Rawls, Meehan, Mays, & Pettinari, 1999; Whaley, 2000). On the other hand, there are mixed opinions in the literature regarding the efficaciousness of physical discipline or spanking (Boyd-Franklin, Franklin, Toussaint, 2000; Comer & Poussaint, 1992). A study conducted by Polaha, Larcener, Shapiro, and Pettit (2004) found that maternal physical discipline reduced teacher-reported externalizing behavior problems in African American students, particularly males, but increases externalizing negative behaviors in European American students. They also reported that physical discipline was more

effective when used with elementary age children than with adolescents. Also, Lansford, Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit (2004) discovered that physical discipline increased externalizing behavior problems in White children, but lowered externalizing behavioral problems for Black children; however, the results were consistent for both boys and girls. Further, Lansford et al. (2004) found that African American mothers used physical discipline more frequently than Whites. In addition, McLoyd and Smith (2002) conducted a study that found physical discipline (i.e., spanking) of children did not lead to behavioral problems because the discipline was moderated by high maternal support in African-Americans, Latinos and Whites. In other words, physical discipline was not problematic if it was followed up with warmth and care by the mother. This six year longitudinal study consisted of a sample of 1,039 European American children, 550 African American children, and 401 Hispanic children from the National Survey of Youth (McLoyd & Smith, 2002). Furthermore, McLoyd and Smith (2002) found an increase in behavioral problems when physical discipline was met with low levels of emotional support. This finding suggests that parent-child relationships are important and dictate the child's interpretation of the use of physical discipline.

Summary

This chapter summarized the literature pertaining to the academic achievement of African American students, African American males, the ecological and parental variables that influence academic success and the role of parenting styles in academic achievement. Research studies were provided as documentation of the various parental and ecological factors that influence African American male

academic success. Ecological systems theory was explained in detail to underscore why this theoretical underpinning is needed to understand the nature of this study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This study examined the relationships between the parenting style of African American parents, parenting variables, ecological factors and the academic achievement of African American males. Brofenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory was used as a framework because cultural, environmental, and parental factors have been positively related to academic achievement. This research study explored the factors impacting African American male academic success by posing the following questions:

Research Question I. Is there a significant relationship between the parenting style of African American parents and their son's high school achievement?

Research Question IA. Is there a significant relationship between parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's enrollment in honor's courses, Advanced Placement Classes or the International Baccalaureate program?

Research Question IB. Is there a significant relationship between the parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's self-reported grade point average?

Research Question II. Is there a significant relationship between African American parents' characteristics (e.g., parents' educational level, parents' monitoring academic activities, communication style, and number of parents in the home) and their parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology)?

Research Question III: Which combination of factors best predicts African American male high school achievement (e.g., 1. parenting style, 2. parents' educational level, 3. frequency of attending church, synagogue or temple, 4. community type (i.e., urban, suburban or rural), 5. number of parents in the home, 6. parents monitoring of academic activities, 7. communication style and 8. parents expectation toward education)?

Procedures

The sample for this study was selected from two public high schools in a school district surrounding a major city in the northeastern region of the United States. The sample was composed of 153 11th and 12th grade African American males from two high schools. The researcher used 11th and 12th graders because these students have had sufficient time to establish an academic record. Additionally, both high schools were used in this study for convenience sampling. Approval for the study was acquired through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Maryland and the local school district to ensure that the rights and welfare of the participants were protected. Further, the researcher obtained consent from the African American male students (see Appendices B and C) and their parents for participation in the research study. Parents signed a consent form in order for their students to be involved in the study (see Appendix A). Students were notified of the voluntary nature of the study.

In collaboration with school officials, the researcher planned the administration of the instruments. The researcher visited all senior and junior English classrooms of the participating high schools to collect the data. Additionally, the

researcher followed the school's policies of attaining parent and student permission as well as procedures for administering the questionnaire. As an incentive for participation, two Ipod shuffles were raffled. Participants were given numbered tickets that were attached to the questionnaire. The participants were notified whether or not they won the raffle by visiting a designated school counselor who pulled the winning ticket. In school number one, the school counselor had the students who participated in the study come to her office to discover whether they won the raffle. The raffle in the second school took place in the school gym during a graduation rehearsal.

<div align="center">Instrumentation</div>

Two instruments were used in this study: *The Parenting Style Index* (Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994) and the *Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire* developed by the researcher of this study. Each instrument is described below.

The Parenting Style Index

The second revision of the *Parenting Style Index* (Steinberg et al. 1994) was used in this study. This instrument was created to measure parenting styles of family's based specifically on the framework of Baumrind's typology. Categorical scoring was used on the second revision of the index as opposed to continuous scoring from the first version of the instrument. The Parenting Style Index is composed of two sub-scales: My Parents and My Free Time. The "My Parents" scale is composed of 18 items and assesses psychological autonomy granting and parental involvement characteristics on a four point Likert format. In other words, this scale

<div align="center">41</div>

"measures the extent to which the adolescent perceives his or her parents as loving, responsive and involved (Steinberg et al. 1994, p. 757)". Sample items include "My parents say you should not argue with adults" and "My parents keep pushing me to think independently". The internal consistency reliability for this scale is .72 with a standard deviation of .11, a range from .25 to 1.0, and a mean of .81. The "My Free Time" scale measures the supervision/restrictiveness characteristics and includes four items with questions, such as "In a typical week, what is the latest you can stay out on School Nights (Monday-Thursday)?" and "In a typical weekend, what is the latest you can stay out on FRIDAY or SATURDAY NIGHT?" This scale has a three point Likert format in addition to two questions created in a nominal (categorical) format. The internal consistency reliability for this scale is .76 with a mean of .74, a range of .30 to 1.0, and a standard deviation of .13. The two subscales will have two different scores that are combined to determine the particular parenting style category (i.e., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, etc). As for scoring the Parenting Style Index, participants who score above the median on acceptance/involvement are assigned the authoritative parenting style while subjects below the median on acceptance/involvement and above on strictness supervision are assigned the authoritarian parenting style. The permissive parenting style category will be assigned to subjects who score above the median on acceptance/involvement and below the median on strictness/involvement. Subjects who score below the median on both acceptance/involvement and strictness/supervision are assigned the indulgent parenting style. The full version of the Parenting Style Index is located in Appendix B.

The Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire

The Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire was developed by the researcher to gather supplemental information regarding African American males' community, family, and educational background. It is comprised of three sections: School Information, School and Community Information, and Family Information. School Information asks questions about African American males' age, grade level, parents' highest education level, Advanced Placement courses, and involvement in school activities. Questions in this section are in a nominal and fill-in the blank format. Examples of questions in this section include "What is your overall grade point average (GPA)?" and "What is the highest level of education obtained by your MOTHER?". Community and School Involvement asks African American males about the type of community they live in (i.e., urban, suburban and rural), place and frequency of worship, the level of their parents' involvement in school activities, parents' marital status, and parents monitoring their academic and social activities. Questions in this section are in a nominal and Likert scale format. Examples of questions in this section include, "I attend a place of worship (e.g., church, synagogue, or temple) at this rate" and "How would you describe the community that you live in?" Family Information asks questions about the relationship between African American male students and their parents. Questions in this section are in nominal and Likert scale format. Examples of questions include, "How would you describe your communication style with your FATHER?" and "How would you describe your communication style with your

MOTHER?" The Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire is located in

Appendix C.

A series of steps were taken in order to ensure the validity of The Academic

and Family Supplemental Questionnaire. For feedback, the questionnaire was sent to

six experts in counselor education who have written and researched the academic and

social development of African American males. Additionally, the questionnaire was

sent to a doctoral candidate in counselor education and two African American male

upper classmen at University of Maryland, College Park for feedback regarding item

clarity and purpose. Several revisions were made to the questionnaire for clarity. For

question 3, "What is your grade point average", the researcher changed the format to

a fill-in the blank response. For question 6, "How many Honors or Advanced

Placement courses have you taken in high school? (if none skip to question 7)", was

changed to How many Advanced Placement, Honors, or International Baccalaureate

courses have you taken in high school? In addition Honors and International

Baccalaureate courses were added to questions 7, 8, and 9 for consistency. In section

II, the answer selection for question 4, "Which parents live in your house? Check all

that apply", included c) legal guardian. Also, question five, Which of the following

BEST describes your parents' current relationship?", the answer selection was

changed to add choice e.) Don't know.

<center>Data Analysis</center>

Research questions and hypotheses were examined and tested by using the

following analyses.

Research Question Ia. Is there a significant relationship between parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's enrollment in honor's courses, Advanced Placement Classes or the International Baccalaureate program?

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether a relationship exists between African Americans' parenting styles and their son's enrollment in honor's courses, Advanced Placement Classes or the International Baccalaureate program. The independent variables were parenting styles while the dependent variables included honor's courses, Advanced Placement classes, and the International Baccalaureate program.

<u>*Hypothesis*</u>. African American males who have authoritarian or authoritative parents will be enrolled in honor's courses, Advanced Placement classes or the International Baccalaureate program. African American males whose parents are neglectful or indulgent are less like to have sons who are enrolled in honor's courses, Advanced Placement classes or International Baccalaureate program.

Research Question Ib. Is there a significant relationship between the parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's self-reported grade point average?

A series of analyses of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine whether a relationship exists between African Americans' parenting styles and their son's grade point average. The independent variables were parenting styles while the dependent variable was grade point average.

Hypothesis. African American males who have authoritarian parents will have higher grade point averages than African American males with parents who have different parenting styles.

Research Question II. Is there a significant relationship between African American parents' characteristics (e.g., parents' educational level, parents' monitoring academic activities, communication style, number of parents in the home, and parents' expectation toward education) and their parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology)?

Analyses of variance were utilized to examine whether a significant relationship exists between parental characteristics of African American males' parents and their parenting style. Additionally correlations were used to describe the degree of relationships between the parental characteristics and parenting style. The independent variables were parental characteristics and the dependent variables were parenting styles.

Research Question III. Which combination of factors best predicts African American male high school achievement (e.g., 1. parenting style, 2. parents' educational level, 3. frequency of attending church, synagogue or temple, 4. community type (i.e., urban, suburban or rural), 5. number of parents in the home, 6. parents monitoring of academic activities, 7. communication style and 8. parents expectation toward education)?

Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted in order to determine the factors that best predict African American male high school achievement (GPA). The independent variables were parenting styles, parents' educational level, attending a

place of worship, community setting, number of parents in the home, parents'

monitoring level, parents' communication level, and parents' level of expectation (these

variables were placed in hierarchal order. The dependent variable was grade point

average.

Table 1 includes an organized format of the research questions, variables, and

the integration of ecological systems theory.

Table 1

Research Questions, Variables, and Theory

Research Question	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory
Is there a significant relationship between parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's enrollment in honor's courses, Advanced Placement Classes or the International Baccalaureate program?	Parenting Styles (Located on Parenting Style Index)	Honor's courses, Advanced Placement Classes or the International Baccalaureate program (Located on Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire)	Microsystem
Is there a significant relationship between the parenting style, (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's self-reported grade point average?	Parenting Styles (Located on Parenting Style Index)	Grade Point Average	Microsystem
Is there a significant relationship between African American	Parental Characteristics:	Parenting Styles (Located on	Microsystem

parents' characteristics (e.g., parents' educational level, parents' monitoring academic activities, communication style, number of parents in the home, and parents' expectation toward education) and their parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology)?	(parents' educational level, item numbers 4 and 5 in section I; parents' monitoring academic activities, item numbers 6a, 6b, 6c, 7a, 7b, and 7c in section II; communication style, item numbers number 3 and 4 in section III; number of parents in the home, item number 3 in section II; parents' expectation toward education, 8a, 8b, 8c, 9a, 9b, and 9c in section II)	Parenting Style Index)	
Which combination of factors best predicts African American male high school achievement (e.g., 1. parenting style, 2. parents' educational level, 3. frequency of attending church synagogue or temple, 4. community type (i.e., urban, suburban or rural), 5. number of parents in the home, 6 parents monitoring academic activities, and parents expectation toward education)?	Parental Characteristics: (parenting styles, parents' educational level, item numbers 4 and 5 in section I; parents' monitoring academic activities, item numbers 6a, 6b, 6c, 7a, 7b, and 7c in section II; communication style, item numbers number 3 and 4 in section III; number of parents in the home, item number 3 in section II; parents' expectation toward education, 8a, 8b, 8c, 9a, 9b, and 9c in section II). Ecological Factors: frequency of attending church, item number 1 in section II; community type, item number 2 in section II	G.P.A. (Located on Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire)	Microsystem Mesosystem (frequency of attending a church, synagogue or place of worship)

Chapter 4

Results

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides a description of the participants and the results of quantitative analyses of the relationships between parental variables, ecological factors and the academic achievement of African American male students. This study examined the following research questions:

Research Question I. Is there a significant relationship between the parenting style of African American parents and their son's high school achievement?

Research Question IA. Is there a significant relationship between parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's enrollment in honor's courses, Advanced Placement Classes or the International Baccalaureate program?

Research Question IB. Is there a significant relationship between the parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology) of African American parents and their son's self-reported grade point average?

Research Question II. Is there a significant relationship between African American parents' characteristics (e.g., parents' educational level, parents' monitoring academic activities, communication style, and number of parents in the home) and their parenting style (based on Baumrind's typology)?

Research Question III: Which combination of factors best predicts African American male high school achievement (e.g., 1. parenting style, 2. parents' educational level, 3. frequency of attending church, synagogue or temple, 4.

community type (i.e., urban, suburban or rural), 5. number of parents in the home, 6. parents monitoring of academic activities, 7. communication style and 8. parents expectation toward education)?

<div align="center">Results of Data Analyses</div>

Instrument Recoding

Recoding was required on both the Parenting Style Index and the Academic and Family Questionnaire for data analysis. The Parenting Style Index was coded on two dimensions acceptance/involvement and strictness/supervision to assign a participant to a parenting style category (i.e., authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and indulgent). Participants who scored above the median on both acceptance/involvement and supervision/strictness were assigned the authoritative parenting style while subjects below the median on acceptance/involvement and above on supervision/strictness were assigned the authoritarian parenting style. The indulgent parenting style category was assigned to subjects who scored above the median on acceptance/involvement and below the median on strictness/supervision. Participants who scored below the median on both acceptance/involvement and strictness/supervision were assigned the neglectful parenting style. Parenting style groups were created by using Pittman and Chase-Lansdale (2001) method of assigning subjects to one of four parenting style groups through the use of median cut-off score. This method was used as opposed to that used by Steinberg and colleagues (Lamborn et al., 1991; Steinberg et al., 1994) because this method retains the majority of the sample ($n = 121$) for this study instead of the sample ($n = 77$)

yielded using Steinberg et al.'s model when categorizing parenting styles. See table 2

for parenting style categorization.

Table 2

Parenting Styles Categorization

Acceptance/Involvement	Above	Below	Strictness/Supervision
Above	Authoritative	Authoritarian	**Above**
Below	Indulgent	Neglectful	**Below**

Several questions on the Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire

were coded for data analysis. For example, "I attend a place of worship at this rate"

(question one) was reverse coded (e.g., 4 = daily, 3 = weekly, 2 = monthly, 1 =

yearly, and 0 = I don't attend a place of worship), Parents educational level (question

four and five) were recoded (e.g., 7 = Less than high school, 6 = High school

graduate, 5 = Education after high school other than 2 year or 4 year college, 4 =

Some college, 3 = College Graduate, 6 = More study after college bachelor's degree,

7 = Graduate/professional degree, and 0 = Don't know), and parents communication

style (questions three and four in section three) were recoded (3 = frequently, 2 =

sometimes, 1 = rarely, 0 = do not) to perform cross tabulations and chi square data

analysis. Also, for the same purpose listed previously, parent expectations were

interpreted as father and mother expectations (questions 8a, 8b, and 8c, 9a, 9b, 9c in

section two) in a Likert scale format summed from 3-21. The statement for number of

parents in the home (question 4 in section two; 0 = no, 1 = yes) was recoded from 1 =

no and 2 = yes to 0 = no and 1 = yes.

Participants

Two hundred surveys were given to 11th and 12th grade African American

males at two high schools in the northeast section of the United States. The surveys

were given to students in class with the instructions to get parent permission and

complete the survey. A designated school counselor in each school collected the

completed questionnaires. Out of 200 surveys, 153 surveys were returned, yielding a

76.5 response rate. Respondents' age ranged from under 15 years to 18 or older with

a mean of 17 years. The majority of the respondents were 17 (38%, $n = 54$) or 18

years or older (48%, $n = 74$). Also, the majority of respondents were in 12th grade

(71%, $n = 109$) or 11th grade (22%, $n = 33$) while some respondents (7.2%, $n = 11$)

did not report their current grade level. The mean grade point average of respondents

was 2.62 ($SD = .62$). Most of the respondents reported taking no International

Baccalaureate, Honors, or Advanced Placement Courses (41%, n = 63), while some

reported taking 1-2 courses (33%, $n = 50$). The majority of respondents reported not

participating in pre-college programs (60%, $n = 92$) while other are affiliated with

College Summit (23%, $n = 35$), Gear Up (1%, $n = 2$), Talent Search (6%, $n = 9$), and

Upward Bound (3%, $n = 5$). Most of the students were not involved in any school

organization (see table 3). Additionally, 54% percent of respondents ($n = 82$) live in

a suburban community setting while the rest of the respondents live in urban (40 %, n

$= 61$) and rural (5%, $n = 8$) community settings. Most respondents (48.4%, $n = 74$)

"attended a place of worship on a weekly basis. Table 3 displays the descriptive

information for academic and ecological factors of African American males.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of Academic and Ecological Variables

Description of Academic and Ecological Variables	n	%
Age		
15	9	5.9
16	9	5.9
17	58	37.9
18 or older	78	48.4
Under 15	3	2
Current Grade		
11TH	33	23.2
12TH	109	76.8
Number of AP, Honors, IB Courses taken		
None	63	42.6
1-2 courses	50	33.8
3-4 courses	14	9.5
5-6 courses	14	9.5
7 or more courses	7	4.7
Pre-College Affiliation		
Upward Bound	5	3.5

Talent Search	9	6.3
Gear Up	2	1.4
College Summit	35	24.5
None	92	64.3
School Club/Organization Involvement		
Student Government		
Yes	21	13.7
No	132	86.3
R.O.T.C.		
Yes	21	13.7
No	132	86.3
African American Clubs or Organizations		
Yes	20	13.1
No	133	86.9
Marching Band		
Yes	17	11.1
No	136	88.9
Involvement in any other school clubs or organizations #1		
Yes	52	34
No	101	66
Involvement in any other school clubs or organizations #2		

Yes	24	15.7
No	129	84.3
Attendance of place of worship		
Does not attend	27	18.0
Attends yearly	12	8.0
Attends monthly	28	18.7
Attends weekly	74	49.3
Attends daily	9	6.0
Community setting		
Urban	61	40.4
Suburban	82	54.3
Rural	8	5.3

Respondents were also asked about their parents' parenting styles and parenting characteristics and labeled as parental variables in this study. Twelve percent (n = 18) of respondents reported their parents as having an authoritarian parenting style while 30 % of them (n = 46) reported having parents with an authoritative parenting style. Also, 29% respondents (n = 44) reported having parents with an indulgent parenting style and 29% of respondents (n = 36) have parents with a neglectful parents style Fifty two percent of respondents (n = 78) live in two parent homes as compared to respondents (48%, n = 72) who live in one-parent homes. On average, respondents (34%, n = 51) reported that they "communicated frequently about school" with their fathers and they (59%, n = 89) reported that the communication about school was frequent with their mothers. Most of the

participants reported their parent's educational level of both father (26%, n = 39) and

mother (34%, n = 51) at a level of a high school diploma or the equivalent (G.E.D.).

The majority of respondents (51%, n = 77) reported that their parents are married.

Participants noted that their mothers are close to being very involved in making sure

they are on task and completing academic activities" (M = 5.21, SD = 1.71). Further,

mothers may not be as involved in participating in school activities such as the P.T.A

(M = 2.76, SD = 2.15), and they (24%, n = 36) are between "not involved to very

involved" in "attending parent teacher conferences" (M = 4.15; SD = 2.24). On

average, respondents reported that their fathers may not be as involved in making sure

they are "on task or completing their academic activities" (M = 3.95, SD = 2.46), not

that "involved in participating in school activities" (M = 2.76, SD = 4.63), and not

that involved in attending parent-teacher conferences" (M = 2.92, SD = 2.34).

Respondents believed that their mothers thought it was almost "very important for

them to make good grades" (M = 6.33, SD = 1.21), somewhat to almost "very

important for them to graduate from high school (M = 6.74, SD = .80) and close to

"very important for them to attend college" (M = 6.36, SD = 1.23). In regards to

participants' fathers, it was almost "very important for their students to make good

grades (M = 5.36, SD = 2.39), almost "very important for them to graduate from high

school" (M = 5.60, SD = 2.39), and almost "very important" for their sons to attend

college (M = 5.34, SD = 2.39). See tables 4, 5 and 6 for descriptions of parenting

styles and parental variables.

Table 4

Frequencies and Percentages of Parenting Styles

Description of Parenting Styles	n	%
Authoritarian	18	11.8
Authoritative	46	30.1
Indulgent	44	28.8
Neglectful	36	29.4

Table 5

Frequencies and Percentages of Parenting Variables

Description of Parenting Variables	n	%
Number of parents in home		
One parent	72	48
Two parents	78	52
Father's communication		
Rarely communicate about school	32	21.3
Sometimes Communicate about school	25	16.7
Frequently communicate about school	51	34
Do not communicate about school	42	28
Mother's communication		
Rarely communicate about school	9	6
Sometimes communicate about school	3	2
Frequently communicate about school	50	33.1
Do not communicate about school	89	58.9
Father's education		

Don't know	26	17.1
Less than high school	17	11.2
High school graduate or G.E.D.	39	25.7
Education after high school other than 2 or 4 year college	14	9.2
Some college (community college/junior or 4 year college	13	8.6
College graduate (bachelor's degree)	22	14.5
More study after bachelor's degree	5	3.3
Graduate/professional degree	16	10.5
Mother's education		
Don't know	7	4.6
Less than high school	12	7.9
High school graduate or G.E.D.	51	33.6
Education after high school other than 2 or 4 year college	20	13.2
Some college (community college/junior or 4 year college	22	14.5
College graduate (bachelor's degree)	20	13.2
More study after bachelor's degree	5	3.3
Graduate/professional degree	15	9.9
Description of parents' current relationship		
Married	77	51
Divorced	18	11.9
Never Married	37	24.5
Dating	8	5.3
Don't Know	11	7.3
Live with mother		
No	21	13.7
Yes	132	86.3
Live with father		
No	72	47.1
Yes	81	52.9

Live with guardian

No		138	90.2
Yes		15	9.8

Table 6

Descriptives of Parenting Variables

Descriptions of parenting variables	N	M	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Parent monitoring*					
Mother-Involved in tasks and completing activities	151	5.21	1.7	1	7
Mother -Involved in participating in school activities (i.e., PTA)	151	3.60	2.2	1	7
Mother-Involved in attending parent-teacher conference	151	4.15	2.2	1	7
Father-Involved in tasks and completing activities	151	3.95	2.5	1	7
Father –Involved in participating in school activities (i.e., PTA)	151	2.76	2.2	1	7

Father-Involved in attending parent-teacher conference	151	2.92	2.3	1	7
Parent Expectations**					
Mother-Importance of good grades	152	6.33	1.21	1	7
Mother-Importance of graduating high school	152	6.74	.80	1	7
Mother-Importance of attending college	152	6.36	1.23	1	7
Father-Importance of good grades	151	5.36	2.39	1	7
Father-Importance of graduating high school	150	5.60	2.39	1	7
Father-Importance of attending college	149	5.34	2.47	1	7

*1 = Not Involved at all, 7 = Very Involved

**1 = Not Important, 7 = Very Important

Research Question One A

The first research question was addressed by conducting a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) between each parenting style and their son's enrollment in Honor's courses, Advanced Placement classes or the International Baccalaureate

program. The participants were asked to complete a parenting style index in which they were asked about their parents' style of parenting (e.g., How much do your parents try to know where you go at night?) and the Academic and Family Questionnaire included items about the students' academic background (e.g., Which Advanced Placement, Honors, or International Baccalaureate courses do you plan to take?). Results of the ANOVA indicated that there is not a significant relationship $F(3, 144) = .66$, $p = .58$ between the parenting styles of African American male students and their son's enrollment in Honor's courses, Advanced Placement classes or the International Baccalaureate program.

Research Question One B

The second part of this research question was examined by conducting a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) between the parenting styles of African American parents and their son's grade point average (g.p.a.). Results of the ANOVA indicated that there is not a significant relationship $F(3, 130) = .96$, $p = .41$ between parenting styles of African American male students and their G.P.A.

Research Question Two

The first part of this research question was analyzed by conducting an analysis of variance (ANOVA) to examine whether a relationship exists between parental characteristics of African American males' parents and their parenting style. A significant relationship was found between father monitoring and parenting styles $F(3, 147) = 3.70$, $p = .01$. Furthermore, a significant relationship was found between mother expectations and parenting styles $F(3, 148) = 3.00$, $p = .03$. Additionally, a significant relationship was found between number of parents in the home and

parenting styles $F(3, 149) = 3.87, p = .01$. Father communication $F(3, 146) = 2.07\ p$ = .11 and mother communication $F(3, 147) = .60, p = .62$ did not have a significant relationship with parenting styles nor did father expectations, $F(3, 147) = 1.87, p = .14$.

Post-hoc results indicated that African American males whose parents were authoritative in the home had higher levels of father monitoring their academics than African American males whose parents had a neglectful parenting style. Additionally, results showed that students who had parents with an indulgent parenting style had higher mothers expectations of their child's education than students with parents who had a neglectful parenting style. Last, students whose parents had an authoritative parenting style were likely to have two parents in the home than students with neglectful parents. See table 7 for ANOVA results and table 8 for cross tabulations of parenting styles and parental characteristics and table 9 for .cross tabulations of parenting styles and family structure.

Table 7

ANOVA Results for Parenting Styles and Parenting Variables

Parenting Variables	df	F	η	p
Mother's level of monitoring	3	2.03	.13	.11
Father's level of monitoring	3	3.70**	.13	.01
Mother expectation	3	3.00**	.10	.03
Father expectation	3	1.87	.09	.14
Number of parents in the home	3	3.87**	.04	.01

Table 8

Cross Tabulations of Parenting Styles and Parental Characteristics

Parenting Variables	Neglectful			Indulgent			Authoritarian			Authoritative		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
Mother's expectation	44	18.43	3.67	44	19.93	2.20	18	19.39	1.85	46	19.91	2.29
Father's expectation	44	15.66	7.19	44	14.80	7.67	18	15.94	7.39	45	18.18	5.96
Mother's level of monitoring	43	11.81	5.14	44	12.55	4.25	18	13.56	4.58	46	14.20	5.08
Father's level of monitoring	43	8.02	6.36	44	8.61	5.47	18	10.22	6.14	46	11.97	5.93
Father's level of communication	43	2.44	.81	43	2.63	1.11	18	2.61	1.14	46	3.00	1.05
Mother's level of communication	44	3.39	.81	43	3.49	.94	18	3.28	.83	46	3.54	.66

Table 9

Cross Tabulations of Parenting Styles and Family Structure

	Neglectful		Indulgent		Authoritarian		Authoritative	
Parenting Variables	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
One Parent Homes	26	36.1	23	32	9	13	4	19.4
Two Parent Homes	17	22	20	26	9	12	32	41

Research Question Three

Research question three examined which combination of factors would best predict African American male achievement (i.e., grade point average) by conducting a hierarchal regression analysis. The factors entered included: parenting styles, parents' educational level, parents' monitoring of academic activities, parent communication style, parents' expectation toward education, number of parents in the home, community type (i.e., urban, suburban or rural) and frequency of attending church synagogue or temple. The rationale for factors entered in this order derives from Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Specifically, all of the factors are at a microsystem levels (e.g., characteristics that have a direct influence on the child) while the factor of attending a worship service is considered to be at the mesosystem level (i.e. it has an indirect influence on child development). As a result, the hierarchal regression analysis, produced three steps to find which variables were significant as well as the ones that disappeared during the process (see the results in Table 6).Step one found no variables to be predictor of grade point average. For step

two, results indicated that father's education was a positive predictor of grade point

average t (123) = 2.88, p = .01, father's expectation was a negative predictor of point

average t(123) = -3.04, p = .003 and two parent households were a positive predictor

of grade point average t(123) = 2.10, p .= .04. Again, in step three, the results

indicated that fathers' education was a positive predictor of grade point average

t(123) = 2.74, p = .01, fathers' expectations was a negative predictor of grade point

average t(123) = -2.98, p = .004 and two-parent households were a positive predictor

of grade point average t(123) = 2.00, p = .05 The F- change for model 3 is .49. The

factors referenced or used as comparison categories were authoritative parenting

style, urban community style, and one parent household. Moreover, correlations

among father education and grade point average were significant r (124) =.00, p <

.01. Also, mother education and g.p.a. were positively correlated r (124), p<.002, p <

.01. Correlations between father expectation and g.p.a. were not significant r(124), p

< .49, p < .05 as well as mother expectation and g.p.a. r(124), p < .09. Table 10

shows the three steps of the hierarchal regression and the combination of factors that

are significant predictors of grade point average.

Table 10

Hierarchal Regression Analysis of Factors that Predict Grade Point Average of

African American Males

Step and Variable	B	SEB	β
Step 1			
Neglectful	-.173	.145	-.12
Indulgent	-.14	.14	-.10
Authoritarian	-.25	.19	.13
Step 2			
Neglectful	-.04	.15	-.03
Indulgent	-.13	.14	-.09
Authoritarian	-.15	.19	-.07
Mother's education	.02	.04	.07
Father's education	.10	.03	.34*
Mother monitoring	.01	.01	.11
Father monitoring	.00	.01	-.00
Father communication	.11	.07	.19
Mother communication	-.05	.09	-.06
Mother expectation	.01	.02	.03
Father expectation	-.04	.01	-.42**
Two parent homes	.27	.13	.22*
Step 3			

Neglectful	-.01	.15	-.01
Indulgent	-.12	.15	-.08
Authoritarian	-.07	.20	-.04
Mother's education	.02	.04	.07
Father's education	.10	.04	.33*
Mother monitoring	.02	.01	.12
Father monitoring	-.00	.01	-.02
Father communication	.11	.07	.19
Mother communication	-.05	.09	-.06
Mother expectation	.01	.02	.03
Father expectation	-.04	.01	-.42*
Two parent homes	.27	.13	.21**
Suburban	.10	.13	.08
Rural	.29	.27	.10
Attend Place of Worship	.01	.05	.02

* p < .01; p < .05

Chapter 5

Discussion

This study examined the influence of parenting style, parental variables and ecological factors on African American male academic achievement. Research (Boyce-Rodgers & Rose, 2001; Rath et al, 2008) has shown that parental variables (e.g., characteristics) can have an impact on academic achievement. Further, ecological factors such as community setting and attending religious services have played a role in helping African Americans achieve academic success (Sanders, 1998).

In this chapter, the discussion of the findings will be presented in six sections. The first section is a discussion of the relationship between parenting styles and enrollment in Honor's courses, the International Baccalaureate program, and Advanced Placement courses. A discussion of the relationship between parenting styles and grade point average is included in section two. Section three will encompass the findings of the relationship of parenting styles and parenting variables. Section five is a discussion about the parenting variables and ecological factors that significantly predict grade point average. Section six will discuss the limitations of the study. Last, section seven will include the implications and the conclusion of this study.

Parenting Styles and Academic Achievement

In this study, no significant relationship was found between parenting styles and African American males enrolled in honors classes, the International Baccalaureate program, Advanced placement courses, or grade point average. I

expected that authoritative and/or authoritarian parenting styles would be significantly related to academic achievement. Mandara (2006) reported inconsistent results in regards to the relationship between parenting style and African American student success. Further, various researchers (Gonzalez, Greenwood, & WenHsu, 2001; Mandara, 2006; Park & Bauer, 2002) have found conflicting connections between parenting styles and African American academic achievement. Based on these results, it can be inferred that the parenting style of African American parents doesn't necessarily determine how successful their African American male students are throughout their high school career.

Parenting Characteristics and Parenting Style

The parental variables, "father monitoring", "mother expectations", and the "number of parents in the home" appear to have a significant relationship with the parenting styles of African Americans. Specifically, African American parents who had an authoritative parenting style had fathers who were monitoring their academic activities at higher levels than parents who had a neglectful parenting style. Previous research has shown that father involvement increases the academic achievement of African American males. Greif, Hrabowski, and Maton (1998) conducted a qualitative study of 29 African American fathers of high achieving male students and noted that the fathers exhibited strengths such as teaching their sons how to communicate and to have a strong sense of racial identity while being concerned about their son's academic and social well-being. In this study, the results were consistent with Grief et al.'s research because fathers monitoring their son's academic achievement is symbolic of caring and communicating the importance of education.

A higher level of parental monitoring has been shown to increase academic success in students (Boyce-Rodgers & Rose, 2001; Seyfried & Chung, 2002; Spera, 2006). To note, the father-son relationship in the African American community is a unique dynamic given the high rate of matriarch headed families and other variables such as high incarceration rates of African American males. This dynamic is explained in detail in the next section labeled: " predictor of African American male achievement".

The parental variable of "mother expectations" was significantly correlated with parenting styles. The results showed that males who had parents with an indulgent parenting style have mothers with high expectations concerning their child's education more so than parents with a neglectful parenting style. In other words, although parents with indulgent styles did not assert control or exert democratic strategies with their males, they had mothers who had high expectations that their students be academically successful. To note, the indulgent style should not be viewed as negative in this study given that African American mothers of any parenting style have high expectations of their son's academic success. As a result, an instrument is needed to accurately assess African American parenting styles. In addition to their study about fathers and their high achieving sons, Grief et al. (2000) conducted a study of 38 mothers and their academically successful sons. Characteristics of these mothers included emphasizing education as an important issue, involvement in their education and instilling values of hard work as well as family into their sons Grief et al. (2000). Also, high parental expectations of academic achievement have been seen as a predictor of academic success (Seyfried &

Chung, 2002). Since the matriarchs are the head of many African American households in the U.S., school counselors need to be aware that many African American males rely on their mother's influence and therefore should use the mother's expectation as a vehicle for assisting them in being academic achievers.

Two-parent homes was another variable significantly correlated with parenting styles. In particular, the results showed that students that had parents with an authoritative parenting style were more like to live in two-parent homes. A possible reason for this result is that both parents share the responsibility of raising the child; therefore, both parents assist each other in the decision making amongst themselves as well as with the child. Both parents help each other in child rearing to decrease the parenting stress which is typically seen in one-parent homes. Two-parent homes are suggested to have students who perform better in school over one-parent homes. Usually, having two parents in the home gives the student multiple resources for assistance. Astone and McLanahan (1991) suggested that children in single parent homes receive less encouragement and help than students in two-parent homes. Furthermore, an outreach to have both parents share their characteristics in parenting can give school counselors more insight into helping their sons succeed in school.

Predictors of African American Male Achievement

This study also examined which parental variables and ecological factors significantly predicted grade point average. The findings of this study suggested that "father educational level" and "two parents homes " were significant predictors of African American male achievement. However, father expectation of academic

achievement was a negative predictor. The findings are explained in detail in the following paragraphs.

Previous research studies (Kaplan, Liu, & Kaplan, 2001; Spera, Wentzel, & Matto, 2009) have shown that parent educational level has an impact on students' achievement. The results of this study are consistent with the previous research; however; the results of this study suggest that the father's education level has the most significant influence on African American males' achievement. Davis-Kean and Sexton (2009) indicate that parent's educational attainment usually transfers into beliefs and values about education and maybe a predictor of academic success. Greif et al. (1998) documented that fathers who did not have high educational credentials relied on community and school stakeholders such as teachers and well educated neighbors who could serve as role models as well as educational resources (Greif et al., 1998). Similarly, parents having access and knowledge to resourceful information that will aid in the academic success of their African American males can account for the variance in grade point average.

Next, "two-parent homes" were found to be a positive predictor of grade point average for African American male students. Boyce-Rodgers and Rose (2001) noted in their findings that two parents homes were one of the family factors that contributed to academic achievement. This result is consistent with previous research that suggests that the African American father's presence is critical to the academic development of African American males. Parental involvement in a child's education has been seen as a critical factor in raising academic performance levels (Bryan, 2005; Eccles & Harold, 1996; Epstein, 1995; Fan, 2001; Finn, 1998; Jeynes, 2005;

72

Machen, Notar, & Wilson, 2005; Redding, 1991; Sanders, 1998; Tucker, 1999).

Given that the achievement gap plagues African American male students, school

counselors should emphasize to "two-parent home" parents that involvement in their

child's education is an important tool to increase academic success. School

counselors can share literature with parents about strategies on being highly involved

in their child's education as well as information on educational resources that can

improve their academic performance (Jeynes, 2005). School counselors could look to

partnering with community and neighborhood leaders to establish programs and

activities outside of school hours to attract parents and bring awareness to the

significant role that both parents play in their child's education. Family, school and

community partnerships have been identified as a resource that positively affects

student achievement (Bryan, 2005; Epstein, Epstein et al., 2002).

Last, the results found that father expectation is a negative predictor of grade

point average for African American males. This may infer that any negative

expectation on academic achievement has a positive impact on African American

male performance. Although, this is in contradiction to what previous research has

explained about parent expectations having a positive impact on academic success,

positive parental expectation may not be applicable to African American male

students and their fathers. Also, this result may be infer that the mother's expectation

of academic success has higher value than father expectation of African American

male academic achievement.

Ecological Systems Theory

Given the results of this study, it is clear that Bonfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory has an impact on child development, especially academic achievement. The microsystem component of this theory integrates relationships (i.e., parents) that directly influence the child. African American parents are included in the microsystem and results show how father and mother education levels, father expectation and two parent homes are predictive of African American male achievement. Further, parenting styles coupled with certain parent characteristics indirectly impact academic achievement (i.e., mother expectations and parenting styles). School counselors should integrate a systems perspective when working with African American parents and males due to the influence that parents have on their sons.

Limitations

There were several limitations of this study. First, the self-report nature of the questionnaire could lead to misleading data and/or results. It is possible that the participants' responses reflected their perceptions rather than actual occurrences. Participants may perceive their parents as being strict rather than democratic or the opposite and it may not be accurate. Also, the results of this study do not include the parents' perspective of their own parenting style and characteristics. Secondly, the study was limited by the narrow location (e.g., geographic region) of the high schools that participated. The two public schools are located in the Northeast region of the United States and the results may have differed if the study included African American males from other regions of the country. Another limitation of this study is

the fact that the participating schools had a large population of males of African descent, rather than African American male students. Although I do not have definitive numbers of African males in this study, many were willing to participate. Consequently, within group difference needs to be taken in to consideration in a future study. Because of cultural differences in parenting, it is possible that the sample is not representative of African American parenting but parenting by persons of African descent. The findings may be further limited because of the small sample size. A larger, more robust sample may have created different results. And lastly, the Parenting Style Index may have limited this study. It is unclear whether or not this instrument accurately assesses the parenting styles of African American parents.

<div align="center">Implications for School Counselors</div>

This study points to the need of school counselors as well as other school personnel to focus on work with African American parents as a means to assist African American males in performing at high levels academically. It is important that school counselors recognize that parents, particularly fathers, can aid in producing higher levels of academic performance of African American males. For this purpose, school counselors must acknowledge that African American parents may parent differently given some of the negative social problems that plague the African American community. African American parents use protective factors such as teaching their son's to be mindful and respectful of police officers given the hostile relationships that exist between them due to excessive and violent tactics used against African American males. Also, protective factors are used to ensure African American males' safety as well as a longer life span.

School counselors are in a pivotal position to reach out to parent organizations, civic groups and community organizations to enhance African American male success. To further support these ideas, school counselors could use the ASCA National Model as a blueprint to forge ties with parents. The ASCA National Model's themes of leadership, advocacy, collaboration and teaming, and systemic change promote guidelines that incorporate using family, school personnel, and community stakeholders in achieving academic success for all students (ASCA, 2005). The ASCA (2005) National Model themes encourage school counselors to develop relationships between stakeholders to ensure all students have equity and access to a quality education. Additionally, the ASCA National Model incorporates the theme of The Education Trust in which it suggests that all students can be academically successful, particularly if school counseling programs are transformed to support a culture of academic achievement ASCA, 2005).

School counselors must look at issues of equity and social justice in order to better serve the needs of African American males and their parents. In particular, school counselors should recognize the plight of African American males in the United States and the significant influence of African American father involvement. School counselors can get parents to change their parenting styles by working with them to find solutions that will aid African American male achievement. For example, school counselors can encourage parents to use a democratic approach in their child's education. African American parents can consult with their son on developing an academic plan that leads to higher levels of success and achievement. Similarly, the results of this study suggest that school counselors should attempt to

engage more African American fathers in the schooling process of their sons. Fathers can monitor their son's academic level, by encouraging them to have quarterly meetings with teachers, setting schedules for father-son homework activities, and engaging school personnel in academic issues if expectations are uncertain or unclear. For many African American males, their fathers may not be active in their lives, and school counselors should seek alternatives to provide male role models for academic achievement. Emphatically, school counselors should acknowledge that African American father involvement is critical and advocate for more father input and feedback at the school level.

The need for school counselors to work with the community and educate African American parents about educational opportunities is imperative. School counselors can create relationships with local universities and other post-secondary institutions to develop Black male mentorship programs in lieu of father absence. These mentorship programs should consist of African American males who are in college, have graduate or vocational training, and secondary education to provide role modeling to African American males who may be struggling academically. Bandura (2002) noted that role modeling has a positive impact on adolescent development. This gives African American males an opportunity to see male role models who have been successful at navigating their way into post-secondary opportunities. School counselors should notify parents of academic opportunities in the school or community. Giving parents' access to venues that increase academic success will help African American males. For this reason, school counselors along with school personnel can develop initiatives that assist fathers in getting more educational

training if they have not completed high school or if fathers are interested in furthering their education since father education is related to academic success for African American males.

<div align="center">Implications for Future Research</div>

Further research is needed to better understand how to train school counselors to become better facilitators of African American male achievement. Studies that take into account the relationships between school counselors and African American males are greatly needed. Also, a study that assesses parents' knowledge about academic achievement and accessibility to resources should be explored to discover if these characteristics could make up the variance in African American male academic success. Research that examines the African American father- school counselor relationship is also needed. Overall, there are no studies that explore the relationships between school counselors and African American parents, particularly fathers. More research is also needed on two-parent African American families to examine the parental characteristics that both parents contribute to the academic success of African American males. In addition, a comparison of parental characteristics across ethnicities may give insight into which variables are strengths for each ethnic/cultural background. Moreover, comparisons between African American backgrounds (i.e., Caribbean, African descent, Black American born) should be explored to differentiate parenting styles and characteristics. Future research should include parent perceptions about parenting styles rather than student perceptions. A large sample of parents would make the study more reliable as well as provide rich information about parenting styles of African American parents.

Another implication for future research is to implement more quantitative as well as qualitative research that focuses on "effective" African American parenting. It is possible that parenting should be measured and analyzed using another framework that is more culturally appropriate. Future research should explore the development of a modified version of Baumrind's typology for African American parenting and a modified instrument for measuring the types/styles of African American parenting. For this reason, a culturally appropriate instrument for parenting styles should be developed and normed on African American parents.

Conclusion

This research study examined the parental variables and ecological factors of African American male academic achievement. There was no significant relationship between parenting styles and African American male academic achievement and fathers who monitor their son's education is seen in more homes with an authoritative parenting style. Across all parenting styles, mothers tend to have higher expectations of their child's education and African American male students tend to have parents who have an authoritative parenting style when two parents are in the home. Likewise, father's education and two parent households are positive predictors of grade point average while father's expectation was a negative predictor of grade point average.

Given the results of this study, more research is needed on how specific parental variables contribute to academic success for African American males. To reiterate, student perceptions of parenting styles and characteristics were explored in this study. In particular, parent perceptions are needed along with student perceptions

to gather an accurate assessment of African American parenting styles. Moreover, a measurement of parenting styles for African American parents should be further explored. Further, father involvement should be studied in particular since results showed it has an impact on academic success. Subsequently, school counselors will find it helpful to decrease the achievement gap by focusing on what parents are doing right and soliciting the help of parents in preparing African American males for a post-secondary education or career. As a result, African American male students will be more competitive and learn at high levels as their counterparts in the academic arena.

Appendix A

Parent Consent Form

Dear Parents,

This is a research project being conducted by Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy and Erik M. Hines at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are asking your permission for your child to participate in our research study. The purpose of this research project is to better understand how African American males and their families achieve academic success to complete high school and prepare for college.

The procedures involve placing your student in a designated room to fill out two questionnaires: The Parenting Style Index and the Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire. It should not take any longer than 20 minutes to complete both questionnaires. For the Parenting Style Index, the questions pertain to the various parenting styles that students perceive their parents to possess. The Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire ask students about their academic background such as grade point average, the level of involvement of their parents in their academics, and the amount of time spent worshipping at a church, synagogue or religious center. In exchange for your child's time and information, the researchers will have a raffle so your child will have a chance to win an IPOD shuffle.

We will do our best to keep your child's personal information confidential. To help protect your child's confidentiality, we will have the questionnaires coded by number and after the information from the questionnaires are entered into a database, the questionnaires will be secured in a locked file cabinet for three months after this study is complete. After three months, the surveys will be destroyed. The surveys are anonymous and will not contain information that may personally identify your child. For coded identifiable information: (1) your child's name will not be included on the surveys and other collected data; (2) a code will be placed on the survey and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your child's survey to their identity; and (4) only Dr. Holcomb-McCoy and Erik will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your child's identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your child's information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if your child or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.

In accordance with legal requirements and/or professional standards, we will disclose to the appropriate individuals and/or authorities information that comes to our attention concerning child abuse or neglect or potential harm to your child or others.

There are no known risks associated with participating in this research project.

This research is not designed to help your child personally, but the results may help the investigators learn more about how environmental factors and parent characteristics affect the achievement of African American male students in high school. We hope that in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of systemic factors that will narrow the achievement gap between African American male students and their peers as well as improve their academic success.

Your child's participation in this research is completely voluntary. Your child may choose not to take part at all. If your student decides to participate in this research, he/she may stop participating at any time. If your student decides not to participate in this study or if your child stops participating at any time, your child will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which he/she otherwise qualify.

This research is being conducted by Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Professor at Johns Hopkins University and Erik Hines, Doctoral Candidate in Counseling and Personnel Services at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy at 301-294-7044 and by email: cholcomb@jhu.edu or Erik M. Hines at ehines3@umd.edu.

If you have questions about your child's rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: **Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) irb@deans.umd.edu; (telephone) 301-405-0678.**

This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.

Your signature indicates that:
you are at least 18 years of age;
  the research has been explained to you;
  your questions have been fully answered; and
 you freely and voluntarily choose to have your child participate in this research project.

Name of Parent(s):_____

Signature of Parent(s):_____

Date of Signature:_____

Name of Student(s):_____

Appendix B

Student Consent Form

Dear Student,

This is a research project being conducted by Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy and Erik M. Hines at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are asking your permission to participate in our research study. The purpose of this research project is to better understand how African American males and their families achieve academic success to complete high school and prepare for college.

The procedures involve placing you in a designated room to fill out two questionnaires: The Parenting Style Index and the Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire. It should not take any longer than 20 minutes to complete both questionnaires. For the Parenting Style Index, the questions pertain to the various parenting styles that students perceive their parents to possess. The Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire asks you about your academic background such as grade point average, the level of involvement of your parents in your academics, and the amount of time spent worshipping at a church, synagogue or religious center. In exchange for your time and information, we will have a raffle so you will have a chance to win an IPOD shuffle.

We will do our best to keep your personal information private. To help protect your privacy, we will have the questionnaires coded by number and after the information from the questionnaires are entered into a database, the questionnaires will be secured in a locked file cabinet for three months after the study is complete. After three months, the surveys will be destroyed. The surveys are anonymous and will not contain information that may personally identify you. For coded identifiable information: (1) your name will not be included on the surveys and other collected data; (2) a code will be placed on the survey and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your survey to your identity; and (4) only Erik and Dr. Holcomb-McCoy will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.

In accordance with legal requirements and/or professional standards, we will disclose to the appropriate individuals and/or authorities information that comes to our attention concerning child abuse or neglect or potential harm to you or others.

There are no known risks associated with participating in this research study.

This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help us learn more about how environmental factors and parent characteristics that affect the achievement of African American male students in high school. We hope that in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of systemic factors that will narrow the achievement gap between African American male students and their peers as well as improve their academic success.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized in your grades or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.

This research is being conducted by Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Professor at Johns Hopkins University and Erik Hines, Doctoral Candidate in Counseling and Personnel Services at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy at 301-294-7044 and by email: cholcomb@jhu.edu or Erik M. Hines at ehines3@umd.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: **Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) irb@deans.umd.edu; (telephone) 301-405-0678.**
This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.

Your signature indicates that:
  you are at least 18 years of age;
  the research has been explained to you;
  your questions have been fully answered; and
 you freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research
 project.

I, _____, want to be in this research study.
  Print your name here

_____   _____
Sign your name here   Date

Appendix C

Assent Form

Dear Student,

This is a research project being conducted by Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy and Erik M. Hines at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are asking your permission to participate in our research study. The purpose of this research project is to better understand how African American males and their families achieve academic success to complete high school and prepare for college.

The procedures involve placing you in a designated room to fill out two questionnaires: The Parenting Style Index and the Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire. It should not take any longer than 20 minutes to complete both questionnaires. For the Parenting Style Index, the questions pertain to the various parenting styles that students perceive their parents to possess. The Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire asks you about your academic background such as grade point average, the level of involvement of your parents in your academics, and the amount of time spent worshipping at a church, synagogue or religious center. In exchange for your time and information, we will have a raffle so you will have a chance to win an IPOD shuffle.

We will do our best to keep your personal information private. To help protect your privacy, we will have the questionnaires coded by number and after the information from the questionnaires are entered into a database, the questionnaires will be secured in a locked file cabinet for three months after the study is complete. After three months, the surveys will be destroyed. The surveys are anonymous and will not contain information that may personally identify you. For coded identifiable information: (1) your name will not be included on the surveys and other collected data; (2) a code will be placed on the survey and other collected data; (3) through the use of an identification key, the researcher will be able to link your survey to your identity; and (4) only Erik and Dr. Holcomb-McCoy will have access to the identification key. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.

In accordance with legal requirements and/or professional standards, we will disclose to the appropriate individuals and/or authorities information that comes to our attention concerning child abuse or neglect or potential harm to you or others.

There are no known risks associated with participating in this research study.

This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help us learn more about how environmental factors and parent characteristics affect the achievement of African American male students in high school. We hope that in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of systemic factors that will narrow the achievement gap between African American male students and their peers as well as improve their academic success.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized in your grades or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.

This research is being conducted by Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Professor at Johns Hopkins University and Erik Hines, Doctoral Candidate in Counseling and Personnel Services at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy at 301-294-7044 and by email: cholcomb@jhu.edu or Erik M. Hines at ehines3@umd.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact: **Institutional Review Board Office, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742; (e-mail) irb@deans.umd.edu; (telephone) 301-405-0678.**
This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.

If you want to be in this study, please sign or print your name.

I, _____, want to be in this research study.
  Print your name here

_____   _____
Sign your name here   **Date**

Appendix D

Parenting Style Index

This is the latest version of our parenting style measure. The first 18 items (MY PARENTS) alternate between the involvement (odd numbered items) and psychological autonomy-granting (even items) scales. All of the psychological autonomy items are reverse scored, with the exception of #12. The last 8 items (MY FREE TIME) compose the strictness/supervision scale. Note that each of the last two questions has three items.

Authoritativeness can be scored as a continuous variable, or scale scores can be used to classify families into theoretically meaningful categories. For illustrations of each, see the following references:

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S., Dornbusch, S., & Darling, N. (1992). Impact of parenting practices on adolescent achievement: Authoritative parenting, school involvement, encouragement to succeed. Child Development, 63, 1266-1281. (Continuous scoring).

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S., Darling, N., Mounts, N., & Dornbusch, S. (1994). Over-time changes in adjustment and competence among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. Child Development, 65, 754-770. (Categorical scoring).

MY PARENTS

Please answer the next set of questions about the parents (or guardians) you live with. If you spend time in more than one home, answer the questions about the parents (or guardians) who have the most say over your daily life.

If you STRONGLY AGREE with the statement, put a 4 on the line next to it.
If you AGREE SOMEWHAT with the statement, put a 3 on the line next to it.
If you DISAGREE SOMEWHAT with the statement, put a 2 on the line next to it.
If you STRONGLY DISAGREE with the statement, put a 1 on the line next to it.

_____ 1. I can count on my parents to help me out, if I have some kind of problem.
_____ 2. My parents say that you shouldn't argue with adults.
_____ 3. My parents keep pushing me to do my best in whatever I do.
_____ 4. My parents say that you should give in on arguments rather than make people angry.
_____ 5. My parents keep pushing me to think independently.
_____ 6. When I get a poor grade in school, my parents make my life miserable.
_____ 7. My parents help me with my schoolwork if there is something I don't understand.
_____ 8. My parents tell me that their ideas are correct and that I should not question them.
_____ 9. When my parents want me to do something, they explain why.
_____ 10. Whenever I argue with my parents, they say things like, "You'll know better when you grow up."
_____ 11. When I get a poor grade in school, my parents encourage me to try harder.
_____ 12. My parents let me make my own plans for things I want to do.
_____ 13. My parents know who my friends are.
_____ 14. My parents act cold and unfriendly if I do something they don't like.
_____ 15. My parents spend time just talking with me.
_____ 16. When I get a poor grade in school, my parents make me feel guilty.
_____ 17. My family does things for fun together.
_____ 18. My parents won't let me do things with them when I do something they don't like.

MY FREE TIME

1. In a typical week, what is the latest you can stay out on
    SCHOOL NIGHTS (Monday-Thursday)?

    I am not allowed out   ___
    before 8:00   ___
    8:00 to 8:59   ___
    9:00 to 9:59   ___
    10:00 to 10:59   ___
    11:00 or later   ___
    as late as I want   ___

2. In a typical week, what is the latest you can stay out on
    FRIDAY OR SATURDAY NIGHT?

    I am not allowed out   ___
    before 8:00   ___
    8:00 to 8:59   ___
    9:00 to 9:59   ___
    10:00 to 10:59   ___
    11:00 or later   ___
    as late as I want   ___

3. How much do your parents TRY to know...

	Don't try	Try a little	Try a lot
Where you go at night?	____	____	____
What you do with your free time?	____	____	____
Where you are most afternoons after school?	____	____	____

4. How much do your parents REALLY know...

	Don't know	Know a little	Know a lot
Where you go at night?	____	____	____
What you do with your free time?	____	____	____
Where you are most afternoons after school?	____	____	____

Appendix E

Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire

DIRECTIONS:

Please answer the below questions to the best of your ability. Circle only one response to each question. Your participation will help us learn how to better assist you and your family with completing high school and preparing for college.

Completing this questionnaire is completely voluntary. You will not be graded on your answers and your decision to participate will not affect your grade.

Academic and Family Supplemental Questionnaire

Section I. School Information

1. What is your age?
    a. 15
    b. 16
    c. 17
    d. 18 or older
    e. under 15

2. What grade are you currently in?
    a. 11th grade
    b. 12th grade

3.   What is your overall grade point average (GPA)?

        GPA:_____

4. What is the highest level of education obtained by your MOTHER?
    a. Less than high school
    b. High school graduate (or GED)
    c. Education after high school other than 2 year or 4 year college
       (e.g., trade school)
    d. Some college (community/junior college or 4 year college study)
    e. College graduate (bachelor's degree)
    f. More study after college bachelor's degree
    g. Graduate/professional degree (master's/doctorate/law/medicine)
    h. Don't know

5. What is the highest level of education obtained by your FATHER?
    a. Less than high school
    b. High school graduate (or GED)
    c. Education after high school other than 2 year or 4 year college
       (e.g., trade school)
    d. Some college (community/junior college or 4 year college study)
    e. College graduate (bachelor's degree)
    f. More study after college bachelor's degree
    g. Graduate/professional degree (master's/doctorate/law/medicine)
    h. Don't know

6. How many Advanced Placement, Honors, or International Baccalaureate courses have you taken in high school? (if none you may skip question 7)
   a. none
   b. 1-2
   c. 3-4
   d. 5-6
   e. 7 or more

7. List the Advanced Placement (AP) Honors, or International Baccalaureate courses you have taken or are currently taking.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

   d. _____

   e. _____

8. If you have not taken an Advanced Placement, Honors or International Baccalaureate course, do you plan to take one in the near future (e.g., next semester, next year)?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Maybe
   d. I am a graduating senior

9. Which Advanced Placement, Honors, or International Baccalaureate courses do you plan to take? Please list below.

   a. _____

   b. _____

   c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

10. If you are not in any Advanced Placement courses, are you in any other honors programs, courses (e.g., the International Baccalaureate program)?
    a. ___Yes

    b. ____No

    If yes, please write in the name of the program courses here.

    1. _____

    2. _____

    3. _____

11. Which of the following classes have you taken? Check all that apply.
    a. ____Algebra I

    b. ____Geometry

    c. ____Algebra II

    d. ____Trigonometry

    e. ____Pre-Calculus

    f. ____Calculus

    g. ____Chemistry

    h. ____Physics

12.Which of the following classes do you plan take? Check all that apply.

    a. _____Algebra

    b. _____Geometry

    c. _____Algebra II

    d. _____Trigonometry

    e. _____Pre-Calculus

    f. _____Calculus

    g. _____Chemistry

    h. _____Physics

13.Please list the school clubs or organizations you are involved in? If your organization(s) are not here, please list them in the blank space.

    a. Student Government

    b. RO.T.C.

    c. African-American Club or Organization

       Name: _____

    d. Marching Band

    e. Other: _____

    f. Other:_____

14. Please select which pre-college program you are affiliated with. If you are not affiliated, please select "none".

    a. Upward Bound

    b. Talent Search

    c. Gear Up

    d. College Summit

    e. None

Section II. School and Community Information

1. I attend a place of worship (e.g., church, synagogue, or temple) at this rate.

    a. Daily
    b. Weekly
    c. Monthly
    d. Yearly
    e. I don't attend a place of worship

2. How would you describe the community that you live in?
    a. Urban
    b. Suburban
    c. Rural

3. How many of your parents (do not include grandparents) currently live in your house?
    a. 1
    b. 2
    c. more than 2
    d. 0…neither of my parents live in my house

4. Which parents live in your house? Check all that apply.

    a. ____Mother
    b. ____Father
    c. ____Legal Guardian

5. Which of the following BEST describes your parents' current relationship?
    a. Married
    b. Divorced
    c. Never married
    d. Dating
    e. Don't know

6. How often is your MOTHER involved in the following?

1=Not involved at all   7=Very Involved

6a.   Make sure you are on task and complete your academic activities (i.e., homework and school work)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

6b.   Participate in parent organizations (i.e., PTA)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

6c.   Attend Parent-Teacher conference(s)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

7. How often is your FATHER involved in the following?

1=Not involved at all   7=Very Involved

7a. Make sure you are on task and complete your academic activities (i.e., homework and school work)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

7b. School Activities (i.e., PTA)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

7c. Attend Parent-Teacher conferences

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

8. Rate the importance of the following to your MOTHER concerning
    your education.

1=Not important   7=Very important

8a. Making good grades

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

8b. Graduating high school

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

8c. Attending college

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

9. Rate the importance of the following to your FATHER concerning your
    education.

1=Not important   7=Very important

9a. Making good grades

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

9b. Graduating high school

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

9c. Attending college

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

Section III. Family Information

1. How would you describe your relationship with your FATHER?
   a. Very close
   b. Close
   c. Distant
   d. Very distant
   e. No relationship

2. How would you describe your relationship with your MOTHER?
   a. Very close
   b. Close
   c. Distant
   d. Very distant
   e. No relationship

3. How would you describe your communication with your FATHER?
   a. We communicate frequently about school
   b. We communicate sometimes about school
   c. We rarely communicate about school
   d. We do not communicate at all about school

4. How would you describe your communication with your MOTHER?
   a. We communicate frequently about school
   b. We communicate sometimes about school
   c. We rarely communicate about school
   d. We do not communicate at all about school

Thank You For Your Participation!

Bibliography

Abner, A., Villarosa, L, & Beal, A.C. (1999). *The Black parenting book: Caring for our children in the firs five years (1ˢᵗ ed.).* New York: Broadway Books.

Adksion-Bradley, C., Johnson, D., Sanders, J., Duncan, L. & Holcomb-McCoy-C., (2005). Forging a collaborative relationship between the Black church and the counseling profession. *Counseling and Values, 49*, 147-154.

American School Counselor Association (2005). The ASCA National Model: *A framework for school counseling programs* (2ⁿᵈ ed). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Armsden, G.C., & Greenberg, M.T. (1987). Inventory of parents and peer attachment: Individual differences in their relationship to psychological well-being in adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence,16*, 427-454.

Astone, N.M. & McLanahan S.S. (1991). Family structure, parental practices and high school completion. *American Sociological Review, 56*, 309-320.

Bailey, D.F. & Paisley, P.O. (2004). Developing and nurturing excellence in African American male adolescents. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *82*, 10-17.

Baker, P (2005). The impact of cultural biases on African American students' education: A review of research literature regarding raced based schooling. *Education and Urban Society, 37*, 243-256.

Bandura, A. (2002, April). Social Cognitive Theory in Cultural Context. Applied Psychology: An International Review, 51(2), 269. Retrieved August 29, 2009, from Academic Search Premier database.

Baumrind, D. (1966). Effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. *Child Development, 37*, 887-907.

Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. *Genetic Psychology Monographs, 75*, 43-88.

Baumrind, D. (1972). An exploratory study of socialization effects on black children: Some black-white comparisons. *Child Development, 43*, 261-267.

Baumrind, D. (1978). Parental disciplinary patterns and social competence in children. *Youth & Society, 9*, 239-276.

Baumrind, D. (1991). The influence of parenting style on adolescent competence and substance use. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 11, 56-95.

Berk, L.E. (2000). *Child development* (5th ed.). Boston: Ally and Bacon. 23-28

Bluestone, C. & Tamis-LeMonda, C.S. (1999). Correlates of parenting styles in predominately working- and middle-class African American mothers. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61*, 881-893.

Boyce-Rodgers, K, & Rose, H.A. (2001). Personal family, and school factors related to adolescent academic performance: A comparison by family structure. *Marriage & Family Review 33*, 47-61.

Boyd-Franklin, N., Franklin, A.J., & Toussaint, P.A. (2000). *Boys to men: Raising our African American teenage sons*. New York: Penguin.

Bradley, Johnson, Rawls., & Dodson-Sims. (2005). School counselor collaborating with African American parents. *Professional School Counselor*, 8, 424-428. Retrieved on June 6, 2005 from Academic Search Premier.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge. MA: Harvard University Press.

Bryan, J. (2005). Fostering educational resilience and achievement in urban schools through school-family-community partnerships [Special issue]. *Professional School Counseling, 8*, 219-227.

Byfield, C. & Birmingham, S. (2008). The impact of religion on the educational achievement of Black boys: A UK and USA study. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 29, 189-199

Comer, J. P. (1976). Improving the quality and continuity of relationships in two inner city schools. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, *15*, 535-545.

Comer, J.P., & Poussaint, A. (1992). *Raising Black children*. New York: Plume.

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. (2008). *Counseling for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs*. Retrieved from http://www.cacrep.org.

Dallman-Jones, A. (2002). A case for separate at-risk education standards. *Journal of School Improvement 3*.

Darling, N. (1999). Parenting styles and its correlates. Champaign, IL: Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. (Eric Reproduction Service No. ED427896).

Davis-Kean, P.E. & Sexton, H.R. (2009). Race differences in parental influences on

    child achievement: Multiple pathways to success. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly,*

    55, 285-315.

Day-Vines, N. & Day-Hairston, B. (2005) Culturally congruent strategies for

    addressing the behavioral needs of urban , African American male

    adolescents. *Professional School Counseling, 8,*236-243. Retrieved October

    23, 2008, from Academic Search Premier database.

Day-Vines, N., Patton, J., & Baytops, J. (2003). Counseling African American

    Adolescents: The impact of race, culture, and middle class status. *Professional*

    School Counseling, *7,* 40-51. Retrieved October 23, 2008, from Academic

    Search Premier database.

Durkin, K. (1995). *Developmental social psychology: From infancy to old age*.

    Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Eccles, J. S., & Harold, R. D. (1996). Families and schools: How can they work

    together to promote school success? In *Family-School Links* (pp. 1-31).

    Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

Education Trust (2008). National Center For School Counseling at Education Trust.

    Retrieved October, 31 2007 from

    http://www2.edtrust.org/EdTrust/Transforming+School+Counseling/main

Entwistle, D., Alexander, K.L., & Olson, L. (2004). Temporary as compared to

    permanent high school drop-out. *Social Forces, 82* , 1185-1205.

Epstein, J. L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships. *Phi Delta Kappan, 76*, 701-713. Retrieved November 4, 2004, from Academic Search Premier Database.

Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Simon, B. S., Clark Salinas, K., Rodriguez Jansorn, N., & Van Voorhis, F. L. (2002). *School, Family, Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action* (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Fan, X. (2001). Parental involvement and students' academic achievement: A growth modeling analysis. *Journal of Experiential Education, 70*, 27-61. Retrieved December 3, 2005, from Academic Search Premier Database.

Finn, J. D. (1998). Parental engagement that makes a difference. *Educational Leadership*, 20-24. Retrieved December 3, 2005, from Academic Search Premier.

Ford, D.Y., & Moore, J. L. III (2004). The achievement gap and gifted students of color. *Understanding Our Gifted, 16*, 3-7.

Flowers, T.A. & Flowers, L.A. (2008). Factors affecting urban African American high school students' achievement in reading. *Urban Education, 43*, 154-171.

Gafford-Muhammad, C. (2008). African American students and college choice: A consideration of the role of school counselors. *NASSP Bulletin 92*, 81-94.

Gills, S., & Reynolds, A.J. (1999). Educational expectations and school achievement of urban African American children. *Journal of School Psychology, 37*. 403-424.

Gonzalez, A., Greenwood, G., & Wenhsu, J. (2001, June). Undergraduate, student's goal orientations and their relationship to perceived parenting styles. *College*

Student Journal, 35, 182. Retrieved February 1, 2008, from Academic Search Premier database.

Greene, J.P., & Winters, M. A. (2006). Leaving boys behind: Public high school graduation rates. Civic Report 48, 1-26. Retrieved on October 5, 2008, from http://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_48.htm.

Greif, L. Hrabowski, F.A., & Maton, K.I. (1998). African American fathers of high achieving sons: Using out-standing members of an at-risk population to guide intervention. Family in Society: *The Journal of contemporary Human Services*, *79*, 45-52.

Harry, B., & Anderson, M. G., (1994). The disproportionate placement of African American males in special education programs: A critique of the process. *Journal of Negro Education, 63*, 602-619.

Hillaker, B.D., Brophy-Her, H.E., Villarruel, F.A., Hass, B.E. (2008). The contributions of parenting to social competencies and positive values in middle school youth: Positive family communication, maintaining standards, and supportive family relationships. *Family Relations, 57*, 591-601.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Walker, J. M., Sandler, H. M., Whetsel, D., Green, C. L., Wilkins, A. S., et al. (2005). Why do parents become involved? Research and implications. *The Elementary School Journal, 106*, 105-129. Retrieved from http://www.vanderbilt.edu/Peabody/family-school/papers.html.

Hopson, D. (1992). *Different and wonderful: Raising Black children in a race-conscious society*. New York: Fireside.

Jackson, J.F. & Moore, J.L. (2006) African American males in education: Endangered or ignored? *Teachers College, 108,* 201-205.

Jeynes, W.H. (2002). A meta-analysis of the effects of attending religious schools and religiosity on Black and Hispanic academic achievement. *Education and Urban Society, 35,* 27-49

Jeynes, W. H. (2005). Parental involvement and student achievement: A meta-analysis. Retrieved May 23, 2006 from http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/digest/meta.html

Jeynes, W. H. (2005). The effects of parental involvement on the academic achievement of African American youth. *Journal of Negro Education*, 74, 260-274.

Jeynes, William. (2007). The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Urban Secondary School Student Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analysis. *Urban Education*, 42 (1), 82-110.

Kaplan, D.S., Liu, X, & Kaplan, H.B. (2001). Influence of parents' self-feelings and academic expectations on children's academic performance. *Journal of Educational Research*, 94, 360-370.

Laird, R.D., Pettit, G.S., Dodge, K.A., Bates, J.E. (2003). Change in parents' monitoring knowledge: Links with parenting, relationship quality, adolescent beliefs, and antisocial behavior. *Social Development, 12,* 401-419.

Lansford, J.E., Deater-Deckard, K., Dodge, K.A., Bates, J.E., & Pettit, G.S. (2004). Ethnic differences in the link between physical discipline and later adolescent

externalizing behaviors. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 45, 801-812.

Lee. C. C. (2001). Culturally responsive school counselors and programs: Addressing the needs of all students. Professional School Counseling, 4, 257. Retrieved May 2, 2008, from Academic Search Premier database.

Machen, S. M., Wilson, J. D., & Notar, C. E. (2005). Parental involvement in the classroom. *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 32*, 13-16. Retrieved June 27, 2005, from PsyARTICLES database.

Mandara, J, (2006). The impact of family on African American males' academic achievement: A review and clarification of the empirical literature. *Teachers College, 108*, 206-223.

Mandara, J & Murray, C.B. (2002). Development of an empirical typology of African American family functioning. *Journal of Family Psychology, 16*, 318-337.

Martin, D., Martin M, Semivan-Gibson, S, & Wilkins, J. (2007) Increasing prosocial behavior and academic achievement among adolescent African American males. *Adolescence, 42*, 690-698.

Maryland State Department of Education (2006). *Task force on the education of Maryland's African American males*. Retrieved on October 3, 2008, from http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE.

McLoyd, V.C. & Smith, J. (2002). Physical discipline and behavior problems in African American, European American, and Hispanic children: Emotional support as a moderator. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64, 40-53.

Melby, J.N., Wickrama, S, Wickrama, K., Conger, R.D., Conger, K. (2008). Adolescent family experiences and educational attainment during early adulthood. *Developmental Psychology,* 44, 1519-1536.

Midgley, C, Kaplan, A., Middleton, M., Maehr, M. L., Urdan, T., Anderman, L. H., et al. (1998). The development and validation of scales assessing students' achievement goal orientations. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 23(2), 113-131.

Moos, R. H. & Moos, B. S. (1994). Family Environment Scale Manual (3rd ed.). Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Mosby, L., Rawls, A.W., Meehan, A.J., Mays, E., & Pettinari, C.J. (1999). Troubles in interracial talk about discipline: An examination of African American child rearing narratives. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 30, 489-521.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2003). *Status and trends in education of Blacks*. Washington, D,C: Author.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2007). *Status and trends in the education of racial and ethnic minorities*. Washington, D.C.: Author

Ness, E.C., & Tucker, R. (2008). Eligibility effects on college access: Underrepresented student perceptions of Tennessee's merit aid program. *Research in Higher Education, 49*, 569-588.

Noguera, P.A. (2003). The trouble with Black boys: The role and influence of environmental and cultural factors on the academic performance of African American males. *Urban Education, 38*, 431-459.

North Carolina State Board of Education (2008). The achievement gap: A definition. Retrieved October 31, 2008, from http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/racg/resources/strategies/movement/definition

Park, H. S., & Bauer, S. (2002). Parenting practices, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and academic achievement in adolescents. *School Psychology International, 23*, 386-396. Retrieved January 25, 2005, from PsyARTICLES Database.

Patton, J. (1998). The disproportionate representation of African Americans in special education: Looking behind the curtain for understanding and solutions. *Journal of Special Education*, 32(1), 25. Retrieved October 8, 2008, from Academic Search Premier database.

Pinkney, A. (2000). *Black Americans (5th ed).* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Polaha, J., Larzelere, R.E., Shapiro, S.K., & Pettit, G.S. (2004). Physical discipline and child behavior problems: A study of ethnic group differences. *Parenting: Science and Practice*, 4 339-360.

Rath, J., Gielen, A, Haynie, D., Solomon, B., Cheng, T., & Simons-Morton, B. (2008). Factors associated with perceived parental academic monitoring in a population of low-income, African American young adolescents. *Research in Middle Level Education Online,* 31, 1-11. Retrieved October 23, 2008, from Academic Search Premier database.

Redding, S. (1991). Creating a school community through parental involvement. *Education Digest, 57*, 6-10. Retrieved June 27, 2005, from Academic Search Premier Database.

Roach, R. (2001). Where are the Black men on campus? *Black Issues in Higher*

Education, 18, 18-22.

Roscigno, V. J. (199). The Black-White achievement gap, family school links, and

the importance of place. *Social Inquiry, 69*, 159-186.

Sanders, M. G. (1998). The effects of school, family, and community support on the

academic achievement of African Americans. *Urban Education, 33*, 385-409.

Seyfried, S.F. & Chung, I. (2002) Parent involvement as parental monitoring of

student motivation and parent expectations predicting later achievement

among African American and European American middle school age students.

Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work. 11 109-131.

Shearin, S. A. (1997). Family Demographic Profile. Norfolk State University,

Norfolk, VA.

Shearin, S.A. (2002). Parent adolescent interaction: Influence on the academic

achievement of African American adolescent males. *Journal of Health and

Social Policy, 16*, 125-137.

Simons-Morton, B. G., & Crump, A (2003). Association of parental involvement and

social competence with school adjustment and engagement among sixth

graders. *Journal of School Health, 73*, 121-126.

Simons-Morton, B. G., Crump, A., Haynie, D., Saylor, K. E., Eitel, P. & Yu, K.

(1999). Psychosocial, school, and parent factors associated with recent

smoking among early adolescent boys and girls. *Preventive Medicine*, 28,

138-148.

Simons, R.L., Lin, K., Gordon, L.C., Brody, G.H., Conger, R.D. (2002). Community
differences in association between parenting practices and child conduct
problems. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 64*, 331-345.

Somers, C.L., Owens, D., Piliawsky, M. (2008). Individual and social factors related
to Urban African American adolescents' school performance. *The High
School Journal, 91*, 1-11.

Spera, C. (2005). A review of relationship among parenting practices, parenting
styles, and adolescent school achievement. *Educational Psychology Review,
17*, 125-146.

Spera, C., Wentzel, K., & Matto, H. (2009, September). Parental Aspirations for
Their Children's Educational Attainment: Relations to Ethnicity, Parental
Education, Children's Academic Performance, and Parental Perceptions of
School Climate. Journal of Youth & Adolescence, 38(8), 1140-1152.
Retrieved August 29, 2009.

Spera, C. (2006). Adolescents' Perceptions of parental goals, practices, and styles in
relation to their motivation and achievement. *Journal of Early Adolescence,
26*, 456-490.

Steinberg, L., Lamborn, S.D., Darling, N., Mounts, N.S., & Dornbush, S.M. (1994).
Over-time changes among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian,
indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development, 65*, 754-770.

Stevenson, H., Davis, G. & Abdul-Kabir, S. (2001). *Stickin to, watchin' over and
getting with: An African American parents guide to discipline*. New York:
Jossey-Bass.

Stewart, E.B. (2007). Individual and school structural effects on African American

    high school students' academic achievement. *The High School Journal*, 91,

    16-34.

Talbert-Johnson, C. (2004). Structural inequities and the achievement gap in urban

    schools. *Education and Urban Society, 37,* 22-36.

The Schott Foundation (2008). *The 50 state report on public education and Black*

    Males. Retrieved on October 10, 2008, from http://www.blackboysreport.org.

Tailiaferro, J.D. & Decuir-Gunby, J.T. (2008). African American educators'

    perspective on the advance placement opportunity gap. *Urban Review, 40,*

    164-185.

Tucker, C. M. (1999). *African American children: A self-empowerment approach to*

    modifying behavior problems and preventing academic failure. Needham

    Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

U. S. Department of Education. (2004). *The no child left behind act of 2001.*

    Washington, D.C.: Author

U. S. Department of Education. (2008). *The no child left behind act of 2001.*

    Washington, D.C.: Author.

U.S. Census (2000). *2000 census of population, public law of 94-171 redistricting*

    data file. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Warde, B (2007). Staying the course: Narrative of African American males who have

    completed a baccalaureate degree. *Journal of African American Studies, 12,*

    59-72

Whaley, A. (2000). Sociocultural difference in the developmental consequences of

the use of physical discipline during childhood for African Americans. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 6, 5-12.

Williams, T.R., Davis, L.E., Saunders J., & Williams, J. H. (2002). Friends, family, and neighborhood: Understanding academic outcomes of African American youth. *Urban Education*, 408-431

Winbush, R. (2002). *The warrior method: A parents guide to rearing healthy Black boys*. New York: HarperCollins.

Wooley, M.E., & Grogan-Kaylor, A. (2006). Protective family factors in the context of neighborhood: promoting positive school outcome. *Family Relations, 55*, 93-104.

Wright, M. (2000). *I'm chocolate, you're vanilla: Raising healthy Black and biracial children in a race conscious world*. New York: Jossey-Bass.