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An Examination Of The Perceptions And Motivations Of African American High School Students Regarding Performance Character Qualities For Future Success

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND MOTIVATIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REGARDING PERFORMANCE CHARACTER QUALITIES FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation to my loving wife, Minnie, of 27 years. It has taken me several years to complete this writing, during that time, my wife has been the most supportive, patient, helpful, and caring person that I have ever known. Without her understanding, I do not believe that I would have completed this endeavor. She has made sure that nothing interfered with my accomplishing this goal. She is what one would call a true friend. I thank her for her cooperation, sacrifice, unconditional love, and support.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

> *You must discover what you are made for, and you must work indefatigably to achieve excellence in your field of endeavor. If you are called to be a street sweeper, you should sweep streets as Michelangelo painted, Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry.*
>
> *-Martin Luther King Jr.*

Introduction

Traditionally, the purpose of schooling is to teach students academic content knowledge and build moral character in them (King, 1947; Davidson & Likona, 2006; Dewey, 2001). Recently, it has been found that schools should also teach students to excel, which has been labeled performance character (Davidson & Likona, 2006). To address this concern, schools need to adopt performance character education, which has two main goals: (a) to teach students to be morally good, and (b) to teach them to perform at their highest level in any endeavor in which they choose to engage. "To educate a person in morals and not in mind is to educate, if not a menace, at least a detriment to society. Who wants an honest but incompetent doctor, lawyer, or mechanic?" (Davidson & Likona, 2006, p. 1). As a result of a study conducted by Davidson and Likona, (2008) a new definition of character education was coined:

> Our research has led us to propose a paradigm shift in the way we think about character and character education. We came to realize that character isn't just about "doing the right thing" in an ethical sense; it's also about doing our best work. If that's true, then character education isn't just about helping kids get along; it is also about teaching them to work hard, develop their talents, and aspire to excellence in every area of endeavor. (p. 1)

The second part of the new definition of character education (i.e., "teaching them to work hard, develop their talents, and aspire to excellence in every area of endeavor") refers to performance character. Some methods used to develop performance character in students were

revealed by the Character Education Partnership (CEP; 2008). The CEP found that character is developed through a formal character education program by:

> . . . creating a supportive learning environment, creating a culture of excellence, develop thinking dispositions in all members of the school community, assign work that matters, provide models of excellence, prepare students to make public presentations, and use rubrics to help students take responsibility of their own work. (p. 4-7)

According to Davidson, Khmelkov, and Likona (2008), performance character:

> ….consists of those qualities – including but not limited to diligence, perseverance, a strong work ethic, positive attitude, ingenuity, and self-discipline – needed to realize one's potential for excellence in any performance environment, such as academics, extracurricular activities, the workplace, and throughout life. (p. 373)

After adopting behaviors that are included in the definition of performance character, students can begin to demonstrate these behaviors on their own. They can develop a locus of causality and feelings of competence when engaged in educational and/or occupational work, as well as most other activities. Subsequently, they can become intrinsically motivated to perform at high levels in school and in the workplace (Deci &Ryan, 2000).

Davidson and Likona (2006) reported that for students to reach their potential for excellence when engaged in an academic or workplace environment, it is very important to introduce them to and to teach them character education, in particular, performance character. Davidson and Likona also reported that expectations and challenges facing students in school, and will encounter in the workplace require a consistent demonstration of certain performance character qualities, such as: assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, diligence, dependability, and reliability.

Research has revealed that students in some urban school districts across the country are not aspiring for excellence. That is, they are not using performance character qualities while engaged in educational activities. For example, the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading and math test results revealed that more than half the students in several urban school districts are not performing at the basic level (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2009). Seventy-three percent of fourth grade and 60% of eighth grade students who are enrolled in one of the nation's largest school districts scored at the below basic reading level on the NAEP reading test in 2009, which are the lowest scores recorded in the test's 40-year history. Furthermore, the reading performance of a substantial percentage of fourth and eighth grade students in other large city public school districts in 2009, such as Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, District of Columbia, Fresno, Philadelphia, and Milwaukee was below the basic reading level. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2010) found that the range for the number of fourth grade students in these cities who performed at the below basic level on the reading portion of the 2009 NAEP test was between 50% and 66%, and for eighth graders the range was between 40% and 52%.

Not only did a substantial number of fourth and eighth graders in large cities perform below basic levels on the NAEP reading test in 2009, in some cases an even greater percentage of them performed below the basic level on the mathematics portion of the NAEP test. In some large schools, the percentage of eighth graders who performed at below basic levels on the NAEP math test in 2009 was substantially greater than the percentage of students who performed below the basic levels on the reading test in the same cities. The percentage of eighth grade students in Chicago, Cleveland, DC, Fresno, LA, Milwaukee, and Philadelphia who scored

below basic levels were 49%, 58%, 62%, 54%, 54%, 63%, and 48% respectively (NCES, 2009). Nationwide, 22% of eighth grade students scored below basic levels. These data provide evidence that public schools are not achieving the second goal of performance character education (i.e. to teach them to perform at their highest level in any endeavor in which they choose to become engaged).

NAEP reading and math test scores are not the only indicators revealing that some students in urban school districts are not using performance character qualities while engaged in an academic environment. The graduation rate for these urban school districts provides evidence regarding students' performance or lack of performance. CEP (2008) reported that the high school dropout rate in some urban areas is as high as 50%. America's Promise Alliance (2009) also report that over half of all young people in the nation's largest cities are not graduating from high school" (p. 1). America' Promise Alliance further revealed that, on average, this equates to 5 out of 10 students who enroll in high schools in these cities graduate from them, or one student drops out of high school every 26 seconds. As evident, reading and math skills are below grade level, and more than half the students in some of the nation's largest cities are as likely to dropout of high school as they are to graduate from high school.

To determine the reasons why American public schools are not meeting their responsibilities for educating students, some factors contributing to students' low academic achievement must be considered. Woolston (2008) revealed that students' low levels of academic achievement can be attributed to several factors, including teacher expectations, parent involvement, and students' socioeconomic environment. Although these factors may be difficult for students to overcome, performance character education can assist students in improving their

educational performance. Researchers (Davidson, Likona, & Khmelkov, 2008; Marzano, Gaddy, & Dean, 2000) found a statistically significant correlation between improving students' performance character, and improvement in academic performance. However, as students' performance character improved, the effort they put fourth and their quality of work also improved. Duckworth and Seligman (2006) found a relationship between improvement in performance character and improvement in academic performance. They found a statistically significant correlation between the performance character quality of self-discipline and academic performance. Self-discipline is defined for the purpose of the present study as "the ability to suppress prepotent responses in the service of a higher goal and further specifying that such a choice is not automatic but rather requires conscious effort" (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006, p.2). That is, the more self-disciplined a student was, the greater the students' gains were in academic performance (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006).

Swanson (2009) reported that students are failing to meet the challenges that they face in schools, and are not performing up to employer standards once they graduate from school. Students from all socioeconomic backgrounds, in particular students who live in the largest cities in the United States, do not possess the performance qualities required by employers. In addition, Casenar-Lotto and Barrington (2006) reported that high school graduates lack the performance character qualities that define work ethic, such as assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, diligence, dependability, and reliability.

Performance character qualities were not always the most important qualities that employers sought in high school graduates. Casenar-Lotto and Barrington (2006) found that in the past, the primary skills that employers wanted in entry-level employees were basic skills,

such as reading, writing, and arithmetic, as oppose to the above mentioned performance qualities (e.g., such as work ethic, assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, diligence, dependability, and reliability) that employers now want in high school graduates.

Casenar-Lotto and Barrington also found that employers used a behavioristic approach to achieve work-related goals. Behavior theorists, such as Watson, Skinner, and Thorndike, theorized that human behavior is elicited from stimuli in the environment without the aid of the human thought processes. Because humans have the capacity to emit desired responses without thinking, behavior learning theory was applied in the workplace to shape behaviors and learning (Hunkins & Ornstein, 2009). However, more than half of the graduating high school seniors in the U.S. are deficient in the curriculum areas of basic reading, writing, and mathematics (Bonilla, 2008). Nevertheless, these skills are still valuable to employers, as well as for the application of behaviorism,

In addition to requiring that employees be able to read, write, and use math skills, now employers are also requiring that potential employees possess various performance character qualities. For example, Chrysler LLC recently completed a new engine plant that began production in June 2010. During a telephone conversation with the UAW local 372 President of the new plant, it was revealed that the minimal requirements that a potential employee must possess to be considered for employment in the new plant include having two years of post secondary education, or being certified in a technical area, or being a journeyman (i.e., one has been an electrician, pipefitter, craftsman, or be certified in one of the other trades) These requirements suggested that employers are looking for individuals with academic skills and high level performance skills (B. Cobb, Personal communication, May 15, 2007).

Research found that employers are becoming increasingly concerned about performance character skills. Bonilla (2008) revealed that 28% of employers surveyed indicated, over the next five years, that they plan to reduce hiring individuals who only possess a high school diploma. However, approximately 50% stated that they expect to increase hiring individuals who possess a two-year degree. Sixty percent are planning to increase hiring of individuals with a four-year degree, with 40% advising that they anticipate an increase in hiring individuals with post-graduate degrees.

In preparing for the workplace, adolescents, especially those who reside in urban areas, may need to experience some form of performance character education to meet the qualifications of the job requirements. Adolescents from urban areas are unemployed at greater rates than any other group (Levine, 2007); and are more likely to select jobs that require functional skills (Fan, Wei & Zang, 2005). Unfortunately, the number of jobs that only require functional skills is decreasing. Urban adolescents need the form of character education that instills performance qualities in them if they are going to be able to compete for entry-level positions. Where do they get such an education? It has been suggested that urban schools must make performance character education a priority in the classroom. The form of performance character education that is selected for use in classrooms should be research-based, culturally-diverse, and correlated with the students' socioeconomic status (SES) and learning styles.

Students have two types of challenges facing them: (a) they have to improve their academic performance levels in school, and (b) they have to acquire the performance character qualities that employers deem necessary for workers to be of value in the workplace (Casenar Lotto & Barrington, 2006; Davidson & Likona, 2008). Likona (2006) asserted that by teaching

performance character, students can achieve success at school and in the workplace, as well as in any endeavor that they choose to pursue. These challenges lead to an important question, that is who will define, model, lead, and demonstrate the performance character behaviors that will give students opportunities to acquire these qualities?

Traditionally, students learned performance character in two societal institutions, (a) the home and (b) school (Hall & Sewell, 2003). At one time, the home was the foundation for developing a work ethic. Boys learned performance character by watching their fathers' actions, and girls learned good work habits by emulating their mothers' behaviors. However, the time when most children learned performance character in the home has passed. Kristo (n.d.) reported that due to changes in the family social institution, resulting from divorce and being raised in single parent homes, the family plays less of a role in developing performance character in children. In addition, the responsibility of family, as character educators, is also being diluted because of the move away from extended family members and friends, and parents engaging in leisurely activities away from home without their children. Hence, little time is available for parent-child face-to-face communication (Kristo, n.d.). This leaves schools with greater responsibility as the primary educational source for character development in children.

Statement of the Problem

In a substantial number of urban school districts, students are dropping out of high school at an increasing rate, and underachieving in school. Furthermore, employers are dissatisfied with the performance character qualities of entry-level employees. These recent high school graduates often lack the necessary skills to compete in the workplace and provide services efficiently and effectively. Research is needed to understand the types of skills that students need to be prepared

for the world of work and determine the best way that high schools can provide instruction in these skills.

Character education has flourished in the primary grades and has been virtually dismissed in the secondary grades (Berkowitz & Bier, 2006; Davidson, Khmelkov & Likona, 2008; Leming, 1993). Davidson and Likona (2005) found that one of the primary reasons that character education is not taught in high schools is that high school teachers do not see character education as contributing to academic learning. One chemistry teacher told the researchers that she does not teach character, she only teaches chemistry. With the high school dropout rate at a high level and students underachieving in core content subjects, one may think that schools should embrace character education as an important improvement strategy (Davidson, Khmelkov & Likona, 2008). Nevertheless, Bridgeland, Burke-Morison, and Dilulio (2006) found that approximately one-third of all students drop out of the nation's high schools each year. CEP (2008) reported that in some school districts the high school dropout rate is as high as 50%. Bridgeland, et al. found, through interviews with several students, there are a variety of reasons why students drop out of high school. The most prevailing reason, which was given by over two-thirds of those students (i.e., high school dropouts) interviewed, was that excellence was not fostered in the school nor in the classroom.

The high school dropout rate is not the only indication that students are underperforming in school. As reported by Davidson et al. (2008), in a substantial number of urban school districts students are also underachieving in core content subjects. Students' national tests scores provide evidence to support this claim. A substantial number of fourth and eighth graders in large cities performed at the below basic level on the NAEP reading test in 2009, in some cases an even

greater percentage of them performed below the basic level on the mathematics portion of the NAEP test. Moreover, in some large school districts, the percentage of eighth graders who performed at below basic levels on the NAEP math test in 2009 was substantially greater than the percentage of students who performed below the basic levels on the reading test in the same cities. The percentage of fourth grade students who performed below the basic level in reading was as high as 66%, and the percentage of eighth grade students who performed below the basic level in reading was as high as 52%. In one major city, the percentage of eighth grade students who performed below the basic level in math was 77% (NCES, 2010).

The high school dropout rate and students national tests scores provide evidence that a substantial number of students are underperforming in school. The achievement level that students perform at is important as it relates to job readiness. ACT (2009) found that employers seek to hire individuals who have graduated from high school and are proficient in reading and mathematics. However, coupled with academic skills, employers are also requiring that students possess performance character qualities, such as assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, diligence, dependability, and reliability. Casenar-Lotto and Barrington (2006) reported that high school graduates lack these qualities. Davidson and Likona (2006) reported that students can improve their academic achievement levels and acquire performance qualities if schools designate performance character education as Intended Learning Objectives (ILO).

In a conversation, Alonzo Glaze, who is an Administrator for Central City School District, advised that Central City Vocational High School does not have a character education program. The developers of the school curricula for the Central City Vocational High School do not include performance character as an ILO for any of its courses. However, administrators and

faculty members have indicated that students in their high school need to receive some form of performance character education. They believe that by instilling performance character qualities in their students, the students can expect to have a higher probability of achieving success in school and in their life endeavors (A. Glaze, Personal communication, June 22, 2010). For example, Noral Ford, who is the building trades teacher at the vocational school discovered that he has several students who are quite talented, but do not put forth enough effort in assigned tasks, or they give up easily on the tasks. He strongly believes that if these students had more determination and possessed other performance qualities, they definitely could become successful building tradesmen (N. Ford, Personal communication, June 22. 2010). Furthermore, Alonzo Glaze advised that he was looking forward to knowing how students perceive performance character qualities, and that the school is discussing implementing a performance character education program in the near future.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to understand students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities (i.e. assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, and self-control) at an urban Vocational Education High School. In examining these relationships, students' actual perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities were identified and were revealed to educators. Bruner, a cognitive theorist, found that if educators know the limits of students' knowledge, then they could have improved opportunities to teach them new knowledge, replace old knowledge, or refine or qualify existing knowledge (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2008).

Without knowing what students' perceptions and motivations are regarding performance character qualities, character educators may find it difficult to make learning relevant to students' understanding of performance character qualities. Assuming that urban students have some knowledge of performance character qualities may lead to educators improperly developing and implementing character education programs. Fan, Wei, and Zang (2005) found that students who live in urban areas are usually from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds and may not have had the opportunity to develop perceptions of performance character qualities, or they may have fairly weak perceptions of these qualities. In addition, in comparison to students who attend schools in affluent areas, urban students are at a comparative disadvantage in accumulating performance character qualities. Fan et al. further revealed that "The stereotype of being disadvantaged in the society may reduce the accumulation of (pre-market) human capital, particularly non-cognitive skills, for individuals from disadvantaged groups" (p. 2). However, once students' perceptions initially have been assessed, an intervention can be employed in an attempt to instill preferred performance character qualities in students. The outcomes of the study can be used to improve and assist in developing character education programs in urban school districts**.**

Significance of the Study

The data collected from this study can provide information to educators and other stakeholders regarding how urban students understand performance character qualities. Furthermore, the study's outcomes may assist in providing curriculum developers and educators with a baseline when developing character education curricula and lesson plans. In a conversation with Alonzo Glaze and Noral Ford, an administrator and teacher respectively, at

Central City Vocational High School, they reported that their students, in general, fail to demonstrate performance qualities. However, the faculty and staff are enthusiastic about introducing these qualities to the students (A. Glaze & N. Ford, Personal communications, June 22, 2010).

Policymakers can obtain additional evidence, related to urban students' perceptions of performance character qualities that can be used as a basis for making policy decisions related to character education. Hence, policymakers can include in character education curricular approaches to pedagogy when instructing urban adolescents on performance character qualities.

Finally, many urban adolescents lack the necessary performance character qualities needed to become successful in school, and then in the workforce. Hence, employers are finding it difficult to hire these adolescents and young adults (Casenar-Lotto & Barrington 2006). The outcome information generated from this study can reveal the need for urban high schools to integrate performance character standards with moral character standards when implementing their character education programs. Davidson and Likona (2006) reported that students can improve their academic achievement levels and acquire performance qualities, if schools designate performance character education as intended learning objective (ILO).

Limitations of the Study

- The study was conducted in one urban vocational high school. The findings may be generalized only to other urban vocational high schools.
- The participants in the study were primarily African American; therefore the findings may not be generalized to other racial ethnic groups.

- The collected data from the study were self-reported and may reflect response bias due to a desire to please the researcher.

Research Questions

Knowing how students perceive performance character qualities and their motivations towards performance character qualities are key to developing effective performance character education programs in schools. Hence, this study focused on gathering this information, and was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise,)?
2. To what extent does a difference in perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) exist between male and female students?
3. To what extent does a difference in motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise,) exist between male and female students?
4. Can students' self-reported academic performance be predicted from perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness)?

Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to gain knowledge of students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities (e.g. assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, and self-control) at an urban Vocational Education High School. Students' low grades, low test scores, low high school graduation rates, and employers reporting that high school graduates do not possess the necessary performance character qualities needed to excel on the job, indicate that urban high school students may not have the proper orientation toward performance character qualities.

NCES (2009) reported that more than 50% of fourth and eighth graders in major urban areas across the United States scored below the basic level in both math and reading. For instance, in one urban school district, 73% of fourth graders scored below the basic reading level, and 77% of eighth graders scored below the basic math level. The high school graduation rates in these same urban areas were not much better. Seventeen of the largest urban areas in the United States had high school dropout rates of more than 50% (America's Promise Alliance, (2009). Furthermore, over the next five years, approximately one-third of employers reported that they will decrease their hiring of high school graduates, and other employers reported that they will begin hiring employees who possess college degrees of two years or more (Bonilla, 2008).

Most high schools basically have dismissed the importance of character education. High schools that do engage students in character education only engage students in moral character education (Davidson et al., 2008). It has been found that students who are engaged in performance character education learn to excel in school and are better prepared for real-world endeavors, and add greater value to society as adults (Davidson & Likona, 2007). However, a

baseline for the development of a performance character education program can be developed with the understanding of students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature that focuses on four topics. The chapter begins with an historical summary of character education. This presentation of how character education has evolved describes the interest, attitudes, motivation, and philosophies across various eras of character education, and ends with various examples of character education implementation strategies. Second, a review of literature discusses how performance character education can improve academic outcomes, and instill those performance character qualities, such as assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, diligence, dependability, and reliability in students. However, research on performance character education and performance character qualities has provided evidence that some students can be taught to achieve at high academic levels in school and in other endeavors, as opposed to students who possess high achieving abilities (e.g., have high IQs) at birth; Davidson, Likona, & Knmelkov, 2008). When students enter the world of work, employers expect them to possess performance character qualities (Bonilla, 2008).

The third topic reviews literature regarding the performance character qualities that employers are looking for in entry-level employees. In addition, the literature review will provide a discussion of a segment of students who generally lack performance character qualities, in particular urban students, and establish why it is important for them to acquire these qualities. The fourth topic included in the review of literature is concerned with students' perceptions of performance character qualities that can provide a foundation for this study.

Finally, a brief discussion of school motivation will be presented. In viewing the history of character education, students' perceptions and motivations were not considered when developing and implementing character education in schools. During various periods in the history of the United States, students were indoctrinated with particular character qualities by those who were in authority over students' formal education.

History of Character Education

Although character education has been around since the colonial period in the United States, it was not as elaborate as character education programs that are in schools at the present time. However, character education is as old as education itself. Throughout history, education has had two important goals: (a) to teach students to perform at their highest level in any endeavor in which they choose to engage, and (b) to teach them to be morally good citizens (Likona, 1993). This statement by Likona implied that schools always have been responsible for instilling character in individuals. Even Benjamin Franklin, one of the founders of democracy in the United States of America, believed that character should be taught in schools. Josephson (2002) cited a Benjamin Franklin document published in 1749, titled: "*Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania."* Benjamin Franklin indicated that demonstrating character should be the intention of all individuals (i.e., individuals should be of service to humanity, their country, friends and family) and that character education should overarch all other forms of education. Performance character was not taught in schools during most of the history of character education. For over 100 years, schools only taught what was considered to be moral character to students. However, character traits, such as reliability and dependability, were taught

as moral character qualities. These traits also are considered to be performance character qualities (Davidson & Likona, 2007).

The character traits that were taught in schools during the infancy of formal education were of a virtuous nature. Lyons (1995) reported that prior to the War of 1812, the main objective of education was to instruct individuals on how to read the Bible and other literature related to religion. The teaching of character traits, such as responsibility, caring, respect, trustworthiness, dependability, and reliability, was extracted from the New England Primer, which was the first text book used to educate individuals formally. Lyons also reported that the contents of this book included religious catechisms that individuals were instructed to memorize for the purpose of reciting them. However, the Bible remained the preferred text over any other religious text used to teach moral values, because early communities were bonded together by religious affiliations (Josephson, 2002), with Christianity the prevailing religion during this period (Peterson, 2007).

As time passed, the nation's citizens increasingly became divided on the source from which character trait information was derived. As the immigrant population grew in the United States, religious and ethnic diversity increased. Eventually, different groups struggled over whose Bible to use and which doctrine should be used to teach character traits to children. In 1836, the McGuffey Reader became the book of choice (Likona, (1993). This text was selected because it was believed that no other texts at the time bore directly and positively upon the formation of character in students (Vail, 1911). The McGuffey Reader remained the book of choice for teaching character education until the beginning of the 20th century.

At the beginning of the 20th century, support for character education began to decrease. Some powerful forces, such as Darwinism and logical positivism, led people to see things in flux, including character education, which was seen as a matter of personal judgment (Likona, 1993). Darwinism, in one of its many arguments, rejected the Christian argument that human beings did not possess good character by nature, and, in contrast, argued that character traits evolved from social qualities acquired through natural selection (Wiker, 2001). People bought into Darwin's theory and began to believe that character traits constantly change. Hence, moral relativism became popular, which Josephson (2002) defined from the perspective of Darwin and his followers:

> Knowledge of other cultures and their varied traditions leads to the conclusion that what is thought to be morally right or wrong is simply a matter of convention or tradition. Thus, there are no objective moral truths or universal ethical standards, and it is a form of moral imperialism to impose any particular set of values on anyone. (p. 49)

Josephson's description of moral relativism argued that people's attitudes toward character education had regressed back to the period prior to the *McGuffey Reader*, in particular when he stated that "there are no more moral truths or universal ethical standards" (p. 49). However, the Logical Positivists' philosophy assisted in changing individuals' thinking toward character education also.

Logical positivism was another philosophical theory that was introduced in concert with Darwinism and assisted in diminishing the support for character education. Positivists only held things to be true that could be verified empirically. They believed that morals were personal value judgments and not a subject to be taught in schools (Likona, 1993). Although Darwinism and Positivist philosophies decreased some support for character education, efforts to maintain

character education in schools continued in other forms, such as Civic Education and Values Clarification.

After the Second World War and the Cold War, character education shifted to civics education in the classroom. A reason for this shift was that the demand for high-level technical skills was growing (Beachum & McCray, 2005). An important component of civic education is referred to as civic virtue, in which civic virtue is defined as "a commitment to democratic principles and values that manifests itself in the everyday lives of citizens" (National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS], 1997, p. 3). However, more than a half century ago it was recognized that a correlation existed between technical skills or work and character education. It may have been coincidental that society's impetus to continue character education, although in another form, as well as the demand for skilled workers were present at the same time. Nevertheless, most teachings of civics education were carried out in social studies classrooms. Character education was not going to go away, although it continued to evolve, taking different shapes and forms.

Character education took a different shape in the 1960s and 1970s, becoming known as values clarification system. Jewell (2002) revealed that:

> Under this system, the child was allowed the freedom of experiencing a decision-making process in which he was to choose the acceptable behavior for himself. Educators were cautioned against presenting morals to the child because this would unduly influence him toward the adult's own value system. Rather than teachers, educators became leaders of moral discussions with a definitive barrier drawn as to the incorrectness of referring in any way to the teacher's own or any other moral code. (p. 3)

Under the values clarification system, society appeared to be returning to an earlier era of character education (i.e. an era before the adoption of the *McGuffey Reader*). This return is

evident as Jewell's description of values clarification coincided with Josephson's (2002) description of the moral relativist view of how individuals' character should be instilled. Beachum and McCray (2005) reported that "It took the shallow moral relativism loose in the land and brought it into the schools" (p. 4). Nevertheless, the values clarification period eventually was abolished. The "common sense" ingredient appeared to be missing from its recipe. Jewell (2002) suggested that:

> The development of maturity levels was overlooked as well in the mistaken concern for the student's opinion being all that mattered. Ethics and morals were considered a matter of personal taste. Children were expected to be mature enough to assimilate a value system, which allowed them to make proper choices when adults of that time were not as capable. (p. 3)

Upon completing character instruction under the values clarification system, character educators expected students to demonstrate good character without guidance. The values clarification system was implemented before its time and without the necessary instillation of character qualities. However, it may be theorized that those individuals who were allowed to make their own decisions about right and wrong as adolescents in the 1960s and 1970s raised their own children in the 1980s with the absence of formal character education in public schools (Jewell, 2002).

According to Jewell (2002), the absence of moral consciousness in individuals during the earlier decades became more prevalent in the 1990s. Jewell (2002) reported that adolescents had few adult role models to emulate or educators to teach them moral qualities that could guide their behavior. In addition, millions of adolescents were not being formally taught moral qualities in school or were being taught the wrong moral qualities. The lack of moral qualities became evident in the increased negative outcomes of adolescents' behavior. In 1992, adolescents

engaged in increased levels of violence, drug use, and drunk driving. The teen pregnancy rate was rising, as well as, teen delinquency (Josephson, 2002). Furthermore, a report published in 1992 by the Josephson Institute of Ethics indicated that:

> . . . 61 percent of high school students admitted they had cheated on an exam in the past 12 months, 33 percent had stolen something from a store, and 21 percent would falsify a report, if necessary, to keep a job, and 32 percent had pushed or hit another student in anger. (p. 6)

Kilpatrick (1993) also reported statistics on students' ill behaviors, stating "An estimated 525,000 attacks, shakedowns, and robberies occur in public high schools each month. Each year nearly three million crimes are committed on or near school property; about 135,000 students carry guns to school on a daily basis" (p. 4). Taking character education out of schools was problematic. Adolescents were losing respect for themselves and particularly for others at an increasing rate. However, taking character education out of the schools was not the only factor for the demonstration of ill-behavior by adolescents. The disintegration of the family also contributed substantially to adolescents' conduct.

Families present the most immediate role models for children and are their first teachers. Children are more likely to emulate their parents' behavior and practice their teachings before noticing the behaviors or teachings of people outside their families. Likona (1993) noted that for a vast number of children, family members are no longer performing as role models because of the breakdown of the family. This trend is expected to continue. Likona also revealed that the breakdown of the family can contribute to the ill-behavior of adolescents more than other variables.

This breakdown has resulted in a renewed drive to teach character education in schools. Two character education organizations (Character Education Partnership [CEP] that was

incorporated in 1992 and Character Counts) were formed that are still making an impact on student behavior. “Character Education Partnership is an umbrella organization designed to support the development of school-based character development programs” (Josephson, 2002, p. 44). Character Counts was founded in 1993 by the Josephson Institute of Ethics. Josephson explained that Character Counts is a framework for developing a character education program and uses the character values of respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and good citizenship to build good character in individuals. At the turn of the 21st century, schools all over the country engaged tens of thousands of students in these programs in efforts to reverse the trend of adolescents’ ill-behavior.

Entering the 21st century, the depth and breadth of scientific research involving character education began accumulating at an increased rate. As a result of this research, the number of character education programs in schools also began to increase; the programs improved; and became more comprehensive. Furthermore, educators were finding that there was more to character education than just instructing students to read the bible or the McGuffey Reader, lecturing students on character values, or chastising them when they demonstrated poor behaviors. Parents and other educational stakeholders also were beginning to play more of a role in students’ character development. In addition, CEP began giving out awards to schools that demonstrated excellence in their character education programs. However, Berkowitz and Bier (2005) and Davidson and Likona (2005) provided sample evidence for some of these emerging developments in character education. In particular, they discovered that implementing a variety of strategies were useful in developing effective character education programs.

Berkowitz and Bier (2005) reviewed 109 research studies related to character education to determine which implementation strategies that teachers, schools, and school districts are using to develop successful character education programs**.** Each study was evaluated for scientific rigor of its research design. Thirty-nine different character education programs were represented in these studies. As a result of their evaluation, Berkowitz and Bier identified 33 effective character education programs based on standards established in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) that encompassed 69 scientifically acceptable character education studies.

Eleven prevailing elements were present in the most effective character education programs (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). Three elements were related to the content of the implementation strategies and the remaining eight elements were related to the pedagogical strategies used to implement the character education programs. Strategies that were most commonly found in the content areas of 27 character education programs include:

- Social skills and awareness (e.g. communication skills, active listening, relationship skills, assertiveness, social awareness)
- Personal improvement/self-management, and awareness (e.g. self-control, goal setting, relaxation techniques, self-awareness, emotional-awareness)
- Problem-solving/decision-making (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005).

The content area strategies led to educating students in both performance and moral character; however performance qualities are emphasized more than moral qualities. For example, in the social skills and awareness category, assertiveness was definitely a performance character quality. Furthermore, Berkowitz and Bier (2005) reported that when using this implementation strategy, students are taught to demonstrate respect, towards one another when engaging in

conversations, which is a moral character quality. For example, students are taught to give and receive compliments.

In the category of personal improvement/self-management and awareness, performance character qualities also are emphasized. This implementation strategy teaches students to fulfill their obligations (i.e., separating those things for which they are responsible from those things for which they are not responsible). Students also are taught to be disciplined in their endeavors. This goal was accomplished by teaching students to set appropriate goals, to develop various strategies for reaching their goals, and to monitor their own performance in attempting to achieve these goals. This strategy coincided with the problem solving-decision making strategy.

The problem solving/decision-making strategy teaches students various methods for making decisions and solving problems. For example, one method used in a sixth grade curriculum to solve problems is: "Stop; Calm down; Identify the problem and your feelings about it; Decide among your options; Do it; Look back; and, Evaluate" (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005, p. 6)

The content implementation strategies are some of the implementation strategies, and may not be considered as the most effective strategies available for educators of character education. However, they are the most prevalent ones that Berkowitz and Bier (2005) found in their review of the 109 character education research studies. Through their own admission, Berkowitz and Bier reported that several other content implementation strategies probably can be found in other research and in other schools that have implemented character education programs where no research has been conducted on the effectiveness of their programs. Berkowitz and

Bier reported that other more effective pedagogical implementation strategies may be available in addition to the ones that they identified in their review of the literature.

Berkowitz and Bier (2005) reported that of the eight most prevalent pedagogical implementation strategies that were found, five of them were implemented more than any of the others (e.g., 50% of the character education programs integrated them into their pedagogy). The following first five listed strategies are the most commonly used, and the last three were used by less than half of the effective character education programs. Table 1 presents these strategies.

Table 1

Pedagogical Implementation Strategies for Character Education Programs

Pedagogical Strategy	Explanation
Professional development for implementation	This particular strategy provides training before and during the implementation of the character education program. For example, before implementation of the program, educators receive four hours of training on the PeaceBuilders model. During the implementation of the program, for the first 8-12 weeks, educators receive two hours per week of coaching in program implementation. In addition, throughout the course of the character education program educators engage in study sessions to address their concerns related to the program. Periodically educators also meet for two hours to discuss their successes, challenges, new materials and interventions.
Interactive teaching strategies	The researchers found that peer discourse, role-playing, and cooperative learning to be the most effective learning strategies when engaging students in character education.
Direct teaching strategies	When implementing this pedagogical strategy, educators simply present lectures on the subject matter, demonstrate a technical skill, and/or discuss a situation or event related to character education.
Family/community participation	The intention of this strategy is to educate and train parents on character education skills, as well as reinforce the character lessons students learn in school, and to encourage parents and students to get involved with their community through various projects. For example, The Child Development Project includes take-home activities that students in grades K-5 engage in and complete with their parents. For example, one step in the Seattle Development Project parents are trained on the same character skills that their children are learning in school. In another program labeled Positive Action, parents and other community members are encouraged to engage in weekly lessons that parallel the character education lessons in their local school.
Modeling/Mentoring	This pedagogical approach to implementing character education appeared in different forms throughout the literature. However, there were three prevailing strategies found in the literature: 1.) Facing History and Ourselves is the most common approach. This approach uses depictions of historical adult role models who demonstrated acts of heroism, or who added value to other's lives; 2.) Teen Outreach is a program that engages students to work in community social service organizations with other volunteers and adult staff members; and 3.) Learning for life is a program that matches community role models with students for the purpose of helping the students identify and develop the skills needed to reach high levels of achievement in their future endeavors.
Classroom or behavior management strategies	The most common forms were reward or recognition programs, developmental discipline or positive classroom management, and monitoring systems.
School wide strategies	The common forms were leadership (individual or team) and school wide character education programs
Community service/service learning	Of these, half were community service and half were service learning.

Note: Berkowitz and Bier, 2005, pp. 7-9

In concluding their literature review, Berkowitz and Bier (2005) reported that the evidence in the literature supported the contention that character education programs do work, if they are designed and implemented effectively; and there are various character education models that can be employed by educators (e.g. whole school models, classroom models, and behavior

models). Furthermore, they also reported that substantial evidence has been published that if implemented appropriately, the influence of character education on students is long lasting, in particular, if parents or caregivers are engaged in the character education of their children. Berkowitz and Bier found three programs that can facilitate parental engagement: Seattle Social Development Project, which assist parents in creating a positive home environment; Child Development Project, which is designed to connect families to the school community; and the Positive Action program, which is designed to engage the student, family, and the community into the schools character education program. These projects and programs demonstrated sustained effects on students from elementary school through early adulthood. However, Berkowitz and Bier asserted that few studies had been conducted in high schools.

A small percentage of the studies that Berkowitz and Bier (2005) reviewed were found in high schools, with the greatest percentage of the studies found in elementary and middle schools. However, Davidson, Likona, and Khmelkov (2008) observed that the perceptions of character challenges are found to be most prevalent in high schools. Hence, students in high schools are in a greater need for character intervention than students in the lower grade levels. The rationale for this conclusion was that high school level students are underachieving academically, dropping out of school, engaging in illicit drug use, committing violent crimes, and getting pregnant. In addition, employers reported that high school graduates generally lack the moral and performance qualities needed to perform effectively on the job.

Davidson and Likona, (2005) conducted a two-year study of character education titled: “Smart & Good High Schools: Integration of Excellence and Ethics for Success in Schools, Work, and Beyond.” Davidson and Likona were encouraged to conduct their two-year study of

character education because of their interest in "how high school educators think about character education, what they currently do and don't do (intentionally or unintentionally) to develop character, and what can be done to promote the wider implementation of character development practices in the adolescent years" (Davidson et al., 2008, p. 371). Three goals guided their study: (a) find educational practices that develop high school student's performance and moral character; (b) make these practices accessible to educators by providing illustrations and descriptions of them in sufficient detail; and (c) use these practices "to develop a working theoretical model of a high school that develops and integrates both excellence and ethics" (p. xxii). Davidson and Likona, in conducting their research, drew on various sources of knowledge in their pursuit of the eight strengths of character and the promising practices. They collected data from three categorical sources:

1. *Assembling a database of relevant literature* - examined relevant theoretical and empirical literature on adolescent development, high school reform, and character education, assembling a database of more than 1,400 references (books, studies, reports, essays, and other sources.)

2. *Site visits to diverse schools* – conducted site visits to 24 high schools, large and small, public and private, secular and religious, representing all geographical regions of the country. Focus groups, classroom observations, interviews, observations of what each school considered to be their 'signature' character practice of their character education program, paired interviews with student leaders, and analysis of the schools' character education program materials and archival data.

3. *Guidance from two panels* – A National Expert Panel comprised of academics practitioners with expertise in adolescent development, high school education, or character education gave both theoretical and methodological guidance during and after the study. A National Student Leader Panel provided input through on-site interviews, a written survey, and feedback on the draft of the report (p. xxii).

Davidson and Likona (2005) found that educational practices (i.e. which they labeled as promising practices) fostered development of what they labeled as the eight strengths of character. Davidson and Likona reported that performance and moral character were the two main parts of character, which they separated into eight different and distinct strengths or developmental outcomes of character. However, the strengths were designated as targeted educational goals. The researchers theorized that with the eight strengths of character instilled in students, they could succeed in school and in most endeavors in which they were engaged, as well as become ethical citizens. However, the eight strengths of character became a primary focus of Davidson's and Likona's research. In conducting their research, they sought out those "promising practices" found in high school character education programs that would foster the eight strengths of character. The eight strengths of character and associated promising practices are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Strengths of Character and Associated Promising Practices

Strength of Character	Associated Promising Practices
Lifelong learner and ethical thinker – strives to academic knowledge, learning is a continuous process, demonstrate critical analytical abilities, seeks expert opinion and credible evidence, admits and corrects errors, and integrates knowledge.	• Have a relevant, rigorous, and engaging curriculum • Develop critical thinking in-depth balanced investigation of controversial issues • Use published curricular materials that develop critical thinking about value-laden current events • Teach Media literacy
Diligent and capable performer – aggressive, self disciplined, takes pride in work, sets personal goals and assesses progress, and demonstrates perseverance.	• Involve students in learning experiences that challenge them to meet real-world standards • Use a pedagogy that requires all students to achieve a specified level of mastery • Teach study skills and hold students accountable for them • Use a teaching methodology and grading system that help students understand and strive for quality work • Use rubrics to help students self-assess, set performance goals, and monitor their progress • Use co-curricular activities to develop students' individual

Strength of Character	Associated Promising Practices
	talents and the collective pursuit of excellence • Develop perseverance through a high challenge rite of passage
Socially and emotionally skilled person – possesses a healthy self-confidence and positive attitude, courteous, sensitive to the feelings of others, effectively communicates, works well with others, resolves conflict fairly, and has emotional intelligence and the ability to manage emotions	• Develop and regularly renew a positive relationship with every student • Foster positive peer relations • Teach the power of a positive attitude • Teach manners • Teach the art of asking questions
Ethical thinker – Possesses moral discernment, has a well formed conscience, identifies with morals and is morally committed, and possesses moral competence needed to translate moral discernment, conscience, and identity into effective behavior.	• Model integrated ethical thinking in your relationships with students • Study lives of character and challenge students to pursue their own character development • Help students to develop a go to ethical framework and an understanding of the functioning of consciousness • Help students develop an ability to make well-reasoned ethical decisions • Teach ethical wisdom through character quotations
Respectful and responsible moral agent, committed to consistent moral action – respects rights and dignity of all persons, understands that respect includes the right of conscience to disagree respectfully with others beliefs and behaviors, possesses a strong sense of personal efficacy and responsibility to do what's right, responsible for own mistakes, sets good examples and is a positive influence, and is a moral leader.	• Develop rules with students • Use discipline as an opportunity for character development • Use the academic curriculum to develop moral agency
Self-Disciplined person who pursues a healthy life style – pursues mental, physical and emotional health, and makes responsible personal choices that contribute to continuous development of a healthy life style and positive future.	• Use advisories, wellness programs and other school wide strategies to promote a balanced self-disciplined life style • Approach sex education holistically as an opportunity to develop good character and a future orientation • Implement a community wide approach to building developmental assets • Partner with parents to discourage substance abuse
Contributing community member and democratic citizen – contributes to family, classroom, school, and community; demonstrates civic character, and the skills needed for participation in the democratic process; appreciates the nation's democratic heritage; and demonstrates awareness of interdependence and a sense of responsibility toward humanity and the environment that sustains life.	• Study our democratic heritage • Engage students in service • Involve students in first hand experiences of democracy • Resolve conflicts democratically, with respect for differences of conscientiousness.
Spiritual person engaged in crafting a life of noble purpose – seeks a life of noble purpose; formulate life goals and a way to pursue them; considers such questions as: What is life?, What is the meaning of life?, and What is the purpose of life?; cultivates such values as truth beauty, and goodness; pursues authentic happiness; possesses a rich inner life; and pursues deep and meaningful connections to others, nature, and a higher power.	• Engage students on reflecting on existential questions • Have students write about their lives, including their laws of life • Have students develop a personal mission statement • Have students formulate and pursue meaningful life goals • Engage students in the study of religion and in developing their faith in something larger than themselves

Davidson & Likona, 2005, pp. 23; 87-198

Davidson and Likona (2005) found that the eight strengths of character together with the promising practices are what smart and good schools do to develop and implement successful character education programs. However, Davidson and Likona also revealed that after analyzing and synthesizing the eight strengths of character and their correlating promising practices, they created a new definition of character:

> Our research has led us to propose a paradigm shift in the way we think about character and character education. We came to realize that character isn't just about "doing the right thing" in an ethical sense; it's also about doing our best work. If that's true, then character education isn't just about helping kids get along; it is also about teaching them to work hard, develop their talents, and aspire to excellence in every area of endeavor. (p. 1)

In conclusion, Davidson and Likona (2005) advised that character educators should not consider their model (i.e. the eight strengths of character and the promising practices that foster them) as an alternative to other character education models. They encouraged character education stakeholders to view their model as one that can be used by itself or to make other character education models more effective. Character educators can employ several research-based character education implementation strategies to make their character education programs successful. The implementation strategies suggested by Berkowitz and Bier (2005); and Davidson and Likona (2005) were merely used as examples of how far character education has evolved since its inception.

Character education has evolved from teaching students values that a particular group of individuals believed were important to teaching students character qualities that are considered to be universally important. In its infancy, character education was taught using a less than complex implementation strategy. For example, in implementing character education, students were merely instructed to read the *New England Primer*, or the *McGuffey Reader*. The character

qualities found in these texts were of a virtuous nature, in which all of the virtues could be found in the *Bible*. The virtues that were taught to students only taught them to be good citizens. Today, these virtues are labeled moral qualities (e.g., respect, responsibility, caring, and thoughtfulness). However, moral qualities are paired with performance qualities that Davidson and Likona (2005) reported were the two defining parts of character education. In addition, Davidson and Likona found that performance quality was the part of character education that taught students to do their best in school. Hence, students who were engaged in character education programs were now being taught to be morally good citizens, as well as, to perform academically at higher levels than before.

Performance Character Education Improving Academic performance

As previously mentioned, Davidson and Likona (2005) conducted a two year study in search of pedagogical methods associated with promising practices that could foster the eight strengths of character, which are used to develop performance character qualities in students. Performance character, according to Davidson, Khmelkov, and Likona (2008), included qualities, such as: diligence, perseverance, a strong work ethic, positive attitude, ingenuity, and self-discipline. Students need these qualities to be proficient in any endeavor that they choose, including any and all school related tasks, the world of work, and beyond. However, evidence demonstrates that performance character qualities are neither being taught to students nor being instilled in students.

Student achievement on state and national standardized high stakes tests and high school graduation rates revealed that some students, in particular urban students, do not aspire to excellence. Students' low outcomes on these tests further revealed that students were not using

performance character qualities while engaged in school-related subject matter activities. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2010) reported that in eight of the largest urban school districts in the United States, on average, more than half of the eighth graders scored below the basic level in math and reading. However, an adolescent drops out of high school every 26 seconds. In some urban school districts, the high school dropout rate is as high as 50% (Character Education Partnership, 2008).

While students' low levels of achievement have been attributed to their cognitive abilities, Duckworth and Seligman (2005) argued that academic performance levels for some students are based on the performance character qualities that they possess, not in their cognitive abilities. For example, these researchers found that students who were self-disciplined earned higher GPAs, and had higher achievement scores on standardized tests. A greater percentage of these students were admitted to competitive high schools and had better school attendance records than their peers who possessed greater cognitive skills. This evidence indicated that performance character education can be used to improve academic achievement levels. Hence, urban students who are resilient and/or possess other performance character qualities can overcome obstacles that confront them, and subsequently experience academic success in school.

Many urban students are confronted with various obstacles that can prevent them from performing successfully in school. Hupfeld (n.d.) reported some obstacles encountered by students, often on a daily basis, might include: lack of an academic role model in the home, low family socioeconomic status, and lack of cultural capital. Carter (2003) reported that urban students often do not relate their understanding or comprehension of words and concepts to situations or events in the same manner as upper-middle class students. As a result, teachers may

perceive that urban students lack intelligence. Other obstacles that students may face include living in single parent homes, and/or having to fill adult roles at home (e.g. working after school to provide for younger siblings). Obradovic et al. (2009) reported that homelessness and high mobility (e.g. moving from school district to school district) also were factors that could prevent some students from achieving academic success. However, violence and drugs are probably the two most prevailing obstacles that urban students confront virtually every day.

Urban students, in some neighborhoods, may face violence daily, as well as being harassed to sell or use drugs. A research study performed by Horowitz, Marshall, and McKay (2005) found that in one of the focus groups they conducted for their study, children reported being afraid in their homes, walking through streets in their neighborhoods and to school, or hanging out with their peers. Their fears included being attacked and beaten by gang members, being shot or killed, being harmed by their parents, or their parents getting killed. In addition, two children expressed that: "Around my block is dangerous, everyday somebody gets killed. . . . In my building there is a lot of drug dealing and I see three of them get shot because they didn't have enough money" (p. 360). Saxe et al. (2001) found that the sale and use of illicit drugs was significantly higher in low income urban neighborhoods than in higher income level neighborhoods. Students, who reside in neighborhoods where violence and drugs are prevalent, generally live in low socioeconomic neighborhoods, experience stressful life events, and live in single parent homes tend to achieve at low academic levels, (FPG Child Development Institute, 2007). Contrary to the presented evidence, some students use non-cognitive tools (i.e. resiliency) to assist them in overcoming these obstacles, and foster their academic success.

The evidence determined that urban students have a number of obstacles to overcome to achieve academic success. Resilience is a performance character quality that some urban students use to combat obstacles that can impede them from achieving academic success. Hupfeld (n.d.) defined resilience as "a set of self-protective characteristics possessed or experienced by those who are able to adapt to hardship and succeed" (p.3). Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1997) defined "educational resilience as the heightened likelihood of educational success despite personal vulnerabilities and adversities brought about by environmental conditions and experiences" (p. 1). Students who have reached an increased level of resiliency perceived that they had the ability to carve a successful educational path, regardless of the number of obstacles facing them along the way ("Academic Resilience Content is Key in School Improvement", n.d.).

Reis, Colbert, and Hebert (2005) reported that resilient students possess certain common characteristics (e.g., a strong sense of self-efficacy) that assist them with dealing with adversities that they encounter in their lives. They achieve academic success because they choose to perform, and they possess beliefs that they can control events that affect them. In addition, these students were surrounded by protective factors that deflected negative influences in their environments. The protective factors included: parents or adults who were concerned about students' safety and welfare, a teacher/counselor who guided and supported students' educational endeavors, a religious home environment, active involvement in sports and other extracurricular activities, and peer encouragement and academic support. In reviewing other literature related to resilience and academic achievement, outcomes of these research studies found a positive correlation between resilience and academic achievement.

Newman, Meyers, Newman, Lohman, and Smith (2000) conducted a study (e.g. via students' perceptions) that sought to identify factors that could assist in facilitating low-income urban African American students' academic success. The data were collected through tape recorded interviews with students and people identified by students as supportive of their education. The students also were asked to respond to questionnaires related to academic motivation, self esteem, and, academic self-efficacy. Over half of the students who participated in the study had grade point averages (GPAs) above 3.0, which were considered high performance. The other participants were considered low performers (GPAs less than 3.0). The study results showed a difference between high and low performing students' responses regarding academic motivation, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy.

According to Newman et al. (2000), high performing students perceived that studying on a consistent basis, asking teachers for help with class work and homework, being determined, and focusing on their school work helped them to succeed in school. In contrast, low performing students stated that if the class work was easier, they believed that they could do well in school. In addition, low performers indicated that they did not do well in school because they perceived the work was too difficult, did not attend class often enough, did not do the assigned task, lost their focus in class, and/or their friends had a negative impact on them. Furthermore, high performers indicated that their mother was supportive of their academic achievement twice as much as low performers.

In summary, Newman et al. (2000) reported that the high performers knew that having a strong focus on academics, possessing good time management skills, exerting effort, being determined, and possessing a strong locus of control was needed to achieve at a high level in

school. In contrast, low performing students had little understanding of how to become successful in school. They lacked the effort needed to succeed, their friends did not support their academic endeavors, they did not have the determination and focus, and they did not have the parental support needed to be academically successful. The evidence showed that high performing students possessed characteristics that defined resilience. In addition, high performing students were surrounded by adults who supported them in their academic endeavors and inspired higher levels of resilience in students. A study conducted by Akey (2006) revealed findings that were similar to those found (i.e., as the findings relate to the high performers) in the Newman et al. (2000) study.

Akey (2006) researched the hypothesis that students' academic achievement levels in mathematics and reading are the result of the students' attitudes and behavior, as well as the support that they receive from their teachers. In effect, Akey sought to determine if educational resilience played a role in the students' academic achievement. Students were administered surveys that measured three components of students' attitudes and behaviors:

1. The Students Engagement Scale is an index of how hard students work in school and their level of participation in activities associated with academic success;

2. The Student-Perceived Academic Competence Scale is an index of students' perceptions about how successful they can be in school and the degree of control they have over their academics; and

3. The Teacher Support Scale is an index of how much students feel that their teachers support them and like them" (p. 9).

The student achievement levels consisted of students' achievement test scores that were collected from three different high schools over a three year period. The student engagement, the student-perceived academic competence, and the teacher support scales were used to obtain the data

needed to determine if a relationship existed between the items in the three scales and academic achievement.

Akey (2006) found that student engagement and perceived academic competence had a significant positive influence on the students' reading and math achievement levels. However, the influence of academic competence on the students' academic achievement was three times greater than student engagement. In addition, students who perceived that their teachers supported their academic endeavors reported higher levels of engagement in course content. The results of this study revealed that students who exert greater effort in school are more likely to have higher levels of perceived control that students have over their academics, and the more supportive that students perceived their teachers to be, the greater the probability that the students would achieve academic success. This evidence lends itself to educational resilience. In a study performed by Borman and Rachuba (2001), it also was revealed that teacher support and locus of control were very important to urban minority students' educational resilience.

Research evidence indicated that students who possessed the performance character quality of resilience, coupled with such protective factors as teacher, parent, and or peer support, improved their chances of achieving academic success. Resilience assists students in overcoming a number of obstacles that they may face at home, school, and the environment in which they live. Resilient students tend to achieve academically despite living in homes where there is no academic role model, having to fill adult roles at home, having some teachers see them as lacking intelligence, living in neighborhoods with a prevalence of violence and drugs, and experiencing homelessness. This leads to the question of how can students sustain the character quality of resilience throughout school, work, and beyond? Answering this question is important

because some urban students faced with similar obstacles consistently maintain their resiliency and other students may encounter other obstacles that can result in negative consequences.

Faced with obstacles, such as violence, drugs, and poverty, on a daily basis can become frustrating and discouraging for students at times, as well as appear to be insurmountable. When these obstacles occur, some students raise the level of effort that they exert on academic tasks while dealing with adverse situations in their home environments. Exerting higher levels of effort can result in a reduction in frustration and discouragement, and subsequently lead to the possession of the performance character quality of perseverance (Markman, Baron, & Balkin, 2005). Markman et al. defined perseverance "as one's tendency to persist and endure in the face of adversity" (p. 3). Students who persevere under adverse situations in school and in their environments may find that they can achieve at higher levels in school and gain additional strength when dealing with adversity in their environments.

Bandura (1994) reported that:

> Some setbacks and difficulties in human pursuits serve a useful purpose in teaching that success usually requires sustained effort. After people become convinced they have what it takes to succeed, they persevere in the face of adversity and quickly rebound from setbacks. By sticking it out through tough times, they emerge stronger from adversity (p.3).

In analyzing the statement made by Bandura (1994), persevering students who spend more time on educational tasks, such as homework, tend to discover strategies (i.e. being resilient) that assist them in overcoming obstacles that could prevent them from completing these tasks successfully, and methods that could assist them in solving educational problems. Subsequently, their levels of self-efficacy increase and the beliefs that they could achieve academic success are

heightened. Most importantly, because students persevere through various obstacles and adversities, their ability to be resilient is sustained throughout school, work, and beyond.

Several studies (Anderson & Keith, 1997: Khan, 2005; Markman et al, 2005; McAllister & Tochkov, 2009; Oyedeji, n.d.) found that perseverance contributes to students' academic achievement. As evidenced, other studies found that self-discipline and resilience also contributed to students' academic achievement levels. Furthermore, Davidson et al. (2008) reported that other performance character qualities; including diligence, a strong work ethic, positive attitude, and ingenuity, also have a significant influence on student's educational success. Students need to attain a certain level of academic achievement in school, because students' academic achievement in school is positively related to the amount of success that students may have in the workplace.

Performance Character Qualities Desired By Employers

Stasz (2001) revealed that due to advancements in technology, competitiveness of various industries, evolving global marketplace, management innovations in the workplace, and the way work is performed have changed. Hence, in today's workplace, employers expect employees to be able to exceed the technical skill (i.e., sometimes referred to as hard skills) requirements needed to perform a particular task. That is, employers are requiring employees to use performance character qualities (i.e., sometimes referred to as soft skills) in concert with technical skills to accomplish work-related tasks. In a study conducted by Harvard University, Rao (2010) revealed that hard skills only made up 20% of long-term job success, while 80% of job success was dependent on performance character qualities.

Performance character qualities are universal traits whose value remains constant globally. Demonstrating hard work in San Jose, California is valued as much as it is in Anchorage, Alaska. Furthermore, Russians value a reliable worker, just as much as Jamaicans value a reliable worker. Performance character qualities include qualities such as: dedication, resilience, dependability, perseverance, reliability, and assertiveness. Archer and Davison (2008) reported that in the 21st century workplace, employers value performance character qualities over any other qualities that an individual may possess. They expect potential entry-level employees to have performance character qualities already instilled in them prior to being hired. While employers value "hard skills," these types of skills are applied in job-specific situations, and are rarely flexible in nature. In contrast, performance character qualities are flexible and adaptive across a range of jobs (Cotton, 1993; Rao, 2010).

Archer and Davison (2008) reported that there are two primary reasons why employers prefer performance character qualities over hard skills: (a) performance character qualities can be transferred to any workplace domain, such as: developing computer programs, waiting on customers in a restaurant, designing of a product, the machining of auto parts, sweeping streets, or performing surgery on a patient, and (b) performance character qualities can be applied to various situations that may arise within these domains. For example, at some point a mechanic, a surgeon, or a janitor, in the performance of their job duties, may encounter obstacles that can prevent them from completing job-related tasks. When these obstacles are encountered, the mechanic, the surgeon, and the janitor will need the performance character quality of resilience instilled in them. They can then use this performance character quality to assist them in overcoming the obstacles and complete their tasks. Rao (2010) reported that performance

character qualities are noncognitive qualities. In contrast, hard skills are cognitive qualities, such as mastering the 3 Rs or demonstrating the ability to follow standard work instructions. In addition, employers can teach hard skills to employees, (e.g., teaching them to push certain buttons when operating a machine) whereas, employers are unable to teach employees to persevere when searching for solutions to job-related problems. Instead, they expect employees to possess this performance character quality already. Research related to the qualities that employers expect potential employees to already possess supported Rao's claim.

Katzenberger (2004) performed a study using student participants who were engaged in a Cooperative Education/School-to-Work program in a school that was located in a rural community. The purpose of the study was to determine employer perceptions of the performance character qualities that students should possess. Employers were asked to rank eight performance character qualities and one hard skill (i.e. technical skill) on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest score. Higher scores on the scale indicated more positive employer perceptions that students had the performance character quality in question. Of the eight performance character qualities, employers reported that students were deficient in five of them (i.e. responsibility, initiative/drive, commitment, problem solving, and teamwork). In conclusion, Katzenberger recommended that the school integrate performance character education into its curriculum. Katzenberger's concluding statement also could apply to urban school districts because urban students need to develop performance character qualities, as development of these skills was associated with higher wages and employability.

Fan, Wei, and Zang, (2005) studied the impact of job skill type on Black/White pay differentials and occupational choices. The sample for the study included Black and White male white collar workers from a National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) that was conducted between 1982 and 2000. The researchers formulated two hypotheses: "The more intensively performance character qualities are used in an occupation, the greater the income gap is there in that occupation; and Black males were more likely to self select themselves into the jobs that use hard skills more intensely" (p. 1). In summary, the outcome of the study failed to reject both hypotheses. The findings suggested that Black males tended not to work at jobs that required performance character qualities. Therefore, they received lower pay than White males who worked in positions requiring performance character qualities. Hence, the racial income gap of an occupation may depend on the relative requirements for performance character qualities versus hard skills. The pay scale differential implied that employers preferred performance character qualities over hard skills. However, the possession of performance character qualities could determine an individuals' employability status also.

Moss and Tilly (1999) performed a multi-city study to collect information on the skills that employers look for in entry level employees, and what employers thought of the available labor pool in large cities. The researchers, via telephone surveys, collected information from several thousand small business managers in Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, and Los Angeles urban areas. Several hundred face-to-face interviews also were conducted. The findings revealed that employers overwhelming reported that they required hard skills and performance character qualities from entry-level employees. However, increased demand for performance character qualities were mentioned more frequently than any hard skills, with the exception of computer

skills. In addition, employers perceived that urban minority applicants lacked both performance character qualities and hard skills. A common theme was found in employers responses: "Employers want workers with cognitive and personal skills … the need is more pronounced in the central city, where a great many minority and less educated workers live" (p. 2). In concluding their study, Moss and Tilly suggested that educators should increase their efforts to improve potential entry-level employees' basic core knowledge, and should instill performance character qualities that employers indicate they need.

Evidence revealed that employers seek to hire and pay higher wages to individuals who possess performance character qualities. Unfortunately, employers perceived that urban minorities lack the performance character qualities needed to be successful in the workplace. Hence, the unemployment rate generally is higher for urban minorities, with the pay gap widening between them and those who possess performance character qualities. This gap leads to the question: Why do urban minorities lack performance character qualities?

Fan, Wei, and Zang (2005) found that students who lived in urban areas generally were living in families with low socioeconomic statuses (SES) and may not have had opportunities to develop performance character qualities, or had weak perceptions of these qualities. In comparison to students who attended schools in affluent areas, urban students were at comparative disadvantages in developing performance character qualities. Fan et al. further argued that "The stereotype of being disadvantaged in the society may reduce the accumulation of (pre-market) human capital, particularly non-cognitive skills, for individuals from disadvantaged groups" (p. 2). However, as Moss and Tilly (1999) suggested, educators should

increase their efforts to instill performance character qualities in students; starting with determining students' perceptions of performance character qualities via assessment.

Students Perceptions of Performance Character Qualities

Various research studies have been conducted in the character education arena with the intent of determining overall objectives. When researching student's perceptions of performance character qualities in any context, knowing how they currently perceive the performance character qualities to be assessed is important. Coleman (2001) defined perception as:

> A subsystem of the mental apparatus characterized by consciousness, receiving input from the outside world via the sensory preceptors (structures in the brain that detect changes in the internal and external environment) and form the preconscious via the activation of memories and playing a dynamic role in avoidance of unacceptable thoughts or ideas and control the pleasure principle. (p. 1)

In summarizing the term perception, individuals' perceptions are the ways that they received and interpreted information in their environments. However, perceptions cannot be seen, touched, or felt in determining ones' awareness of events, people, or other aspects of the environment. Through the use of assessment instruments, educators are able to determine students' perceptions of particular performance character qualities.

Without understanding what students' perceptions are relative to performance character qualities, character educators may find it difficult to make learning relevant to students' understanding of those qualities. Furthermore, assuming that urban students have correct knowledge of performance character qualities may result in improper development and implementation of character education programs. Fan et al. (2005) found that students who live in urban areas usually are from families with low-SES and may not have had opportunities to develop appropriate perceptions of the need for performance character qualities, or they may

have fairly weak perceptions of these qualities. Educators need to be aware of students' perceptions of performance character qualities.

In researching Vygotsky's Theory of Knowledge, Clabaugh (2010) found that educators should be aware of students' current perceptions of particular knowledge of subject matter before teaching them new knowledge in the same subject matter. Furthermore, students' knowledge relative to a particular concept is developed via the environment in which students were reared. However, this conceptual knowledge may be lacking in content or be incorrect. Therefore, educators should seek out students' zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD is the distance between students' actual knowledge that is determined by the teacher's assessment of students' current knowledge, and students' potential for further learning under the guidance of the teacher or other students (Clabaugh, 2010). In applying Vygotsky's ZPD, character educators may find it easier to instill performance character qualities in students. Nevertheless, students' perceptions of performance character qualities should be similar and of the same importance as employers.

Gabric and McFadden (2001) performed a study, using a survey instrument, to determine if there was a gap between students' and employers' perceptions of the importance of performance character qualities needed to secure entry-level employment. The researchers also wanted to know whether employers valued performance character qualities over technical skills. The study results showed that a significant gap existed between students' and employers' perceptions of the importance of performance character qualities. The study also indicated that employers valued performance character qualities over technical skills. This study provided evidence that students' perceptions of performance character qualities should be assessed, and

that educators should not assume that students possess appropriate perceptions of the importance of performance character qualities. However, educators can use other methods to assess students' perceptions of performance character qualities. For instance, the use of focus group discussions have been found to be useful in examining differences in employers and students regarding the development and use of performance character qualities in the workplace.

Steen, Kachorek, and Peterson (2003) sought to determine adolescents' perceptions of performance character qualities by assessing the adolescents' character strengths through focus group discussions. The participants in the study included high school students from five high schools in Michigan. Ninth through twelfth grade students (N = 459) in 20 different classes participated in the focus groups. The majority of the participants were female (52%) and White (80%). In guiding the discussions, researchers had the group discuss performance character qualities, including: creativity, ingenuity, perseverance, and self-regulation. The group discussions began with the researcher asking questions, such as: "Would someone give an example of people they know or have heard about who are particularly creative? What are they like? How do you know that they possess creativity? Give an example of when someone showed a lot of creativity?" (p. 8). In asking these types of questions, Steen et al. were able to generate general ideas regarding adolescents' perceptions of each of the performance character qualities. Prior to revealing the findings, a question of whether the researchers' method of assessing the students' perceptions of performance character qualities was a valid method to gain realistic responses from the adolescents should be visited.

The concern was that the researchers were asking the adolescents, in a social setting, to truthfully express their thoughts about desired social behavior. Fendrick and Johnson (2002)

suggested that: “Social desirability is commonly thought of as the tendency of individuals to project favorable images of themselves during social interaction” (p. 1661). According to Fendrick and Johnson, adolescents in focus group discussions generally give researchers ideal responses to their questions. In attempting to determine if researchers acquired adolescents’ accurate perceptions of performance character qualities, Razavi (2001) reported:

> At the most basic level, there is a concern about the construct validity of self-report measures. Both theory and research indicate that self-report responses are a product of psychological, sociological, linguistic, experimental, and contextual variables, may have little to do with the construct of interest. Because of the influences of item content, it has been pointed out that it is never clear precisely what is being measured (p. 4).

Construct validity may not be of a concern in this study because the researchers did not use standardized items to administer their questions. The questions were asked in an interview context where probing is used to engage the participant in revealing rich and clarifying data (Razavi, 2001). In support of other research methods for collecting data related to the adolescents’ perceptions of performance character qualities, Bradburn and Sundman, (as cited in Fendrick & Johnson, 2002), indicated that “persons who score highly on tests of social desirability do in fact behave in an altruistic manner consistent with the underlying personality trait represented by these measures”(p. 1). Razavi (2001) concurred with Bradburn and Sundman, stating that “they found a positive correlation between the measurement instrument and the participants’ responses. Nevertheless, self-report is generally a suitable methodology for the study of human characteristics, and may even be superior to other approaches” (p. 4). Hence, the findings in the Steen et al. (2003) are accepted as valid.

Steen et al. (2003) acquired a substantial amount of information about how students perceived performance character qualities. The researchers stated: “We were impressed with the

degree to which our high school students appreciated the complexities of the performance character qualities under discussion" (p. 9). That is, the students understood that particular performance character qualities could not be developed without the existence of others. For example, without "commitment" an individual could not demonstrate "perseverance". Students also recognized subtle differences in closely related concepts. For example, they understood the difference between good and effective. "These students agreed that Adolph Hitler was an example of an effective leader but not a good leader" (Steen et al., p. 9). Students also perceived a distinction among common sense, street smarts, and wisdom using differing analogies. The students defined common sense as: "the ability to do things right without really even having to think about them. Like the ability to make the right choices" (p. 9). Street smart was defined as how to react in a bad neighborhood. Wisdom was defined as "More than just book smarts or possessing knowledge, something 'deeper' and less common than knowledge" (Steen et al., p. 9). In their study, evidence revealed that the students had appropriate perceptions of performance character qualities.

On the other hand, in a study performed by Cummings and Lesniak (2000), students who were thought to hold proper perceptions of performance character qualities, in fact held incorrect perceptions of these qualities. Pre-surveys, intervention, and post-surveys were used to collect data in this study. Cummings and Lesniak found that teachers at two neighboring high schools reported that students were taught performance character qualities. The curricula at the two high schools were designed to teach performance character qualities. However, students who graduated from the two schools lacked the performance character qualities that employers looked for in entry-level employees. Based on these outcomes, the researchers decided to conduct a

survey of 9th through 12th grade career and technical education students, teachers, employers, and recent graduates of the high schools. The purpose of the research was to determine the extent to which the students lack the preferred qualities. Data were collected using pre/post-test surveys.

Pretest surveys were used to assess current students' and graduates' perceptions of performance character qualities to determine if teachers were teaching these qualities, and to determine which performance character qualities employers thought students were lacking. The findings from student and employer survey results indicated that students were not being taught performance character qualities that employers look for in entry-level employees. Based on the findings, performance character qualities also were perceived to be below-average levels, although 82% of the teachers reported that they taught performance character qualities to students. In contrast, the evidence showed that teachers were not using the proper teaching methods when providing instruction to students on performance character qualities. Subsequently, the researchers decided to employ an intervention in the students' classrooms. Specifically, they asked some local business people to talk to students about good work ethics; and the researchers guided the students in discourses on real job related situations and simulations:

> Job-related simulations were used in which the students cooperatively made decisions concerning whether or not employees were using good work ethics. Besides using simulated examples, students shared situations with the class that actually happened at their jobs [referring to co-op assignments] and together the class discussed what happened. In order to stress the importance of good attendance and being on time, the Cooperative Education class used time cards as they entered the room. (p. 27)

After the intervention, a post-survey was administered to the students. The survey results indicated that the intervention significantly improved students' perception of performance

character qualities. Moreover, results from the students' post-survey were similar to results found in the employers' survey results.

In summary, evidence from the study demonstrated the importance of educators knowing how students perceive performance character qualities, because students' perceptions of these qualities may be incorrect. The Gabric and McFadden (2001) study demonstrated that students' perceptions of performance character qualities were different from those of employers. In research performed by Cummings and Lesniak (2001), teachers believed that students' possessed correct perceptions of performance character qualities, because they were teaching these qualities to students. However, after testing students' perceptions of performance character qualities, it was found that students had incorrect perceptions of performance character qualities. This finding demonstrated that although students are being taught performance character qualities, student perceptions of these qualities still need to be assessed. Assessing urban students' perceptions of performance character qualities is important. Fan et al. (2005) reported that students in urban school districts may not have developed or may have weak perceptions of performance character qualities, putting urban students at a disadvantage, in school, and the workplace. Whatever students' perceptions are of performance character qualities, their perceptions are how they think about performance character qualities. On the other hand, students' motivation toward performance character qualities can influence their performance.

School Motivation

When teaching character education, students' motivational orientation towards particular performance character qualities is knowledge of which character educators should be aware. With this information, educators can determine if a student is intrinsically or extrinsically

motivated towards a particular character quality. Tella (2007) reported that intrinsic motivation is a result of the satisfaction that is found in a particular task. As a student performs a task, the student finds the task internally rewarding. Contrarily, "extrinsic motivation is incentive or reward that a person can enjoy after he finishes his work" (Tella, 2007, p. 151).The reward can be anything that the person deems valuable, such as grades or praise. Yeung and McInerny (2005) reported that students who are oriented toward task motivation are intrinsically motivated; however, these types of students usually demonstrate a performance character quality, such as perseverance and/or resilience. Students who possess a praise motivational orientation are extrinsically motivated. These students also demonstrate a performance character quality when attempting to accomplish a goal. However, they may demonstrate the performance character quality of assertiveness in their attempt to accomplish a goal, leading to the question: What is school motivation?

Like perception, school motivation cannot be seen, heard, or touched. Motivation is a force that compels students to engage in learning activities in school. "Motivation is students' energy to learn, work effectively, and achieve to their potential at school. Motivation plays a large part in students' interest in enjoyment of school and study and underpins their achievement" (Martin, 2003, p. 1). Motivation also is categorized as either mastery orientation or performance orientation. McInerny and Yeung (2005) found that students who possess a mastery orientation in regard to school work perform at a level that can increase their competence and understanding of a given task. They reported that task and effort are two motivational orientations that these students possess. In contrast, students who engage in school-related tasks for the purpose of receiving some form of external reward, or because they want to outperform

other students, possess a performance orientation towards school work. Praise and competition are two motivational orientations that these types of students possess.

Whatever students' motivational orientations are, character educators can match student orientations with students' perceptions of performance character qualities. Subsequently, matching motivational orientations with performance character qualities may instill in students or increase students' perceptions of performance character qualities, hence increasing students' opportunities for educational success. However, students who possess, for example, a task orientation may not use this particular orientation for all assigned school work. Corpus, Iyengar, and Lepper (2005) reported that students may not find all school work enjoyable, interesting, or pleasurable; therefore they may not do their best. However, if a lesson on perseverance or assertiveness was presented to them, or integrated into the assignment; students' can have an increased likelihood to engage more deeply into their school work.

Summary

Character education has been a part of educating individuals for more than 200 years, although it has taken on different meanings and forms. However, character education was virtually absent from public education (during the 1980s), which was considered by some to be one reason that adolescents and young adults were excessively behaving in ill-mannered ways. Since the early 1990s, educators, parents, and policymakers have been making arguments regarding the integration of character education into core content subject matter. Several research studies have provided evidence on the need of character education in schools; along with other studies that have demonstrated how character education intervention has impacted student behavior. Entering into the 21st century, character education was assigned a new meaning.

Recently, the depth and breadth of scientific research involving character education has accumulated at an increasing rate. As a result of this body of research, the number of character education programs in schools also has expanded; the programs improved; and are becoming more comprehensive. For example, Berkowitz and Bier (2005) and Davidson and Likona (2005) provided sample evidence for some of emerging developments in character education. In particular, they discovered that implementing a variety of strategies was useful in creating effective character education programs. Davidson and Likona (2005) devised an elaborate strategy for developing performance character qualities. In conducting their research, they sought out practices found in high schools character education programs that could foster character strengths. Davidson and Likona found that eight strengths of character, together with the promising practices, are what smart and good schools do to develop and implement successful character education programs. Subsequently, while matching the eight strengths of character with the promising practices, Davidson and Likona expanded the definition of character education to include performance character. Hence, character educators will teach students to be morally good, as well as teach students to do their best in school, work, and beyond.

Performance character education is needed in urban school districts in particular. Results of data on student achievement on state and national standardized high stakes tests and high school graduation rates showed that some students, in particular urban students, do not aspire to excellence. Students' low outcomes on these tests further indicated that students were not using performance character qualities while engaged in school-related subject matter activities. However, research evidence revealed that students who possess performance character qualities tend to succeed in school and other endeavors in life. Newman, Meyers, Newman, Lohman, and

Smith (2000) found that students who possess the performance character quality of resilience can succeed in school. In addition, researchers (Anderson & Keith, 1997: Khan, 2005; Markman et al, 2005; McAllister & Tochkov, 2009; Oyedeji, n.d.) found that perseverance contributes to the academic achievement of students. Davidson, Likona and Khmelkov (2008) reported that other performance character qualities (e.g., diligence, a strong work ethic, positive attitude, and ingenuity) also have a significant impact on student's educational success levels. Other evidence showed that employers prefer performance character qualities over technical or hard skills.

Archer and Davison (2008) reported that employers prefer performance character qualities because they are transferrable across work domains and work situations. Individuals who possess these types of qualities are more likely to be employed (Fan, Wei & Zang, 2005) and receive higher wages than other employees (Moss & Tilly, 1999). Employers perceive that urban minorities tend not to possess the performance character qualities needed to be successful in the workplace. Hence, the unemployment rate is usually higher for urban minorities, and the pay gap is widening between them and those who possess performance character qualities. Character educators need to improve their efforts in instilling performance character qualities in urban minority students. Their efforts should start with assessing students' perceptions of performance character qualities.

Research performed by Cummings and Lesniak (2000) and Gabric and McFadden (2001) found that students possessed incorrect perceptions of performance character qualities. Fan et al. (2005) reported that urban students' perceptions of performance character qualities are either weak or they lack any concept of the importance of these qualities. Whether students lack performance character qualities or not, in every segment of industry, from small to large private

and public organizations, employers prefer to hire individuals who possess performance character qualities. Because urban adolescents, as evidenced in research studies, lack these qualities, they are becoming increasingly unemployed and paid less. Character education can assist in remedying this dilemma for urban students. To assist character educators, knowing students' motivational orientations can be very helpful. However, some students are extrinsically (i.e., possess a performance motivational orientation) motivated, while others are intrinsically motivated (i.e., possess a mastery motivational orientation). Whatever students' motivational orientations are, character educators can match the students' orientations with the students' perceptions of performance character qualities.

Character education programs are utilized in some schools to instill performance character qualities in adolescents. The legal system does not compel schools to teach these qualities, but as supported by research, it is very important for schools to do so. Schools that implement character education programs in their schools choose the character qualities that they deem are the most important to instill in individuals. Schools can employ modeled character development education programs, such as Character Counts and Partnerships in Character Education. Whatever character educations program a particular school chooses to implement, it should reflect the teaching of the performance character qualities that employers value the most.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between vocational students' perceptions and motivations regarding performance character qualities associated with character education in a vocational classroom setting. Understanding urban vocational students' perceptions of performance character qualities help educators working with parents and

employers to develop programs to close the gap in employment and wages experienced by urban students.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was used to collect and analyze data needed to address the research questions posed for this study. The topics that are included in this chapter are: restatement of the problem, research design, setting for the study, participants, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

Restatement of the Problem

The primary purpose of this study was to understand students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities (i.e. assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, and self-control) at an urban Vocational Education High School. In examining these relationships, students' actual perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities were identified.

Research Design

This study used a descriptive quantitative research design approach for collecting data to determine students' perceptions and motivations toward performance character qualities. In collecting the data, the researcher used a combination of survey instruments. This type of research design is appropriate, as the independent variable was not manipulated and no intervention or treatment was provided for the students. The students completed the survey packet one time. The descriptive research design was selected for three reasons:

1. No attempt was made to change the behavior of the students, teachers, or other stakeholders in the school or school district.

2. A quantifiable relationship between two variables was being sought. This study examined the relationship between these performance character qualities of resilience, perseverance, self-control, and assertiveness and students' perceptions, and motivations toward performance character qualities.
3. Random sampling in a school setting was not possible because of the requirement that parents had to provide permission for their children to participate in the study. The participants in the study were selected because of their availability.

Using a quantitative research design to collect data was appropriate when seeking to understand individuals' perceptions and motivations toward particular performance character qualities. Furthermore, the researcher had the opportunity to make comparisons among different groups within the sample (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2008).

Research Objectives, Questions, and Hypothesis

Research questions.

Understanding student motivations and perceptions regarding performance character qualities is important in developing effective performance character education programs in schools. This study focused on collecting data to address the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise)?

2. To what extent does a difference in perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) between male and female students?
3. To what extent does a difference in motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise) exist between male and female students?
4. Can students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) be predicted from students' age, gender, self-reported academic performance?

Hypotheses.

H_{01}: There is no relationship between students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, and competition, praise).

H_1: There is a relationship between students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise).

H_{02}: There are no differences in perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) between male and female students.

H_2: There are differences in perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) among male and female students.

H_{03}: There are no differences in motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise) among male and female students.

H_3: There are differences in motivations toward performance character qualities ((i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise) among male and female students.

H_{04}: Students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) cannot be predicted from students' age, gender, self-reported academic performance.

H_4: Students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) can be predicted from students' age, gender, self-reported academic performance.

Setting for the Study

Central City Vocational High School was selected as a site for conducting this study, because it offered a Career and Technical Education curriculum coupled with an academic core content curriculum. According to Central City Vocational High School administration, the ethnicity of the student body is (99%) African American.

Central City Vocational High School is located in Central City, which is a small suburb of a large city in the United States. If one would travel in a straight line from east to west, the school is approximately 14 miles from the major city in this geographic area. According to the

United States Census (2010), Central City occupies an area of 6.28 square miles. As of 2010, this city had an estimated population of 27,360 people, including:

- Caucasian (29.4%)
- African American (61.4%),
- Asian (3.6%),
- Hispanic or Latino (1.2%)
- Native American (0.4%),
- Other races (1.8%),
- Two or more races (2.8%).

Due to rounding, the percentages exceed 100%.

The U.S. Census (2010) also revealed that there were 10,218 households in the city of Central City. A total of 12,320 housing units were located in the city. Homeownership was approximately 55.5%; with the median value of occupied homes being $96,700. Twenty-eight percent of the occupants of the households were children under 18 years of age. However, approximately 24.6% of the population of Central City was under 18 years of age. Thirty-two percent of all households were headed by married couples, with approximately 22.3% of all households headed by a female. The average household size was 2.7 people and the average family size was 3.53 people.

The median household income for the city was estimated at $34,402, and the median income for a family was estimated at $42,042 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010). The median income for males was $38,039, with females having a median income of $29,795. The per capita income

for the city was $17,502. Approximately 19.4% of families and 24.1% of the population live below the poverty level, including 35.5% of individuals below 18 years of age.

Central City School District.

The Central City school District provides education for approximately 2,381 students, from grades Pre-K through 12 (Schoolfinder Report, 2010). Four public schools are located in the city's school district: one high school, one middle school, and two elementary schools. The high school encompasses grades 9 through 12, with approximately 1,110 students enrolled in the school. The vocational school, with a student population of 288, is an extension of the high school.

Central City Vocational High school students' scores on the State of Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) test, ACT, and students' scores for the Michigan Merit Exam (MME) for reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and writing were obtained from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE, 2011). The MEAP social studies scores for Central City Vocational High school's ninth graders indicated that 42% of ninth graders who completed the MEAP test in the fall of 2010 met or exceeded the proficiency level in social studies. The Michigan Department of Education (2011) also reported 2011 MME results for Central City High school's eleventh grade students. The scores for students scoring at or above proficiency levels for the MME and Average Scores on the ACT are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Percent of Students Scoring at or Above Proficiency Levels on the MME and Average Scores on the ACT

Subject Content Areas	Percent of Students at or above Proficiency Levels and Average Scores on the ACT
MME	31.5
Reading	2.4
Mathematics	14.0
Science	14.0
Social Studies	50.9
Writing	15.6
School-Wide Average Scores on the ACT Subject Areas	
Composite	14.7
English	13.2
Mathematics	14.9
Reading	14.6
Science	16.0

Participants

The participants in the study were high school students attending the Central City Vocational Academy. The majority of students are ninth graders. The academy enrolls ninth graders who are in regular and special education programs, as well as students in other grade levels who are completing career technical programs.

Sample

The sample included students enrolled at the Central City Vocational Academy. Approximately 252 students are enrolled in the school. While most of the students are in the ninth grade, a few students at other grade levels were included in the study. To assure that an adequate sample size was obtained, letters were sent to all parents to obtain permission for their children to participate in the study.

Sample Size.

To determine the number of students that were needed for the study, a power analysis using G-Power 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009) was completed. A one-way analysis of variance with four groups, an alpha level of .05, and effect size of .25 would need a sample of 180 participants to obtain a power of .80. As letters were sent to all parents, the minimum sample of 180 participants was available for the study. Additional participants in excess of 180 increased the power to make correct decisions on the null hypotheses.

Instruments

Six instruments, Short Grit Scale (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009), Self-Control (Audrain-McGovern, Roderiguez, Tercyak, Neuner, & Moss, 2005); Resiliency Scale (Wagnild & Young, 1993), Assertiveness Scale (Schwartz & Gottman, 1976); and Motivation Scale (McInerney & Sinclair, 1992), and a short researcher-developed demographic survey, were used to collect the data needed to address the research questions. See Appendix A for copies of all instruments. Each is explained in detail below.

Short Grit Scale (Grit-S, Duckworth, 2009).

The Grit-S scale uses eight items to measure two performance character qualities, consistency of interest and perseverance of effort as measures of perseverance. According to Duckworth and Quinn (2009), grit is students' ability to maintain interest in completing long-term goals (consistency of interest). Students who exhibit high levels of grit are more likely to remain steadfast in completing their goals, even when they do not receive interim feedback (perseverance of effort). Data on the consistency of interest and perseverance of effort were used

to establish the relationship between performance character qualities, motivation, and academic achievement.

Scoring. The students rated the items on the Grit-S scale using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for Not Like Me At All to 5 for Very Much Like Me. The numeric ratings for the items were summed to obtain a total score. The total score was divided by the number of items on the scale to calculate mean scores for the two measures, interest and effort. The use of a mean score provides scores that reflect the original rating scale and allows comparisons across the two subscales.

Reliability. Duckworth and Quinn (2009) tested the eight items with a sample of 2005 National Spelling Bee contestants to determine the internal consistency as a measure of reliability. The resultant alpha coefficients of .65 for effort and .76 for interest, as well as the overall alpha coefficient of .80 provide evidence that the instrument has adequate internal consistency for secondary-level students. To assess the test-retest stability of the Grit-S, Duckworth and Quinn (2009) conducted a study using 279 middle and high school students in a racial and economically diverse public magnet school. The students completed the GRIT-S twice, in the Spring of 2006 and again in the Spring of 2007. The correlations between the scores on effort and interest at the two times were .82 and .84 respectively, indicating good stability over time.

Validity. To test the instrument for construct validity, the Grit-S was tested using confirmatory factor analysis (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). The results of this analysis supported the two factor structure of the Grit-S. Criterion validity was examined by correlating scores on the Grit-S with secondary school GPAs. The scores on the Grit-S was a strong predictor of GPA

and was negatively related to hours spent watching television. The scores on the GRIT-S did not differ between male and female students, providing support for convergent validity.

Readability. The readability level of the instrument was determined using the Flesch-Kincaid readability scale available in Microsoft Word™. The readability for the Grit-S was 5.7, indicating that most high school students should be able to read the items easily.

Self-Control Scale.

The Self-Control Scale (Audrain-McGovern et al., 2009) is a 41-item instrument that uses six subscales, impulsive control, planning, hostile blaming, attentional disregulation, conscientiousness, and physical aggression. Seventeen items used to assess good self-control were originally derived from inventories that measured general control in everyday situations (Kendall & Williams; Wills et al.; Wills, Vaccaro, McNamara, & Hirky as cited in Audrain-McGovern et al., 2009). The remaining 24 items are used to assess poor self-control. These items were obtained from surveys measuring general poor control, impulsive behavior, and anger coping (Eysenck & Eysenck; Kendall & Wilcox; Wills et al., as cited in Audrain-McGovern, 2009). For the purpose of the present study, 21 items measuring impulsive control (8 items), planning (8 items), and attentional disregulation (5 items) will be used. The remaining subscales will not be included in the study. Table 4 presents the items on each of the included subscales:

Table 4

Self-Control Subscales in the Present Study

Subscale	Items
Impulsive control	1. Bothers other students 2. Does not stop to think 3. Impulsive person 4. Talks quickly 5. Involved but wants out 6. Needs to use lots of self-control 7. Trouble because does not think 8. Gets carried away
Planning	9. Gets information 10. Thinks hard about what steps 11. Thinks of choices 12. Different ways to take care of it 13. Thinks different solutions 14. Tries to solve problem 15. Makes action plan 16. Stops and thinks
Attentional Disregulation	17. Reminded several times 18. Difficult to do work 19. Easily distracted 20. Switches between things 21. Gets frustrated

Scoring. The students were asked to rate each of the items as they applied to them using a 5-point scale, ranging from one (1) for Not At All to five (5) for Very True. The numeric values for each of the subscales were summed to obtain a total score. The total score was divided by the number of items on each subscale to calculate the mean score for the subscale. The use of a mean score allowed comparisons across the subscales and provided scores that reflect the original unit of measure on the instrument.

Reliability. The internal consistency as a measure of reliability was obtained by calculating Cronbach alpha coefficients for each of the subscales (Audrain-McGovern et al., 2009). The alpha coefficients for impulsive control (.88), planning (.90), and attentional

disregulation (.81) were evidence of good internal consistency. No information was provided regarding the stability of the instrument.

Validity. An exploratory factor analysis was used to determine the construct validity of the Self-Control instrument (Audrain-McGovern, 2009). Six factors emerged from the 41 items, accounting for 54% of the variance in self-control. The associated eigenvalues were greater than 1.00, indicating that each of the subscales was accounting for a statistically significant amount of variance in the latent variable, self-control.

Readability. The Flesch-Kincaid readability index was used to assess the readability of the Self-Control instrument. The results of this analysis indicated that the 21 items on the instrument had a readability grade level of 3.3. This finding provide assurances that the items can be read by high school students.

Resiliency Scale.

Wagnild and Young (1993) developed the Resilience Scale to measure the personally characteristic that "moderates the negative effects of stress and promotes adaptation" (p. 165). The Resiliency scale measures the extent to which a person is able to adapt to different situations. The scale uses 25 items to measure two aspects of resilience, personal competence and acceptance of self and life. The 17 items on the personal competency subscale measure self-reliance, independence, determination, invincibility, mastery, resourcefulness, and perseverance (Wagnild & Young, 1993). For the purpose of the present study, only the personal competence scale was be used.

Scoring. The items were rated by the students using a 7-point Likert type scale, ranging from 1 for Strongly Disagree to 7 for Strongly Agree. The numeric ratings were summed to

obtain a total score, and then divided by 17 to create a mean score for each of the participants. The mean score provided a score that reflects the original scale of measurement.

Reliability. Wagnild and Young (1993) tested the Resilience scale for internal consistency using Cronbach alpha coefficients. The results ranged for .76 to .90 using five different population groups, including Alzheimer's caregivers, female graduate students, male graduate students, first-time mothers, and public housing residents. Test-retest stability was obtained by having the first-time mothers complete the instrument at four intervals over an 18-month period. The Pearson product moment correlations for the sample ranged from .67 to .84, providing evidence that the instrument measured resiliency consistently over time.

Validity. A principal components analysis with an oblimin rotation and Kaiser normalization to determine the factor structure of the 25 items. Two factors (personal competence, and acceptance of self and life) emerged, accounting for 44% of the variance in resiliency. The eigenvalues for each of the factors were greater than 1.0 and all factor loadings were greater than .40. This result provided evidence of the construct validity of the Resiliency scale. Concurrent validity was tested by correlating the scores on the Resiliency Scale with other instruments (Beck Depression Scale, Life Satisfaction Index, and Philadelphia Geriatric Center Morale Scale) that had been theoretically linked with resilience. Results of these corrections were statistically significant and in the expected direction, indicating the Resiliency Scale had good concurrent validity.

Readability. The readability of the instrument was tested using the Flesch-Kincaid reading test. The results of this analysis indicated the reading level of the instrument was at a 4.9

grade level. This finding indicated that the Resiliency Scale can be read and understood by individuals with a fifth grade reading level.

Assertiveness Self-Statement Test

The Assertiveness Self-Statement Test (ASST) was developed by Schwartz and Gottman (1976) to measure people's cognitions related to assertion-related problems. The 32 items on the instrument were intended to be situation-specific and used when cognitions are active in short-term memory. This process was intended to minimize distortion that could result if the items were global. The 32 items measure two subscales: 16 positive self-statements that facilitate (or make it easier to refuse) a request and 16 negative self-statements that interfere (or make it harder to refuse) with a request. For the purpose of the present study, the positive self-statements were used because performance character qualities require positive assertiveness. The study focus is on positive character qualities, not on character qualities that act as barriers to successful performance.

Scoring. Participants in the study were asked to rate each item using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for Hardly Ever Had the Thought to 5 for Very Often Had the Thought. The numeric values were summed to obtain a total score. The total score was divided by 16 to develop a mean score that reflects the original scale of measurement.

Reliability. Internal consistency as a measure of reliability was determined using Cronbach alpha coefficients (Schwartz & Gottman, 1976). The results of their analysis provided an alpha of .78, indicating the instrument has adequate internal consistency. The authors did not provide reports of stability as a form of reliability.

Validity. According to Schwartz and Gottman (1976), the Assertiveness Self-Statement Test (ASST) has good construct validity and has the ability to discriminate between functional and dysfunctional groups in their responses to the positive and negative statements. Participants also demonstrate changes in the anticipated direction following psychotherapy (reduced negative responses). Concurrent validity has been supported through finding correlations between negative self-statements and cognitive complexity and the Irrational Beliefs Test and correlations between the positive assertions and self-efficacy scores.

Readability. The Flesch-Kincaid Readability test was used to test the readability level of the ASST. The results of this analysis indicated the items had a readability grade level of 5.2, indicating that individuals with a fifth grade reading level should be able to read the items without difficulty.

Inventory of School Motivation - Revised

The Inventory of School Motivation – Revised (ISMR; McInerney & Sinclair, 1992) was designed to measure achievement motivation for students who were culturally diverse. The ISMR uses 114 items to measure specific goal orientations that relate to behavioral goals, general motivation, and a general sense of self (McInerney, Roche, McInerney, & Marsh, 1997). The goal orientations measured by the ISMR are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

ISMR Item Groupings

Goal Orientations	Number of Items
Mastery – General Mastery	8
General Motivation	8
Sense of Purpose	6
Sense of Competence/Self-reliance	12
Self-Concept (School)	12

McInerney et al., 1997

The goal orientations selected for the present study reflect positive character qualities that will be used to test the hypotheses developed for the study. Students who exhibit high levels of these goal orientations are more likely to achieve success both in school and later in life (McInerney et al., 1997). Definitions of each of goal orientations are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Definitions of Goal Orientation that will be used in the Present Study

Goal Orientation	Definition of Goal Orientations
Mastery	The intrinsic motivation for completing school tasks for self-gratification and personal enhancement is measured by the general mastery subscale.
Sense of Purpose	The sense of future goal orientation is perceptions of future goal orientation in which the person is motivated to do well on present tasks in order to obtain remote goals such as a good job or college entrance.
Sense of Competence/Self-Reliance	Sense of competence/self-reliance is the assessment of confidence in school ability and self-discipline.
Self-Concept	Self-concept is specific to school self-concept and self esteem. This scale is related to perceptions and assessment of the ability of the self and others within a school setting to perform tasks and integrate information leading to academic achievement.
General Motivation	General motivation is the assessment of students' understanding of motivation and how motivation affects their performance.

McInerney et al. (1997, 2003)

Scoring. The students rated each item on the instrument using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for Strongly Disagree to 5 for Strongly Agree. Some items on the scale were reversed scored to reflect a positive response prior to scoring. The numeric values associated with the responses were summed for each scale to obtain a total score. The total scores were then divided by the number of items on each scale to obtain a mean score. The use of a mean score provided scores that reflected the original unit of measure and allowed comparisons across the scales.

Reliability. Cronbach alpha coefficients as a measure of internal consistency were obtained for each of the scales on the ISMR (McInerney, Yeung, & McInerney, 2001). The alpha coefficients ranged from .62 to .85, indicating adequate to good internal consistency as a measure of reliability. Reliability was also tested on students in the seventh through twelfth grades and across five ethnic groups (Aboriginal, Australian immigrant, Anglo, Navajo, and Betsiamite). The alpha correlations ranged from .67 for the Betsiamite group to .77 for the Australian immigrant group. These findings support the internal consistency of the instrument for use with middle and high school students.

Validity. A principal components factor analysis with a varimax rotation was used on the original ISM. Ten interpretable factors emerged from the factor analysis that explained 98.2% of the variance in school motivation. The criteria for inclusion on a factor were a factor loading greater than .30 (McInerney & Sinclair, 1992). To test for construct validity, McInerney et al. (2001) obtained a statistically significant correlation between mastery and performance motivation ($r = .38$, $p < .05$), providing support to a dichotomous structure of motivation. Goal orientations were moderately correlated with three dimensions. Goodness of fit was assessed

emphasizing the Tucker-Lewis Index. The model was considered to fit as the Tucker-Lewis index exceeded .90 (McInerney et al., 2001). The ISMR is a reliable and valid instrument used to measure school motivation in middle and high school students.

Readability. Readability was assessed using the Flesch-Kincaid readability test. The obtained grade level of 3.8 provided assurances that individuals with a fourth grade reading level should be able to read and comprehend the included items with ease.

Demographic Survey.

An original demographic survey developed by the researcher was used in the study. The items included age, gender, self-reported academic achievement, self-reported citizenship, and participation in extracurricular activities. These questions used forced-choice responses. The demographic variables were used to provide a profile of students at the school. In addition, age, gender, self-reported academic achievement and citizenship data were used to determine their relationship with the variables measuring performance character education.

Data Collection

After receiving approval from the Human Investigation Committee (HIC) at Wayne State University, the researcher met with the administrators from the Vocational School to determine a mutually agreeable date to conduct the study. The researcher sent research information sheets to the parents of students enrolled in the school (Appendix B). The research information sheets included the purpose of the study, information about the surveys their child was asked to complete, assurances of confidentiality, and voluntary nature of participation. The research information sheets included the same information as contained in an informed consent form, but did not require a signature of the parent to allow the child to participate in the study. Students

whose parents returned the form indicating they did not want their child to participate in the study were not allowed to be part of the study.

Survey packets were developed that included copies of all instruments that were used in the study. The surveys were counterbalanced by class to minimize order effect. Counterbalancing the surveys changes the order of the surveys as responding to some of the surveys could affect the students' responses on subsequent surveys. For example, the survey measuring negative performance character could affect their responses on positive performance character. By reordering the surveys by class, the order effect could be controlled for the sample as a whole. The surveys were placed in large envelopes for distribution to students. The survey packets were not coded in any way to provide assurances that the students participating in the study would remain anonymous.

The researcher met in the students' classrooms to distribute the survey packets. Students whose parents had denied them permission to participate in the study were asked to move to the media center, while the remaining students participate in the study. The researcher distributed assent forms to the students (Appendix C). The students were asked to read the assent forms and indicate their willingness to participate in the study. The students who chose not to participate were assured that neither the school nor the researcher would hold it against them because they do not want to be included in the study. Students who decided not to participate in the study were asked to move to the media center while the remaining students complete the survey packets.

Each student who participated in the study received a survey packet. They were cautioned not to provide any identifying information (e.g., name, student number) on any of the surveys. After they are finished with the surveys, they were instructed to place them in the envelopes and

return them to the researcher. The total time to complete the surveys was approximately 45 to 50 minutes. All data collection was conducted in the classroom. Students who were absent on the day that data were collected was allowed to complete the surveys on another day that was mutually agreeable with the school. .

Data Analysis

The data collected from the students were entered into a computer file for analysis using IBM-SPSS (ver. 20.0). The data analysis was divided into three sections. The first section used frequency distributions, measures of central tendency and dispersion, and crosstabulations that provided a profile of the students' personal and academic characteristics. The second section of the data analysis used descriptive statistics that provided baseline information on each of the dependent variables. Inferential statistical analyses, including Pearson product moment correlations, one-way multivariate analysis of variance, and multiple linear regression analyses was used to address the research questions. All decisions on the statistical significance of the inferential statistics were made using a criterion alpha level of .05. Table 7 presents the statistical analyses that were used in this study.

Table 7

Statistical Analysis

Research Question	Variables	Statistical Analysis
1. What is the relationship between students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise)? H_{01}: There is no relationship between students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise). H_1: There is a relationship between students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise).	Performance character qualities • Perseverance • Self-control • Resilience • Assertiveness Motivation toward performance character qualities • Task • Effort • Competition • Praise	Pearson product moment correlations were used to examine the strength and direction of the correlations between performance character qualities and motivation toward performance character qualities.

Research Question	Variables	Statistical Analysis
2. To what extent does a difference in perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) exist between male and female students? H_{02}: There are no differences in perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) between male and female students. H_2: There are differences in perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) among male and female students.	<u>Dependent Variables</u> Performance character qualities • Perseverance • Self-control • Resilience • Assertiveness <u>Independent Variables</u> Gender	A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine if male and female students differ in their perceptions of performance character qualities. If a statistically significant omnibus F is obtained on the MANOVA, the between subjects effects were examined to determine which of the dependent variables are contributing to the statistically significant difference. The mean scores for male and female students were examined to determine the direction of any statistically significant differences.
3. To what extent does a difference in motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise) exist between male and female students? H_{03}: There are no differences in motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise) between male and female students. H_3: There are differences in motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise**)** between male and female students.	<u>Dependent Variables</u> Motivation toward performance character qualities • Task • Effort • Competition • Praise <u>Independent Variables</u> Gender	A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine if male and female students differ in their perceptions of motivation toward performance character qualities. If a statistically significant omnibus F is obtained on the MANOVA, the between subjects effects were examined to determine which of the dependent variables are contributing to the statistically significant difference. The mean scores for male and female students were examined to determine the direction of any statistically significant differences.

Research Question	Variables	Statistical Analysis
4. Can students' self-reported academic performance be predicted from perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness)? H_{04}: Students' self-reported academic performance cannot be predicted from perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness). H_4: Students' self-reported academic performance can be predicted from perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness).	<u>Dependent Variables</u> • Self-reported academic performance • Self-reported citizenship grades <u>Independent Variables</u> Performance character qualities • Perseverance • Self-control • Resilience • Assertiveness	Multivariate linear regression analyses using the general linear model were used to determine which of the independent variables can be used to predict the dependent variables.

Summary

Chapter 3 has presented the methodology that was used to collect and analyze the data needed to describe the sample and address the research questions and hypotheses. The study used a nonexperimental, descriptive quantitative research design, with surveys used as the primary data collection tools. The participants were enrolled at Central City's Vocational Academy. Using a power analysis, a sample of 180 students was needed to achieve a power of .80. Additional students increased the power to make correct decisions on the inferential statistical analyses used to test the hypotheses. The instruments that were used in the study included: Short Grit Scale (Duckworth, 2009), Self-Control (Audrain-McGovern, Roderiguez, Tercyak, Neuner, & Moss, 2005); Resiliency Scale (Wagnild, 1993), Assertiveness Scale (Schwartz & Gottman, 1976); and Motivation Scale (McInerney & Sinclair, 1992), and a short researcher-developed

demographic survey. The students' parents received passive consent forms to inform them of the research study. They were asked to respond by signing the form if they did not want their child included in the study. All students whose parents gave passive consent to participate in the study were asked to review the adolescent assent form that explained the study and provided information regarding their participation. Students were allowed to opt out of the study if they did not want to participate. The students completed the surveys in their classrooms. Data collected from the surveys was analyzed using IBM-SPSS ver. 20.0. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were completed to provide a profile of the demographic characteristics of the sample and test the hypotheses. All decisions on the statistical significance of the findings were made using a criterion alpha level of .05.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The results of the data analysis that were used to describe the sample and address the research questions developed for this study are presented in this chapter. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section uses frequency distributions and crosstabulations to provide a description of the sample. Descriptive statistics are used to provide baseline data on the scaled dependent variables. The results of the inferential statistical analyses that are used to address the research questions and test the hypotheses for the study are presented in the third section of the chapter.

The primary purpose of this study was to understand students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities (i.e. assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, and self-control) at an urban Career and Technical Education High School. In examining these relationships, students' actual perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities were identified.

Description of the Sample

A total of 252 students at Central City Career and Technical Education High School were asked to participate in the study. Research information sheets were sent to all students who met the criteria for inclusion in the study. Of this number, one parent refused permission for her child to participate in the study. Of this number, 213 students completed all of the instruments and 39 students refused to participate in the study, for a response rate of 84.9%. However, all of the students in the school were given an opportunity to participate or refuse to participate in the study. The researcher distributed assent forms to all of the students. The students were asked to

read the assent forms and indicate their willingness to participate in the study. The use of passive assent forms provided additional assurance that the students' identity would be anonymous. Only students who agreed to participate in the study completed the survey. The students who chose not to participate were assured that neither the school nor the researcher would hold it against them because they did not want to be included in the study. Students who decided not to participate in the study were asked to move to the media center while the remaining students completed the survey packets.

The participants completed a short demographic survey to obtain a profile of the personal and academic characteristics. The gender of the participants was obtained on the survey. The results of the frequency distribution are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Frequency Distribution – Gender of Participants

Gender	Number	Percent
Male	86	41.3
Female	122	58.7
Total	208	100.0

Missing 5

The majority of the participants (n = 122, 58.7%) indicated their gender as female. The remaining 86 (41.3%) participants reported their gender as male. Five participants did not provide a response to this question. They were not included in the crosstabulations of the remaining demographic variables. Figure 1 presents a graphical representation of students' gender.

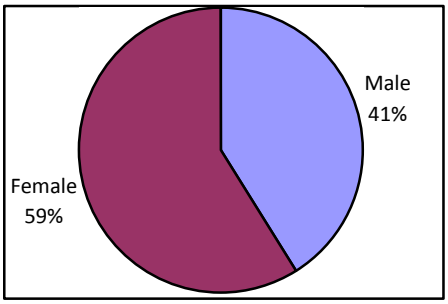

Figure 1 – Gender of Students

The students (n = 204) provided their ages on the survey. Three females and one male did not did not provide their ages. The largest group of students (n = 92, 45%) reported their ages to be 14 years old. Of this number 42 (49.4%) of the participants who were 14 years of age were males, with the remaining 50 (49.5%) females reporting their age as 14 years. Fifty-seven (28%) students reported their age to be 15 years old. Of this number 25 (48%) were male and 32 (52%) were female. Two (1%) participants were 13 years old, with the remaining 53 (26%) participants ranging in age from 16 to 18 years old. Figure 2 provides a graphical representation of the students' ages by gender.

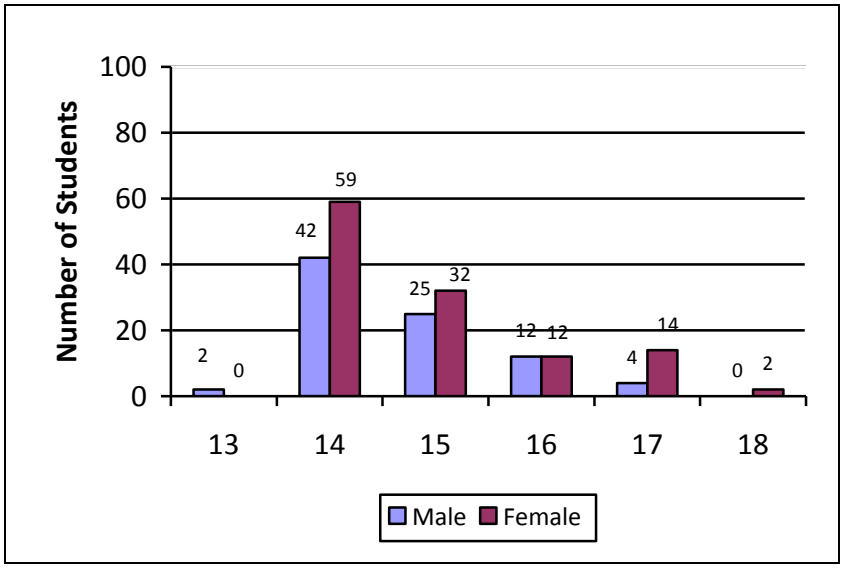

Figure 2 Age by Gender

The students were asked to provide their ethnicity on the survey. Their responses were crosstabulated by gender. The majority of participants (n = 171, 82.5%) reported their ethnicity as African American. Of this number, 69 (40%) were male and 102 (60%) were female. The remaining students either were multi-ethnic or reported that their ethnicity was American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asia/Pacific Islander Caucasian, or Hispanic. One male student did not provide a response to this question Figure 3 provides a graphical representation of the crosstabulation of students' ethnicity by gender.

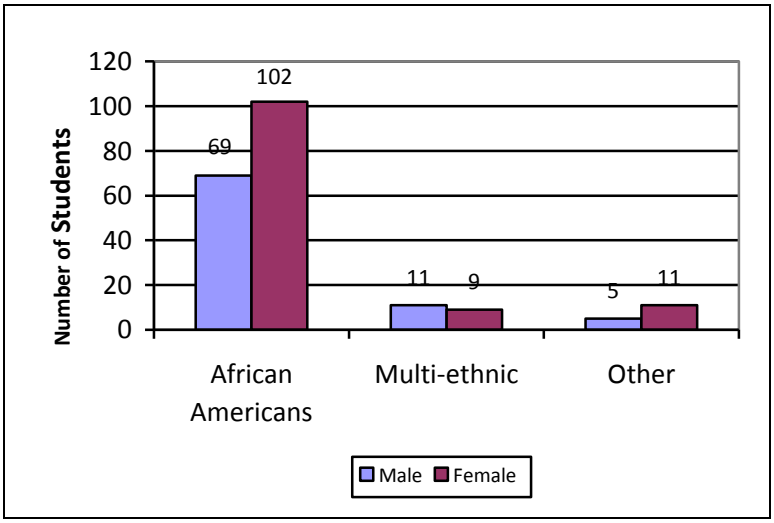

Figure 3 – Ethnicity by Gender

The students were asked to provide their grade levels in the school. Their responses were crosstabulated by gender. The majority of students (n = 158, 76.3%), included in this number were 70 (81.4%) males and 88 (72.8%) females, reported they were in the ninth grade. The remaining 23.7% reported that they were in the tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade. One male and three females did not provide a response to this question. Figure 4 presents results of this analysis. The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students who participated in the study attended Central City Vocational High School to take either a cosmetology training class and/or to attend ROTC training.

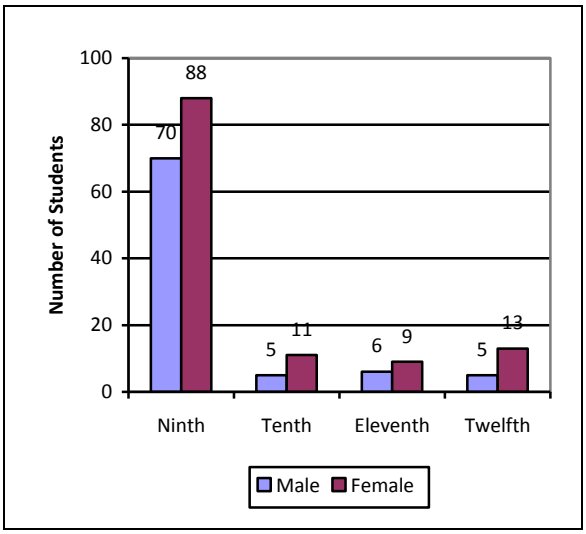

Figure 4 Grade Level by Gender

The students were asked to indicate their living arrangements. Their responses were crosstabulated by gender. The largest group of students (n = 100, 48.2%) reported living with their mothers only. This number included 40 (46.5%) male students and 60 (49.3%) female students. Fifty-four (26%) students reported they were living with their mothers and fathers. Of this number 25 (29.1%) were male students and 29 (23.8%) were female students. The other 25.8% of the students reported living with a biological parent and a stepparent, grandparent(s), legal guardian, or other relatives. Figure 5 provides a graphical representation of the living arrangements by gender.

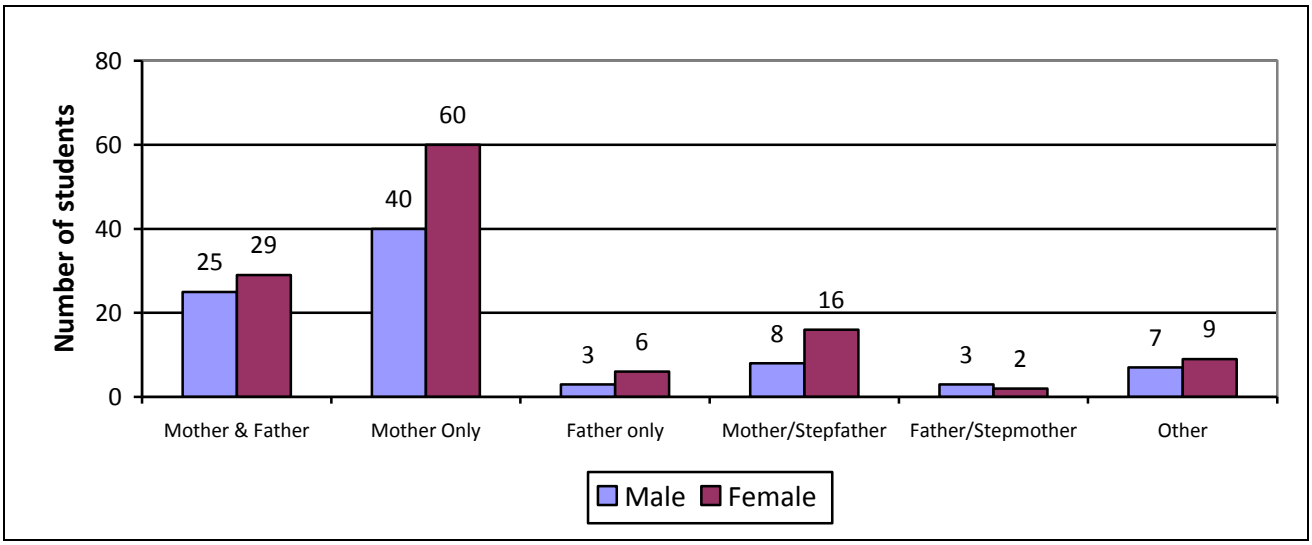

Figure 5 Living Arrangements by Gender

The students were asked to self-report their grade point averages using a 13-point scale. Their responses were crosstabulated by gender. Of the 23 (11.1%) students who reported all As, 6 (7.1%) were male and 17 (13.9%) were female. Ninety-two (44.4%) students, including 36 (42.3%) male and 56 (45.9%) female, reported their grades are mostly As and some Bs. Mostly Bs and some As were reported by 6 (7.1%) male and 14 (11.5%) female students. One (0.8%) female student reported her grades as all Bs. Forty (19.3%) students reported mostly Bs and some Cs. Included in this number were 21 (24.5%) female and 19 (15.6%) male students. Six (7.1%) male and 6 (4.9%) female students reported their grades as mostly Cs and some Bs. Two (2.4%) male students reported their grades were all Cs. Of the 12 (5.8%) students who reported mostly Cs and some Ds, 6 (7.1%) were male and 6 (4.9%) were female. One (1.2%) male and 3 (2.5%) female students reported their grades as mostly Ds and some Cs. One (1.2%) male student indicated his grades were mostly Fs and some Ds. One male student did not provide a

response to this question. Figure 6 presents a graphical representation of the self-reported grades by gender.

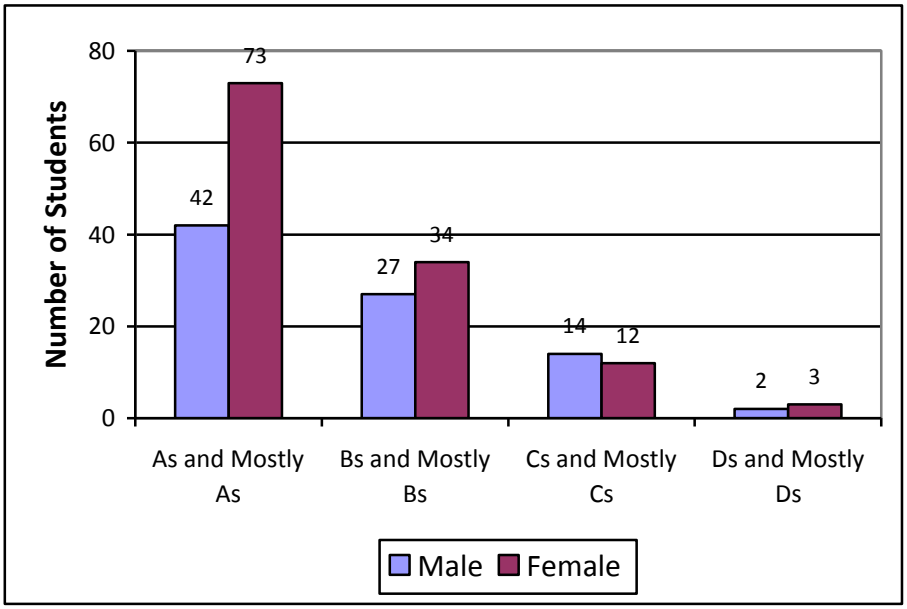

Figure 6 Self-reported Grades by Gender

The students were asked to self-report their citizenship grades in school. Their responses were crosstabulated by gender. The largest group of students (n = 95, 46.4%) reported their citizenship at school was excellent. This number included 27 (32.5%) male and 68 (55.8%) female students. Seventy-eight students indicated their citizenship in school was good. Of this number 41 (49.4%) were male and 37 (30.3%) were female. Of the 30 (14.6%) students who reported their citizenship as fair, 14 (16.9%) were male and 16 (13.1%) were female. One (1.2%) male and 1 (0.8%) female students reported their citizenship grades as poor. Three male students did not provide a response to this question. Figure 7 presents a graphical representation of the self-reported citizenship grades by gender.

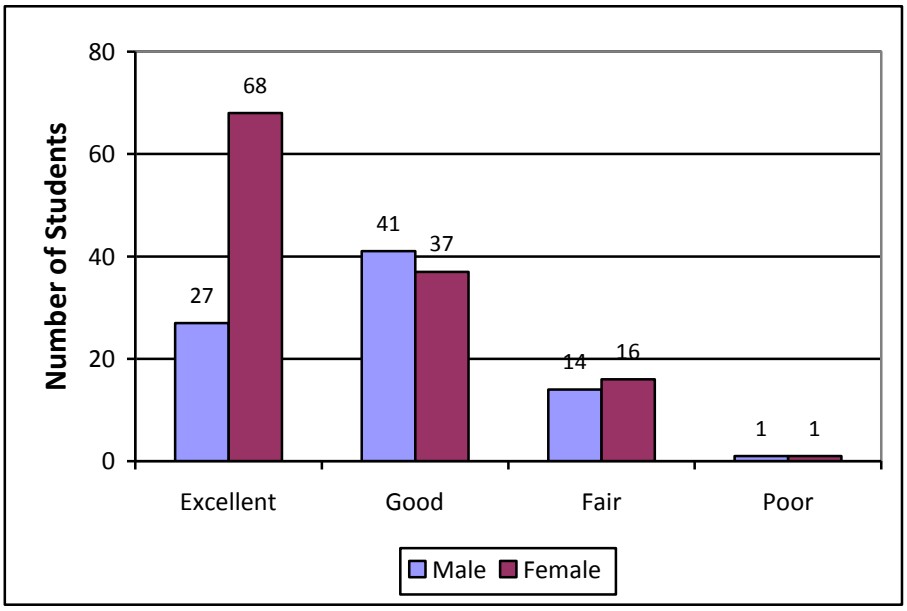

Figure 7 Self-reported Citizenship Grades by Gender

Scaled Variables

The students completed five instruments: The Grit Scale, Self-control Scale, Resiliency Scale, Assertiveness Self-Statement Test, and Motivation Scale. The instruments were scored using the protocols developed by the scale authors. Descriptive statistics were obtained for each of the scales. For each scale, higher scores indicated greater perseverance, self-control, resiliency, assertiveness, and motivation. Results of the descriptive statistics used to summarize the scores are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics – Scaled Variables

				Actual Range		Possible Range	
Scale	Mean	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Perseverance	3.37	.63	3.25	1.88	5.00	1.00	5.00
Interest	2.77	.92	2.50	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00
Effort	3.97	.73	4.00	2.00	5.00	1.00	5.00
Self-control							
Impulsive control	2.45	.69	2.43	1.00	4.38	1.00	5.00
Planning	3.61	.82	3.50	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00
Attention disregulation	2.76	.89	2.80	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00
Resiliency Scale							
Personal competence	5.51	1.06	5.71	1.18	7.00	1.00	7.00
Assertiveness	3.10	.73	3.14	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00
Motivation							
Task motivation	4.33	.84	4.75	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00
Effort motivation	3.94	.82	4.00	1.29	5.00	1.00	5.00
Competition motivation	3.65	.99	3.60	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00
Praise motivation	3.60	.98	3.80	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00

The mean scores for students' perceptions of perseverance indicated that the students were more likely to report higher scores for effort (m = 3.97, sd = .73, median = 4.00) than interest (m = 2.77, sd = .92, median = 2.50). The scores for perseverance were slightly above the midpoint of the scale (m = 3.37, sd = .63, median = 3.25). The range of actual scores on this scale was from 1 to 5, with possible scores ranging from 1 to 5.

Three subscales were used to measure students' perceptions of self-control. The mean score for impulsive control was 2.45 (sd = .69), with a median of 2.43. Higher mean scores were obtained for planning (m = 3.61, sd = .82), with a median of 3.50. Attention disregulation had a mean score of 2.76 (sd = .89), with a median of 2.80. Actual scores on this scale were from 1 to 5, with possible scores ranging from 1 to 5.

Students' perceptions of resiliency were measured by personal competence. The mean score for personal competence was 5.51 (sd = 1.06), with a median of 5.71. The actual scores on this scale were from 1.18 to 7.00, with possible scores ranging from 1.00 to 7.00.

The mean score for students' perceptions of assertiveness was 3.10 (sd = .73), with a median of 3.14. The actual range of scores for assertiveness was 1 to 5, with possible scores ranging from 1 to 5.

Four subscales were used to measure students' motivation. The mean score for task motivation was 4.33 (sd = .84), with a median of 4.75. The mean score for effort motivation was 3.94 (sd = .82), with a median of 4.00. Competition motivation had a mean score of 3.65 (sd = .99), with a median of 3.60. The mean score for praise motivation was 3.60 (sd = .98), with a median 3.80. The actual scores for the subscales ranged from 1.00 to 5.00, with the exception of effort motivation that had actual scores ranging from 1.29 to 5.00. Possible scores on the four subscales could range from 1 to 5.

Research Questions

Four 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.

Research question 1. What is the relationship between students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise)?

Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between performance character qualities and their motivations toward performance character qualities. Table 10 presents results of this analysis.

Table 10

Pearson Product Moment Correlations Performance Character Qualities and Motivations toward Performance Character Qualities

Performance Character Qualities	Motivation Toward Performance Character Qualities							
	Task		Effort		Competition		Praise	
	r	p	r	p	r	p	r	p
Perseverance	.26	<.001	.34	<.001	.18	.008	.18	.010
Interest	.02	.823	.10	.155	.05	.498	.17	.015
Effort	.41	<.001	.45	<.001	.25	<.001	.09	.207
Self-control								
Impulsive control	-.04	.606	-.10	.132	.05	.457	.15	.029
Planning	.43	<.001	.48	<.001	.13	.069	.02	.794
Attentional disregulation	-.03	.684	-.14	.048	-.04	.532	.04	.563
Resilience	.48	<.001	.48	<.001	.16	.018	.08	.248
Assertiveness	.08	.235	-.09	.214	.11	.115	.07	.292

The results of the correlation analysis provided evidence of statistically significant relationships between motivation toward performance character qualities and performance character qualities. Perseverance was overall highly correlated with the motivation factors, with effort being the largest contributor to the correlation. Of the two perseverance subscales (i.e., interest and effort) effort was more likely to be significantly correlated with the motivational factors than interest, except for correlation between interest and praise. The correlation between interest and praise was stronger than the correlation between effort and praise, which was not statistically significant. The correlations were in a positive direction, indicating that higher scores for effort and interest were associated with higher scores for the four motivation orientations. Perseverance was significantly correlated with task motivation ($r = .26$, $p < .001$), effort ($r = .34$, $p < .001$), competition ($r = .18$, $p = .008$), and praise ($r = .18$, $p = .010$). Statistically significant correlations were obtained for interest, as a subscale of perseverance, and praise motivation ($r = .17$, $p = .015$). The second subscale measuring perseverance, effort was significantly correlated with task ($r = .41$, $p < .001$), effort ($r = .45$, $p < .001$), and effort ($r = .25$, $p < .001$).

The correlation analysis between the subscales of self-control (i.e., impulsive control, planning, and attentional disregulation) and the motivational factors of task, effort, competition and praise produced mixed outcomes. The correlations between the performance character quality of planning and the motivational factors of task and effort were significantly correlated in a positive direction. Impulsive control was significantly correlated with only the motivational factor of praise, while attentional disregulation was only significantly correlated with effort in a negative direction. Planning, as a measure of Self-Control, was significantly correlated with task ($r = .43$, $p < .001$) and effort ($r = .48$, $p < .001$), with impulsive control as another measure of

Self-Control, significantly correlated with praise ($r = .15$, $p = .029$). Attentional disregulation was significantly correlated with effort in a negative direction ($r = -.14$, $p = .048$). This result indicated that students with lower scores for attentional disregulation were more likely to have higher scores for effort.

The outcomes of the analysis of the correlations between the performance character quality of resilience and the motivational factors of task, effort, and competition revealed that resilience was significantly correlated with all three. Praise, the fourth motivational factor was not statistically significantly related to resilience. The correlations between resilience and task ($r = .48$, $p < .001$), effort ($r = .48$, $p < .001$), and competition ($r = .16$, $p = .018$) were statistically significant. The correlations between the performance character quality of assertiveness and the four motivational factors were not statistically significant. Based on these findings, it appears that the performance character qualities, with the exception of impulsive control and attentional disregulation as measures of self-control, were related to motivation in a positive direction. As students' scores on performance character qualities for interest, effort, planning, resilience, and assertiveness increased, their motivations also increased.

Research question 2. To what extent does a difference in perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) exist between male and female students?

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine if the performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) differed between male and female students. MANOVA allows the comparison of more than one dependent variable (the four performance character qualities) by a single independent variable

(gender). If a statistically significant difference is found on the MANOVA, the between subjects effects are examined. The between subjects effects comparison is used to determine which of the four dependent variables are contributing to the statistically significant result on the MANOVA. The results of the MANOVA are provided in Table 11.

Table 11

One-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance – Performance Character Qualities by Gender

Hotelling's Trace	F Ratio	DF	Sig	Effect Size
.06	1.75	7, 200	.099	.06

The results of the one-way MANOVA comparing the four performance character qualities (perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) was not statistically significant, $F (7, 200) = 1.75$, $p = .099$, $eta^2 = .06$. This result indicated that male and female students did not differ in their perceptions of performance character qualities by gender. The eta^2 of .06 was considered small, providing support that the result had little practical significance. To further explore the lack of statistically significant differences between male and female students for the performance character qualities, descriptive statistics were obtained for each of the dependent variables. Table 12 present results of this analysis.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics – Performance Character Qualities by Gender

Performance Character Qualities	Gender					
	Male			Female		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
Perseverance						
Interest	86	2.68	.93	122	2.84	.89
Effort	86	3.83	.77	122	4.06	.68
Self-control						
Impulsive control	86	2.45	.70	122	2.44	.70
Planning	86	3.50	.74	122	3.68	.85
Attentional disregulation	86	2.77	.80	122	2.73	.94
Resilience	86	5.27	1.18	122	5.67	.93
Assertiveness	86	3.04	.71	122	3.13	.73

The descriptive statistics were similar for the male and female students. The close proximity of the mean values by gender were similar. These findings support the lack of statistically significant differences on the performance character qualities between male and female students.

Research question 3. To what extent does a difference in motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise) exist between male and female students?

The four subscales measuring motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise) were used as dependent variables in a one-way MANOVA. The gender of the student was used as the independent variable. Table 13 presents results of this analysis.

Table 13

One-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance – Motivations for Performance Character Qualities by Gender

Hotelling's Trace	F Ratio	DF	Sig	Effect Size
.08	4.18	4, 203	.003	.08

When the four motivations for performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise) were compared between male and female students, the results were statistically significant, F (4, 203) = 4.18, p = .003, eta^2 = .08. This result indicated that male and female students differed in their motivations for performance character qualities. However, this result does not indicate which motivation factors are contributing to the difference or the direction of the difference. The eta^2 (effect size) of .08 indicated that the result had little practical significance. To determine which of the four subscales measuring motivations for performance character qualities are differing between male and female students; the between subjects effects analyses were examined. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Between Subjects Effects – Motivations for Performance Character Qualities by Gender

Motivation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F Ratio	Sig	Effect Size
Task	5.73	1, 206	5.73	8.22	.005	.04
Effort	5.20	1, 206	5.20	7.86	.006	.04
Competition	1.46	1, 206	1.46	1.50	.223	.01
Praise	.02	1, 206	.02	.02	.899	.00

To determine which motivational factors differed between male and female students, first the significance (Sig) for each motivational factor was examined. If statistical significance was found for any of the factors, the effect size was interpreted. Large effect sizes (greater than .25) indicate the result has practical significance in addition to statistical significance. Two of the four subscales, task ($F [1, 206] = 8.22$, $p = .005$, $d = .04$) and effort ($F [1, 206] = 7.86$, $p = .006$, $d = .04$) motivation differed significantly between male and female students. The effect sizes for each of these analyses were small, indicating that while the differences between male and female students on task and effort motivations were statistically significant, the findings had little practical significance. The other two measures of motivation, competition and praise, did not differ significantly between the male and female participants. Descriptive statistics were obtained to determine the direction of the differences for the four measures of motivation. Table 15 presents results of this analysis.

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics - *Motivations for Performance Character Qualities by Gender*

	Male			Female		
Motivations	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
Task	86	4.12	1.00	122	4.46	.70
Effort	86	3.75	.92	122	4.07	.73
Competition	86	3.75	.90	122	3.58	1.05
Praise	86	3.60	.99	122	3.58	.98

The mean scores for task motivation were higher for female students (m = 4.46, sd = .70) than for male students (m = 4.12, sd = 1.00). When the mean scores for effort motivation were compared, female students (m = 4.07, sd = .73) had higher scores than male students (m = 3.75, sd = .92). The scores for competition were higher for male students (m = 3.75, sd = .90) than for female students (m = 3.58, sd = 1.05), although this difference was not statistically significant. The comparison of mean scores for praise motivation provided evidence that male (m = 3.60, sd = .99) and female (m = 3.58, sd = .98) students had similar outcomes. Based on these findings, it appears that male and female students differ on task and effort, but not on competition and praise as measures of motivation.

Research question 4. Can students' self-reported academic performance be predicted from perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness)?

A stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine if performance character qualities (perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) could be used to predict students' self-reported academic performance. A 13-point scale was used to measure academic performance. Table 16 presents results of this analysis.

Table 16

Stepwise Multiple Linear Regression Analysis – Self-reported Academic Grades and Performance Character Qualities

Predictor Variable	Constant	b-Weight	β-Weight	Δr^2	t-Value	Sig
Included Variables						
Perseverance – effort	8.60	.66	.22	.09	3.05	.003
Impulsive control		-.57	-.18	.04	-2.86	.005
Planning		.47	.18	.03	2.46	.015
Perseverance – interest		-.33	-.14	.02	-2.20	.029
Excluded Variables						
Attentional			-.09		-1.21	.228
disregulation			.08		1.20	.229
Personal competence			.03		.39	.696
Assertiveness			.08		1.21	.229
Resilience						
Multiple R	.42					
Multiple R^2	.18					
F Ratio	11.19					
DF	4, 208					
Sig	<.001					

Four of the predictor variables, perseverance – effort, impulsive control, planning, and perseverance – interest, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, accounting for 18% of the variance in self-reported academic grades, $F (4, 208) = 11.19$, $p < .001$. Four of the variables (i.e., attentional disregulation, personal competence, assertiveness, and resilience) were not included in the regression analysis, because they were not significant predictors of academic achievement, hence were excluded from further analysis. Perseverance – effort entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation first, accounting for 9% of the variance in self-reported academic grades, $r^2 = .09$, $\beta = .22$, $t = 3.05$, $p = .003$. The positive direction of the

relationship indicated that students who had higher scores for perseverance –effort tended to report higher academic grades. Impulsive control was a significant predictor in a negative direction, $r^2 = .04$, $\beta = -.18$, $t = -2.86$, $p = .005$. The negative relationship provided support that students who had less impulsive control (i.e., lower scores for impulsive control) were more likely to report higher academic grades. Planning entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, explaining an additional 3% of the variance in self-reported academic grades, $r^2 = .03$, $\beta = .18$, $t = 2.46$, $p = .015$. Students who had higher scores for planning tended to self-report higher academic grades. Perseverance-interest entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, accounting for an additional 2% of the variance in self-reported academic grades, $r^2 = .02$, $\beta = -.14$, $t = -2.20$, $p = .029$. This negative relationship provided support that lower scores for persistence – interest were associated with higher self-reported academic grades.

A second stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine which of the motivations for performance character qualities could be used to predict self-reported academic achievement. The predictor variables were task, effort, competition, and praise motivations. The criterion variable was self-reported academic achievement. Table 17 presents results of this analysis.

Table 17

Stepwise Multiple Linear Regression Analysis – Self-reported Academic Grades and Motivations for Performance Character Qualities

Predictor Variable	Constant	b-Weight	β-Weight	Δr^2	t-Value	Sig
Included Variables						
Task	6.32	.99	.38	.15	6.00	<.001
Excluded Variables						
Effort			.06		.67	.505
Competition			.07		1.03	.304
Praise			-.07		-1.04	.298
Multiple R	.38					
Multiple R^2	.15					
F Ratio	36.03					
DF	1, 210					
Sig	<.001					

One predictor variable, task motivation, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, accounting for 15% of the variance in self-reported academic grades, $r^2 = .15$, $\beta = .38$, $t = 6.00$, $p < .001$. This relationship indicated that students who had higher scores for task motivation tended to report higher academic grades. The remaining three variables measuring motivation (effort, competition, and praise) did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of self-reported academic grades.

Summary

The results of the statistical analyses used to describe the sample and address the research questions have been presented in this chapter. The majority of the participants were female (59%) and 14 to 15 years of age, in the ninth grade, and African American. Most of the students

were living only with their mothers, followed by mother and father. The self-reported grades of the students generally were As and mostly As, followed by Bs and mostly Bs. Female students were more likely to report their citizenship grades as either excellent or good than male students.

Four research questions were developed for the study. These questions were addressed using inferential statistical analyses, with all decisions on the statistical significance of the results based on an alpha level of .05. The first research question examined the relationship between performance character qualities and motivations toward performance character qualities. Statistically significant relationships in a positive direction were found between perseverance and the four motivations (task, effort, competition, and praise), with the subscale measuring effort significantly correlated with task, effort, and competition. Statistically significant correlations in a positive direction were found between planning as a measure of self-control and task and effort motivation toward performance character qualities. A statistically significant correlation in a negative direction was obtained for attentional disregulation (as a measure of self-control) and effort, indicating that students with higher scores on effort associated with lower scores for attentional disregulation. The remaining correlations were not statistically significant.

The second research question used a MANOVA to compare the performance character qualities by gender. No statistically significant differences were found on the seven measures of performance character qualities between male and female students. The four measures of motivation for performance character qualities were compared between male and female students using a one-way MANOVA. A statistically significant difference was found on the omnibus F ration for the MANOVA. An examination of the between subject effects showed statistically

significant differences between male and female students for task and effort as motivations for performance character qualities. Female students tended to have higher scores for these two subscales than male students. No statistically significant differences were found between male and female students for competition and praise as measures of motivations for performance character qualities.

Stepwise multiple linear regression analyses were used to determine which of the performance character qualities could be used to predict self-reported academic grades. Four independent variables, perseverance – effort, impulsive control, planning, and perseverance – interest, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation as statistically significant predictors of self-reported academic grades, explaining 18% of the variance. Impulsive control and perseverance – interest were negatively related to self-reported academic grades, indicating lower scores on these measures were associated with higher self-reported academic grades. Perseverance – effort and planning were positively related to self-reported academic grades, indicating that higher scores for effort and planning were associated with higher self-reported academic grades. The remaining performance character qualities did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not significantly predictors of self-reported academic grades.

A second stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine which of the four motivations for performance character qualities could be used to predict self-reported academic grades. One independent variable, task as a measure of motivation entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, explaining 15% of the variance in self-reported academic grades. The positive relationship between these variables indicated that students who had higher

scores for task were more likely to report higher academic grades. The remaining three motivations for performance character qualities (effort, competition, and praise) did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of self-reported academic grades. Conclusions and recommendations based on these findings can be found in Chapter V.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Traditionally, the purpose of schooling is to teach students academic content knowledge and build moral character (Davidson & Likona, 2006; Dewey, 2001; King, 1947). In a research study conducted by Davidson and Likona (2006), it was revealed that schools also should teach students to excel, which has been labeled performance character. "To educate a person in morals and not in mind is to educate, if not a menace, at least a detriment to society. Who wants an honest but incompetent doctor, lawyer, or mechanic?" (Davidson & Likona, 2006, p. 1). According to Davidson, Khmelkov, and Likona (2008), performance character:

> …consists of those qualities – including but not limited to diligence, perseverance, a strong work ethic, positive attitude, ingenuity, and self-discipline – needed to realize one's potential for excellence in any performance environment, such as academics, extracurricular activities, the workplace, and throughout life. (p. 373)

Students' low grades, low test scores, and low high school graduation rates, along with employer concerns that high school graduates lack the necessary performance qualities needed to excel on the job, provide evidence that urban high school students may not have the proper orientation toward performance qualities.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2009) reported that more than 50% of fourth and eighth grade students in major urban areas across the United States scored below the basic level in both math and reading. For instance, in one urban school district, 73% of fourth graders scored below the basic reading level, and 77% of eighth graders scored below the basic math level. High school graduation rates in these same urban areas were not much better. Seventeen of the largest urban areas in the United States had high school dropout rates greater

than 50% (America's Promise Alliance, 2009). Furthermore, over the next five years, approximately one-third of employers reported that they expect to decrease their hiring of high school graduates. Other employers reported that they are planning to hire employees who possess college degrees of two years or more (Bonilla, 2008).

Many high schools have dismissed the importance of character education. High schools that engage students in character education only engage students in moral character education (Davidson et. al., 2008). It has been found that students who are engaged in performance character education learn to excel in school and are better prepared for real-world endeavors, and add greater value to society as adults (Davidson & Likona, 2007). A study conducted by Duckworth and Seligman (2005) revealed that academic performance levels for some students were based on the performance character qualities that they possessed, not on their cognitive abilities. For example, these researchers found that students who were self-disciplined earned higher GPAs and had higher achievement scores on standardized tests. A greater percentage of these students were admitted to competitive high schools and had better school attendance records than their peers who possessed greater cognitive skills. This evidence indicated that performance character education can be used to improve academic achievement levels.

A study conducted by Newman, Meyers, Newman, Lohman, and Smith (2000) provided additional evidence that African American students who possessed performance character qualities tend to excel in school. Specifically, these researchers examined the role of performance character quality, resilience, to determine if it significantly contributed to students' academic success. Newman et al. (2000) also used students' perceptions to identify factors that could assist in facilitating low-income urban students' academic success. The data were collected through

tape recorded interviews with students and people identified by students as supportive of their education. The students also were asked to respond to questionnaires related to academic motivation, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy. More than half of the students who participated in the study had GPAs above 3.0, which was considered high performance. The other participants were considered low performers (GPAs less than 3.0). Significant differences were found between high- and low-performing students' responses regarding academic motivation, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy. In summary, Newman et al. reported that the high performers knew that having a strong focus on academics, possessing good time management skills, exerting effort, being determined, and possessing a strong locus of control were needed to achieve at a high level in school. In contrast, low performing students had little understanding of how to become successful in school. They lacked the effort needed to succeed, their friends did not support their academic endeavors, they lacked determination and focus, and did not have the parental support needed to be academically successful. The evidence showed that high performing students possessed characteristics that defined resilience.

The Duckworth and Seligman (2005) and Newman, Meyers, Newman, Lohman, and Smith (2000) studies provided evidence that students who possessed performance character qualities tended to achieve academic success. Hence, educators should develop and implement performance character quality education programs in their schools. However before developing and implementing performance character education programs, educators may find it beneficial to examine students' perceptions of performance character qualities. Without understanding students' perceptions relative to performance character qualities, character educators may find it difficult to make learning relevant to students' understanding of those qualities. Furthermore,

assuming that urban students have correct knowledge of performance character qualities may result in improper development and implementation of character education programs. Fan, Wei, and Zang (2005) found that students who live in urban areas usually are from families with low-SES and may not have had opportunities to develop appropriate perceptions of the need for performance character qualities, or they may have fairly weak perceptions of these qualities. In a study performed by Cummings and Lesniak (2000), students who were thought to hold appropriate perceptions of performance character qualities held incorrect perceptions of these qualities. Pre-surveys, intervention, and post-surveys were used to collect data in this study. Cummings and Lesniak found that teachers at two neighboring high schools reported that students were taught performance character qualities. While the curricula at the two high schools were designed to teach performance character qualities, students who graduated from the two schools lacked the performance character qualities that employers looked for in entry-level employees. Based on these outcomes, the researchers decided to conduct a survey of 9th through 12th grade career and technical education students, teachers, employers, and recent graduates of the high schools. The purpose of the research was to determine the extent to which the students lack the preferred qualities. Data were collected using pre/post-test surveys. Pretest surveys were used to assess current students' and graduates' perceptions of performance character qualities to determine if teachers were teaching these qualities and to determine which performance character qualities employers thought students were lacking. Findings from student and employer survey results indicated that students were not being taught performance character qualities that employers look for in entry-level employees. Based on the findings, performance character

qualities also were perceived to be below-average levels, although 82% of the teachers reported that they taught performance character qualities to students.

As was the objective of the Cummings and Lesniak (2000) study, the primary objective of the present study was to understand students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities (i.e. assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, and self-control) at an urban Career and Technical Education High School. In examining these relationships, students' actual perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities were identified and were revealed to educators. A baseline for the development of a school-based performance character education program can be developed when educators understand students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities.

Regardless of the motivational orientation of students, character educators can coordinate student orientations with student perceptions of performance character qualities. By pairing motivational orientations with performance character qualities, student perceptions of performance character qualities may improve students' opportunities for educational success. For example, students with a task orientation may not use this particular orientation for all assigned schoolwork. Corpus, Iyengar, and Lepper (2005) reported that most students do not find *all* schoolwork enjoyable, interesting, or pleasurable, and as a result, they may underperform. However, if a lesson on perseverance or assertiveness was presented or integrated into their assignments, students would have an increased likelihood to be more intensely engaged in their school work.

Methods

This study used a nonexperimental, descriptive quantitative research design, with surveys used as the primary data collection tools. Using a power analysis, a sample of 180 students was needed to achieve a power of .80. Additional students increased the power to make correct decisions on the inferential statistical analyses used to test the hypotheses. The instruments that were used in the study included: Short Grit Scale (Duckworth, 2009), Self-Control (Audrain-McGovern, Roderiguez, Tercyak, Neuner, & Moss, 2005); Resiliency Scale (Wagnild, 1993), Assertiveness Scale (Schwartz & Gottman, 1976); and Motivation Scale (McInerney & Sinclair, 1992), and a short researcher-developed demographic survey. The students completed the surveys in their classrooms. Data collected from the surveys was analyzed using IBM-SPSS ver. 20.0. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were completed to provide a profile of the demographic characteristics of the sample and test the hypotheses. All decisions on the statistical significance of the findings were made using a criterion alpha level of .05.

The sample for this study consisted of 252 students enrolled at Central City Vocational Academy. Research information sheets were sent to the parents of all students who met the criteria for inclusion in the study. One parent refused permission for his/her child to participate in the study. Of the 251 students eligible to participate in the study, 213 students completed all of the instruments for a response rate of 84.9%. The participants completed a short demographic survey to obtain a profile of the personal and academic characteristics. The gender of the participants was obtained on the survey. The majority of the participants (n = 122, 58.7%) indicated their gender as female. The remaining 86 (41.3%) participants reported their gender as male. Five participants did not provide a response to this question. They were not included in the

crosstabulations of the remaining demographic variables. The majority of participants (n = 171, 82.5%) reported their ethnicity as African American. Of this number, 69 (40%) were male and 102 (60%) were female. Four (3.3%) females reported their ethnicity as American Indian/Alaskan native. One (1.2%) male reported his/her ethnicity as Asian/Pacific Islander, with 1 (1.2%) male and 1 (0.8%) female reporting their ethnicity as Caucasian. Two (1.6%) female students indicated their ethnicity as Hispanic. Of the 20 (9.7%) students who reported their ethnicity as multi-ethnic, 11 (12.9%) were male and 9 (7.4%) were female. Three (3.5%) male and 4 (3.3%) female participants indicated their ethnicity as other, but did not provide any additional information regarding their specific ethnic backgrounds. One male student did not provide a response to this question.

The majority of students (n = 158, 76.3%), including 70 (81.4%) males and 88 (72.8%) females, reported they were in the ninth grade. Among the 16 (7.7%) tenth grade students in the study, 5 (5.8%) were male and 11 (9.1%) were female. Six (7.0%) male and 9 (7.4%) female eleventh grade students participated in the study. Five (5.8%) male and 13 (10.7%) female students reported they were in the twelfth grade. One male and 3 female students did not provide their grade levels on their surveys.

Research Questions

Four research questions were developed for this study. Inferential statistical analyses were used to test each of these questions. These questions were designed to gain an understanding of students' motivations and perceptions regarding performance character qualities, which is important in developing effective performance character education programs

in schools. All decisions on the inferential analyses were made using a criterion alpha level of .05.

The dependent variables that were included in the study were obtained from five different instruments. Students' perceptions of (a) two performance character qualities, consistency of interest and perseverance of effort measured perseverance; (b) items measuring impulsive control, planning, and attentional disregulation were used as measures of self-control; (c) the personal competency subscale was used as a measure of resiliency; (d) the Assertiveness Self-Statement Test (ASST) measured people's cognitions related to assertion-related problems that facilitated (or made it easier to refuse) a request; and (e) the Inventory of School Motivation (ISM) was used to measure specific goal orientations related to task, effort, competition, and praise. These variables were used to address the research questions.

Research question 1. What is the relationship between students' perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise)?

Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) and their motivations toward performance character qualities i.e., task, effort, competition, and praise). The findings indicated that statistically significant correlations were found between perseverance and the four motivations toward performance character qualities. As students' perceptions of perseverance increase, students become more interested in the task and want to improve their understanding of the subject matter, put forth

greater effort, and become more competitive. In addition, there was a probability that praise could have an increasing impact on their academic performance.

When correlating the subscales of perseverance (i.e. interest and effort) with the motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition and praise), only praise as a motivation toward performance character qualities was significantly related to the perseverance subscale of interest. Moreover, this positive correlation indicated that as praise increased, students' interest in the subject matter increased. Three of the four motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, and competition) were significantly correlated in a positive direction with students' perceptions of effort as a measure of perseverance. Hence, as the students' efforts increase, the findings indicated that they would be more likely to complete assigned tasks, put forth greater effort, and become more competitive. While not statistically significant, the relationship between praise and effort indicated that when praised, students could achieve greater academic success.

The findings also indicated a statistically significant correlation between the other performance character qualities of the subscales of self-control (i.e., impulsive control and planning) and resilience. Praise was significantly correlated with students' perceptions of impulsive control in a positive direction. The significance of this relationship indicated that students who had higher scores for praise were more likely to have lower scores for impulsive control. Task motivation and effort was significantly correlated with the students' perceptions of planning. This finding indicated that as students' scores increased on perceptions of planning, their scores also increased for motivation to stay on task and expend effort when engaged in academic course work. However, only effort among the motivations toward performance

character qualities was significantly correlated with the self-control subscale of attentional disregulation. The negative direction of this finding indicated that students who expended greater effort were more likely to have lower levels of attentional disregulation. The nonsignificant findings for the other three motivation subscales (task, competition, and praise) were important because they indicated that students' did not associate an inability to regulate their attention with completing and understanding assigned task, being competitive, or praise that they may receive. Three of the motivations toward performance character qualities (task, effort, and competition) were significantly correlated with resilience. Increased levels in students' perceptions of resilience were associated with increased scores on task, greater effort, and being more competitive. In contrast, none of the motivations toward performance character qualities was significantly correlated with assertiveness.

Research question 2. To what extent does a difference in perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) exist between male and female students?

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine the extent to which performance character qualities (perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness) differed between male and female students. Results of this analysis provide no evidence of a statistically significant difference between male and female students and their scores for the performance character qualities. This nonsignificant finding was important because the development of performance character qualities were similar for both male and female students. Based on these findings, character educators do not need to develop separate performance character lessons, because the mean values between gender were similar.

Research question 3. To what extent does a difference in motivations toward performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort, competition, praise) exist between male and female students?

The results of the MANOVA used to compare the four motivations toward performance character qualities (task, effort, competition, and praise) between male and female students were statistically significant. The associated effect size was small, indicating that while the difference was statistically significant, the result had little practical significance. The between subjects analyses on the four motivations toward performance character qualities provided support for statistically significant differences on task and effort between male and female students. The results of the analyses for competition and praise did not differ significantly. The mean scores were compared to determine the direction of the difference for task and effort between male and female students. Female students had significantly higher mean scores, for both task and effort, than male students. Hence, female will probably achieve at a higher level than male students.

Research question 4. Can students' self-reported academic performance be predicted from perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness)?

A stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine if self-reported academic grades could be predicted from perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness). Four independent variables, perseverance – effort, impulsive control, planning, and perseverance – interest, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, accounting for 18% of the variance in self-reported academic grades. Impulsive control and perseverance – interest were significant predictors in a

negative direction, indicating higher scores for impulsive control and perseverance – interest were associated with lower self-reported academic grades. Perseverance – effort and planning were related to self-reported academic grades in a positive direction, indicating that higher scores on these variables were associated with higher self-reported academic grades. The remaining independent variables, attentional disregulation, personal competence, assertiveness, and resilience, did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of self-reported academic grades.

A second stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine which of the four motivations for performance character qualities could be used to predict self-reported academic grades. One independent variable, task, entered the stepwise multiple linear regression equation accounting for 15% of the variance in self-reported academic grades. The positive relationship indicated that higher scores on task were associated with higher academic grades. The remaining motivations for performance character qualities (effort, competition, and praise) did not enter the stepwise multiple linear regression equation, indicating they were not statistically significant predictors of self-reported academic grades.

Conclusions

This study examined students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities (i.e. assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, and self-control). Once students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities were identified, educators could develop a baseline for creating performance character education programs. Bruner (as cited in Ornstein & Hunkins, 2008), a cognitive theorist, found that if educators were aware of

the limits of students' knowledge, then they could have increased opportunities to teach them new knowledge, replace old knowledge, or refine or qualify existing knowledge.

Without being aware of students' perceptions and motivations regarding performance character qualities, character educators may find it difficult to make learning relevant to students' understanding of performance character qualities. Assuming that urban students have some knowledge of performance character qualities may lead to improper development and implementation of character education programs. Fan, Wei, and Zang (2005) found that students who live in urban areas are usually from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds and may lack opportunities to develop perceptions of performance character qualities, or they may have fairly weak perceptions of these qualities. In addition, in comparison to students who attend schools in affluent areas, urban students are at a comparative disadvantage in accumulating performance character qualities. Fan et al. further revealed that "The stereotype of being disadvantaged in the society may reduce the accumulation of (pre-market) human capital, particularly non-cognitive skills, for individuals from disadvantaged groups" (p. 2). However, once students' perceptions initially have been assessed, interventions can be employed to instill preferred performance character qualities in students. Outcomes of the study can be used to improve and assist in developing character education programs in urban school districts**.**

The outcome of the descriptive statistical analysis revealed that in general the students had slightly above average scores for their perception of performance character qualities (i.e. assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, and self-control) and their scores provided evidence of an average amount of motivation towards performance character qualities (task, effort, competition, and praise). For example, the three scores related to students' perceptions of performance

character qualities (i.e., assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, and self-control) were rated using a scale ranging from 1 to 5, with a midpoint of 3. The mean scores for the subscales, perseverance (m = 3.37); the subscale self-control – planning (m = 3.61); and assertiveness (m = 3.10) demonstrated the slightly above average perceptions that students had for these performance character qualities.

Results of the correlations between students' perceptions of performance character qualities and their motivation for performance character qualities can be used to improve student orientations towards a particular performance character quality. For example, the correlation between the motivational factor of effort and the performance character quality of perseverance should be used to show students that by expending greater effort in their work, they can develop perseverance to complete assignments and projects. McInerney, Yeung, and McInerney (2001) reported that if a student has a particular motivational orientation when engaged in a particular endeavor, then the motivational orientation can influence the students' performance.

In the review of literature, Markman, Baron, and Balkin (2005) reported that students who increased their level of effort ultimately developed the performance character quality of perseverance. Markman et al. further reported that urban students who are faced with obstacles, such as violence, drugs, and poverty on a daily basis, can become frustrated and discouraged at times. When obstacles occur, some students increase the level of effort that they exert on academic tasks, while dealing with adverse situations in their home environments. Exerting higher levels of effort can result in a reduction in frustration and discouragement, and subsequently lead to the possession of the performance character quality of perseverance. Hence, educators may find it advantageous to teach students a particular performance character quality

in concert with students' motivational orientation(s), such as task, effort, competition, and praise. This leads to the question: Is there is a difference between male and female students' perceptions of performance character qualities?

The purpose of asking this question is that the outcome of the correlations between male and female students' perceptions of performance character qualities may prove to be important when developing character lessons for classes that consist of both male and female students. The results of the present study revealed that male and female students did not differ in their perceptions/orientations of performance character qualities. In their research on self-discipline related to academic performance, Seligman and Peterson (2004) reported that female students had a greater orientation toward self-discipline than male students. Hence, character lesson designs related to self-discipline should accommodate both genders. However, as the findings in the present study indicated that both genders may possess the same orientation towards a particular performance character quality, or the difference may be of little practical significance; therefore lesson designs could be uniform for both genders. However, male and female students may have different motivational orientations.

It was found in the present study that both male and female students possess above average motivational orientation, however they have differing levels of motivational orientations for task, effort, and competition. The students had similar motivational orientations for praise. These findings may assist character educators to make appropriate assumptions regarding which motivational factors to assign to male and female students in urban schools. For example, in many high schools, male and female students participate in virtually the same sporting activities. Hence, character educators may assume that female students are just as competitively oriented as

male students. Contrarily, the results from this study indicate that male students are more competitive than female students. Furthermore, study conducted by Cummings and Lesniak (2001) found that educators made erroneous assumptions about students' knowledge of performance character qualities. That is, students who were thought to hold correct perceptions of performance character qualities, in fact held incorrect perceptions of these qualities. Therefore, it was concluded that character educators should not make the assumption that both female and male students have the same level of motivational orientations.

Researchers (Akey, 2006; Newman, Meyers, Newman, Lohman, & Smith, 2000; Reis, Colbert, & Hebert, 2005) examined if a particular motivational factor could contribute to students' academic achievement. However in each study, students possessed slightly above average motivational orientations. The findings in the present study supported the researchers (Akey, 2006; Newman et al., 2000; Reis et al., 2005) outcomes that also found that students possess slightly above average motivational orientations. Although students may have slightly above average motivational orientations, some students may be more or less oriented toward a particular motivational factor than others. Character educators also should be aware that some students may possess greater perceptions of performance character qualities than others.

The conceptual framework of the present study supports the case that students are failing to meet challenges that they face in schools (Swanson, 2009). Students across the country are not performing at the basic level on national achievement tests, and some students are dropping out of school at a rate as high as 50%. However, students who improved their performance character can improve their academic performance. Davidson and Likona (2006) and Deci and Ryan, (2000) reported that students who have increased perceptions of performance character qualities

can become intrinsically motivated to perform at high levels in school. Hence, the present study examined if students' self-reported academic performance can be predicted from their perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness), as well as, their motivations towards performance character qualities (i.e., task, effort competition, and praise).

This study indicated that the subscales of perseverance – effort and interest, the subscales of self-control – impulsive control and planning, and the motivational factor of task were found to be predictors of students' academic performance. That is, students who possessed increased perceptions of performance character qualities, and have an increased orientation toward motivational factors, tend to achieve at higher academic levels than students who have lower perceptions/orientations of these qualities and factors. The present study concluded that performance character education can be used to improve academic achievement levels.

Duckworth and Seligman (2005) argued that academic performance levels for some students are based on the performance character qualities that they possess, not their cognitive abilities. For example, these researchers found that students who were self-disciplined earned higher GPAs, and had higher achievement scores on standardized tests. Several other studies (Anderson & Keith, 1997: Khan, 2005; Markman et al, 2005; McAllister & Tochkov, 2009; Oyedeji, n.d.) found that perseverance contributes to students' academic achievement. Furthermore, Davidson et al. (2008) reported that other performance character qualities; including diligence, a strong work ethic, positive attitude, and ingenuity, also have a significant influence on student's educational success. Results of studies by Akey (2006); and Reis et al. (2005) indicated that students who were resilient achieved increased levels of academic success.

The findings of the present study supported conclusions that were found in previous research (e.g., Akey, 2006; Anderson & Keith, 1997; Davidson et al., 2008; Duckworth & Seligman, 2005; Khan, 2005; Markman et al., 2005; McAllister & Tochkov, 2009; Oyedeji (n.d.); Reis et al., 2005) studies that found significant correlations between the motivational factor of task and four of the performance character qualities (i.e., interest and effort, subscales of perseverance; and impulsive-control and planning, two of the subscales of self-control) and students' self-reported academic performance. However, this information may be generalized only to similar school settings, with students who possess similar demographics. Character educators should be aware that students' academic grades can be predicted from their perceptions of performance character qualities.

Implications for Research

The findings of the present study suggested four implications for research. First, correlational relationships between students' perceptions of other performance character qualities (e.g., diligence, strong work ethic, and positive attitude) and other motivational factors (e.g., token, affiliation, and social concern) should be examined. Also, an examination of the differences between male and female students' perceptions of these particular performance character qualities and the differences in motivations (e.g., token, affiliation, and social concern) towards performance character qualities should be considered. Students in urban school districts may not have been introduced to particular performance character qualities, or lack the meta-cognitive skills to know that they possess an orientation towards a particular motivational factor. This type of study can be of value to character educators when developing character education programs.

Second, in examining whether students' academic performance can be predicted from their perceptions of performance character qualities, this study relied on students' self-reported academic performance. A study that correlates students' actual grades with their perceptions of performance character qualities may produce more reliable information. Hence, results can provide a better assessment of whether increased perceptions of performance character qualities result in higher levels academic achievement.

Third, this study was framed on the premise that students who acquire performance character qualities can increase their academic performance levels. This study suggested that an experimental longitudinal study should be performed at two separate high schools. The demographics of the students in the schools should be similar, with one school receiving extensive performance character education, and the other not receiving any form of character education. The study should examine students' academic achievement levels over a four year period (i.e., grades 9 through 12), starting in grade nine. In the school that receives the experimental treatment of performance education, the treatment should be threaded and woven into every course and activity in which the students are engaged. This type of study could provide comprehensive evidence regarding the comparison of performance character qualities and students' academic achievement levels in the two schools

Finally, this study employed a quantitative research method to gather, analyze, and develop inferences about the data. Students were given several survey instruments to complete. The students answered prescribed questions using forced-choice rating scales. To get more realistic knowledge of how students think about performance character qualities, a qualitative research study should be performed. Through an exhaustive search, no published qualitative

research studies have been found examining African American urban students' perceptions of performance character qualities. Group discussions, facilitated by a character educator, should be used as an approach to data collection. The facilitator could provide a thread for students' discussions of performance character qualities. With this method, character educators could acquire robust and genuine knowledge and understanding of students' perceptions of performance character qualities.

Implications for Character Education Practices

This study presents preliminary evidence that urban high school students possess slightly above average perceptions of performance character qualities (i.e., perseverance, self-control, resilience, and assertiveness). Also, evidence also emerged that these students possess various motivations towards performance character qualities. Upon entering high school, students are expected to have acquired certain knowledge along with some understanding of this knowledge. This statement might not apply to urban high school students, as knowledge and understanding related to performance character qualities has not been studied. In research performed by Fan, et al. (2005), students who live in urban areas are usually from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds and may not have had opportunities to develop perceptions of performance character qualities, or may have fairly weak perceptions of these qualities. However, the results of the present study provided character education curricula developers with a baseline for the development of a performance character education program that can be implemented using students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities as the starting point.

Second, results of the present study can assist character educators in developing lesson plans that can facilitate successful learning. Without understanding what students' perceptions are relative to performance character qualities, character educators may find it difficult to make learning relevant to students' understanding of those qualities. Furthermore, assuming that urban students have correct knowledge of performance character qualities may result in improper development and implementation of character education programs. Results of the present study can provide information to character educators regarding the approximate developmental level of students, as levels related to the students' perceptions of, and motivations toward, performance character qualities change over time. Hence, character educators may find it easier to instill performance character qualities in students if they are aware of the developmental levels of the students.

Finally, results of this study revealed that male and female students' perceptions of performance character qualities were not significantly different. Implications of this finding for character educators is that they can employ the same character lesson plan for both genders.

Recommendations

The evidence from this study indicated that students in the present study possessed slightly above average perceptions of performance character qualities. If students are to excel in school, work, and beyond, they need increased perceptions of performance character qualities. It is recommended that urban schools develop and implement comprehensive character education programs that are designed to teach and instill performance character qualities in students. Davidson and Likona (2006) reported that for students to reach their potential for excellence when engaged in an academic or workplace environment, it is important to introduce them to and

teach them character education, in particular, performance character qualities. Davidson and Likona also reported that expectations and challenges facing students in school that they will encounter in the workplace require a consistent demonstration of certain performance character qualities, such as: assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, diligence, dependability, and reliability.

Davidson and Likona (2005) reported that for character education programs to be effective, all stakeholders must consistently demonstrate the performance character qualities that are to be taught and instilled in the students. These stakeholders include the school's faculty and staff (e.g., lunch aids, bus drivers, secretaries, and janitors) students' parents, church leaders, business leaders, and community groups. Each stakeholder group makes important contributions in helping the school and its students to become the best that they can be. However, evidence from the present study and the review of literature revealed that students who possess certain character quality traits generally achieve higher levels of academic success.

Second, urban high school performance character educators should use a pedagogical instructional approach founded in constructivism when teaching performance character education. The pedagogical instructional approach used in teaching students performance character education can make a difference relative to increasing students' perceptions of performance character qualities. One prevalent method employed in the classroom is the behavioristic approach that teaches students to memorize information and then regurgitate it upon request. This approach does not provide opportunities for students to internalize performance character qualities effectively. In opposition, Berkowitz and Bier (2005) found that a constructivist teaching methodological approach is preferable for increasing students'

perceptions of performance character qualities. Berkowitz and Bier reported that constructivist teaching strategies, such as peer discourse, role-playing, and cooperative learning are the most effective learning strategies when engaging students in character education.

Using constructivist pedagogical approaches to teaching/learning improves the probability of students increasing their perceptions of performance character qualities. While engaged in peer-discourse, students can learn from one another that performance character qualities are transferable or can apply to many behavioral situations (i.e., they can take on different meanings, as a skill is used in various contexts). For example, students can learn that resilience is an important quality to possess when trying to solve a math problem, as well as, when developing their bodies for athletic competitions. However, role playing, using performance character qualities as themes, facilitates opportunities for students to simulate real-life situations and events, in which subsequently students can analyze these simulations critically. Hence, students internalize and acquire deeper understandings of performance character qualities. Finally, cooperative learning provides opportunities for students to construct their own knowledge of performance character qualities. This pedagogical strategy also helps students to internalize and acquire a deeper understanding of performance character qualities. Berkowitz and Bier (2005) reported that effective cooperative learning techniques should be designed to foster individual accountability and responsibility. Students should not be rewarded for participating, performing, or engaging in activities in which they are assigned. However, these activities should be interesting and challenging, and encourage students to become intrinsically motivated to participate in learning.

Finally, urban high school students should receive classroom instruction for both performance and moral character. Teaching urban students either one of these forms of character education alone only partially assists students to reach their full potential. Davidson and Likona (2006) reported that performance and moral character must be integrated in a character education program for students to reach their optimum level of success. Most high schools that teach character education focus on moral character. This type of education teaches students to be ethically good. However, students need to be taught to be both ethically good and work at being the best that they can be. "To educate a person in morals and not in mind is to educate, if not a menace, at least a detriment to society. Who wants an honest but incompetent doctor, lawyer, or mechanic?" (Davidson & Likona, 2006, p. 1). Contrarily, people do not want a competent psychiatrist or nurse who engages in immoral acts while performing their duties.

Davidson and Likona (2006) reported that performance and moral character have an interdependent relationship. When both are taught in conjunction with the other, students learn that strong performance character can help them achieve their moral goals, and moral character can supply the motivational energy that drives high-level performance and ensures that the means they used to accomplish their goals are ethical. Moral and performance character can assist students in accomplishing their goals (e.g., academic, work, and beyond). Davidson et al. , (2008) reported that moral and performance character play four important roles in the lives of successful students: (a) students need performance character in order for them to do their best work; (b) performance character is developed through, for example, hard work, overcoming obstacles, and finding joy in a job well done; (c) moral character creates a classroom relationship that facilitates a positive learning environment; and (d) moral character is developed through

their school work. Through using constructive feedback to help other students with their school work, studying lessons on ethical issues, and engaging in service work projects that add value to solving real-world problems, students can develop moral character as well as performance character qualities.

APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTS

Grit Scale

Please respond to the 8 items using the following scale.

Place a check mark in the box that most closely matches how each statement is like you. Be honest – there are no right or wrong answers	Not at all like me	Not much like me	Somewhat like me	Mostly like me	Very much like me
1. I often set a goal, but later choose to pursue a different one.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
2. New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
3. I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time, but later lost interest.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
4. I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
5. I finish whatever I begin.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
6. Setbacks don't discourage me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
7. I am a hard worker.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
8. I am diligent.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Self-Control

Place a check mark in the box that most closely matches how each statement is like you. Be honest – there are no right or wrong answers	Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Usually
1. Bothers other students.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
2. Does not stop to think.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
3. Impulsive person.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
4. Talks quickly.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
5. Involved, but wants out.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
6. Needs to use lots of self-control.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
7. Trouble because does not think.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
8. Gets carried away.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
9. Gets information.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
10. Thinks hard about what steps.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
11. Thinks of choices.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
12. Different ways to take of it.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
13. Thinks different solutions	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
14. Tries to solve problems.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
15. Makes action plan.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
16. Stops and thinks.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
17. Reminded several times.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
18. Difficult to do work.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
19. Easily distracted.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
20. Switches between things.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
21. Gets frustrated.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Resiliency Scale

Place a check mark in the box that most closely matches how each statement is like you. Be honest – there are no right or wrong answers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. When I make plans, I follow through with them.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
2. I usually manage one way or another.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
3. I am able to depend on myself more than anyone else.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
4. Keeping interested in things is important to me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
5. I can be on my own if I have to.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
6. I feel proud that I have accomplished things in my life.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
7. I feel that I can handle many things at a time.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
8. I am determined.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
9. I can get through difficult times because I've experienced difficulty before.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
10. I have self-discipline.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
11. I keep interested in things.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
12. My belief in myself gets me through hard times.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
13. In an emergency, I'm somebody people generally can rely on.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
14. I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
15. Sometimes I make myself do things whether I want to or not.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
16. When I am in a difficult situation, I can usually find my way out of it.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
17. I have enough energy to do what I have to do.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Assertiveness Self-Statement Test

Place a check mark in the box that most closely matches how each statement is like you. Be honest – there are no right or wrong answers	Hardly ever had the thought	Rarely had the thought	Sometimes had the thought	Often had the thought	Very often had the thought
1. I was thinking that it is not my responsibility to help people I hardly know.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
2. I was thinking that there didn't seem to be a good reason why I should say yes.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
3. I was thinking that I just don't feel like saying yes.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
4. I was thinking that this request is an unreasonable one.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
5. I was thinking that the person could ask someone else.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
6. I was thinking that I will be happy later if I don't commit myself to something I don't want to do.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
7. I was thinking that I am perfectly free to say no.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
8. I was thinking that if I don't say no now, I'll end up doing something I don't want to do.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
9. I was thinking that this person should take care of his/her own business.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
10. I was thinking that my own plans are too important.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
11. I was thinking that I don't have to please this person by giving in to his/her request.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
12. I was thinking that if I commit myself, it will interfere with my plans.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
13. I was thinking that I am too busy now to say yes.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
14. I was thinking that since I hardly know the person, why should I go out of my way for him/her.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
15. I was thinking that it doesn't matter what the person thinks of me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
16. I was thinking that this request is an imposition on me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Motivation

Place a check mark in the box that most closely matches how each statement is like you. Be honest – there are no right or wrong answers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I like being given the chance to do something again to make it better.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
2. I try harder with interesting work.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
3. I like to see that I am improving in my schoolwork.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
4. I need to know that I am getting somewhere with my schoolwork.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
5. I don't mind working a long time at schoolwork that I find interesting.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
6. I try hard to make sure that I am good at my schoolwork.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
7. When I am improving in my schoolwork, I try even harder.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
8. The harder the problem the harder I try.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
9. I try hard at school because I am interested in my work.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
10. I work hard to try to understand new things at school.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
11. I am always trying to do my schoolwork better.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
12. Winning is important to me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
13. Coming first is very important to me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
14. I like to compete with others at school.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
15. I work harder if I'm trying to be better than others.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
16. I want to do well at school to be better than my classmates.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
17. Praise from my teachers for my good schoolwork is important to me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
18. Praise from my friends for good schoolwork is important to me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
19. At school I work best when I get praised.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
20. I want to be praised for my good schoolwork.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
22. Praise from my parents for good schoolwork is important to me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Demographic Survey

Age

_____

Gender

- ❑ Male
- ❑ Female

Race/Ethnicity

- ❑ African American
- ❑ American Indian/Alaskan Native
- ❑ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ❑ Caucasian
- ❑ Hispanic
- ❑ Middle Eastern
- ❑ Multi-ethnic
- ❑ Other _____

Grade Level

❑ Ninth ❑ Tenth ❑ Eleventh ❑ Twelfth

Who do you live with?

- ❑ Mother and Father
- ❑ Mother and Stepfather
- ❑ Legal Guardian
- ❑ Mother only
- ❑ Father and Stepmother
- ❑ Other relatives
- ❑ Father only
- ❑ Grandparents
- ❑ Other _____

What kind of grades do you generally receive in school?

- ❑ All As
- ❑ All Bs
- ❑ All Cs
- ❑ All Ds
- ❑ All Fs
- ❑ Mostly As and Some Bs
- ❑ Mostly Bs and Some Cs
- ❑ Mostly Cs and Some Ds
- ❑ Mostly Ds and Some Fs
- ❑ Mostly Bs and Some As
- ❑ Mostly Cs and Some Bs
- ❑ Mostly Ds and Some Cs
- ❑ Mostly Fs and Some Ds

What is your father's and mother's highest level of education?

Father

- ❑ Less than high school
- ❑ High school graduate/GED
- ❑ Some college
- ❑ Technical school
- ❑ Associate's degree
- ❑ Bachelor's degree
- ❑ Graduate degree
- ❑ Other _____

Mother

- ❑ Less than high school
- ❑ High school graduate/GED
- ❑ Some college
- ❑ Technical school
- ❑ Associate's degree
- ❑ Bachelor's degree
- ❑ Graduate degree
- ❑ Other

APPENDIX B

PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

Parental Permission/Research Informed Consent/Information Sheet

Title of Study: An Examination of the Perceptions of Urban High School Students Regarding Performance Character Qualities for Future Success

Purpose:
You are being asked to allow your child to be in a research study at their school that is being conducted by Robin W. Stewart of the College of Education, Curriculum and Instruction Department from Wayne State University. The purpose of this study is to examine student perceptions of performance character qualities. Your child has been selected because he/she is enrolled in the Central City Vocational Academy.

Study Procedures:
If you decide to allow your child to take part in the study, your child will be asked to complete surveys on performance character qualities that measure perseverance of effort, self-control, resiliency, assertiveness, and motivation. In addition, they will be asked to complete a short demographic survey. Sample items from each of the surveys are shown below.

Perseverance of Effort
- I finish whatever I begin
- I am a hard worker
- Setbacks do not discourage me

Self-control
- Thinks of choices
- Tries to solve problems
- Makes action plans

Resiliency
- I can be on my own if I have to
- I am determined
- I feel proud that I have accomplished things in my life

Assertiveness
- I was thinking that I am perfectly free to say no
- I was thinking that it doesn't matter what the person thinks of me

- I was thinking that this request is an unreasonable one

Motivation

- The harder the problem, the harder I try
- Winning is important to me
- I like to see that I am improving in my school work

Students will be asked to indicate their agreement on each of the items on the surveys. Their involvement will be approximately one hour.

The demographic survey will ask the students to provide their age, gender, self-reported academic achievement. The questions will use a check-off format, with no right or wrong answers. The students will be told that they do not have to answer any questions on the survey.

Copies of each of the surveys will be in the school office for review.

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. There may also be risks involved from taking part in this study that are not known to researchers at this time.

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. As the surveys will have no identifiers, your child's survey cannot be withdrawn after it has been returned to Mr. Stewart. 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 Robin Stewart at one of the following phone number or . If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, the Chair of the Institutional Review Board 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 2-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 returning the tear-off sheet to your child's teacher, by email at ar6867@wayne.edu or by telephone at .

Tear Off

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.

_____

Printed Name of Parent

_____ _____

Signature of Parent Date

APPENDIX C

ADOLESCENT ASSENT FORM

[Behavioral]Documentation of Adolescent Assent Form
(ages 13-17)

Title: An Examination of the Perceptions of Urban High School Students Regarding Performance Character Qualities for Future Success

Study Investigator: Robin W. Stewart

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 Central City Vocational Academy. 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 your ideas about performance character qualities that are important for future success.

What will happen to me?
You will be asked to complete some surveys that measure performance character qualities, including perseverance, self-control, resiliency, assertiveness, and motivation, as well as personal characteristics, such as your age, gender, and academic achievement. Examples of the items on these scales include:

Perseverance of Effort
- I finish whatever I begin
- I am a hard worker
- Setbacks do not discourage me

Self-control
- Thinks of choices
- Tries to solve problems
- Makes action plans

Resiliency
- I can be on my own if I have to
- I am determined
- I feel proud that I have accomplished things in my life

Assertiveness

- I was thinking that I am perfectly free to say no
- I was thinking that it doesn't matter what the person thinks of me
- I was thinking that this request is an unreasonable one

Motivation

- The harder the problem, the harder I try
- Winning is important to me
- I like to see that I am improving in my school work

You will be asked to rate your agreement with each of the statements. There are no right or wrong answers. You can skip any questions that you do not want to answer.

How long will I be in the study?
You will be in the study for approximately one hour.

Will the study help me?
You may not benefit from being in this study; however information from this study may help other people in the future.

Will anything bad happen to me?
There are no risks to participating in the study.

Do my parents or guardians know about this? (If applicable)
This study information has been given to your parents/guardian. You can talk this over with them before you decide.

What about confidentiality?
We will keep your records private unless we are required by law to share any information. The law says we have to tell someone if you might hurt yourself or someone else.

What if I have any questions?
For questions about the study please call Robin Stewart at . If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, the Chair of the Institutional Review Board 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 researcher. No one will be angry if you decide to stop being in the study.

Agreement to be in the Study

By completing the surveys in the packet and returning them to Mr. Stewart, you are agreeing to participate in this study.

APPENDIX D

HUMAN INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE APPROVAL

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

CONCURRENCE OF EXEMPTION

FILE

To: Robin Stewart
Teacher Education

For: **From:** Dr. Scott Millis K. Campbell-Voytal /sz.
Chairperson, Behavioral Institutional Review Board (B3)

Date: October 31, 2011

RE: IRB #: 108811B3X

Protocol Title: An Examination of the Perceptions of Urban High School Students Regarding Performance Character Qualities for Future Success

Sponsor:

Protocol #: 1110010265

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed and found to qualify for **Exemption** according to paragraph #2 of the Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations [45 CFR 46.101(b)].

- Revised Protocol Summary Form (received in the IRB Office 10/31/2011)
- Revised Protocol (received in the IRB Office 10/31/2011)
- The request for a waiver of the requirement for written documentation of informed consent for adolescents and parents has been granted according to 45 CFR 46.117(1)(2). Justification for this request has been provided by the PI in the Protocol Summary Form. The waiver satisfies the following criteria: (i) the research involves no more than minimal risk to participants, (ii) the research involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context, (iii) the consent process is appropriate, and (iv) an information sheet disclosing the required and appropriate additional elements of consent disclosure will be provided to participants.
- Parental Permission/Research Informed Consent/Information Sheet (dated 09/21/2011)
- Behavioarl Adolescent Assent Form (dated 09/21/2011)
- Letter to Parents
- Data collection tools: Grit Scale, Self-Control Scale, Resiliency Scale, Assertiveness Self-Statement Test, Motivation Scale, and Demographic Survey.
- Letter of support from Inkster Public Schools Board of Education and Administrative Offices (dated 05/11/2011)

This proposal has not been evaluated for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human subjects in relation to the potential benefits.

- Exempt protocols do not require annual review by the IRB.
- All changes or amendments to the above-referenced protocol require review and approval by the IRB **BEFORE** implementation.

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ABSTRACT

AN EXAMINATION OF THE PERCEPTIONS AND MOTIVATIONS OF URBAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REGARDING PERFORMANCE CHARACTER QUALITIES FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

by

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The purpose of this dissertation is to understand student perceptions and motivations regarding performance character qualities (i.e., assertiveness, perseverance, resilience, and self-control) at an urban high school. In examining these relationships, students' perceptions and motivations towards performance character qualities were identified. The study is important because students' poor academic performance, low test scores, low high school graduation rates, and employers reporting that high school graduates do not possess the necessary performance qualities needed to excel on the job indicate that urban high school students may lack the proper orientation toward performance qualities. Research is needed to understand types of skills that students need to be prepared for the world of work and beyond, and to determine the best way that high schools can provide instruction in these skills.

A descriptive quantitative research design approach was used to collect data on students' perceptions and motivations toward performance character qualities. The findings revealed a statistically significant relationship between students' perceptions of performance character

qualities and their motivations towards these qualities. The findings also indicated that male and female students did not differ in their perceptions of these qualities. In addition, female students possessed a greater motivational orientation towards task and effort than male students. Lastly, it was found that students' self-reported academic grades can be predicted from students' perceptions of performance character qualities.

Two main conclusions that were drawn from this research are (1) without being aware of students' perceptions and motivations regarding performance character qualities, character educators may find it difficult to make learning relevant to students' understanding of performance character qualities; and (2) results of the correlations between students' perceptions of performance character qualities and their motivation for performance character qualities can be used to improve student orientations towards a particular performance character quality. It is recommended that urban schools develop and implement comprehensive character education programs that are designed to teach and instill performance character qualities in students.

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