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Cultural enrichment: connecting african american elementary children to academic achievement

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CULTURAL ENRICHMENT: CONNECTING AFRICAN AMERICAN ELEMENTARY CHILDREN TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents,

the late Walker Vernon Biggs, Jr. and to my mother, Gladys M. (Cobbs) Biggs

You both have been there for me throughout my lifetime and Dad,

only days before you made your transition,

you said, “Baby, you’ve been working on it [dissertation] a long time”.

Well Dad, it is finished and I thank and honor you.

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CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, ITS SCOPE, AND RATIONALE

The achievement gap between European American and minority students, especially in comparison to African American and Hispanic students, persists. Johnston and Viadero (2000) wrote "The disparity in school performance tied to race and ethnicity, known as the achievement gap, shows up in grades, test scores, course selection, and college completion" (p. 1). Many factors such as poverty, low self-esteem among students, lack of parental involvement, inequity of financial resources available to school districts, lack of teacher preparation, and a plethora of additional factors have been cited as possible causes for the disparity in academic achievement.

Despite the various efforts of educators, parents, community members, politicians and other members of American society, the problem continues. The ability of public schools in this country to produce well-educated, productive citizens and a highly skilled ethnically diverse work force is in question.

Proposed solutions for remedying the widening achievement gap are numerous. Various remedies proposed as solutions include: providing programs to address the needs of the poor, raising students' and teachers' expectations, developing programs to increase parental involvement in homes and schools, improving teacher training, providing additional financial resources to all schools and increasing standardized testing among students.

A large, growing number of miseducated American citizens are being produced by America's public schools. Many of these students are being funneled into the penal system shortly after dropping out of high school. This phenomenon is especially prevalent among African American male students, many of whom have withdrawn academically years prior to permanently dropping out of school. Additionally, to further underscore the importance of

successfully educating African American students are the debilitating effects brought about after incarceration. Dowdy (2002) wrote that about 4 million people in the United States, including 1.4 million African American men (13% of the adult male African American population) have temporarily or permanently lost their right to vote as a result of felony convictions. In essence, more than a million poorly educated Black male individuals have lost their fundamental American right – the right of "one person, one vote". The denial of the right to vote subjects this population to a powerless status. They exist in society, but are politically powerless to influence their lives or the lives of their families. Consequently, the future of America's economic, political and social fabric is weakened as the number of well-educated, self-actualized individuals diminishes.

In her book, *Learning While Black: Creating Educational Excellence for African American Children*, Hale (2001) outlined a model of school reform that includes three essential components:

1. A pedagogy that features culturally salient instruction;
2. Strategies for implementing an instructional accountability infrastructure within the school;
3. A plan to move African American children from remediation to enrichment.

Figure 1 presents a graphical representation of Hale's model of school reform.

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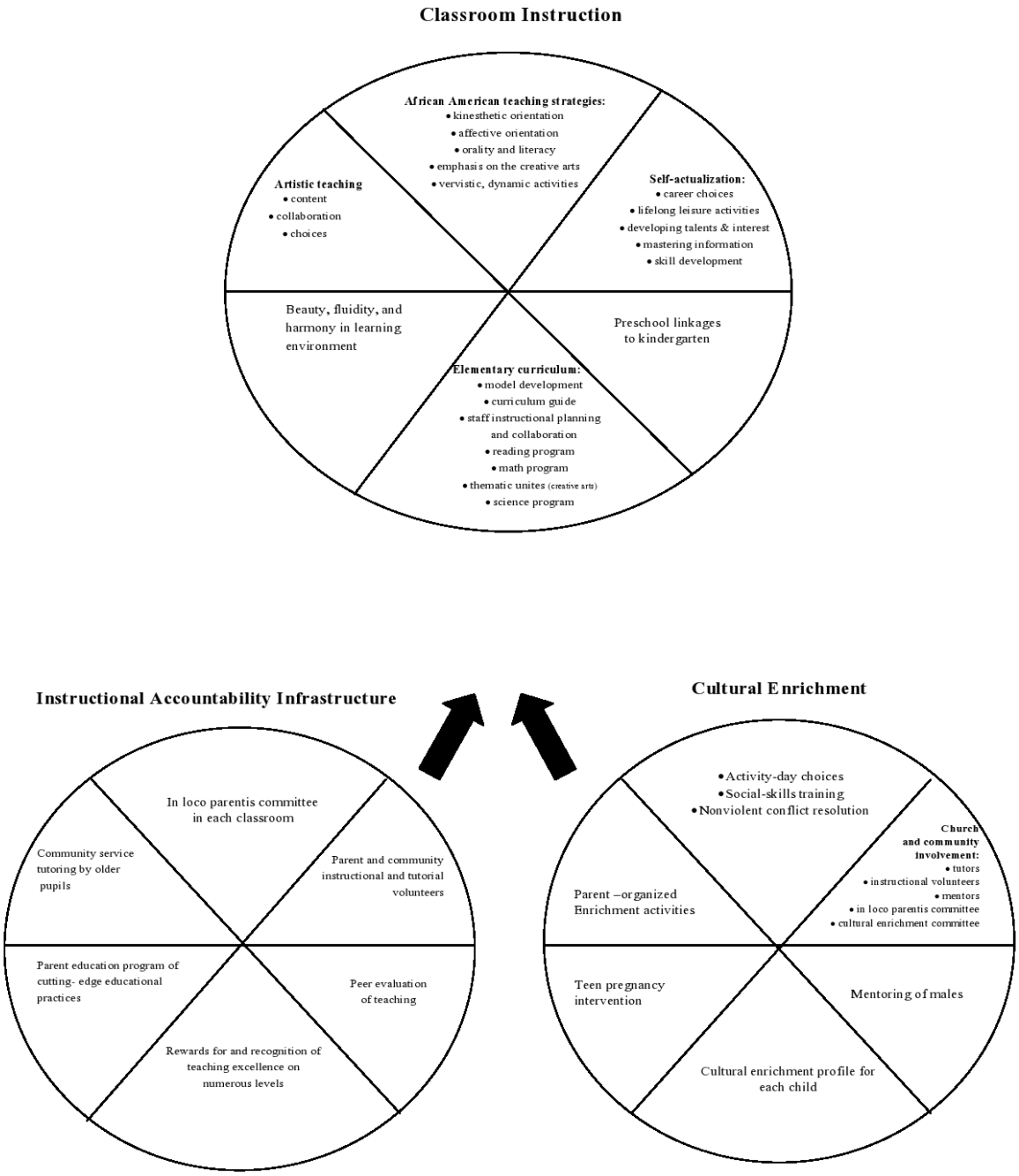

Figure 1 Culturally Appropriate Pedagogy

Note: Hale, 2001

Hale maintained that when children are exposed to enriching experiences at home, at school and in the community, a canvas is created for artistic teaching in the classroom. She further argued that in most traditional efforts at school reform, the focus is upon lengthening the school day and year, essentially offering a greater quantity of what is already being done. She pointed out that attention should be given to the quantity and quality of extra and community-based experiences provided to children that support academic achievement.

Hale (2001) suggested that participation in cultural enrichment activities enables children: to develop social and political skills; to identify talents and interests that can lead to satisfying leisure time activities and careers; and to find meaning in their daily lives. She stipulated that "it is essential that inner-city children be given an opportunity to participate in activities that enable them, in the words of Thurman (1980), the African American theologian-mystic, to identify the genuine in themselves" (p. 143).

Furthermore, Hale (2001) contended that public schools must be the major conduits of change in the lives of millions of African American children. Because schools have children within their buildings and under their direct influence for a minimum of six hours, five days a week for an average of 180 days each year, the schools often function as the primary care-taker of children. Schools, then, must assume the role of provider and/or coordinator of those activities that serve as protective factors for children. The schools must act *in loco parentis*. Alexander (2001) stated, "Next to the family, the school is the greatest institution of socialization in American Society (p. 57).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between self-reported academic achievement and participation in extracurricular, community-based and religious activities

among African American elementary school children. The study further sought to examine the impact of participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities on the students' self-reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies.

Considerable empirical evidence exists that participation in cultural enrichment activities could have a positive impact on outcomes for African American students in particular. Fleming (1985) identified the opportunity to provide leadership in extracurricular activities as one of three factors that caused African American students to grow more intellectually in historically Black colleges as compared to the outcomes of African American students attending White colleges.

Additionally, Nettles (1999) stated, "… structured school-based or community-based after-school and weekend activities, if carried out properly, can provide both rewards and challenges for adolescents that facilitate social, moral, and intellectual development" (p. 1). Additional studies: (Benard, 1991; Braddock, Royster, Winfield, & Hawkins, 1991; Finn & Rock, 1997) supported the importance of children being involved in meaningful school activities. Borman and Rachuba (2001) posited that the school environment that provides "opportunities for students to become meaningfully and productively involved and engaged within the school" promotes academic success (p. 3).

Significance of the Study

This study is important because children spend almost half of their waking hours outside of school. According to Miller (1997) "Children spend only 20% of their waking time in school, because public schools meet only for 6 hours per day, 180 days per year. This [time frame] leaves 185 days and many hours each day free – a time of both risk and opportunity" (p. 1).

The kinds of activities in which children invest their time can influence their immediate and future lives. Most of the previous research, however, has been conducted on European American, middle-class high school students. By examining younger African American children, patterns of academic success can be identified at an earlier age and generalized to broader populations.

The data could be useful in helping parents, educators and policy-makers shape African American children's leisure activities, academic curricula, and social environments to bring about successful school and future career experiences for children. Additionally, by providing a roadmap early in children's lives, the number of children having school and life successes could increase.

Furthermore, this study sought to document the categories and quantity of cultural enrichment to which African American children were exposed. Understanding their exposure to enrichment activities was achieved by collecting data on how African American elementary children used non-instructional time in and outside of school.

Data were collected to examine the inter-relatedness between the categories and quantity of enrichment activities that children engaged in and how that involvement supported academic achievement. The dependent variables of the study were self-reported academic achievement, self-reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs and strategies.

Again, with almost one half of children's time being discretionary, it is important to examine specifically how this time is being spent and its influence on academic achievement. High academic achievement has a direct and lasting impact on the opportunities and careers to which children are exposed and often engaged in for an entire lifetime.

Children have daily, discretionary time that can be used for positive or negative pursuits. Timmons, Eccles, and O'Brien (1985) reported that,

> … young adolescents (9-14) spent 42% of their time in discretionary activities such as viewing television, playing and hobbies, playing sports, and attending church. About 37 percent of their time was spent in what Timmons and his colleagues call productive activities, including school, studying, and reading. (p. 1)

Dryfoos (as cited in Jordan & Nettles, 1999) also argued that unstructured time could lead to negative behaviors.

Previous studies, (*Carnegie Council on Youth Development, 1992; Conrad & Hedin, 1989; Mortimer, Finch, Shanahan & Rye, 1992; Nettles, 1989; Timmons, Eccles, & O'Brien, 1985)* have focused on how children spend their out-of- school time, but these studies did not specifically examine its effect on academic achievement. Additional research is needed to determine if the results of previous studies conducted during the 1980s and 1990s remain relevant.

By examining the patterns of participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities among elementary African American children, a largely overlooked population in the literature, it is hoped that educators could garner useful data in helping to design curricula that positively impact academic achievement.

The findings of this study could also provide policy-makers, school administrators, teachers, parents and concerned citizens with important information about the correlates of cultural enrichment. These findings could provide guidance for structuring enrichment activities for African American children, a vulnerable and most underserved group by public schools.

A key element in closing the achievement gap is to redefine the scope of activity of the school. The school is uniquely positioned to take the leadership in developing the talents of all children through cultural enrichment activities. The findings of this study encourage educators to

incorporate cultural enrichment programs into the missions of their schools because low opportunity children often do not have parents who provide consistent, high quality out-of-school enrichment activities for their children.

Source of Materials, Participants, etc.

The participants in the study were 4th, 5th, and 6th grade African American elementary students enrolled in a Public School Academy located in an urban area.

Method and Design

Randomly selected 4th, 5th, and 6th grade African American elementary students were asked to complete the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS) and a short demographic questionnaire. The collected data were used to analyze the relationship between the students' involvement in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities on the dependent variables. The variables that were examined in this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Variables in the Study

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Background Variables
Involvement in extracurricular activities	Self-reported academic achievement	Age
Involvement in community-based activities	Self-reported school behavior	Grade Level
Involvement in religious activities	Goal Orientation	Gender
	Academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies	Socioeconomic Status as measured by eligibility for free or reduced lunch

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions were addressed in the study:

1. Is there a relationship between self-reported academic achievement, self-reported

school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies among African American students who are attending an elementary school in an urban area?

2. Can elementary African American students' self-reported academic achievement, self-reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies be predicted from their participation in extracurricular, community-based and religious activities?

Assumptions

The following assumptions were used in this study:

- African American children are more likely than European American children to attend schools that offer a limited variety of extracurricular activities.
- African American children are less likely than European American children to live in communities that offer a variety of community-based activities.
- The public schools that African American children attend must coordinate the extracurricular and community-based activities in which children are engaged.
- Involvement in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities impacts academic achievement.

Limitations

The generalizability of the study results were affected by the following limitations:

1. The study was limited to students from a single elementary, public school academy located in an urban setting.
2. The study was limited to students in grades 4 through 6.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for this study:

Personal Achievement Goal Orientation:	This refers to students' reasons or purposes for engaging in academic behavior. Different goals foster different response patterns. These patterns include cognitive, affective, and behavioral components, which have been characterized as more or less adaptive. (Midgley et al., 2000).
Mastery Goal Orientation	When oriented to mastery goals students' purpose or goal in an achievement setting is to develop their competence. They seek to extend their mastery and understanding. Attention is focused on the task (Midgley et al., 2000).
Performance-Approach Goal Orientation	When oriented to performance-approach goals, students' purpose or goal in an achievement setting is to demonstrate their competence. Attention is focused on the self (Midgley et al., 2000).
Performance-Avoid Goal Orientation	When oriented to performance-avoid goals, students' purpose or goal in an achievement setting is to avoid the demonstration of incompetence. Attention is focused on the self (Midgley et al., 2000).
Academic Efficacy	Refers to students' perceptions of their competence to do their class work (Midgley et al., 2000).
Academic Press	Refers to students' perceptions that their teacher presses them for understanding (Midgley et al., 2000).
Academic Self-handicapping Strategies	Refers to strategies that are used by students so that if subsequent performance is low, those circumstances, rather than lack of ability, is seen as the cause (Midgley et al., 2000).
Avoiding Novelty	Refers to students' preference for avoiding unfamiliar or new work (Midgley et al., 2000).
Cheating Behavior	Refers to students' use of cheating in class (Midgley et al., 2000).

Disruptive Behavior	Refers to students' engagement in behaviors that disrupt or disturbs the classroom (Midgley et al., 2000).
Self-Presentation of Low Achievement	Refers to students' preference to keep peers from knowing how well they are achieving in school (Midgley et al., 2000).
Skepticism About the Relevance of School For Future Success	Refers to students' beliefs that doing well in school will not help them achieve success in the future (Midgley et al., 2000).
Public School Academy (Charter School)	A PSA is a state-supported public school operating under a charter contract issued by a public authorizing body. PSAs are also commonly referred to as charter schools. Charter schools may include grades K-12 or any combination of those grades. They may not charge tuition and must serve anyone who applies to attend; that is, they may not screen out students based on race, religion, sex, or test scores. Students are selected randomly for admission if the number of students applying exceeds the school's enrollment capacity. Charter teachers must be certified and "highly qualified" as defined in the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); charter school students are assessed annually as part of the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP). Charter schools cannot be religiously affiliated. (Michigan Department of Education, 2009, p. 1, para. 1)

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Participation in Extracurricular Activities and Its Effect on Academic Achievement

Researchers have studied high school students' involvement in extra and co-curricular activities and the impact of that involvement on academic achievement for decades. Much of the research was based on the seminal work of Coleman (1961) *The Adolescent Society*: *The Social Life of the Teenager and its Impact on Education*.

Coleman's (1961) research was designed to seek solutions to making adolescents' high school experiences better and more satisfying. He further sought to examine "schools which differed in the kinds and number of activities which brought to a boy or girl status among his fellows" (p. vii). He administered questionnaires to students in ten high schools in Illinois. The schools in the study were from rural areas, small cities, Chicago and suburban high schools. The students were given three questionnaires. A pretest was administered in the spring of 1957, a second questionnaire was administered in the fall of 1957, and a final questionnaire was given in the spring of 1958.

Coleman's (1961) findings supported the idea that involvement in non-academic extracurricular pursuits was counter to attaining educational excellence. He asserted that adolescents were drawn to non-academic extracurricular activities which took away valuable time better used for academic pursuits. Coleman suggested that the time adolescents spent doing extracurricular activities negatively impacted academic results.

Coleman (1961), however, also hypothesized that students whose school environments were primarily monolithic, that is, "giving status and approval for a single activity alone" (p. 332) were less likely after high school to have as wide a range of plans as those students who

attended schools with pluralistic environments. Pluralistic environments, on the other hand, offered students a wide range of activities and gave recognition and honor to many activities.

Monolithic environments are quite common in urban high schools, favoring sports over many other extracurricular activities. The attainment of high academic achievement, participation in rigorous curricula, and exposure to a variety of extracurricular activities is often less supported than sports in many urban high schools. This monolithic focus on sports excludes many students who have other interests. The concentrated push for athletic achievement sometimes overshadows the thrust for high academic achievement and often contributes to the growing problem of academic mediocrity experienced in many public schools.

Coleman (1961) also found that high school students valued and respected male athletes more than male scholars. In cases, however, where a male was both an athlete and scholar, he was more likely to have male peers who wanted to be his friend. His peers also wanted to be like him and the athlete/scholar was more popular with the girls than either the male who was exclusively an athlete or scholar.

Coleman (1961) also noted that students most wanted to “be” the person that is valued and rewarded in their school’s environment. In schools that rewarded and valued academic achievement, those students that were scholars were comfortable in their roles as scholars. If a school did not value scholarship, however, the student achieving high grades reported being less satisfied with their role. Additionally, the star athletes in schools that primarily valued athletics were more likely to feel satisfied with their roles as athletes. These finding have great significance even today, especially in a disproportionate number of schools in urban settings, where again, the athlete and not the scholar is revered.

Coleman (1961), Spreitzer and Pugh (1973), and Holland and Andre (1987) also

suggested that the school's values strongly influence how students feel about themselves and their achievements. These findings gave strong support for the need to create rich academic and extracurricular environments to which African American students are exposed. Providing school environments that offer and honor meaningful academic and extracurricular pursuits allows students to participate in activities that help to counteract negative environmental factors, promote achievement and provide enriching activities that influence their futures.

The body of literature regarding involvement in extracurricular activities and its impact on academic achievement grew in the decades following Coleman's (1961) research as school districts grappled with the dilemma of attempting to solve several challenging problems. Among these problems were low academic achievement especially among African American high school students, how best to allocate limited money on resources most beneficial to students, high delinquency rates associated with high school students, and high school students' alarmingly high drop-out rates. Many decisions regarding the inclusion or exclusion of extracurricular and co-curricular activities, however, were not made in light of the social or psychological effects that access to and participation in these activities provided. Countless decisions were based solely on balancing school districts' budgets and many extracurricular activities were eliminated from schools' curricula.

The majority of the studies that examined student participation in extra and co-curricular activities and their relationship to academic achievement focused on white, middle-class, male high school students. The research, therefore, on minority students' participation in extracurricular activities and its impact on academic achievement is limited. Holland and Andre (1987) cited limitations to studies done on students' participation in extracurricular activities as (a) a disproportionate amount of research focused on students' participation in sports to the

exclusion of other activities, (b) the use of small sample sizes which affected the ability to generalize the findings to larger populations and (c) most students who engaged in extracurricular activities usually self-selected the activity. Researchers speculated that pre-existing social and personality differences may have already existed between students who choose to participate in extracurricular activities as compared to those students who do not chose to participate in extracurricular activities. Some researchers posited that these pre-existing differences among students, rather than the students' involvement in extracurricular activities influenced academic achievement.

Bronfenbrenner (1986) studied certain ecological factors that affected the well-being of a child. His study concluded that the child's community, family, school, friends and relatives all had a major impact on the child. To positively develop the "whole" child all components must be in harmony. After-school programs, extended-day programs, and community-based programs can all serve to provide support and enrichment to the child-- especially African American and poor children who are less likely to have positive influences working simultaneously and harmoniously. Bronfenbrenner (1986) also pointed out that despite the specific focus of the programs, those programs "that address the following three development needs of the 'whole' child are best, Academic…Recreational…Cultural." (p. 3)

As schools shape their extracurricular, co-curricular and after-school programs it is imperative to consider that the school is often the most stabilizing influence in many children's lives. Schools, therefore, must address the academic and social needs of its children.

Academic Achievement

Landers, Feltz, Obermeir, and Brouse (1978) reported that male students who participated exclusively in athletics had lower Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores than those male

students who participated in sports and service activities. Female athletes' SAT scores, however, were not significantly different from females who did not participate in service activities.

In like manner, Brown and Steinberg (1991) conducted research on non-instructional influences on adolescent engagement and achievement. The results of their study showed a direct link between the types of activities that adolescents engaged in and their academic achievement. Extracurricular activities with an academic focus resulted in higher student achievement than those activities lacking an academic focus. Brown and Steinberg wrote, "Those who concentrated on 'glory' sports (football, basketball, baseball) or performing activities had a significantly lower academic record than those who concentrated on leadership activities or clubs and interest groups". (p.5) These data suggest that exclusive involvement in extracurricular activities that are not academically oriented do not assist students, especially male students, in attaining academic excellence.

Camp (1990) wrote "the variable of interest, student activity level, produced a positive, significant effect on academic achievement. Of particular interest was the fact that the effect size was over twice as great as that of study habits which is generally regarded as an important causal variable of academic achievement" (p. 277). The amount of time spent participating in the activity and the role of the participants, participant versus leader, impacted achievement.

Camp (1990) derived the students' participation rate by having students respond to a series of questions. The students were asked to respond to each of a series of sports clubs, other in-school activities, and several out-of-school student activities by indicating nonparticipation (0), limited participation (1), and participation in a leadership role (2; p. 275).

As has been noted, African American students having the opportunity to assume leadership roles in activities helped them grow more intellectually in historically black colleges

(Fleming 1985). These findings were confirmed in a subsequent study conducted by Camp.

Marsh (1992) stated that students' participation in extracurricular activities had a small, but positive impact on their commitment to school and grade point averages (GPA). This positive impact on commitment to school translated into positive benefits for several other school outcomes. Furthermore, of the categories of students' participation in extracurricular activities studied: sports; cheerleading; drama/debate; music; dance/chorus; hobby clubs; school subject clubs; vocational education clubs; community youth clubs; church activities; Junior Achievement; publications; student government service clubs; honor societies; and fraternities/sororities, Marsh found that 8 had small, but positive results. These activities were: "sports, honor societies, student government, community service organizations, school publications, church organizations, school subject matter activities, and cheerleading" (p. 24).

Likewise, Walker (1995) supported the premise that involvement in specific types of extracurricular activities impacted the academic achievement of African American high school students. He conducted research with sixty-eight high school students who enrolled in an eighteen week fine arts after-school program with an emphasis on "vocal music, forensics/debate, visual arts, instrumental music, drama, dance, and study skills" (p.14). Fifty-four of the subjects were considered to be *at-risk*. At the conclusion of the program, Walker noted that 45% of the students had higher grade point averages and experienced additional positive outcomes. These additional positive outcomes included students becoming more engaged in other school activities and their parents also reported improved behavior at home and school. While the results of Walker's study were limited in scope, they indicated, like Marsh (1992), that additional positive outcomes in the students' academic achievement and commitment to school life occurred as a result of their involvement in extracurricular activities.

Moreover, Brown and Steinberg (1991); Marsh (1992); and Walker (1995) provided data that supported the importance of involvement in extracurricular activities to academic achievement.

Marsh (1992) and Sabo (1986) corroborated these findings. Their studies found that minority students, who participated in school-sponsored sports, were more involved in other school affairs than non-participants. Involvement in extracurricular activities engages students more in the fabric of the schools. A critical premise of this current study, that schools must be the center of change, especially for African American students, is supported by these studies.

Mahoney and Cairns (1997) and Finn (1989) also concluded that involvement in extracurricular activities helped *at-risk* students develop a sense of connectedness to the school. This sense of connectedness served as a deterrent to dropping out of school. Again, the type of extracurricular activity was important. Mahoney and Cairns stated that programs with a drop-out prevention or remediation focus were ineffective in keeping high school students connected to school. Indeed, the opposite was true. Students involved in these programs were more likely to form deviant groups because of the programs' foci on student deficits rather than strengths. Clearly, this research supports Hale's premise that African American students must be moved from remediation activities to enrichment activities that provide them with rewarding and meaningful experiences.

Equally important, Kalmijn and Kraaykamp (1996) examined the work of Pierre Bourdieux (1973), a French sociologist and leading proponent of the Cultural Capital Theory. They studied the effects of *cultural capital*, "socialization into highbrow cultural activities… such as interest in art and classical music, attendance at theaters and museums, and reading literature" (p. 23) on the educational attainment levels of black and white students in the United States. Like Bourdieux's findings in French schools, Kalmijn and Kraaykamp (1996) found the

same trend in American schools wherein teachers favored students who entered school with higher levels of *cultural capital*. Most often children with high levels of *cultural capital* were better prepared for the rigors of schooling.

The researchers' findings also indicate that high school students' participation rates in *highbrow* activities increased across ethnic groups, as their educational attainment levels rose. While the researchers did not expressively conclude that increased *cultural capital* caused higher academic attainment levels, involvement in highbrow activities had a positive relationship to higher levels of educational attainment. The researchers further indicated that upward social mobility is associated with increased levels of *cultural capital*.

These data imply that patterns of participation in highbrow activities are found among members of better educated groups. This writer suggests that these findings have strong implications for the need to structure the extracurricular activities of African American elementary children in schools because oftentimes this group does not have exposure to these activities anywhere else in their lives. By structuring their extracurricular activities, in and outside of school, their lives can begin to be steered toward activities that are associated with high academic attainment levels. While this notion is not new, it lends further support for the need to intervene early in children's lives and expose them, especially at the elementary level, to culturally enriching experiences.

Historically, the majority of African American children have lower levels of *cultural capital* than European American children when entering school and throughout their years in school. As supported by Posner (1994) their levels of exposure to art, classical music, museums and other experiences deemed *highbrow* are limited.

In addition to favoring children who enter school with high levels of *cultural capital*,

teachers also hold higher expectations for the academic abilities of these children to excel. There is a large body of literature (Cantor, Kester, & Miller, 2000; Gottfredson, 1991; Kerman, Kimball, & Martin, 1980) that suggests teachers' negative expectations impact how they instruct children and how they interact socially with children. Ultimately, the teachers' low expectations manifest themselves and result in the children's lower academic achievement. Teacher expectations directly impact student achievement.

Whereas Kalmijn and Kraaykamp (1996) implied that exposure to highbrow activities may impact academic achievement, research conducted by DiMaggio (1982) and DiMaggio and Mohr (1985) clearly suggests that students' involvement in highbrow activities is positively correlated to academic achievement. Again, because African American and poor children are least likely to be exposed to highbrow activities through their families and communities, the schools must become the channel through which children are exposed to these enriching experiences. Structured programs that provide opportunities for children to engage in hobbies, visit cultural institutions and interact with people from different cultural and economic groups all help to close the opportunity and achievement gaps experienced by African American children. Again, this research supports the critical need, especially at the elementary level in urban settings, to begin exposing young children, to academically-oriented and fine arts activities in addition to quality sports programs. These activities enrich the children's school environments and ultimately their futures.

Sports and Academic Achievement

As previously suggested, the curricula of most urban high schools include sports programs as the primary option for extracurricular activities. This is especially true of schools serving high populations of African American students. Brown and Steinberg (1991); Walker

(1995); and Mahoney and Cairns (1997) suggest that participation in sports alone does not translate into higher academic achievement. As a probable consequence of this singular focus, a disproportionate number of African American students, especially African American male students, do not participate in extracurricular activities with an academic focus. Consequently, many of these students do not achieve high levels of academic achievement.

Furthermore, Melnick, Sabo, and Vanfossen (1992) suggest that teachers often view athletes, especially African American male athletes, as non-intellectuals and hold lower expectations for this population. The teachers' low expectations and consequently their lack of academic press negatively impact the students' academic achievement. This lack of academic press occurs despite research that suggests that athletes, when taught well, perform as well as their non-athletic counterparts.

Melnick et al. (1992) analyzed data from the 1987 *High School and Beyond Study*. They concluded that participation in interscholastic sports at the sophomore or senior year had some impact on the self-reported academic achievement of African American male students attending suburban schools and on Hispanic females attending rural high schools. Achievement test scores, however, of African American males in urban areas and Hispanic females in rural areas were only marginally positively impacted by participation in interscholastic sports.

Interestingly, researchers Melnick et al. (1992) also found that participation in interscholastic sports at the varsity level and for students in leadership positions within the sports did not have the *holding effect* on urban, minority youth as anticipated. These students were no more likely to graduate from high school than their non-participating counterparts. Many other factors impacted youths' graduation rates in urban settings such as: poverty, crime, few community resources, and poor educational institutions. Collectively, these factors negatively

impacted the students' high school graduation rates despite their leadership roles in extracurricular activities.

Indeed, these findings regarding urban high school students' graduation rates contrast with the results of the Flemings (1985) study regarding African American college students. Flemings found that African American college students, attending historically black colleges and who participated in leadership roles in extracurricular activities, were more likely to finish college than African American students attending White colleges. In the opinion of this writer, historically black colleges often known for their culturally relevant extracurricular activities and strong mentoring relationships have clearly found ways to connect to their students in ways that are missing in many urban high schools. Further research into the curricula and social environments of historically black colleges and universities is warranted and may have significant implications for K-12 public schools educating high populations of African American students.

Gender Differences and Achievement

Lisella and Serwatka (1996) using data from the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) of American secondary-school students (U.S. Department of Education, 1990) studied gender differences among minority students. The subjects were African American, Hispanic American, and Native American, 8th graders who participated in school-sponsored and community-based extracurricular activities versus non-participants. The students from the sample attended poor urban schools whose total school free and reduced lunch count was more than 51%. They found considerable discrepancies between the achievement levels of minority males and females.

Minority male participants in school sponsored activities were found to have lower

academic achievement than non-participating minority males in all school-sponsored (science fairs, sports/cheerleading, music/arts, academic clubs, speech/drama, school publications, student council, religious organizations, and vocational clubs) extracurricular activities with the exception of science fair participation (p.68). The researchers speculate that this achievement difference in relationship to science fair participants and non-participants occurred because academically higher achieving minority male students sought participation in science fairs. They participated in science fair because of their pre-existing achievement status and the academic nature of science fairs. Interestingly, minority male students participating in the science fairs had higher Grade Point Averages (GPAs) than non-participating male students, but not higher achievement test scores.

Additionally, the researchers found that minority male participation in community-based activities (Scout/Boys, YMCA, 4-H, sports, summer programs, religious groups, hobby clubs) also resulted in lower academic achievement than non-participating males. And yet, White male students, attending the same urban schools as the minority males, had different results when compared to white non-participating males. The White males who participated in sports, music or arts activities had higher grade point averages than non-participating white males attending the urban schools. Also, white males who participated in community-based activities such as the "Scouts, Boys Clubs or YMCAs" did not have significantly different achievement scores as non-participants. (p.78)

Participating minority females, however, showed no significant difference than non-participating minority female students. Minority female students, who participated in many of the school's extracurricular activities, however, had higher self-reported academic achievement than non-participating minority female students.

Additionally, White female students, who attended urban schools similar to those as the minority female students in the study, had comparable results. White females who participated in extracurricular activities had higher academic achievement than non-participating White females.

Also of note is the study's finding that both male and female minority students who participated in vocational extracurricular activities had lower GPAs than non-participants. These findings indicate the need for further research into the different school and programming conditions that impact minority students.

Vandell and Corasaniti (1988) speculated that the quality of extracurricular and community-based programs is sometimes in question. Oftentimes, extracurricular activities are manned by volunteers who may or may not have expertise in the field. Furthermore, many programs may be understaffed or employ staff members who are also not particularly skilled in the area in which they supervise. Additional factors that affect the quality of student outcomes include: student and staff attendance, students' school courses, student/staff ratio and student and staff commitment to the goals of the program. Further research into these and other variables might help to explain why participation in these school and community-based programs did not yield positive academic growth for minority male students.

Silliker and Quirk (1997) found that both male and female high school students participating in soccer had higher GPAs and school attendance rates during the soccer season than they did during the off season. This researcher speculates that because many students are required to maintain a designated GPA in order to sustain eligibility, these students are sufficiently motivated to attend school and study during the sport's season. Additionally, coaches might closely monitor the participants GPAs during the season. Silliker and Quirk give additional support to the notion that participation in extracurricular activities, with certain

student populations and under structured conditions, helps to improve student academic achievement.

Jordan and Nettles (1999) studied African American and Hispanic students' involvement in structured after-school activities and its impact on academic achievement. Structured activities involved time spent in attending youth or recreational programs, volunteering, community service, taking classes or sports lessons, etc. The students' involvement in extracurricular activities had a positive impact on their math and science test scores. Furthermore, their study looked at the impact of the common out of school activities that tenth grade high school students engaged in and the impact of that involvement on the students' level of in-school engagement, perceptions of chances, and twelfth grade academic achievement. A cohort group of eighth grade students, who participated in the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), was identified and was followed throughout high school. This sampling of students was given a survey at the tenth grade and again at the twelfth grade. The survey examined the students' participation in activities at the tenth grade and the impact of that involvement on academic outcomes in the twelfth grade. The students were also followed for two years after graduating from high school.

The independent variables of the study under examination were grouped into six major categories. Those categories were: (1) time spent in structured (community-based) activities; (2) time spent "hanging out" with peers; (3) time spent alone (hobbies or reading); (4) time spent with adults; (5) time spent in religious activities; and (6) time spent working for pay.

The researchers examined the results through the lens of "student investment". The term "student investment" is defined as "exploration, skill development, and credential acquisition that makes more attainable a range of options for the future" (p. 3). How students invested their

discretionary time impacted academic achievement.

Results of the Jordan and Nettles (1999) study indicated that involvement in structured activities had a positive effect on participation in school. Also, involvement in structured activities allowed the students to interact with positive adult role models and make better choices on how to invest their time which positively impacted educational outcomes.

Again, it is this perspective that drives this current research. How students, especially those at the elementary school level, invest their time impacts their future options and achievement. Most of the past and current research has focused on white, middle-class, high school males. African American students and especially those at the elementary level have been largely ignored. This researcher clearly asserts that the foundation of a student's patterns of "student investment" have been laid years prior to entering high school. It is these early years that must be captured, shaped and structured in order to impact students much earlier. Therefore, it becomes critical to use all of a student's years to structure their lives for positive outcomes. Generally, high school students select their associates and make those decisions that affect their educational outcomes. Conversely, elementary school students' parents generally provide the contexts in which their children participate and together, parents and schools can help to make those contexts positive.

Self-concept

Phillips (1969) studied the relationship between African American high school students' involvement in extra and co-curricular activities and their self-concepts. The results of the study indicated that there was not a significant difference in the overall self-concepts of high school students who participated or were non-participants in extra and co-curricular activities. Phillips, however, found that *first-string* male athletes' self-concepts were affected by their participation

and level of status within an activity, but not *second-string* male or female athletes. This finding suggests that those students receiving the most attention and holding a higher social status among their peers are also most likely to view themselves as others perceive them. Participation in these highly visible, glory sports impacted the *first-string* males' self-concept as they were often revered in their high school settings. *Second string* male athletes' self-concepts; however, were not impacted by their participation in sports as these athletes were less likely to hold the same social status enjoyed by *first-string* athletes.

Yarworth and Gauthier, Jr. (1978) also examined the relationship between a student's self-concept and his or her participation levels in high school extra and co-curricular activities. The results of their study concluded that students with high self-concepts were involved in extra and co-curricular activities at higher participation rates. The researchers also found that female students, mostly those in the college preparatory track, were more likely to participate in non-athletic activities than males. Participation in the non-athletic activities, however, required higher grade point averages for entry.

The results of this study contrasted with the earlier study done by Phillips (1969) which indicated that there was not a significant difference in the overall self-concepts of high school students who participated in extra and co-curricular activities versus those students who did not participate. Despite differences in the data from the Phillips (1969) and the Yarworth and Gauthier, Jr. (1978) studies, students participating in extra and co-curricular activities do become part of the social fabric of the school's environment (Mahoney and Cairns 1997). This sense of belonging often helps students appreciate and get exposed to additional school experiences not enjoyed by students who are non-participants. Engaging students in the social fabric of the school, especially beginning in elementary school, broadens their knowledge base.

Joekel (1986) concluded that students participating in extra and co-curricular activities benefited by having opportunities for leadership, feelings of self-worth, self-actualization and the opportunity to learn new knowledge and skills. These students formed bonds with other students and adult mentors that increased their feelings of being part of the social fabric of the school. Being part of a group or club with opportunities for leadership was cited by Fleming (1985) as an important factor in the graduation rate of African American students attending historically Black colleges.

School Values and Aspirations for College Attendance

Spreitzer and Pugh (1973) found that the values promoted by the schools directly impacted male students' educational aspirations. Those schools that most valued and rewarded athletics produced athletes with the highest levels of aspirations for college attendance. Male athletes, however, despite having high college aspirations did not necessarily have high educational attainment. The culture of many high schools, particularly many found in urban areas, value athletic accomplishments over academic achievement. Consequently, support systems needed for educational attainment such as tutoring, test preparation skills, and mentoring are often limited in these settings.

Conversely, those athletes who attended schools that valued academics rather than athletics were least likely to have high academic aspirations. Conceivably, male athletes attending schools that valued academics felt academically inadequate. Male students, however, with high IQs and grades were most likely to have high levels of educational attainment. Academic preparation produced positive educational attainment. These data reiterated the importance of coupling academic rigor with extracurricular and co-curricular pursuits.

The findings of Braddock, Royster, Winfield and Hawkins (1991) corroborate those

found by the Spreitzer and Pugh (1973) study. Braddock et al. concluded that 8th grade African American males participating in interscholastic and intramural sports had higher aspirations regarding attending college than did non-participants. Interesting, however, was that males participating in interscholastic sports, competing against teams from different schools, had a marginally higher expectation of completing high school than did those males who participated in intramural sports, competing against teams within the same school. Perhaps males participating in interscholastic sports viewed themselves as likely becoming *first string* candidates. African American males, particularly those attending schools with large African American populations, generally place a lot of emphasis on sports. They are heavily influenced by the peer status that playing *first-string* sports can bring. These males often expect that they can become part of professional sports teams after college.

Furthermore, Holland and Andre (1987) examined students' participation in extracurricular activities and its effect on adolescent development. Three of the five variables examined in their study are also examined in this current study. These variables are: academic achievement, the participant's role in the activities and a student's personal characteristics. The researchers posited that a school district's decision to maintain, expand or eliminate extra or co-curricular activities was precipitated by its values. Schools interested solely in academic achievement were more likely to eliminate extra and co-curricular activities, deeming inclusion of these activities in the curriculum as frivolous. These schools focused on academic press and regarded the attainment of high grades in core subjects as the primary goal of a student's education.

Those schools, however, that viewed the development of the whole child as important to education were more likely to maintain extracurricular programs. The position of these schools is

that a student's cognitive and affective domains must be nurtured in order to produce self-actualized adults. Academic achievement and extra and co-curricular activities, therefore, were not viewed as hierarchical in nature, but equalitarian. As previously noted, Holland and Andre (1987) found that students who participated in extracurricular activities had slightly higher Grade Point Averages (GPA) than non-participants. Males, however, who participated exclusively in sports, had lower standardized and aptitude test scores than non-participants.

Elementary Age Children and Academic Achievement

Posner and Vandell (1994) investigated the effects of various after-school programs on the academic achievement of low socio-economic African American children. The results of their study reported that low income African American children were more likely to use "center-like" after-school programs than middle income children. Their results concluded that those children who attended formal, after-school programs did better academically in mathematics, reading and other subjects than children attending less-formal programs or who were in their mother's care after-school. As mentioned earlier, these researchers also noted that unless minority and poor children were enrolled in after-school programs they did not have exposure to music, dance, or other enrichment activities in their lives. Unfortunately, many minority children lack enrichment opportunities in their schools and communities. The centers of change for minority children clearly must begin in school—a place where all children must attend.

Posner and Vandell (1994) supported the results of an earlier study done by Vandell and Corasaniti (1988). The subjects of this earlier study, however, were white middle-class, third grade children in a suburban Texas school district. Vandell and Corasaniti (1988) studied the impact of various types of after-school child care arrangements on the students' academic, social and emotional functioning. The different after- school arrangements included children in latch-

key situations (children who would be home alone), children who went home to their mothers, siblings or other sitters as well as children who attended day-care or community centers. The results indicated that those children in day-care settings had lower grades on their report cards and scored lower in math and IQ scores on achievement tests than children involved in all other types of after-school child care arrangements. They also reported that children attending day-care centers often had lower conduct grades on their report cards.

The researchers suggested that the quality of the day- care centers needed further study. They reported that many of the day- care centers were under staffed, employed staff with minimal training, had few age-appropriate activities and had large numbers of children enrolled in the centers. They speculated that if centers provided quality experiences, then those children who attended should have positive outcomes.

Likewise, Rosenthal and Vandell (1996) examined children at 30 child-care centers in grades three, four, and five regarding the climate and flexibility of their after-school child care centers. These children reported that larger groups of children participating in the programs negatively affected the programs' atmospheres despite having more program offerings. Also, "...children in the larger programs rated them lower on perceived emotional support and autonomy..." (p. 46).

Furthermore, Pierce, Hamm, and Vandell (1999) studied first grade, six year old children at their after-school child care centers. These 38 centers were evaluated for: (1) positive and negative behaviors exhibited among children and between children and staff, (2) flexibility – the degree to which children could self-select their activities or playmates and (3) activities – the number of activities offered at the sites and their age appropriateness.

The study also noted that:

> Children from higher SES families were more likely than children from lower SES families to be enrolled in programs offering greater flexibility,…and a larger number of available activities…Higher SES also was associated with children obtaining better grades in reading,…, and math…Only one significant association with family structure was found. Children who lived in single-parent homes were more likely than children living with two parents to be enrolled in programs where staff displayed more negativity… (p.762)

The study noted that boys who had greater program flexibility, the ability to choose their playmates and activities, exhibited better social skills than boys who participated in programs with less flexibility. However, the boys who were involved in programs offering more activities were found to exhibit more externalizing problems, delinquent and aggressive behavior, and more internalizing problems such as withdrawn, somatic complaints and anxious/depressed problems. Also, these boys had poorer reading and math scores than their counterparts. The researchers hypothesized that this phenomenon might be a result of the boys being placed in an environment that was less tightly controlled than what they experienced in their first grade classrooms. The researchers indicated that further study of these boys at different grade levels might be necessary.

Two additional and critical findings of this study were: (1) the six year old boys were influenced more by their after-school care experiences than girls and (2) children from poor homes were more likely to be enrolled in programs where staff displayed more negativity. The boys' after-school environments impacted the behaviors they exhibited in school. Boys who experienced good relationships with the after-school staff and their peers also exhibited less delinquent and aggressive behavior and less internalizing problems (withdrawn, somatic complaints and anxious/depressed problems). Finally, boys who were enrolled in programs in which staff displayed negativity also had lower reading and math scores. As earlier hypothesized by Bronfenbrenner (1986), children’s experiences, both inside and outside of school, result in

similar behaviors. These data support the importance for the need of children to be exposed to and engaged in positive, enriching experiences.

This writer suggests that these findings further support the need for quality aftercare programs for poor children, especially African American boys. As noted earlier, there are over a million African-American males in prisons, most of whom withdrew from school academically long before dropping out. Again, by intervening early in the lives of African American children, especially boys, many of the destructive behaviors that they are exposed to and become engaged in as adolescents and young adults can be curbed. In the opinion of this writer, if society and schools can connect early with these children by providing them with quality experiences and good adult role models to counteract their negative environmental factors, then, perhaps the destructive forces that permeate the lives of these children can be stopped.

The article, "Urban After-School Programs: Evaluations and Recommendations" (1988) stated that after-school programs are categorized into five distinct groups. Each category influenced the design and anticipated outcomes of the program. The five categories were:

> *Language Arts* These programs, focusing on a single component of the curriculum, address the need to increase urban students' literacy and language skills. …
>
> *Study Skills* These programs which may address all areas of the curriculum are specifically designed for at-risk students whose lack of study and comprehension skills hampers their academic achievement….
>
> *Academic Subjects* These programs address a specific curriculum area such as science or computer technology….
>
> *Tutoring* These programs help students improve their reading. They differ from language arts programs in that they are comprised solely of one-on-one tutoring activities….
>
> *Community-Created or Community-Based* These programs are often developed within the community to meet local needs…They are more likely than other programs to emphasize recreational, social, or cultural activities…

(pp. 1-2)

Fashola (1998) wrote, however, that despite an increased interest in the effects of after-school programs by educators and policymakers alike, the research on the effectiveness of the various types of programs is limited. Fashola noted that several limitations regarding the data must be considered when evaluating various programs for effectiveness--particularly academic effectiveness. These limitations include: most studies of how children spend their after-school hours have been conducted on white middle-class children, few studies have reported specific programs that have been successful and have focused primarily on after-school programs as a whole, and due to selection bias the results of these reports can only be loosely generalized to larger populations.

In addition, Fashola (1998) wrote that programs can complement the schools and enhance student achievement by developing extended-day programs that are aligned with the child's school's curriculum. Providing children with academic activities that bridge the gap between the school day and after-school hours supports achievement.

Fashola (1998) noted that despite the efforts of some after-school programs to link their program offerings to state standards, "Some seem promising... However, many have not been used with at-risk students and while they may have been assessed for implementation and enjoyment, few have been evaluated for achievement purposes..." (p. 5).

Students who elect to participate in after-school, extended-day school or community-based programs may or may not be similar to those children who choose not to participate in such programs. Oftentimes, the children who participate in these programs are already sufficiently motivated to achieve despite belonging to an *at-risk* population. Additionally, these children and/or their parents may already have access to protective factors and/or resources in

their homes or communities. The critical need remains, however, to provide all children with similar opportunities.

Ford, Brown-Wright, Grantham, and Harris (1998) stated that children in low income families often have parents with values similar to economically advantaged parents as it related to their children's education. However, Ford et al. also concluded that parents have a major role in developing their children's talent. Parents who monitored and organized their children's time, set standards for their children's performance and monitored their children's progress. This helped their children to succeed. These protective factors positively supported children despite their environments.

Additionally, some parents have family members or other concerned individuals who support their children. These other individuals often expose the children to enriching activities that may be outside the realm of activities provided by their parents. These opportunities also provided protective factors for the children by engaging them in activities that broadened their life experiences, structured their free time and allowed them to see beyond their current situations.

In other words, parents who actively take part in shaping their children's experiences and who do not rely on their communities or institutions to provide structure and set goals for their children, provide protective factors that positively impact their children. Parents, however, of this nature are limited in many communities and singularly cannot bring about the degree or scope of change needed for African American children. Change, however, can be brought about on a large scale by focusing on the types of structured experiences provided by the schools and ultimately those offered within the community.

Moreover, Bridglall and Gordon (2002) wrote about supplementary education which has

been defined as "…the formal and informal learning and developmental enrichment opportunities provided for students outside of school and beyond the regular school day or year. Some of these activities may occur inside the school building but are beyond those included in the formal curriculum of the school", (p. 2). Children whose families and communities have the most access to supplementary education are from mid-to-upper socio-economic families. Hale (2001) advocates that a difference between her cultural enrichment component and that proposed by Bridghall and Gordon is that the school must take the leadership in incorporating these opportunities during the school day and after school. This is the only way that these opportunities can be extended equally to all children.

Researchers (Birch & Gussow, 1970; Gordon & Meroe, 1989; National Task Force on Minority High Achievement, 1999) stated that the most academically successful groups, primarily European Americans and Asian Americans, have the most access to supplementary education, school resources and strong support for academic achievement at home and in their communities. Conversely, African American, Latino American, Native American and the poor have less access to supplementary education and live in communities that are often void of resources that support academic achievement.

Despite inherent differences in the available resources of different communities, the United States government provides some funding for public schools serving poor children. Through grants, public schools are able to access funding to provide children with various after-school opportunities. Funding for afterschool programs, however, is in jeopardy as the nation's economy faces challenges despite the need for more afterschool programs for America's children. In the (2009) report,

> America after 3PM: The Most In-Depth Study of How American's Children Spend Their Afternoons sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance stated: Further, nearly all

> programs (89 percent) expected the recession to impact them in the 2009-10 school year…In order for afterschool programs to meet the needs of the 15.1 million in self care and the 18.5 million children whose parents say they would join a program if one were available, increased investments re needed across all sectors. (p. 13)

Many of the afterschool programs made available to African American and poor children are intended to create a seamless environment in the child's day that bridges the gap between what occurs during the school day and during the after school hours. Nevertheless Noam (2002) wrote:

> Bridging school and afterschool does not mean that all programs must become school-based or that they should become school-like. What is important is that programs aim to create continuity across learning opportunities, achieve integration of different learning goals, and deepen children's exploration and skill acquisition, all the while respecting the fact that there exists many types of learning that should be protected across a diversity of learning environments.
> (p. 2)

Often afterschool programs are located within the children's school buildings. The strategic locating of these programs within the schools helps to alleviate parental concerns such as: child safety, lack of transportation and program fees that are often eliminated in school programs that otherwise would be cost prohibitive to many parents.

Optimistically, these programs provide African American and poor children with the same quality of enrichment experiences offered to children in wealthier communities. However, the quality of the experiences offered to the children varies as widely as the number of different programs (Halpern, 1999; National Institute on Out-of School Time, 2001). Indeed, one of the characteristics distinguishing healthy communities from less healthy communities is the percentage of youth engaged in some type of positive activity (Leffert 1996).

A study by Reisner et al. (2007) regarding high- quality after-school programs supported findings that elementary children enrolled in supervised, structured environments after school

formed positive relationships with adults and experienced positive results in improved behavior, social skills and academics. High quality programs were assessed using the following criteria:

> …members of the research team rated programs based on evidence of supportive relationships between staff and youth participants and among participants and on evidence of rich and varied academic support, recreation, arts opportunities, and other enrichment activities. (p.5)

Additionally, those students who attended the extracurricular activities consistently, at least two to three times a week, were more likely to have positive outcomes than those children who attended programs sporadically or who were engaged in self-care after school.

Beck (1999) and Halpern (1992) did two different qualitative studies of after-school homework assistance programs for at-risk children in urban settings. Beck (1999) looked at a program serving kindergarten through 12th grade students while Halpern (1992) looked at children ranging from ages five through twelve. Both researchers found that the success of the programs was mediated by the students' improved self-esteem, the forming of positive bonds with adults and by providing structured environments for the children to complete homework assignments. Also, both researchers found that the teachers' expectations of the children improved. Although, both studies were descriptive and did not suggest casual relationships, the findings suggested that as the students' self-esteem increased and homework completion improved, the teachers also began to believe in the potential of their students. Again, this confirms that teacher expectations greatly affect the academic achievement of their students (Cantor, Kestor, & Miller, 2000; Gottfredson, 1991; Kerman, Kimball, & Martin, 1980).

Ross, Saavedra, Schur, Winters, and Felner (1992) studied 400 elementary children enrolled in different after school programs. These researchers suggested that despite the focus of the programs, each should encourage building students' self-esteem. Their findings of an after school program designed specifically to build self-esteem, resulted in students' increased self-

esteem and improved standardized test scores in math and reading. Interestingly, those children who were given extended school time solely focused on providing extra time to do homework and lacked a self-esteem component in their program, did not experience increased positive self-esteem or academic achievement. This finding gives additional support to Hale (2001) who suggested that most attempts at school reform give children more of the same such as increased school time which often has not translated into increased achievement. Furthermore, as cited earlier by Mahoney and Cairns (1997), those programs that were primarily focused on remediation were unsuccessful in increasing student achievement.

Dumais (2006) using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study found, however, that young children between first and third grade benefited most academically by participating in dance, athletic activities and by participating in clubs. Also, the number of activities in which young children engaged positively impacted their reading test scores, but not their math test scores. Although, the researcher indicates that additional research on causal factors of why reading scores and not math scores improved suggested a possible reason. Dumais stated that middle-class parents enroll their children in more structured extracurricular activities than working-class parents. Also, middle-class parents read to and provide more reading opportunities for their children than working-class parents and therefore the reading scores are positively impacted.

Co-curricular Activities

The Oregon State Department of Education reported:

> According to NELS (National Education Longitudinal Study. 1988) there are no important differences in availability of co-curricular activities in relatively less affluent and more affluent schools. However, the study finds that students of low socioeconomic status participate at lower rates in every type of activity except vocational or professional clubs (in which they are almost twice as likely to participate than more affluent students. (p. 68)

The superintendents surveyed for this study were strongly convinced about the absolute necessity and importance of extracurricular activities to all schools' curriculums. Therefore, they believed that the term extracurricular activities should be changed to co-curricular activities thereby underscoring the importance of these activities to student learning. The study pointed out further that the majority of high school students participating in co-curricular activities participated in sports, performing arts, academic clubs and vocational/professional clubs respectively. This finding is significant because research indicates that students engaged in sports, except minority high school students (Melnick, Sabo, & Vanfossen, 1992) are more likely to remain in school. Also, it was documented that those students directly involved in academic oriented, co-curricular activities were more likely to form relationships with other students interested in attaining an education. Finally, students who participated in academically oriented co-curricular activities had higher grade point averages than non-participants.

Students' connectedness to school increases as they become more involved in the activities offered by the school. Many school districts, however, link students' ability to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities to their academic standing. Minority and poor children who oftentimes have lower grade point averages are shut out of participating in these co-curricular activities – activities that might otherwise prove supportive to their school engagement. Martin (2011) wrote:

> Instead of beating these children down even more, we should be encouraging them to participate in activities where they have talents and abilities. We are punishing the "good" kids, the ones who care about their school and want to participate in school activities instead of being involved in gangs and other destructive groups. (p. 1, para. 3)

Moje (2000) supports this premise and wrote, "…when I changed jobs to work with students who often lived in poverty…I learned how young people had been shut out of academic,

social, and community opportunities because they could not successfully perform the academic tasks deemed valuable in school." (p. 15)

Fenzel (2001) stated that even as students enter college their involvement in co-curricular activities has an immediate and direct impact upon their successful completion of college. Their research indicated that those students who were actively engaged in co-curricular activities had a much better transition to college life and a higher graduation rate. "Developing relationships in the college environment by becoming involved in the co-curricular environment of college has been found to be an essential ingredient for making a successful transition."

Involvement/Time Spent in Activities in Religious Institutions

Although, parents, politicians and religious leaders often espouse the notion that many of societal problems stem from the lack of church attendance by the youth of today, very little research regarding adolescents and younger children's church involvement has been done to support this theory. Smith, Denton, Faris and Regnerus, (2002) wrote that "Of 18 of the best national surveys of youth that we investigated in our research, for example, fully 12 contain a mere three religion questions or less; only three high-quality, nationally representative surveys of adolescents include six or more questions about religion" (p. 598). Haight (2002) also pointed out the lack of empirical data regarding the church attendance of American youth. "The existing empirical literature is also limited with regard to children's participation within religious contexts" (p.5).

Despite this relative lack of information regarding the participation of youth in religious activities, Smith, Denton, Faris and Regnerus (2002) concluded that

> American adolescents exhibit a great deal of variance in their frequency of religious service attendance. Analysis of the religious service attendance of 8th , 10th, and 12th graders (combined) shows that 38 percent attend weekly, 16 percent attend one to two times a month, 31 percent attend rarely, and 15 percent never

> attend religious services. The youth of America, in other words, widely vary in their levels of involvement in religious worship attendance. (p. 601)

In addition to church attendance, the degree to which children are active participants in church activities, often viewed as positive opportunities for building character, providing a healthy social environment, and support for academic interests, needs to be examined. Smith, et al. (2002) noted that youth who attended church reported being involved in youth activities, albeit at different levels of involvement. However, children who do not attend church also do not participate in those activities offered to youth by various churches.

> What does not appear to be happening among American youth then, is a diversification and specialization process in which some youth participate religiously in church services while others are involved only in youth groups; rather, American youth tend to do either both or neither. (p. 605)

Foshee and Hollinger (1996) stated:

> Maternal religiosity may increase adolescent commitment to conventional. Secular activities by creating opportunities for involvement in clubs for children and youth, sports activities, athletic leagues, educational programs, trips, outing, and other activities that are sponsored by religious organizations but inherently are not religious. Parental religiosity has been related closely to adolescent commitment to, and involvement in religious activities. (p. 453)

Unfortunately, children who do not attend church may be missing some experiences that are equated with providing protective factors for children at risk of failure in and outside of school.

Maston, Best, and Garmezy (1990) provided a general description of churches, indicating they had the potential for helping children develop resiliency. The Black church, specifically, has long been an integral part of the lives of many African American children, helping to influence their values, mores, and resiliency. Additionally, church experiences often supported African American children's academic achievement. Brown and Gary (1991) noted that the review of the literature showed that religion, and particularly the Black church, exerted an important influence in the socialization of African Americans both from an individual, as well as a societal

perspective. In particular, research on this topic suggests that many of the socialization experiences emanating from religion and the Black church appear to be conducive to a number of outcomes including educational achievement.

In this writer's opinion, children who come from families who attend church oftentimes have a very strong sense of hope. Their participation in religious training has taught them to have faith in the unseen and to believe that good outcomes await those who are faithful and patient. This belief in a positive future is often translated into their approach toward schooling. These children often accept that delayed gratification is a condition of life and are willing to persevere until their future goals are met. Conversely, those children who do not have a strong religious background or no religious background oftentimes do not put much faith in the future. Many of these children are pre-occupied with immediate gratification and may be less willing to persevere for goals that appear to be in the future.

Additionally, children of poverty oftentimes live in environments where daily survival permeates the culture of the home. These children may not be prepared socially to wait for the results of their hard work. Instant gratification and survival take precedent and long term educational goals may not be as important.

Summary

Celebrated debates about the purposes, structures and effectiveness of America's public schools have ensued for centuries. Lay-persons, politicians, and educators have attempted to put forth their ideas on what is wrong with public education and how to best correct the problems. As previously stated a plethora of solutions have been advocated such as: providing programs to address the needs of the poor, raising students' and teachers' expectations, developing programs to increase parental involvement in homes and schools, improving teacher training, providing

additional financial resources to all schools and increasing standardized testing among students. Despite these efforts, America's public schools have not yet been able to consistently educate students at high academic levels especially African American children. The public schools also fail to consistently produce a highly skilled and ethnically diverse work force.

Legislatures have identified the need for closing the achievement gap between white and minority students as requiring unremitting efforts in view of the changing ethnicity of America's citizens. Foreign born and native-born children of foreign parents contribute to the changing levels of diversity in America and all of these citizens represent the future workforce of America. America's public schools face increasing challenges to successfully educate all children as the population becomes more diverse and long-standing discrepancies between European American and African American students continues.

The "centers-of-change", therefore, must be in our public schools where most minority students attend. However, reform efforts have centered heavily on the quantity and quality of the core academic subjects offered to students. Reading, writing, science, mathematics and foreign languages have received the attention of most educators and legislators. However, despite more children than ever before in America's history having access to a high school education, the academic discrepancy between European American students and African Americans remains. Factors other than the core academic subjects affect achievement and must be examined.

Numerous research studies on how children spend their out-of-school time and their engagement in extracurricular activities have been conducted, but most of these studies have focused on the European American high-school population. It is the intent of this study to research the participation rates of African American elementary children in extracurricular, community-based and religious activities and the impact of that engagement on academic

achievement. The study further sought to examine the impact of participation in extracurricular, community-based and religious activities on the students' school behavior, goal orientation and academic-related perceptions, beliefs and strategies. It was expected that by examining how this younger population spent time investing in their futures, a correlation between the activities the children were involved in and student achievement would be suggested. It was also expected that this information would help to shape the curriculums of schools especially for African American children who are still shut out of "high quality" educational experiences.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The methods that were used to describe the sample and address the research questions posed for the study are discussed in this chapter. The topics that are included are: restatement of the purpose, research design, setting for the study, participants, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis. Each of these topics is presented separately.

Restatement of the Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between self-reported academic achievement and participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities among African American elementary school children attending an urban charter school. The study further sought to examine the impact of participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities on students' self-reported behavior, goal orientation, and perceptions, beliefs, and strategies. Figure 2 presents a graphical representation of the interrelatedness of the types of activities and their influence on student outcomes.

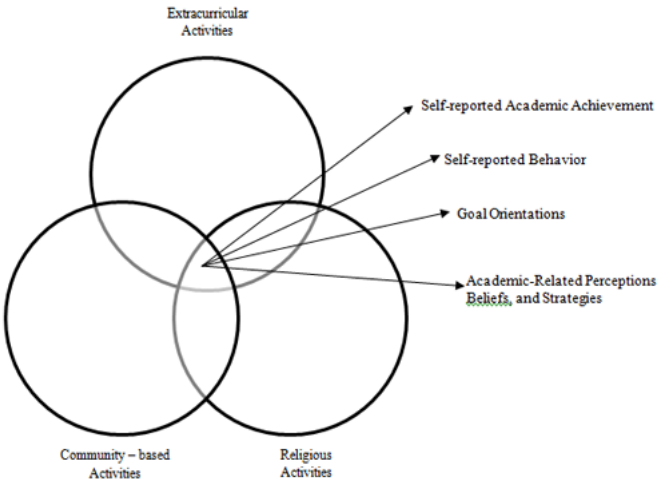

Figure 2: Influence of Participation in School-based, Community-based, and Religious Activities on Student Outcomes

Research Design

A nonexperimental, correlational research design was used in the study. This type of design is appropriate as the independent variables were not manipulated and no treatment or intervention was used with the participants in the study. The primary data collection was a valid, reliable survey, “Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales” (Midgley et al., 2000).

This type of research design was used to determine the strength and direction of relationships among variables (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2008). The variables that were the primary focus of this study are self-reported academic achievement, number of school-based extracurricular activities, number of community-based activities, number of religious activities, and school-related behaviors. In addition, the study also examined the relationships among these variables and selected demographic variables (age, gender, grade level, socioeconomic status).

This type of research was not subject to the same threats to internal and external validity that can affect the outcomes of experimental research. However, the researcher needed to be aware of any uncontrolled extraneous variables that could affect the manner in which the students may respond to the surveys. If a teacher suddenly left, the students’ attitudes toward some aspects of their classes might be affected. By understanding this occurrence, the researcher could provide this information in the discussion of the findings to help interpret the findings correctly.

Setting for the Study

The study was conducted in Public School Academy (PSA), an elementary charter school located in an urban area in a Midwestern state. During the 2010-2011school year, PSA had an enrollment of approximately 400 African American students in kindergarten through sixth grade. The school received the letter “A” from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) on the

annual report card for 2010-2011. This designation is reserved for schools in the state of Michigan that met the Michigan Department of Education's achievement goals as measured by the Michigan Educational Assessment Program. The schools must also show significant academic progress. The MEAP is the MDE's annual state-wide assessment given to public school students. Table 2 presents scores for the Fall 2010 MEAP tests for grades 3 through 6. During the fall of 2010, the school had the following MEAP scores:

Table 2

MEAP Scores for Grades 3 through 6

Grade	Math	Reading	Writing	Science	Social Studies
Third					
Level 1 Advanced	42.9	23.8			
Level 2 Proficient	57.1	66.7			
Level 3 Partially Proficient	0.0	9.5			
Level 4 Not Proficient	0.0	0.0			
Met or exceeded	100.0	90.5			
Number tested	42	42			
Fourth					
Level 1 Advanced	14.0	14.0	2.3		
Level 2 Proficient	72.1	72.1	37.2		
Level 3 Partially Proficient	14.0	11.6	60.5		
Level 4 Not Proficient	0.0	2.3	0.0		
Met or exceeded	86.0	86.0	39.5		
Number tested	43	43	43		
Fifth					
Level 1 Advanced	30.0	30.0		16.7	
Level 2 Proficient	60.0	53.3		53.3	
Level 3 Partially Proficient	10.0	10.0		26.7	
Level 4 Not Proficient	0.0	6.7		3.3	
Met or exceeded	90.0	83.3		70.0	
Number tested	30	30		30	
Sixth					
Level 1 Advanced	26.7	16.7			6.7
Level 2 Proficient	50.0	63.3			46.7
Level 3 Partially Proficient	23.3	16.7			36.7
Level 4 Not Proficient	0.0	3.3			10.0
Met or exceeded	76.7	80.0			53.3
Number tested	30	30			30

PSA has an after school tutoring program, a vibrant after school enrichment program that includes academic support. Twelve students at PSA received HOPE scholarships that allowed them to attend Lansing Community College tuition free for two years.

Participants

The participants in the present study were fourth through sixth grade students who were enrolled in a single charter school located in an urban area. The majority of the students were African American. All students in these grades were eligible to participate in the study.

Sample size.

To determine the appropriate sample size for the study, G*Power 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner & Lang, 2009) was used. With a two-tailed test, an effect size of .15, alpha level of .05, and a power of .80, a sample of 55 students was needed to obtain a valid result on a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis using one dependent and 5 predictor variables. Having a larger sample increased the power of the analysis.

Instrumentation

Two surveys were used in the present study: The Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS; Midgley et al., 2000) and a researcher-developed demographic questionnaire. Each of these instruments is discussed in this section.

Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales

The Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS; Midgley et al., 2000) were used for the study. The PALS was developed to measure goal orientation theory and examine the relation between student motivation, affect, and behavior and the learning environment. The instrument is divided into student and teacher scales. For the purpose of the present study, only student scales were used. Five scales are included in the student scales: personal achievement goal

orientations, perception of teacher's goals, perception of classroom goal structures, academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies, and perceptions of parents, home life, and neighborhood. Perceptions of teacher's goals and perceptions of parents, home life, and neighborhood scales were not used in the present study. Table 3 presents the scales and subscales that were included in the study.

Table 3

Subscales that Were Included in the Present Study

Scale	Subscales	Number of Items	Alpha Coefficient
Personal Achievement Goal Orientation	Mastery Goal Orientation (Revised)	5	.85
	Performance-Approach Goal Orientation (Revised)	5	.89
	Performance-Avoid Goal Orientation (Revised)	4	.74
Academic-Related Perceptions, Beliefs, and Strategies	Academic Efficacy	5	.78
	Academic Press	7	.79
	Academic Self-Handicapping Strategies	6	.84
	Avoiding Novelty	5	.78
	Cheating Behavior	3	.87
	Disruptive Behavior	5	.89
	Self-Presentation of Low Achievement	7	.78
	Skepticism About the Relevance of School for Future Success	6	.83

The PALS was developed for use at all levels of education (elementary, middle, and high school). Several of the scales were developed using research that indicated a differential emphasis was found for mastery and performance goals that were associated with adaptive or maladaptive patterns of learning (Ames; Dweck; Maehr; Nicholls; as cited in Midgley, 2000). Researchers (Elliot & Harackiewicz; Middleton & Midgley; Skaalvik as cited in Midgley, 2000) indicated that performance goal orientation has been divided into two components (approach and avoidance). The scales include both master and performance, with performance further classified as performance-approach and performance-avoid.

Because students in elementary school spent most of their day with one teacher, the items have been worded to reflect class or school work in general. Middle and high school items were domain-specific (e.g., science, math, reading, etc.).

Scoring. Each item was rated using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 for not at all true to 5 for very true. The numeric values associated with each of the 5-points were summed to obtain a total score, which was then divided by the number of items on the subscale to create a mean score for the subscale. The use of a mean score provided scores that reflected the original scale of measurement and allowed comparisons across the subscales that had different numbers of items.

Validity. A confirmatory factor analysis was used to validate the revised personal goal scales. Using LISREL VIII, the factor structure of the mastery, performance-approach, and performance-avoid subscales was confirmed. The goodness of fit indices provided evidence that the model fit the data and the personal mastery, performance-approach, and performance-avoid loaded on different latent factors (Midgley et al., 2000). The subscales measuring perceptions of classroom goal structure were validated using a confirmatory factor analysis. The results of this analysis indicated that the items loaded on different latent factors.

Reliability. Each of the subscales was tested for internal consistency as a measure of reliability. The alpha coefficients ranged from .70 to .89, providing supported the adequate reliability of the subscales. Table 4 presents the subscales that were used in the study with their associated Cronbach alpha coefficients.

Table 4

Subscales That Were Included in the Present Study

Scale	Subscales	Number of Items	Alpha Coefficient
Personal Achievement Goal Orientation	Mastery Goal Orientation (Revised)	5	.85
	Performance-Approach Goal Orientation (Revised)	5	.89
	Performance-Avoid Goal Orientation (Revised)	4	.74
Academic-Related Perceptions, Beliefs, and Strategies	Academic Efficacy	5	.78
	Academic Press	7	.79
	Academic Self-Handicapping Strategies	6	.84
	Avoiding Novelty	5	.78
	Cheating Behavior	3	.87
	Disruptive Behavior	5	.89
	Self-Presentation of Low Achievement	7	.78
	Skepticism About the Relevance of School for Future Success	6	.83

Demographic questionnaire.

In addition to the PALS, the students were asked to complete a short demographic survey developed by the researcher. The questionnaire asked the children to indicate their age, gender, grade in school, and eligibility for free or reduced lunch as a measure of socioeconomic status, participation in school and community-based extracurricular activities, self-reported academic performance, and self-reported citizenship. The items used a forced-choice format to make it simpler for the students. These variables were used to provide a profile of the students in the study and to test the hypotheses and address the research questions.

Variables in the Study

The dependent variables in the study included:

- Self-reported academic achievement
- Self-reported behavior (citizenship)
- Goal orientation
    - Master goal orientation (revised)

    - Performance-approach goal orientation (revised)
    - Performance-avoid goal orientation (revised)
- Academic perceptions, beliefs, and strategies
    - Academic efficacy
    - Academic press
    - Academic self-handicapping strategies
    - Avoiding novelty
    - Cheating behavior
    - Disruptive behavior
    - Self-presentation of low achievement
    - Skepticism about the relevance of school for future success

The independent variables included:

- Involvement in school-based extracurricular activities
- Involvement in community-based activities
- Involvement in religious-based activities

The background variables included:

- Age
- Gender
- Grade level
- Socioeconomic status (eligibility for free or reduced lunch)

Data Collection Procedures

Following approval from the Human Investigation Committee (HIC) and the principal of the elementary school that was used in the study, the researcher began the data collection

process. She developed a passive research information sheet for distribution to the parents of students in the fourth through sixth grade. The passive research information sheet followed the guidelines of the HIC and included the purpose and importance of the study, procedures that were used to have students complete the surveys, samples of survey questions, assurances of confidentiality, nature of voluntary participation, benefits and risks, and contact information for both the researcher and the HIC. The parents had the ability to refuse participation of their children in the study by signing a form and returning it to the researcher.

The researcher developed an oral assent that was read to the students whose parents had given passive permission to participate in the study. The students had the right to refuse to participate in the study if they so choose. They were told that their decision to not participate would not affect their standing in their classes or in the school. Students who decided to participate completed the questionnaires in their classrooms.

The students who participated in the study received the two questionnaires. They were told not to place their names or any other identifying information on the questionnaires. They were instructed to complete the questionnaires without discussing either the items or their responses. When they were through with the questionnaires, they returned them to the researcher who placed them in a large envelope. All surveys were completed in this area. Students whose parents had given permission for them to participate but were absent when the data were being collected were allowed to participate on a make-up day.

Data Analysis

The data were entered into a computer file for analysis using IBM-SPSS (ver.19.0). The data analyses were divided into three sections. The first section used crosstabulations, frequency distributions, and measures of central tendency and dispersion to provide a profile of the

students. The second section used descriptive statistics to provide baseline information regarding the scales and subscales that were included in the study. The findings for the inferential statistical analyses used to test the hypotheses and address the research questions were presented in the third section of the analysis. The inferential statistical analyses included Pearson product moment correlations and stepwise multiple linear regression analysis. All decisions on the statistical significance of the findings were made using a criterion alpha level of .05. Table 5 presents the statistical analyses that were used to test each research question and associated hypotheses.

Table 5

Statistical Analysis

Research Questions/Hypotheses	Variables	Statistical Analysis
1. Is there a relationship between self-reported academic achievement, personal achievement goal orientation, academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies, and school behavior among African American students who are attending an elementary charter school in an urban area? H_1: There is a relationship between self-reported academic achievement, personal achievement goal orientation, academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies, and school behavior among African American students who are attending an elementary charter school in an urban area. H_{01}: There is no relationship between self-reported academic achievement, personal achievement goal orientation, academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies, and school behavior among African American students who are attending an elementary charter school in an urban area.	• Self-reported Academic Achievement • Self-reported behavior (citizenship) • Personal Achievement Goal Orientation • Academic-Related Perceptions, Beliefs, and Strategies	Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine the strength and direction of the relation between self-reported academic achievement and school behavior with goal orientation and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies.

Research Questions/Hypotheses	Variables	Statistical Analysis
2. Can elementary African American students' self-reported academic achievement; personal achievement goal orientation, academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies and school behavior be predicted from their participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities? H_2: Elementary African American students' self-reported academic achievement; personal achievement goal orientation, academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies, and school behavior can be predicted from their participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities. H_{02}: Elementary African American students' self-reported academic achievement; personal achievement goal orientation, academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies, and school behavior cannot be predicted from their participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities.	<u>Dependent Variables</u> Self-reported academic achievement Goal orientation Academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies Self-reported behavior <u>Independent Variable</u> Number of extracurricular activities Number of community-based activities Number of religious activities	Separate stepwise multiple linear regression analyses were used to determine if the independent variables could be used to predict the dependent variables.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The results of the data analysis used to describe the sample and address the research questions are presented in this chapter. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides a profile of the students and their participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities. The second section presents a description of the scaled variables, with results of the inferential statistical analyses used to address the research questions presented in the third section.

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between self-reported academic achievement and participation in extracurricular, community-based and religious activities among African American elementary school children. The study further sought to examine the impact of participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities on the students' school behavior, goal orientation and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies.

A total of 102 students in fourth, fifth, and sixth grade participated in the study. The parents had provided permission for the children's participation and the students had assented to be in the study. The students were attending a charter school academy in an urban area of a Midwestern state.

Description of the Sample

The students were asked to provide their age and gender on the survey. Their responses were crosstabulated by their grade in school. Table 6 presents results of this analysis.

Table 6

Crosstabulations: Age and Gender of Students by Grade

	Grade in School							
	Fourth		Fifth		Sixth		Total	
Age and Gender	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Age								
8	1	2.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
9	18	50.0	2	6.3	0	0.0	20	19.8
10	16	44.4	19	59.3	3	9.1	38	37.6
11	1	2.8	9	28.1	23	69.7	33	32.7
12	0	0.0	2	6.3	6	18.2	8	7.9
13	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.0	1	1.0
Total	36	100.0	32	100.0	33	100.0	101	100.0
Missing			1					
Gender								
Male	15	41.7	14	42.4	19	57.6	48	47.1
Female	21	58.3	19	57.6	14	42.4	54	52.9
Total	36	100.0	33	100.0	33	100.0	102	100.0

Thirty-eight (37.6%) of the participants, including 16 (44.4%) in the fourth grade, 19 (59.3%) in the fifth grade, and 3 (9.1%) in the sixth grade, reported their ages as 10 years. Eighteen (50.0%) students in the fourth grade and 2 (6.3%) students in the fifth grade reported their ages as 9 years. One (2.8%) eight-year old student was in the fourth grade and 1 (3.0%) student in the sixth grade reported his/her age as 13 years. One student in the fifth grade did not provide a response to this question.

The majority of the students in the study (n = 54, 52.9%) reported their gender as male. This number included 21 (58.3%) in the fourth grade, 19 (57.6%) in the fifth grade, and 14 (42.4%) in the sixth grade.

The students were asked to provide information about their academic outcomes, including qualifying for free or reduced lunch programs, self-reported grade point average, and self-reported citizenship grades. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Crosstabulations: Qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch, Self-reported Grades, and Self-reported Behavior of Students by Grade

	Grade in School							
	Fourth		Fifth		Sixth		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Qualify for free or reduced lunch program								
Yes	36	100.0	30	90.9	32	97.0	98	96.1
No	0	0.0	3	9.1	1	3.0	4	3.9
Total	36	100.0	33	100.0	33	100.0	102	100.0
Self-reported Achievement								
Mostly As and Bs	27	75.0	14	42.4	13	39.4	54	52.9
Mostly Bs and Cs	9	25.0	15	45.5	17	41.5	41	40.2
Mostly Cs and Ds	0	0.0	3	9.1	3	9.1	6	5.9
Mostly Ds and Fs	0	0.0	1	3.0	0	0.0	1	1.0
Total	36	100.0	33	100.0	33	100.0	102	100.0
Self-reported Behavior								
Satisfactory	34	94.4	25	75.8	27	81.8	86	84.3
Unsatisfactory	2	5.6	8	24.2	6	18.2	16	15.7
Total	36	100.0	33	100.0	33	100.0	102	100.0

The majority of the students (n = 98, 96.1%), including 36 (100.0%) in the fourth grade, 30 (90.9%) in the fifth grade, and 32 (97.0%) in the sixth grade, reported they qualified for the free or reduced lunch program.

The largest group of students (n = 54, 52.9%) indicated their grades were mostly As and Bs. Of this number, 27 (75.0%) were in the fourth grade, 14 (42.4%) were in the fifth grade and 13 (39.4%) were in the sixth grade. Nine (25.0%) students in the fourth grade, 15 (45.4%) students in the fifth grade, and 17 (41.5%) students in the sixth grade reported their grades were mostly Bs and some Cs. One (3.0%) student in the fifth grade indicated his/her grades were mostly Ds and some Fs.

The majority of students (n = 86, 84.3%) reported their behavior was satisfactory. Included in this number were 34 (94.4%) fourth grade, 25 (75.8%) fifth grade, and 27 (81.8%)

sixth grade students. Two (5.6%) fourth grade, 8 (24.2%) fifth grade, and 6 (18.2%) sixth grade students indicated their behavior was unsatisfactory.

The students were given a list of extracurricular activities sponsored by their school. They were asked to indicate in which activities they were participating. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 8.

Table 8

Frequency Distributions: Participation in Extracurricular Activities Sponsored by School

	Grade in School							
	Fourth		Fifth		Sixth		Total	
Extracurricular Activities	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
After School tutoring	18	50.0	22	66.7	10	30.3	50	49.0
Reaching Higher After School Program	15	41.7	16	48.5	10	30.3	41	40.2
School Sports	8	22.2	11	33.3	14	42.4	33	32.4
Reaching Higher Choir	12	33.3	11	33.3	7	21.9	30	29.7
Science Fair	9	25.0	13	39.4	7	21.2	29	28.4
Shabazz Dance & Drumming Group	11	30.6	6	18.2	8	24.2	25	24.5
Chess Club	7	19.4	9	27.3	2	6.1	18	17.6
Spelling Bee	9	25.0	5	15.2	4	12.1	18	17.6
After school enrichment program	9	25.0	5	15.2	2	12.5	16	15.7
Cheerleading	8	22.2	3	9.1	0	0.0	11	10.8
Girls' Club	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	27.3	9	8.8
Robotics	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	24.2	8	7.8
First Aid/CPR Training	2	5.6	5	15.2	0	0.0	7	6.9
Boys' Club	1	2.8	1	3.0	5	15.2	7	6.9
Summer Book Reading Program	0	0.0	5	15.2	0	0.0	5	4.9
Digital Media	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	15.2	5	4.9

The largest group of students (n = 50, 49.0%) reported they participated in after school tutoring. This number included 18 (50.0%) fourth grade, 22 (66.7%) fifth grade, and 10 (30.3%) sixth grade students. Fifteen (41.7%) fourth grade, 16 (48.5%) fifth grade, and 10 (30.0%) students were participating in the Reaching Higher after school program. Of the 33 (32.4%) students who were participating in school sports, 8 (22.2%) were in the fourth grade, 11 (33.3%) were in the fifth grade, and 14 (42.4%) were in the sixth grade. Twelve (33.3%) fourth grade students, 11 (33.3%) fifth grade students, and 7 (21.9%) sixth grade students were in the Reaching Higher Choir. Participation in the science fair was reported by 9 (25.0%) fourth grade, 13 (39.4%) fifth grade, and 7 (21.9%) sixth grade students. Of the 25 (24.5%) students who were participating in the Shabazz Dance & Drumming Group, 11 (30.6%) were in the fourth grade, 6 (18.2%) were in the fifth grade, and 8 (24.2%) were in the sixth grade. Participation in the other activities was reported by less than 20% of the students in the sample.

The students were asked to indicate the types of community-based activities in which they were participating. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions. Table 9 provides results of this analysis.

Table 9

Frequency Distributions: Participation in Community-based Activities

Community-based Activities	Grade in School							
	Fourth		Fifth		Sixth		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Community Sports Programs	15	41.7	11	33.3	10	30.3	36	35.3
Boys and Girls Club	12	33.3	10	30.3	9	27.3	31	30.4
YMCA/YWCA	10	27.8	4	12.1	5	15.2	19	18.6
Library Programs	4	11.1	7	21.2	5	15.2	16	15.7
A+ Summer Sports Program	6	16.7	3	9.1	2	6.1	11	10.8
Boy/Girl Scouts	4	11.1	5	15.2	0	0.0	9	8.8
Dance Classes	5	13.9	2	6.1	0	0.0	7	6.9
Music Classes	1	2.8	2	6.1	2	6.1	5	4.9
A+ Summer Art Academy	1	2.8	2	6.1	0	0.0	3	2.9
A+ Summer College Program	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.0	1	1.0
Summer College Program	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.0	1	1.0
Science Mathematics Challenge	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.0	1	1.0

Thirty-six (35.3%) students, including 15 (41.7%) fourth grade, 11 (33.3%) fifth grade, and 10 (30.3%) sixth grade students, indicated they were participating in community-based sports programs. Of the 31 (30.4%) students who were participating in the Boys and Girls Club, 12 (33.3%) students were in the fourth grade, 10 (30.3%) students were in the fifth grade, and 9 (27.3%) students were in the sixth grade. Ten (27.8%) of the fourth grade students, 4 (12.1%) students in the fifth grade, and 5 (15.2%) students in the sixth grade reported they participated in the YMCA/YWCA programs. Sixteen (15.7%) students, including 4 (11.1%) fourth grade, 7 (21.2%) fifth grade, and 5 (15.2%) sixth grade students, were involved in the community-based library programs. Other community-based activities in which students were participating

included boy/girl scouts, dance classes, and music classes.

The students were asked about their religious activities. Their responses to these questions are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Frequency Distributions: Participation in Religious Activities

Participation in Religious Activities	Grade in School							
	Fourth		Fifth		Sixth		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Involved in religious activities								
Yes	29	80.6	24	80.0	16	48.5	69	69.7
No	7	19.4	6	20.0	17	51.5	30	30.3
Total	36	100.0	30	100.0	33	100.0	99	100.0
Missing			3					
Types of Religious Activities								
Choir	17	47.2	5	19.2	8	42.1	30	37.0
Praise Dancers	9	25.0	4	15.4	2	10.5	15	18.5
Band	2	5.6	1	3.0	4	12.1	7	6.9
Frequency of Attendance at Religious Activities								
Rarely or Never	7	19.4	7	24.1	12	40.0	26	27.4
Less than once a week	6	16.7	4	13.8	2	6.7	12	12.6
Once/twice a week	19	52.8	8	27.6	13	43.3	40	42.1
Everyday/almost every day	4	11.1	10	34.5	3	10.0	17	17.9
Total	36	100.0	29	100.0	30	100.0	95	100.0
Missing			4		3		7	

The majority of students (n = 69, 69.7%) reported they were involved in religious activities. This number included 29 (80.6%) fourth grade, 24 (80.0%) fifth grade, and 16 (48.5%) sixth grade students. The largest group of students (n = 30, 37.0%), including 17 (47.2%) fourth grade students, 5 (19.2%) fifth grade students, and 8 (42.1%) sixth grade students, indicated they participated in the choir at their churches. Nine (25.0%) fourth grade, 4 (15.4%) fifth grade, and 2 (10.5%) sixth grade students were in the Praise Dancers group at their churches. Of the 7 (6.9%) students who indicated they were in the band at their churches, 2 (5.6%) were in the

fourth grade, 1 (3.0%) was in the fifth grade, and 4 (12.1%) were in the sixth grade. The largest group of students (n = 40, 42.1%) reported they attended religious activities once or twice a week. This number included 19 (52.8%) fourth grade students, 8 (27.6%) fifth grade students, and 13 (43.3%) sixth grade students. Twenty-six (27.4%) students, including 7 (19.4%) fourth grade students, 7 (24.1%) fifth grade students, and 12 (40.0%) sixth grade students, rarely or never attended religious activities. Four (11.1%) fourth grade students, 10 (34.5%) fifth grade students and 3 (10.0%) sixth grade students reported they attended religious activities everyday or almost every day.

Description of Scaled Variables

The students completed 10 subscales on the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS) survey. Each of the scales used a 5-point response format ranging from not at all true to very true to rate how each statement applied to them. Their responses on the subscales were summed and divided by the number of items to obtain a mean score that reflected the original unit of measure. The student responses were summarized using descriptive statistics for presentation in Table 11.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics – Subscales on the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales by Grade

					Range	
Subscale	N	M	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Mastery goal orientation						
Fourth grade	36	4.56	.59	4.80	3.00	5.00
Fifth grade	33	4.36	.47	4.40	3.40	5.00
Sixth grade	33	4.51	.58	4.80	3.20	5.00
Performance goal orientation – approach						
Fourth grade	36	3.78	1.21	4.00	1.00	5.00
Fifth grade	33	3.37	1.18	3.50	1.00	5.00
Sixth grade	33	3.17	1.15	3.00	1.00	5.00
Performance goal orientation – avoid						
Fourth grade	36	3.60	1.08	4.00	1.00	5.00
Fifth grade	33	3.39	1.26	3.25	1.00	5.00
Sixth grade	33	3.61	.95	3.75	1.75	5.00
Academic efficacy						
Fourth grade	36	4.48	.66	4.75	2.25	5.00
Fifth grade	33	4.22	.85	4.50	2.00	5.00
Sixth grade	33	3.96	.91	4.00	1.25	5.00
Academic press						
Fourth grade	36	4.33	.69	4.50	1.86	5.00
Fifth grade	33	4.15	.68	4.33	2.43	5.00
Sixth grade	33	3.88	.74	3.86	2.14	5.00
Academic self-handicapping strategies						
Fourth grade	36	1.81	1.02	1.58	1.00	5.00
Fifth grade	33	2.71	1.29	2.50	1.00	5.00
Sixth grade	33	1.87	.86	1.67	1.00	4.17
Avoiding novelty						
Fourth grade	36	2.20	1.05	1.80	1.00	4.20
Fifth grade	33	2.35	1.19	2.20	1.00	5.00
Sixth grade	33	2.34	1.02	2.00	1.00	4.80
Cheating behavior						
Fourth grade	36	1.20	.49	1.00	1.00	2.67
Fifth grade	33	1.61	1.11	1.00	1.00	5.00
Sixth grade	33	1.28	.66	1.00	1.00	3.67
Self-presentation of low achievement						
Fourth grade	36	1.71	.69	1.57	1.00	3.29
Fifth grade	33	2.18	.95	1.86	1.00	4.33
Sixth grade	33	1.63	.63	1.43	1.00	3.43
Skepticism about relevance of school for the future						
Fourth grade	36	1.53	.83	1.00	1.00	4.67
Fifth grade	33	1.90	1.06	1.67	1.00	5.00
Sixth grade	33	1.60	.63	1.50	1.00	3.17

The mean scores for the students reflected the content of the subscale. For example, the mean scores were high for mastery goal orientations and lower for performance goal orientations, both approach and avoid. While the mean scores for academic efficacy and academic press were both high, the scores for the negative scales, academic self-handicapping strategies, avoiding novelty, cheating behavior, self-presentation of low achievement, and skepticism about relevance of school for the future were below the midpoint of 3.

Research Questions

Two research questions were posed for this research. They were addressed using inferential statistical analyses, with all decisions made using a criterion alpha level of .05.

Research question 1. Is there a relationship between self-reported academic achievement, self-reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies among African American students who are attending an elementary school in an urban area?

Pearson product moment correlations were used to examine the strength and direction of the relationships between self-reported academic grades and student responses to the subscales measuring self-reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies among African American students attending an elementary school. Table 12 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 12

Pearson Product Moment Correlations: Self-reported Academic Grades, Self-reported School Behavior, Goal Orientation, and Academic-Related Perceptions, Beliefs, and Strategies

	Self-reported Academic Grades			Self-reported School Behavior		
	n	r	p	n	r	p
Goal Orientation						
Mastery	102	-.38	<.001	102	-.18	.066
Performance – Approach	102	-.10	.340	102	.01	.925
Performance - Avoid	102	-.09	.395	102	.07	.475
Academic-related Perceptions, Beliefs and Strategies						
Academic efficacy	102	-.26	.008	102	.01	.970
Academic press	102	-.31	.001	102	-.03	.802
Self-handicapping strategies	102	.25	.010	102	.18	.069
Avoiding novelty	102	.23	.021	102	.11	.267
Cheating behavior	102	.29	.003	102	.19	.053
Self-presentation of low achievement	102	.15	.131	102	.16	.113
Skepticism about relevance of school for the future	102	.19	.052	102	.30	.002

Self-reported academic grades were significantly related to mastery goal orientation ($r = -.38$, $p < .001$), but not to performance goal orientation – approach ($r = -.10$, $p = .340$) or performance goal orientation – avoid ($r = -.09$, $p = .395$). The negative correlations indicated that students who reported higher grades (Mostly As and Bs were coded as a 1 and mostly Ds and Fs were coded as a 5) were more likely to have higher scores on mastery goal orientation.

Statistically significant correlations were found between self-reported academic grades and academic efficacy ($r = -.26$, $p = .008$), academic press ($r = -.31$, $p = .001$), self-handicapping strategies ($r = .25$, $p = .010$), avoiding novelty ($r = .23$, $p = .021$) and cheating behavior ($r = .29$, $p = .003$). The negative relationships for academic efficacy and academic press with self-reported academic grades indicated that students who had higher self-reported academic grades were more likely to have higher scores for academic efficacy and academic press. The positive relationships between self-reported academic grades and self-handicapping strategies, avoiding

novelty, and cheating behavior were indicative that students with lower academic grades tended to have higher scores on these three subscales. No statistically significant correlations were found for self-presentation of low achievement and skepticism about relevance of school for the future with self-reported academic grades.

The correlations between self-reported school behavior and goal orientation (mastery orientation, performance oriented – approach, and performance oriented – avoid) were not statistically significant. The results of the correlations between self-reported school behavior and academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies (academic efficacy, academic press, self-handicapping strategies, avoiding novelty, cheating behavior, self-presentation of low achievement, skepticism about relevance of school for the future) were not statistically significant. These findings indicated that students' self-reported school behavior and academic-related beliefs and strategies were not related.

Research question 2. Can elementary African American students' self-reported academic achievement, self-reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies be predicted from their participation in extracurricular, community-based and religious activities?

Stepwise multiple linear regression analyses were used to determine if the number of extracurricular, community-based and religious activities in which the students participated could be used to predict self-reported academic achievement, self- reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies. The results of the stepwise multiple linear regression analysis using self-reported academic achievement as the dependent variable and the number of extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities as the independent variables are presented in Table 13.

Table 13

Stepwise Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: Self-reported Academic Achievement

Independent Variables	Constant	b-Weight	β-Weight	Δ r^2	t-Value	Sig
Included Variables						
Community-based activities	1.68	-.01	-.22	.05	-2.26	.026
Excluded Variables						
School extracurricular activities			-.08		-.82	.413
Religious activities			-.07		-.67	.506

Multiple R	.22
Multiple R^2	.05
F Ratio	5.10
DF	1, 100
Sig	.026

One independent variable, number of community-based activities, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, accounting for 5% of the variance in self-reported academic achievement, $r^2 = .05$, $\beta = -.22$, $t = -2.26$, $p = .026$. The negative relationship indicated that students who self-reported higher grades were more likely to be involved in community-based activities. Involvement in school extracurricular activities and religious activities did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not related to self-reported academic achievement.

When self-reported school behavior was used as the dependent variable in a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis, none of the independent variables entered. This result indicated that students' self-reported school behavior was not related to their involvement in extracurricular activities, community-based activities, or religious activities.

Master goal orientation was used as the dependent variable in a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis. The independent variables in this analysis were the number of extracurricular activities, the number of community-based activities, and the number of religious activities. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Stepwise Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: Mastery Goal Orientation

Independent Variables	Constant	b-Weight	β-Weight	Δ r^2	t-Value	Sig
Included Variables						
Religious activities	4.36	.24	.28	.08	2.95	.004
Excluded Variables						
School extracurricular activities			.01		.15	.884
Community-based activities			.18		1.82	.072

Multiple R	.28
Multiple R^2	.08
F Ratio	8.72
DF	1, 100
Sig	.004

Participation in religious activities entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, accounting for 8% of the variance in mastery goal orientation, $r^2 = .08$, $\beta = .28$, $t = 2.95$, $p = .004$. This result indicated that students who were involved in a greater number of religious activities were more likely to have higher scores for mastery goal orientation. The number of extracurricular activities and number of community-based activities did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not predictive of mastery goal orientation.

A stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine if performance goal orientation – approach could be predicted from the number of extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities in which the students participated. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Stepwise Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: Performance Goal Orientation - Approach

Independent Variables	Constant	b-Weight	β-Weight	Δ r^2	t-Value	Sig
Included Variables						
Religious activities	3.14	.61	.34	.11	3.55	.001
Excluded Variables						
School extracurricular activities			-.09		-.93	.355
Community-based activities			.17		1.69	.095

Multiple R	.34
Multiple R^2	.11
F Ratio	12.62
DF	1, 100
Sig	.001

The number of religious activities in which students participated entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, explaining 11% of the variance in performance goal orientation – approach, $r^2 = .11$, $\beta = .34$, $t = 3.55$, $p = .001$. Students who were involved in a greater number of religious activities tended to have higher scores for performance goal orientations – approach. The number of extracurricular activities and community-based activities did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of performance goal orientations – approach.

Scores for performance goal orientations – avoid were used as the dependent variable in a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis. The independent variables in this analysis were the number of extracurricular activities, the number of community-based activities, and the number of religious activities. Table 16 presents results of this analysis.

Table 16

Stepwise Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: Performance Goal Orientation - Avoid

Independent Variables	Constant	b-Weight	β-Weight	Δ r^2	t-Value	Sig
Included Variables						
Religious activities	3.36	.35	.21	.04	2.14	.035
Excluded Variables						
School extracurricular activities			-.13		-1.30	.198
Community-based activities			.07		.70	.488

Multiple R	.21
Multiple R^2	.04
F Ratio	4.58
DF	1, 100
Sig	.035

One independent variable, religious activities, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, accounting for 4% of the variance in performance goal orientations – avoid, $r^2 = .04$, $\beta = .21$, $t = 2.14$, $p = .035$. This finding indicated that students who were involved in a greater number of religious activities were more likely to have higher scores for performance goal orientations – avoid. Involvement in extracurricular activities and community-based activities did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of performance goal orientations – avoid.

The scores for academic efficacy were used as the dependent variable in a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis. The number of extracurricular activities, community-based activities, and religious activities were used as the independent variables. Table 17 presents results of this analysis.

Table 17

Stepwise Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: Academic Efficacy

Independent Variables	Constant	b-Weight	β-Weight	Δ r^2	t-Value	Sig
Included Variables						
Community-based activities	4.04	.14	.25	.06	2.54	.013
Excluded Variables						
School extracurricular activities			.05		.49	.623
Religious activities			.17		1.67	.098

Multiple R	.25
Multiple R^2	.06
F Ratio	6.44
DF	1, 100
Sig	.013

The number of community-based activities in which the students participated entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation explaining 6% of the variance in academic efficacy $r^2 = .06$, $\beta = .25$, $t = 2.54$, $p = .013$. The positive direction of the relationship indicated that students who participated in a greater number of community-based activities were more likely to have higher scores for academic efficacy. Participation in a greater number of extracurricular activities and religious activities did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating these variables were not statistically significant predictors of academic efficacy.

The number of extracurricular activities, community-based activities, and religious activities in which the students participated were used as the independent variables in a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis. The dependent variable in this analysis was scores for academic press. Table 18 presents results of this analysis.

Table 18

Stepwise Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: Academic Press

Independent Variables	Constant	b-Weight	β-Weight	Δ r^2	t-Value	Sig
Included Variables						
Community-based activities	3.92	.15	.32	.10	3.31	.001
Excluded Variables						
School extracurricular activities			-.14		-1.45	.150
Religious activities			.19		1.98	.051

Multiple R	.32
Multiple R^2	.10
F Ratio	10.99
DF	1, 100
Sig	.001

The number of community-based activities in which the students participated entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, explaining 10% of the variance in academic press, $r^2 = .10$, $\beta = .32$, $t = 3.31$, $p = .001$. The results of this analysis provided evidence that students who participated in a greater number of community-based activities were more likely to have higher scores for academic press. The other two independent variables, number of extracurricular activities and number of religious activities, did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of academic press.

The scores for self-handicapping strategies were used as the dependent variable in a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis. The independent variables were the number of extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities in which the students participated. None of the independent variables entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of self-handicapping strategies.

A stepwise multiple linear regression analysis used avoiding novelty as the dependent variable and the number of extracurricular activities, community-based activities, and religious activities as the independent variables. None of the independent variables entered the stepwise

multiple linear regression equation, indicating that they were not statistically significant predictors of avoiding novelty.

Cheating behavior was used as the dependent variable in a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis, with the number of extracurricular activities, community-based activities, and religious activities used as the independent variables. The results of this analysis provided no evidence that the independent variables were predicting scores for cheating behavior.

A stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine if the number of extracurricular activities, community-based activities, and religious activities could be used to predict self-presentation of low achievement. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 19.

Table 19

Stepwise Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: Self-presentation of Low Achievement

Independent Variables	Constant	b-Weight	β-Weight	Δr^2	t-Value	Sig
Included Variables						
Community-based activities	1.67	.13	.25	.06	2.55	.012
Excluded Variables						
School extracurricular activities			.03		.32	.748
Religious activities			.05		.51	.614

Multiple R	.25
Multiple R^2	.06
F Ratio	6.50
DF	1, 100
Sig	.012

One independent variable, number of community-based activities, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, accounting for 6% of the variance in self-presentation of low achievement, $r^2 = .06$, $\beta = .25$, $t = 2.55$, $p = .012$. The positive direction of the relationship indicated that students who participated in a greater number of community-based activities were more likely to have higher scores for self-presentation of low achievement. The remaining

independent variables, number of extracurricular activities and number of religious activities, did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of self-presentation of low achievement.

Scores for skepticism of school for the future were used as the dependent variable in a stepwise multiple linear regression analysis, with the number of extracurricular activities, community-based activities, and religious activities used as the independent variables. None of the independent variables entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, providing evidence that they were not statistically significant predictors of skepticism of school for the future.

Ancillary Findings

A 2 x 2 multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine if the three variables measuring goal orientations (mastery, performance – approach, and performance – avoid) differed by grade and gender of the students. Table 20 presents results of this analysis.

Table 20

3 x 2 MANOVA: Goal Orientations by Grade and Gender

Source	Hotelling's Trace	F Ratio	DF	Sig	Effect Size
Grade	.09	1.41	6, 186	.215	.04
Gender	.02	.54	3, 94	.654	.02
Grade x Gender	.05	.78	6, 186	.586	.03

The results of the MANOVA comparing the three measures of goal orientation (mastery, performance – approach, and performance – avoid) by grade in school and gender were not statistically significant. The interaction effect between grade and gender also was not statistically significant. To further explore this lack of statistically significant differences, descriptive statistics were obtained for grade and gender on the three goal orientations. Table 21 presents

results of this analysis.

Table 21

Descriptive Statistics: Goal Orientations by Grade and Gender

Goal Orientations	Number	M	SD
Mastery Goal Orientations			
Grade			
Fourth	36	4.57	.59
Fifth	33	4.36	.47
Sixth	33	4.51	.58
Gender			
Male	48	4.50	.54
Female	54	4.46	.56
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	4.61	.61
Fourth x Female	21	4.53	.58
Fifth x Male	14	4.50	.36
Fifth x Female	19	4.26	.52
Sixth x Male	19	4.42	.61
Sixth x Female	14	4.63	.54
Performance - Approach			
Grade			
Fourth	36	3.78	1.21
Fifth	33	3.37	1.18
Sixth	33	3.17	1.15
Gender			
Male	48	3.44	1.22
Female	54	3.45	1.18
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	3.62	1.35
Fourth x Female	21	3.89	1.12
Fifth x Male	14	3.61	1.04
Fifth x Female	19	3.19	1.27
Sixth x Male	19	3.18	1.26
Sixth x Female	14	3.15	1.03
Performance - Avoid			
Grade			
Fourth	36	3.60	1.08
Fifth	33	3.39	1.26
Sixth	33	3.61	.95
Gender			
Male	48	3.43	1.10
Female	54	3.63	1.10
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	3.48	1.19
Fourth x Female	21	3.68	1.02
Fifth x Male	14	3.43	1.13

Goal Orientations	Number	M	SD
Fifth x Female	19	3.37	1.38
Sixth x Male	19	3.39	1.06
Sixth x Female	14	3.89	.73

An examination of the mean scores for the three measures of goal orientation supports the lack of statistically significant differences among the students relative to their grade and gender. Based on these findings it appears that goal orientations are similar regardless of the grade level and gender of the students.

The scores for academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies (academic efficacy, academic press, self-handicapping strategies, avoiding novelty, cheating behavior, self-presentation of low achievement, and skepticism of school for the future) were used as dependent variables in a 3 x 2 MANOVA. The grade level and gender of the students were used as the independent variables. Table 22 presents results of this analysis.

Table 22

3 x 2 MANOVA: Academic Related Perceptions, Beliefs, and Strategies by Grade and Gender

Source	Hotelling's Trace	F Ratio	DF	Sig	Effect Size
Grade	.35	2.22	14, 182	.010	.15
Gender	.02	.22	7, 90	.981	.02
Grade x Gender	.17	1.11	14, 178	.354	.08

The results of the 3 x 2 MANOVA for academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies by the main effect, grade, was statistically significant, $F (14, 182) = 2.22$, $p = .010$, $d = .15$. This result indicated that grade differed significantly among students at the three grade levels. The other main effect, gender, and grade x gender did not provide any evidence of statistically significant differences for academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies. The between subject effects were examined to determine which of the variables comprising academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies were contributing to the statistically significant results.

Table 23 presents results of this analysis.

Table 23

Between Subject Effects: Academic Related Perceptions, Beliefs, and Strategies by Grade Level

Variable	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio	Sig	Effect Size
Academic Efficacy	3.90	2, 96	1.95	3.01	.054	.06
Academic Press	2.99	2, 96	1.49	3.15	.048	.06
Academic Self-handicapping Strategies	16.73	2, 96	8.36	7.28	.001	.13
Avoiding Novelty	.41	2, 96	.20	.17	.846	.01
Cheating Behavior	2.81	2, 96	1.41	2.19	.118	.04
Self-presentation of Low Achievement	5.42	2, 96	2.71	4.57	.013	.09
Skepticism about Relevance of School for the Future	2.15	2, 96	1.07	1.46	.238	.03

Three of the seven subscales, academic press, academic self-handicapping strategies, and self-presentation of low achievement, measuring academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies, differed significantly among the three grade levels. The remaining subscales did not provide evidence of statistically significant differences among the three grade levels. To determine the direction of the differences, descriptive statistics were obtained for each of the seven variables by grade and gender. Scheffé a posteriori tests were used to determine which of the three grade levels were contributing to the statistically significant differences for the three subscales with statistically significant differences. Table 24 presents the results of these analyses.

Table 24

Descriptive Statistics: Academic Related Perceptions, Beliefs, and Strategies by Grade and Gender

Goal Orientations	Number	M	SD
Academic Efficacy			
Grade			
Fourth	36	4.48	.66
Fifth	33	4.22	.85
Sixth	33	3.96	.91
Gender			
Male	48	4.18	.89
Female	54	4.27	.77
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	4.45	.77
Fourth x Female	21	4.50	.58
Fifth x Male	14	4.41	.59
Fifth x Female	19	4.08	.99
Sixth x Male	19	3.79	1.05
Sixth x Female	14	4.19	.61
Academic Press			
Grade			
Fourth	36	4.33_{a}	.69
Fifth	33	4.15	.68
Sixth	33	3.88_{a}	.74
Gender			
Male	48	4.10	.75
Female	54	4.15	.70
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	4.13	.96
Fourth x Female	21	4.48	.37
Fifth x Male	14	4.46	.38
Fifth x Female	19	3.93	.77
Sixth x Male	19	3.81	.69
Sixth x Female	14	3.98	.82
Academic Self-Handicapping Strategies			
Grade			
Fourth	36	1.81_{a}	1.02
Fifth	33	$2.71_{a,b}$	1.29
Sixth	33	1.87_{b}	.86
Gender			
Male	48	2.02	.96
Female	54	2.21	1.27

Goal Orientations	Number	M	SD
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	1.57	.57
Fourth x Female	21	1.99	1.22
Fifth x Male	14	2.57	1.17
Fifth x Female	19	2.80	1.39
Sixth x Male	19	1.98	.87
Sixth x Female	14	1.73	.86
Avoiding Novelty			
Grade			
Fourth	36	2.20	1.05
Fifth	33	2.35	1.19
Sixth	33	2.34	1.02
Gender			
Male	48	2.35	1.06
Female	54	2.24	1.10
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	2.21	1.06
Fourth x Female	21	2.19	1.06
Fifth x Male	14	2.36	1.20
Fifth x Female	19	2.34	1.21
Sixth x Male	19	2.44	.99
Sixth x Female	14	2.20	1.07
Cheating Behavior			
Grade			
Fourth	36	1.20_{a}	.49
Fifth	33	$1.61_{a,b}$	1.11
Sixth	33	1.28_{b}	.66
Gender			
Male	48	1.36	.79
Female	54	1.36	.82
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	1.29	.60
Fourth x Female	21	1.15	.39
Fifth x Male	14	1.60	1.09
Fifth x Female	19	1.61	1.16
Sixth x Male	19	1.25	.66
Sixth x Female	14	1.33	.68
Self-presentation of low achievement			
Grade			
Fourth	36	1.71	.69
Fifth	33	2.03	.95
Sixth	33	1.75	.63
Gender			
Male	48	1.85	.76
Female	54	1.83	.84

Goal Orientations	Number	M	SD
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	1.79	.69
Fourth x Female	21	1.65	.70
Fifth x Male	14	2.03	.87
Fifth x Female	19	2.28	1.01
Sixth x Male	19	1.75	.73
Sixth x Female	14	1.47	.42
Skepticism about relevance of school for the future			
Grade			
Fourth	36	1.53	.83
Fifth	33	1.90	1.06
Sixth	33	1.60	.63
Gender			
Male	48	1.71	.83
Female	54	1.64	.90
Grade x Gender			
Fourth x Male	15	1.63	1.06
Fourth x Female	21	1.46	.63
Fifth x Male	14	1.72	.80
Fifth x Female	19	2.03	1.23
Sixth x Male	19	1.75	.67
Sixth x Female	14	1.39	.53

Note: Subscripts in the same cell indicate a statistically significant difference. Higher scores indicate that students feel the subscale is more like them.

The comparison of the mean scores for academic press by grade level provided evidence that students in the fourth grade (m = 4.33, sd = .69) differed significantly from those in the sixth grade (m = 3.88, sd = .74). The students in the fifth grade (m = 4.14, sd = .68) did not differ from either the fourth grade or sixth grade students. No differences were noted for gender or the interaction between grade and gender.

When the mean scores for academic self-handicapping strategies were compared among the three grade levels, a statistically significant difference was found between students in the fifth grade (m = 2.71, sd = 1.29) and those in the fourth grade (m = 1.81, sd = 1.02) and those in the sixth grade (m = 1.87, sd = .86). Students in the fourth grade and those in the sixth grade did not differ significantly on academic self-handicapping strategies. The mean scores for gender and the interaction between grade and gender were not significantly different.

The comparison of scores for cheating behavior differed significantly between fifth grade students (m = 1.61, sd = 1.11) and students in the fourth grade (m = 1.20, sd = .49) and those in the sixth grade (m = 1.28, sd = .66). The difference between the fourth grade students and sixth grade students was not statistically significant. No statistically significant differences were noted between gender and for the interaction of grade and gender.

The mean scores for the other subscales measuring academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies did not differ by grade, gender, or for the interaction between grade and gender. This result indicated that fourth grade students were more likely to use academic press, while fifth graders had the highest scores for academic self-handicapping strategies and cheating behavior.

Summary

The results of the data analysis that have been used to describe the sample and address the research questions have been presented in this chapter. The conclusions and recommendations based on these findings are provided in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter V includes a summary of the study, including a discussion of conclusions, limitations, and recommendations based on the findings of the study. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between self-reported academic achievement and participation in extracurricular, community-based and religious activities among African American elementary school children. The study further sought to examine the impact of participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities on the students' school behavior, goal orientation and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies.

Summary

The achievement gap between European American and minority students, especially when compared to African American and Hispanic students, persists. Johnston and Viadero (2000) wrote "The disparity in school performance tied to race and ethnicity, known as the achievement gap, shows up in grades, test scores, course selection, and college completion" (p. 1). Proposed solutions for remedying the widening achievement gap are numerous. Various remedies proposed as solutions include: providing programs to address the needs of the poor, raising students' and teachers' expectations, developing programs to increase parental involvement in homes and schools, improving teacher training, providing additional financial resources to all school districts and increasing standardized testing among students. Despite these and other efforts, the problem continues.

Researchers have studied high school students' involvement in extra and co-curricular activities and the impact of that involvement on academic achievement for decades. Much of the research was based on the seminal work of Coleman (1961) *The Adolescent Society*: *The Social*

Life of the Teenager and its Impact on Education.

Coleman's (1961) findings supported the notion that involvement in non-academic extracurricular pursuits was counter to attaining educational excellence. He asserted that adolescents were drawn to non-academic extracurricular activities which took away valuable time better used for academic pursuits. Coleman suggested that the time adolescents spent doing extracurricular activities negatively impacted academic results.

The majority of the studies that examined student participation in extra and co-curricular activities and their relationship to academic achievement focused on white, middle-class, male high school students. The research, therefore, on minority students' participation in extracurricular activities and its impact on academic achievement is limited.

Bronfenbrenner (1986) suggested that after-school programs, extended-day programs, and community-based programs could all serve to provide support and enrichment to the child. Brown and Steinberg (1991) wrote that after-school programs with an academic focus positively impacted academic achievement. "Those who concentrated on 'glory' sports (football, basketball, baseball) or performing activities had a significantly lower academic record than those who concentrated on leadership activities or clubs and interest groups" (p.5). Marsh (1992) stated that students' participation in extracurricular activities had a small, but positive impact on their commitment to school and grade point averages (GPA). These activities were: "sports, honor societies, student government, community service organizations, school publications, church organizations, school subject matter activities, and cheerleading" (p. 24).

Numerous studies' data indicated that the parental involvement levels of parents of poor and minority children were less than the parental involvement levels of white parents. Therefore, because schools have children within their buildings and under their direct influence for a

minimum of six hours, five days a week for an average of 180 days yearly, the schools often function as the primary "care-taker" of children. Schools, then, must assume the role of provider and/or coordinator of those activities that serve as "protective factors" for children. The schools must act "in loco parentis".

School districts have made many attempts to reform schools to make the academic outcomes positive for its students. However, most school reform efforts have centered heavily on the quantity and quality of the core academic subjects offered to students. Reading, writing, science, mathematics and foreign languages have received the attention of most educators and legislators. However, despite more children than ever before in America's history having access to a high school education, the academic discrepancy between European American students and African American students remains. Factors other than the core academic subjects affect achievement and therefore were examined in this study.

Hale's (2001) school reform model includes three essential components. They are:

1. A pedagogy that features culturally salient instruction;
2. Strategies for implementing an instructional accountability infrastructure within the school; and
3. A plan to move African American children from remediation to enrichment.

The third component of this model made it most unique in comparison to many school reform models. The cultural enrichment component looked at other influences in addition to and in support of academically oriented practices that affect the academic achievement of African American children. Hale's charge to move African American children from remediation to enrichment is a challenging, yet attainable goal.

By examining how this younger population spends time investing in their futures, a direct link between the activities in which the children are involved and student achievement was examined. This information could help to shape the curriculums of schools especially for African American children who are still shut out of “high quality” educational experiences.

Hale (2001) maintained that when children are exposed to enriching experiences at home, at school and in the community, a canvas is created for artistic teaching in the classroom. She further argued that in most traditional efforts at school reform, the focus is upon lengthening the school day and year, essentially offering a greater quantity of what is already being done. She pointed out that attention should be given to the quantity and quality of extracurricular and community-based experiences provided to children that support academic achievement.

Methods.

A nonexperimental, descriptive research design was used in this study. Two surveys, the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS) and a short demographic survey were used to collect data from the students in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades who were attending a charter school academy located in an urban area in a large Midwestern state. A total of 102 students participated in the study.

Findings.

The sample included 36 fourth grade, 33 fifth grade, and 33 sixth grade students. The students were between 8 and 13 years of age, with the fourth grade students ranging from 8 to 11 years, fifth grade students ranging from 9 to 12 years, and sixth grade students ranging from 10 to 13 years. The majority of the students in the fourth grade (n = 21, 58.3%) and fifth grade (n = 19, 57.6%) were female, with the majority of sixth grade students indicating their gender as male (n = 19, 57.6%). Almost all of the students qualified for the free or reduced lunch program (n =

98, 96.1%). The majority of the students indicated their grades were mostly As and Bs (n = 54, 52.9%). The fourth grade students had the largest percentage of students at this level (n = 27, 75.0%), with fifth grade (n = 14, 42.4%) and sixth grade (n = 13, 39.4%) students reporting lower percentages of students at the mostly As and Bs level. The majority of students (n = 86, 84.3%) at all grade levels reported their citizenship was satisfactory.

The students were participating in many extracurricular activities, with after school tutoring, Reaching Higher After School Program, school sports, Reaching Higher Choir, science fair, and the Shabazz dance and drumming group the most often indicated programs. Many of the students were involved in community-based programs, specifically community-based sports programs, Boys and Girls Club, YMCA/YWCA, and library programs. The majority of students were involved in religious activities, including choir, praise dancers, and band. They generally attended these programs once/twice a week or everyday/almost every day.

Research Questions.

Two research questions were developed for this study. Each of these questions was addressed using inferential statistical analyses, with all decisions on the statistical significance of the findings made using a criterion alpha level of .05.

1. Is there a relationship between self-reported academic achievement, self-reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies among African American students who are attending an elementary school in an urban area?

Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between self-reported academic grades and self-reported school behavior with the goal orientation and academic-related perceptions. The results of these analyses

provided evidence of statistically significant relationships between self-reported academic grades and mastery goal orientation, academic efficacy, academic press, self-handicapping strategies, avoiding novelty, and cheating behavior. The direction of the relationships was in the anticipated direction, with master goal orientation, academic efficacy, and academic press in a positive direction, indicating higher scores on these scales were associated with higher self-reported academic achievement. Self-handicapping strategies, avoiding novelty, and cheating behavior were negatively related to self-reported academic achievement, indicating that higher scores on these subscales were associated with lower academic achievement. None of the subscales were significantly correlated with self-reported school behavior.

2. Can elementary African American students' self-reported academic achievement, self-reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies be predicted from their participation in extracurricular, community-based and religious activities?

Stepwise multiple linear regression analyses were used to determine if the number of school extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities could be used to predict self-reported academic achievement, self-reported school behavior, goal orientation, and academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies. The statistically significant results were as follows:

- Self-reported academic achievement could be predicted by number of community-based activities
- Mastery goal orientation could be predicted from religious activities
- Performance goal orientation – approach could be predicted by religious activities
- Performance goal orientation – avoid could be predicted by religious activities
- Academic efficacy could be predicted by community-based activities

- Academic press could be predicted by community-based activities
- Self-presentation of low achievement could be predicted by community-based activities.

Ancillary findings.

A 3 x 2 multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine if goal orientations differed among the students by grade and gender. No statistically significant results were obtained on the MANOVA, providing support that goal orientations were similar among the three grade levels and gender.

A 3 x 2 MANOVA was used to examine academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies by the grade and gender of the students. A statistically significant difference was found for grade. The between subjects effects were examined to determine which of the scales measuring academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies were contributing to the statistically significant difference. The results of this analysis indicated that academic press, academic self-handicapping strategies, and self-presentation of low achievement differed among the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. The Scheffé a posteriori tests used to compare all possible pairwise comparisons on the three statistically significant scales provided evidence that fourth grade students had statistically significant higher scores for academic press than sixth grade students. For the scale measuring academic self-handicapping strategies, fifth grade students had statistically significant higher scores than either fourth or sixth grade students. Fifth grade students had significantly higher scores for cheating behavior than either fourth or sixth grade students. The remaining comparisons were not statistically significant.

Conclusions

The results of the number of children participating in extracurricular activities showed that the greatest number of students across the grades participated in the After-School tutoring program, a remediation program aimed at improving academic outcomes. The second largest group of children was participating in an enrichment program, the Reaching Higher After-School program, to gain greater understanding of academic topics. Additional programs that could be considered enhancement with an academic focus were the Science Fair, Chess Club, Spelling Bee, and the Robotics class. Students' exposure to and involvement in the types of extracurricular activities have changed significantly since Coleman's (1961) seminal study, *The Adolescent Society: The Social Life of the Teenager and its Impact on Education*, which found that students were engaged primarily in non-academic extracurricular activities. As more mothers entered the workforce, since Coleman's (1961) study, after school programs became more prevalent. This phenomenon supports why children today are offered and probably engaged in a wider variety of extracurricular activities.

The activities focusing on the arts such as the Reaching Higher Choir, Shabazz Dance and Drumming Group, and the after-school enrichment program were well attended by the students. In all activities with an academic focus the fourth and fifth grade students participated at a higher rate than the sixth graders. Holland and Andre (1987) suggested that students who engage in extracurricular activities self-select the activity. Oftentimes, as students get older they are left to make their own decisions, which may account for a lower percentage of the older students being engaged in extracurricular activities with an academic focus.

The focus of students' participation in community-based activities differed from the students' participation in extracurricular activities offered by the school. The largest percentage

of students participated in sports programs that were offered in the community whereas in school the percentage of students participating in academic activities was greater. Because of the seasonal offerings of sports activities many students clamor to attend these activities during the specific seasons. Additionally, many children engage in sports activities when school is closed on the weekends and during vacations.

The participation rate in community-based activities was lower at the sixth grade than either fourth grade or fifth grade. This finding might be attributed to the practice that many younger children are taken to activities by their parents or other responsible individuals. Again, older children are often responsible for getting themselves to activities. This slightly older population of children may face challenges such as transportation, negative peer-pressure or other factors that may interfere with their ability to get to activities. The percentage of students participating in the Boys and Girls Club, however, was evenly distributed across all grade levels.

The community-based programs with an academic focus were the library programs, A+ Summer College Program, Summer College Program, and the Science Mathematics Challenge program. Collectively, these programs had a lower student participation rate than the students' participation rate in community-based sports programs. Again, many African American children are not engaged in community-based, high-quality programs with an academic focus. Furthermore, the children's involvement in community-based activities with an enrichment focus, dance and music classes, also was lower than their involvement in community-based sports programs. These findings suggest that despite the variety of community-based activities offered, a greater percentage of African American students are participating in non-academic pursuits outside of school, largely sports.

Kalmijn and Kraaykamp (1996) implied that exposure to "highbrow activities" such as

music and dance may influence academic achievement. Unfortunately, the children did not participate in these community-based activities at a rate comparable to sports participation. The students' limited engagement in the community-based art and music classes deemed "high brow" supported Hale's (2001) work that implied that the school must provide and/or be the coordinator of activities for African American children. Further support for the need of schools to provide or coordinate the types of community-based activities with an academic and enrichment focus is supported by the following data. Those students with higher self-reported grades were more likely to be involved in community-based activities and students participating in greater numbers of community-based activities were more likely to have higher academic efficacy and higher academic press scores.

The cycle of not being involved in and exposed to these "highbrow" activities is supported by Posner and Vandell (1994) in which the researchers reported that many African American children in families with low socioeconomic statuses do not have these opportunities available in their communities. Additionally, the cost of "highbrow" activities may be too expensive for many parents. Therefore, many African American children do not participate in these cost- prohibited activities despite being available in some of their communities.

When asked about their involvement in religious activities, over two-thirds of the children responded that they participated in religious activities. However, the remainder of the participants indicated that they did not participate in any religious activities. Almost one-third of the children in the study did not have access to the "protective factors" offered by many religious institutions, such as organized activities, mentoring, and character building opportunities. The lack of attendance in religious activities potentially impacts African American students' academic achievement. Foshee and Hollinger (1996) suggested that the Black church supports

educational achievement and a large percentage of the children lacked exposure to the type of support offered by some religious institutions.

Of the percentage of children attending religious activities, most reported attending activities once or twice a week. This percentage was similar to the patterns of attendance found in Smith, Denton, Faris and Regnerus (2002) in which the religious weekly attendance rate among 8^{th}, 10^{th}, and 12^{th} grade American adolescents was 38%. Although, the demographic survey administered in the study did not specify the type of religious institution, some children verbally acknowledged attending church. Brown and Gary (1991) noted that "many of the socialization experiences emanating from religion and the Black church appear to be conducive to a number of outcomes including educational achievement" (p. 415). Additionally, of the percentage of children attending religious institutions, approximately one-third rarely attended while a smaller percentage reported that they attended religious activities everyday or almost everyday. This finding is in accord with Smith et al. (2002) who found great variance in adolescents' frequency of attendance in religious activities.

The PALS survey examined the ways that children approached the learning process, goal orientation, as well as to determine their academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies. The students completed 10 subscales on the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS) survey. The first three subscales were examining personal mastery, performance - approach and performance-avoid as part of goal orientation. The other subscales measured academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies: academic efficacy, academic press, academic self-handicapping strategies, avoiding novelty, cheating behavior, self-presentation of low achievement and skepticism about relevance of school for the future. Each of the subscales is discussed next and conclusions related to self-reported academic achievement and self-reported

behavior are presented.

Mastery goal orientation refers to those children whose goal is to achieve mastery or expertise in school subjects. They focus on the task at hand and to these children learning is innately interesting. The mean scores across all grade levels were higher for mastery goal orientation than for performance-approach goal orientation, which expresses a student's desire to focus on self as compared to others. This approach describes the student who tries to appear smarter than their peers and to look competent among others. Mastery goal orientation was also higher than the results for performance-avoid goal orientation approach to learning in which students want to avoid appearing incompetent among their classmates. Goal orientations were similar regardless of the grade level or gender of the students. Self-reported academic grades were significantly related to mastery goal orientation, but not to performance goal orientation – approach or performance goal orientation – avoid. Students who had higher levels of academic achievement were more likely to have a mastery goal orientation.

Students with higher self-reported grades had higher scores for academic efficacy, which is the student's perception of their competence to do their class work (Midgley et al., 2000) than students with lower self-reported grades. They also had higher scores for academic press, the student's perception that their teacher presses them for understanding (Midgley et al, 2000) than students with lower self-reported grades. When comparing the mean scores for academic press, no differences were noted for gender or the interaction between grade and gender. Students with higher grades often believe in their abilities to learn because of the previous academic successes that they experienced in school. These children are probably more likely to have been in classes with teachers who pushed them to achieve because of their higher academic standing. In other words, their teachers believed that they could learn. Gender and grade by gender interaction did

not provide any evidence of statistically significant differences for academic related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies. These findings are important and are supported by the work done by Cantor, Kester and Miller (2000); Gottfredson (1991); and Kerman, Kimball, and Martin (1980). These studies reported that teacher expectations influenced student achievement. Additionally, no significant correlations were found for self-presentation of low achievement and skepticism about relevance of school for the future with self-reported academic grades.

Furthermore, children with lower self-reported grades scored higher on self-handicapping strategies, which means they deliberately engaged in strategies that hindered efforts toward academic achievement. They also scored higher on two other subscales: avoiding novelty, and cheating behaviors. These results provided additional evidence of the importance of shaping school environments to support nurturing environments where all students experience some measure of success.

The correlation between the students' self-reported behavior, goal orientation and academic perceptions, beliefs, and strategies was not significant. This finding was unexpected because children who had higher scores for academic self-handicapping strategies might have been expected to engage in disruptive behavior and/or cheating behaviors. Because students with a self-handicapping orientation look for excuses on which to blame their academic failure, it was expected that they might have engaged in disruptive behaviors to avoid tasks that they may not have been able to complete successfully.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to fourth through sixth grade students in a single elementary, public school academy located in an urban setting. The findings of the study may not be generalizable to students in traditional public schools.

Recommendations to Educational Stakeholders

The students who participated in the study were African American and 96.1% of the population qualified for free and reduced lunch. These children, however, attend a school that provides "protective factors" for them. The children are kept active in the school setting which provides a variety of extracurricular activities. The student participation rates resulted in children often staying in school until after 6:00 p.m. These activities kept many of the children from being exposed to, or possibly involved in, negative influences that they might have faced in their neighborhoods. The students were very fond of the school and exhibited a sense of belonging as evidenced by their behavior and attitudes while in school. Researchers have studied students that feel a sense of belonging to a school. They are more likely to stay in school, become engaged in the "fabric of the school" and develop meaningful relationships with adults.

By providing safe, fun, and engaging extracurricular activities, the schools become the safe havens and stimulating environments needed by many African American children. This study suggested that the students' self-reported grades were significantly related to mastery goal orientation, indicating that students who were doing better in school also found learning inherently rewarding. Students with higher self-reported grades were also more likely to have higher scores on the academic efficacy and academic press scales. These findings suggested that students who reported having higher grades in school also believed in their own abilities to learn and engaged in behaviors that helped them to achieve academically.

Mahoney and Cairns (1997) and Finn (1989) concluded that involvement in extracurricular activities could help "at-risk" students develop a sense of connectedness to the school. Schools that create stimulating environments, inclusive of enriching extracurricular activities, involve and support their students along the path of achieving academic success.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations should be considered to continue study on the link between school-based extracurricular and community-based activities and academic achievement:

- Examine student achievement levels among students enrolled in specific extracurricular and community-based activities that have been evaluated for effectiveness. These students could be compared to a group of students not enrolled in the programs to gauge the effectiveness of the activities on academic achievement.
- Investigate the degree of parental involvement with their child's extracurricular activities. This involvement could include parents encouraging their children to participate in school-related and community-based activities, attendance at their children's performances in sports and other activities, and volunteering as coaches or providing help to reinforce their support for their children.
- Use a longitudinal research design to determine when students' interest in extracurricular activities begins to change and how these changes affect the types of activities in which the child is involved. Perhaps the school administrators and teachers could provide different types of activities for students at different grade levels.
- Study the effects of cost on involvement in community-based activities that could limit a child's participation. Determine if parents have to limit the number and types of community-based activities based on financial constraints.
- Study the effects of participation in extracurricular activities and academic outcomes (grades and behavior) in public and parochial schools. Compare these results with the

present study to determine if the outcomes are generalizable to all school children or are specific to children in public school academies (charter schools).

APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENT

Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all True		Somewhat True		Very True

Here are some questions about yourself as a student in this class. Please put an "x" under the number that best describes what you think. There are no right or wrong answers.	1	2	3	4	5
1. It is important to me that I learn a lot of new concepts this year.					
2. One of my goals in class is to learn as much as I can.					
3. One of my goals is to master a lot of new skills this year.					
4. It is important to me that I thoroughly understand my class work.					
5. It is important to me that I improve my skills this year.					
6. It is important to me that other students in my class think I am good at my class work.					
7. One of my goals is to show others that I am good at my class work.					
8. One of my goals is to look smart in comparison to the other students in my class.					
9. It is important to me that I look smart compared to others in my class.					
10. It is important to me that I do not look stupid in class.					
11. One of my goals is to keep others from thinking I am not smart in class.					
12. It is important to me that my teacher does not think that I know less than others in class.					
13. One of my goals in class is to avoid looking like I have trouble doing the work.					
14. I am certain I can master the skills taught in class this year.					
15. I am certain I can figure out how to do the most difficult class work.					
16. Even if the work is hard, I can learn it.					
17. I can do even the hardest work in this class if I try.					
18. When I have figured out how to do a problem, my teacher gives me more challenging problems to think about.					
19. My teacher presses me to do thoughtful work.					
20. My teacher asks me to explain how I get my answers.					

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all True		Somewhat True		Very True

Here are some questions about yourself as a student in this class. Please put an "x" under the number that best describes what you think. There are no right or wrong answers.	1	2	3	4	5
21. When I am working out a problem, my teacher tells me to keep thinking until I really understand.					
22. My teacher does not let me do just easy work, but makes me think.					
23. My teacher makes sure that the work I do really makes me think.					
24. My teacher accepts nothing less than my full effort.					
25. Some students fool around the night before a test. Then if they do not do well, they can say that is the reason. How true is this of you?					
26. Some students purposely get involved in lots of activities. Then if they do not do well on their class work, they can say it is because they were involved with other things. How true is this of you?					
27. Some students look for reasons to keep them from studying (not feeling well, having to help their parents, taking care of a brother or sister, etc.). Then if they do not do well on their class work, they can say this is the reason. How true is this of you?					
28. Some students let their friends keep them from paying attention in class or from doing their homework. Then if they do not do well, they can say their friends kept them from working. How true is this of you?					
29. Some students purposely do not try hard in class. Then if they do not do well, they can say it is because they did not try. How true is this of you?					
30. Some students put off doing their class work until the last minute. Then if they do not do well on their work, they can say that is the reason. How true is this of you?					
31. I would prefer to do class work that is familiar to me, rather than work I would have to learn how to do.					
32. I do not like to learn a lot of new concepts in class.					
33. I prefer to do work as I have always done it, rather than trying something new.					
34. I like academic concepts that are familiar to me, rather than those I have not thought about before.					
35. I would choose class work I knew I could do, rather than work I have not done before.					
36. I sometimes copy answers from other students during tests.					
37. I sometimes cheat on my class work.					

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all True		Somewhat True		Very True

Here are some questions about yourself as a student in this class. Please put an "x" under the number that best describes what you think. There are no right or wrong answers.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I sometimes copy answers from other students when I do my class work.					
39. I sometimes annoy my teacher during class.					
40. I sometimes get into trouble with my teacher during class.					
41. I sometimes behave in a way during class that annoys my teacher.					
42. I sometimes do not follow my teacher's directions during class.					
43. I sometimes disturb the lesson that is going on in class.					
44. I would avoid participating in class if it meant that other students would think I know a lot.					
45. If other students found out I did well on a test, I would tell them it was just luck even if that was not the case.					
46. I would not volunteer to answer a question in class if I thought other students would think I was smart.					
47. If I did well on a school assignment, I would not want other students to see my grade.					
48. It is very important to me that I do not look smarter than others in class.					
49. If I were good at my class work, I would try to do my work in a way that did not show it.					
50. One of my goals in class is to avoid looking smarter that other kids.					
51. Even if I do well in school, it will not help me have the kind of life I want when I grow up.					
52. My chances of succeeding later in life do not depend on doing well in school.					
53. Doing well in school does not improve my chances of having a good life when I grow up.					
54. Getting good grades in school will not guarantee that I will get a good job when I grow up.					
55. Even if I am successful in school, it will not help me fulfill my dreams.					
56. Doing well in school will not help me have a satisfying career when I grow up.					

Demographic Survey

How old are you? _____

What grade are you in? □ Fourth □ Fifth □ Sixth

Are you a □ Boy □ Girl

Do you receive free or reduced lunch? □ Yes □ No

What kind of grades do you usually earn?
- □ Good grades (Mostly As and some Bs)
- □ Average grades (Mostly Bs and some Cs)
- □ Poor grades (Mostly Cs and some Ds)
- □ Failing grades (Mostly Ds and some or all Fs)

What kind of citizenship grades do you mostly receive?
- □ Satisfactory
- □ Unsatisfactory

In which of the following extracurricular activities do you participate?
- □ After school tutoring
- □ After school enrichment program
- □ Chess Club
- □ First Aid/CPR Training
- □ Cheerleading
- □ Shabazz Dance & Drumming Group
- □ Robotics
- □ Girls' Club
- □ Reaching Higher Choir
- □ Spelling Bee
- □ Science Fair
- □ Reaching Higher After School Program
- □ Summer Book Reading Program
- □ School Sports (Which ones?_____)
- □ Digital Media
- □ Boys' Club

Other_____
_____
_____

In what other types of activities are you involved?
- □ YMCA/YWCA
- □ Boys and Girls Club
- □ Dance Classes
- □ A+ Drama Program
- □ A+ Summer College Program
- □ A+ Summer Sports Camps
- □ Summer College Program
- □ Boy/Girl Scouts
- □ Library Programs
- □ Community Sports Programs (Which ones?_____
- □ A+ Summer Art Academy
- □ Science Mathematics Challenge
- □ Music Classes

Other_____
_____
_____

Are you involved in any religious activities? □ Yes □ No

If yes, what types of activities?
□ Choir □ Praise Dancers
□ Rites of Passage □ Band
□ Other_____
_____
_____

About how often do you attend religious activities?

□ Rarely or never □ less than once a week
□ Once or twice a week □ everyday or almost everyday

APPENDIX B

PARENT CONSENT FORM

Parental Permission/Research Informed Consent/Information Sheet
Title of Study: *Cultural Enrichment: Connecting African American Elementary Children to Academic Achievement*

Purpose:
You are being asked to allow your child to be in a research study at their school that is being conducted by Deborah Winston from the College of Education at Wayne State University to the relationship between self-reported academic achievement and participation in extracurricular and community-based activities among African American elementary school children attending an urban charter school. Your child has been selected because he/she is attending Shabazz Public School Academy and is in the fourth, fifth, or sixth grade.

Study Procedures:
If you decide to allow your child to take part in the study, your child will be asked to *complete two surveys, the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS) and a short demographic survey*. The children should be able to complete the questionnaires in 30 to 45 minutes. The questions on the PALS are about their goals and motivation for school.

Examples of items on the PALS are:

- It is important to me that I learn a lot of new concepts this year.
- One of my goals is to show others that I am good at my class work.
- I like academic concepts that are familiar to me, rather than those I have not thought about before.

The demographic survey will ask students about their age, gender, their academic achievement, and their citizenship. In addition, they will be given a list of possible extracurricular and community-based activities and be asked to indicate those in which they are participating.

If you would like to review the instrument, Dr. Cain will have a copy available in the school office.

Benefits:
There may be no direct benefits for your child; however, information from this study may benefit other people now or in the future.

Risks:
There are no known risks at this time to your child for participation in this study.

Costs
There are no costs to you or your child to participate in this study.

Compensation:
You or your child will not be paid for taking part in this study.

Confidentiality:
All information collected about your child during the course of this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. All information collected about your child during the course of this study will be kept without any identifiers.

Voluntary Participation /Withdrawal:
Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your child at any time. Your decision about enrolling your child in the study will not change any present or future relationships with Wayne State University or its affiliates, your child's school, your child's teacher, your child's grades or other services you or your child are entitled to receive.

Questions:
If you have any questions about this study now or in the future, you may contact Deborah Winston at (313) 244-7770 or one of *her* research team members at the following phone number (248) 661-4339. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, the Chair of the Human Investigation Committee can be contacted at (313) 577-1628. If you are unable to contact the research staff, or if you want to talk to someone other than the research staff, you may also call (313) 577-1628 to ask questions or voice concerns or complaints.

Participation:
If you do not contact the principal investigator (PI) within a 1-week period, to state that you do not give permission for your child to be enrolled in the research trial, your child will be enrolled into the research. You may contact the PI by telephone at (313) 244-7770, by email at dwinston722@gmail.com, or by returning page three to your child's teacher in the enclosed envelope.

If you do not wish to have your child participant in the study, you may fill out the form and return it to your child's teacher.

I **do not** allow my child _____to participate in this research study.

Name

_____

Printed Name of Parent

_____ _____

Signature of Parent Date

APPENDIX C

STUDENT ORAL ASSENT

Oral Assent Form

(ages 7 to 12)

Title: *Cultural Enrichment: Connecting African American Elementary Children to Academic*

Study Investigator: Deborah Winston

Why am I here?
This is a research study. Only people who choose to take part are included in research studies. You are being asked to take part in this study because you are in the fourth, fifth, or sixth grade at your school. Please take time to make your decision. Talk to your family about it and be sure to ask questions about anything you don't understand.

Why are they doing this study?
This study is being done to find out if being in activities after school have an effect on how you do in school.

What will happen to me?
You will be asked to complete two surveys, the PALS and a survey about you.

How long will I be in the study?
You will be in the study for about 30 to 45 minutes.

Will the study help me?
We cannot promise you that being in this research study will help you. Additionally, information from this study may help other people with similar issues now or in the future."

Will the study hurt?
You should not have any side effects from being in this study.

What other options are there?
The only option might be NOT to participate in the study

Do my parents or guardians know about this? (If applicable)
This study was explained to your parents/guardian and they said that you could be in it. You can talk this over with them before you decide.

What about confidentiality?
Every reasonable effort will be made to keep your information confidential.

What if I have any questions?

For questions about the study please call Mrs. Winston at (313) 244-7770. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, the Chair of the Human Investigation Committee can be contacted at (313) 577-1628.

Do I have to be in the study?

You don't have to be in this study if you don't want to or you can stop being in the study at any time. Please discuss your decision with your parents and Mrs. Winston. No one will be angry if you decide to stop being in the study.

APPENDIX D

HUMAN INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE CONSENT

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

IRB Administration Office
87 East Canfield, Second Floor
Detroit, Michigan 48201
Phone: (313) 577-1628
FAX: (313) 993-7122
http://irb.wayne.edu

NOTICE OF EXPEDITED APPROVAL

To: Deborah Winston
College of Education

From: Dr. Scott Millis, PhD
Chairperson, Behavioral Institutional Review Board (B3)

Date: August 16, 2011

RE: IRB #: 062711B3E
Protocol Title: Cultural Enrichment, Connecting African American Children to Academic Achievement
Funding Source:
Protocol #: 1108010009

Expiration Date: August 15, 2012

Risk Level / Category: 45 CFR 46.404 - Research not involving greater than minimal risk

The above-referenced protocol and items listed below, (if applicable) were **APPROVED** following *Expedited Review* Category (#7)* by the Chairperson/designee for the Wayne State University Institutional Review Board (B3) for the period of 08/16/2011 through 08/15/2012. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals that may be required.

- Revised Protocol Summary Form (received in the IRB Office 08/12/2011)
- Protocol (received in the IRB Office 08/04/2011)
- Parental Permission/Research Informed Consent/Information Sheet (dated 08/03/2011)
- Oral Assent Form for ages 7 to 12 (dated 08/03/2011)
- Data collection tools: Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales
- Receipt of Letter of Support (dated 08/01/2011) from Shabazz Public School Academy

* Federal regulations require that all research be reviewed at least annually. You may receive a "Continuation Renewal Reminder" approximately two months prior to the expiration date; however, it is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date. Data collected during a period of lapsed approval is unapproved research and can never be reported or published as research data.

* All changes or amendments to the above-referenced protocol require review and approval by the IRB **BEFORE** implementation.

* Adverse Reactions/Unexpected Events (AR/UE) must be submitted on the appropriate form within the timeframe specified in the IRB Administration Office Policy (http://www.irb.wayne.edu/policies-and-forms-research.php).

NOTE:

1. Upon notification of an impending regulatory site visit, hold notification, and/or external audit the IRB Administration Office must be contacted immediately.
2. Forms should be downloaded from the IRB website at each use.

*Based on the Expedited Review List, revised November 1998

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ABSTRACT

CULTURAL ENRICHMENT: CONNECTING AFRICAN AMERICAN ELEMENTARY CHILDREN TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

by

DEBORAH L. WINSTON

May 2012

Advisor: Dr. Janice E. Hale

Major: Curriculum and Instruction

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between self-reported academic achievement and participation in extracurricular, community-based and religious activities among African American elementary school children. The study further sought to examine the impact of participation in extracurricular, community-based, and religious activities on the students' school behavior, goal orientation and academic-related perceptions, beliefs, and strategies.

A nonexperimental, descriptive research design was used in this study. Two surveys, the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scales (PALS) and a short demographic survey were used to collect data from the students in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades who were attending a public school academy located in an urban area in a large Midwestern state. A total of 102 students participated in the study. The sample included 36 fourth grade, 33 fifth grade, and 33 sixth grade students. The students were between 8 and 13 years of age, with the fourth grade students ranging from 8 to 11 years, fifth grade students ranging from 9 to 12 years, and sixth grade students ranging from 10 to 13 years.

The findings of the study indicated that the students were involved in many school-based

extracurricular and community-based activities. More than two thirds of the students attended religious activities at least once a week. The students had a direct relationship between their self-reported academic achievement and master goal orientation. Some statistically significant relationships were found between self-reported academic achievement and their participation in extracurricular activities, community-based activities, and religious activities. Recommendations for further study are provided to continue research on these important topics.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Deborah L. Winston

Education:

2012 – Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
Doctor of Philosophy
Major: Curriculum and Instruction

1992 – Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
Education Specialist
Major: General Administration and Supervision

1987 – Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
Master of Arts
Major: Reading

1976 – University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Bachelor of Arts
Major: Social Sciences

Professional Experiences

1976 through Present
Detroit Public Schools, Detroit, MI

- 2011 to present
  Executive Director – Office of Literacy
- 2009 to 2011
  Principal – Bagley Elementary School
- 2003 to 2008
  English Language Arts Supervisor
- 1993 to 1997
  Assistant Principal
- 1989 to 1993
  Reading Improvement Teacher
- 1977 to 1989
  Classroom teacher
- 1976 to 1977
  Substitute teacher

1997 to 2001
Edison Schools, Detroit, MI
Administrator

Memberships

International Reading Association
Michigan Reading Association
Wayne County RESA Reading Association