EXPLORING RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN ALTERNATIVE AND GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS

A Dissertation

by

TIA BILLY CROSSLEY

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2009

Major Subject: School Psychology

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ABSTRACT

Exploring Risk and Protective Factors Among African American Males in Alternative and General Education Settings. (August 2009)

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A large number of African American males have experienced risk and protective factors that may impede or enhance their success in the school setting. As a result of these risk and protective factors, they may or may not be at-risk for adverse outcomes behaviorally as well as academically. As indicated throughout the literature, to better serve behaviorally at-risk students, the educational system has responded by implementing methods such as zero-tolerance policies, increased security, and alternative education programs. While the former has been established throughout the literature, there has been a paucity of research on alternative education programs in general and even less with regard to African American male students. This study examined four levels of risk and protective factors, individual, school, community, and family, among African American males in both alternative and general educational settings. One hundred fifteen students ages 11 to 16 were assessed for demographics, self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity measures.

The purpose of the study was to examine the differences between risk and protective factors among African American males in alternative and general education

settings. Specifically, the individual level was examined in detail using the following risk and protective factors: self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity. This study also examined the impact risk and protective factors have in predicting the likelihood that an African American male would be placed in an alternative education setting. Both independent samples t-tests and hierarchical logistic regression analyses were used. Results indicated that there are statistically significant differences in levels of self-efficacy and school engagement between African American males in alternative education settings and general educations settings. No difference was found in levels of racial identity among the groups. Results from the hierarchical logistic regressions indicated that self-efficacy is a significant predictor.

These findings show the importance for school psychologists to work with students to instill confidence to be successful in school settings. Also, since self-efficacy was shown to be a significant predictor of placement status in alternative school settings, it is important for school psychologists and school personnel to get involved with these students before they even become at-risk.

DEDICATION

To my wonderful husband, Quinton Crossley, whose *patience*, love, and support guided me to the end of this lengthy process

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There has been a rising concern across the education and mental health fields about school violence, substance abuse, and academic failure among students in the public school setting. Students who are considerably vulnerable to undesirable school, family, and environmental circumstances and stressors have been referred to as "at-risk" throughout the literature (Rodney, Johnson, & Srivastava, 2005; Tobin & Sprague, 2002). These students tend to "display failing grades, truancy, low motivation, short attention span, low self-esteem, behavior or discipline problems or negative encounters or both with the juvenile courts" (Dirette & Kolak, 2004, p. 337). Many students who engage in delinquent and antisocial behaviors are at-risk for negative outcomes, such as delinquency, school dropout, vocational maladjustment, drug and alcohol abuse, increased rates of arrest and incarceration, relationship problems, psychological, social, and emotional maladjustment, as well as higher hospitalization and mortality rates (Crean, 2004; McGee, 2003; Van Acker, 2007). Of particular interest among students who are at-risk are African American males in alternative education settings.

African American Male Adolescents

African American males tend to be overrepresented in the juvenile justice system, have higher high school dropout rates, and higher unemployment rates when compared to their same age White male peers (Rollins & Valdez, 2006; Woods, 2005).

This dissertation follows the style of *School Psychology Review*.

African American males also tend to be disproportionately represented in terms of school failure. “It is evident that for many male African Americans, the schooling process is not a positive, nurturing, healthy developmental experience that helps to build character, shape values, and reduce vulnerability to social pressure and psychological stress” (Haynes, Troutman, & Nwachuku, 1998, p. 146). Given this information, it is clear that African American males are at-risk for adverse outcomes behaviorally and academically.

System Responses to Concerns

To respond to the concern of academic failure, high rates of violence, and related negative outcomes, many educational systems have implemented various methods such as increased security, zero-tolerance policies, and alternative school settings (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002; Noam, Warner, & Van Dyken, 2002; Skiba, 2002; Stader, 2006; Stinchcomb, Bazemore, & Reinstenberg, 2006). For example, it is not uncommon to see many schools across the United States with metal detectors or a large number of security guards on school grounds. Many schools have turned to increased security to maintain the safety of students and faculty (Eisenbraum, 2007), however, research has suggested that the increased presence of security guards or law enforcement might take away from the authority of teachers. As a result, students might be more likely to misbehave in the absence of the security guards (Hyman & Perone, 1998).

Zero Tolerance Policies

Zero tolerance policies developed in response to increasing school violence in the 1990s. Zero tolerance is defined as “a specific response to student misbehavior

where a school automatically and severely punishes students for a variety of infractions, often resulting in expulsions or suspensions and criminal charges" (Noam, Warner, & Van Dyken, 2002, p. 155). Throughout the literature there are arguments for and against zero tolerance polices.

Proponents of zero tolerance policies believe that it is an effective way of decreasing the crime amongst youth in schools (Stader, 2006; Stinchcomb, et al., 2006). Many believe that schools have become much safer for students and faculty as a result of these policies. This is evident in the declining numbers of students found with weapons and the increasing numbers of students feeling safer in schools (Stader, 2006). Proponents also believe that such policies allow faculty and school administrators to focus on educating students rather than on disciplining them.

Opponents of policies believe that they do not allow school personnel to identify and deal with the underlying issues of why school violence is occurring (Noam, Warner, & Van Dyken, 2002; Stinchcomb, et al. 2006). Many believe that it is a one-size-fits-all model that tends to stigmatize the students who are affected by this policy, especially minority students (Skiba, 2002). Opponents believe that while zero tolerance may play a role in curtailing school violence, it ignores the effects of excluding students through suspension and expulsions. For example, some effects may include an increase in maladaptive behaviors and withdrawal from school staff (Stinchcomb, et al. 2006). While increased security and zero tolerance policies may have positive and negative effects on students, school personnel should move toward the development of a school climate that allows for students to deal with the underlying causes of school violence,

such as problems within the self, family, and school. In addition, many school districts have also turned to alternative school settings as a means of dealing with at-risk youth.

Alternative Schools

Historically, alternative school settings have been used to serve at-risk students who have not been served well in the general education setting (McCants, 2006; Richards, 2005; Van Acker, 2007). Depending on the purpose of the alternative school, students may be placed in these settings due to academic failure or disruptive/inappropriate behaviors that may hinder others from learning in the classroom setting. Some are seen as the step before suspension or expulsion. In the 2005-2006 school year, there were 6,448 operating alternative schools out of a total of 97,382 schools including regular, vocational, and charter schools. Out of the 6,448 alternative schools, 504 were newly added that year (Hoffman, 2007).

Alternative schools were created in the early 1960s to better serve at-risk students, as well as to ensure the safety of all students (Kleiner, et al. 2002). Some alternative school settings also serve students who are in special education, advanced placement, and home-schooling. Many of the students who attend alternative school settings enter with different education and discipline needs. As such, they pose a challenge for many educators (Foley & Pang, 2006; Tsang, 2004). For the purpose of this paper, an alternative school setting refers to any public nontraditional school setting that services students who have been placed due to engaging in antisocial behaviors including aggression, fighting, defiance of adults, possession of weapons, and threats to school personnel or other students (Tobin & Sprague, 2002; Van Acker, 2007). These

programs were designed to help keep at-risk students who display delinquent, antisocial, violent, and disruptive behaviors in a school setting and away from the larger student population (Tobin & Sprague, 2000).

One way these programs can help at-risk students is by understanding the risk and protective factors that occur within the student and the student's environment that influences the likelihood that the student will be placed in alternative school settings. For example, African American adolescent males as well as other youth experience risk and protective factors that occur at different levels: individual, family, and community. Within these levels are factors that influence the development of a student's personality and affect their overall adjustment, as well as how they perceive themselves and their environment. One model that allows for the understanding of these interacting levels and processes that affect people within their environment is the ecological model of human development.

Theoretical Framework

Ecological Model of Human Development

The ecological model of human development was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner. This model postulates that development occurs through bidirectional interactions between the person and environment (Bronfenbrenner 2000; Tsang, 2004). The environment is further divided into five interacting ecosystems that influence human development: the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. The individual is at the center of these systems (Bronfenbrenner, 2000). This model assumes that the individual is not only influenced by characteristics within,

but also by external forces that the individual interacts with in his or her environment (Atzaba-Poria, Pike, & Deater-Deckard, 2004). The microsystem is the immediate system that directly affects the individual. It can be characterized as the direct interactions that an individual may have with his or her family, peers, and community. The mesosystem refers to the connections between the microsystems that involve the individual person. The exosystem is the system where the individual does not play an active role. It is the system where social settings indirectly influence the individual and others involved in the microsystems. The macrosystem is the overarching views and cultures of society. The chronosystem is the system that takes into account consistency and change over time involving the individual and the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 2000). This model, as well as variations of this model, has been used throughout the literature to help understand external and internal influences that affect individuals and place them at-risk. Research suggests that there is no single risk or protective factor that can produce adverse or favorable outcomes in an individual's life; rather, it is multiple risk or protective factors that produce either positive or negative outcomes (Arthur, Briney, Hawkins, Abott, Brooke-Weiss, Catalano, 2007; Gutman, et al. 2002; Sameroff, et al. 2003; Van Acker, 2007). An understanding of risk and protective factors in terms of the ecological model of human development, especially as it pertains to African American male adolescents in alternative education settings, can provide greater insight in terms of potential outcomes of at-risk African American youth and how they behave and adjust to their environments. For the purpose of this study, the ecological view of human development will be used to identify and understand risk and protective factors

for a sample of African American middle school boys in alternative and general education programs.

Categories of Risk and Protective Factors

Throughout the literature, studies have divided risk and protective factors into categories or levels to examine the impact on individuals (Barrow, Armstrong, Vargo, & Boothroyd, 2007; Li, Nussbaum, & Richards, 2007; Rodney, Johnson, & Srivastava, 2005). Garmezy (1985) identified three consistent categories of variables that are mentioned throughout the literature and are found within an individual's context: family-based, community-based, and dispositional attributes or individual-based. For the purpose of this study, the community-based level will be expanded to add a fourth level: school-based.

Family-based factors are found within the family (Carr & Vandiver, 2001). There is evidence to suggest that the family plays a key role in the development of risk and protective factors for children and adolescents (Annunziata, Hogue, Faw, & Liddle, 2006; Fulkerson et al., 2006; Woolley, & Bowen, 2007). Families can provide children and adolescents with the coping skills that are continuously present as a protective factor in children who are resilient (Garmezy, 1985). Some family-based factors include socioeconomic status (SES), family size and structure, living arrangements of the child, parental involvement, parental education, and parental incarceration. For the purpose of this study, the following family-based factors were examined: family structure, parental involvement, parental education, and parental criminality.

Community-based factors are risk or protective factors that are present in a child's or adolescent's larger environment that have a direct effect on a child's development (Rak & Patterson, 1996). Some community-based factors include scarce access to resources, such as community centers and job opportunities, and exposure to neighborhood violence. Research suggests that when community-based factors are coupled with disadvantage, they are more likely to affect ethnic minorities (Smith & Hasbrouck, 2006). Factors within the community can be either positive or negative and can produce healthy or maladaptive development. For the purpose of this study the following community based factors were examined: exposure to violence and socially supportive relationships.

School–based factors are factors that are found within the school environment. Schools can play a critical role in buffering the risk factors that plague students. Some common school-based factors include peer relationships, teacher relationships, grade retention, and school climate. For the purpose of this study the following school-based factors were examined: peer relationships and grade retention.

Dispositional-based or individual-based factors are factors that are within the child. These factors are dependent on whether the child perceives the risk factors that are present within himself or herself or within in his or her family, school, or community life as being stressful. They include variables such as self-efficacy, school engagement, self esteem, gender, and racial identity. For the purpose of this study, the specific dispositional variables of self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity were examined.

Purpose of the Study

There is a lack of research regarding differences between risk and protective factors concerning African American male students who are placed in alternative school settings due to disciplinary concerns. The ecological model of human development can be applied to understanding the range and impact of variables affecting these students. Not only is there little known about the differences in risk and protective factors among African American males in alternative school settings, there is a lack of understanding as to what pathways lead to placement in alternative school settings. Why do some succeed while others fail? Thus, to address this gap in the literature, the purpose of this study is two-fold. First, this study seeks to compare the differences in risk and protective factors, from an ecological perspective between African American adolescent males, who have been placed in alternative school settings for disciplinary reasons, and African American males in the general education setting who have not been placed in an alternative school setting within the past academic school year. Second, this study seeks to examine the relative importance of risk and protective factors and how they predict the placement status of African American males in alternative school settings.

Research Questions

There is ample literature concerning risk and protective factors; however, there is limited research comparing differences in risk and protective factors in African American males in alternative and general education school settings. In addition, there is also limited research evaluating which of these risk and protective factors predict the

placement status of African American males in alternative school settings. Thus, the following questions were addressed in this study:

1) Is there a difference in self-efficacy among students in alternative school settings as compared to students in general education settings?
    a. It is hypothesized that African American males in general education settings will evidence higher self-efficacy.
2) Is there a difference in school engagement among students in alternative school settings as compared to students in general education settings?
    a. It is hypothesized that African American males in an alternative school setting will evidence a lower level of engagement with their home school (general education setting) as compared to students in the general education setting.
3) Is there a difference in racial identity among students in alternative school settings as compared to students in general education settings?
    a. It is hypothesized that African American males in general education settings will report a more positive racial identity as compared to students in alternative school settings.
4) How much do risk factors at the individual level predict the placement status of African American males being placed in alternative school settings? Specifically, after controlling for risk factors at the community, school, and family levels.

a. Risk factors at the individual level will significantly contribute above and beyond to placement status in alternative education settings after controlling for variables at the family, school, and community level.

Implications

Despite the continuing concern with the increase in violence and aggression in the schools, and the high frequency of negative outcomes for African American males in particular, very little is known about which factors or combination of factors contribute to the variance in terms of likelihood of being placed in alternative school settings. This study also will provide school psychologists and other school personnel with greater insight into the risk and protective factors that influence or impede African American males' successful development in a regular education setting. Understanding the factors that contribute and hinder the successful development of African American males can allow for better prevention and intervention strategies by identifying the where, when, and how in terms of intervening when a child exhibits behaviors that may precipitate placement in an alternative educational setting.

Important Definitions

Many terms are used with multiple or different meanings depending on context. Below are a list of terms and their meanings as the terms are used in this paper:

Alternative school setting/alternative education program: Alternative school setting refers to any public nontraditional school setting that services students who have been placed due to engaging in antisocial behaviors including aggression, fighting,

defiance of adults, possession of weapons, and threats to school personnel or other students.

At-risk students: At-risk students refer to those students who are considerably vulnerable to undesirable school, family, and environmental circumstances and stressors.

Zero tolerance: Zero tolerance is defined as "a specific response to student misbehavior where a school automatically and severely punishes students for a variety of infractions, often resulting in expulsions or suspensions and criminal charges" (Noam, Warner, & Van Dyken, p. 155, 2002).

Risk factor: Risk factors have been characterized as variables increase the chances of maladaptive outcomes (Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002).

Protective factor: Protective factors have been characterized as "those attributes of person's, environments, situations, and events that appear to temper predictions of psychopathology based upon an individual's at-risk status" (Gutman et al., 2002, p.370).

Self-efficacy: Self-efficacy is defined as "the confidence individuals have in their ability to execute specific behaviors" (Robbins, Pender, Ronis, Kazanis, & Pis, 2004, p. 436).

School engagement: School engagement is defined using three components: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. Fredricks et al. (2005) characterized behavioral engagement as drawing on the participation aspect of school. Emotional engagement is characterized as drawing on the affective component of school engagement. Cognitive engagement is characterized by drawing on investment.

Racial Identity: Racial identity is defined "as that part of the person's self-concept that is related to her or his membership within a race" (Rowley, et al. 1998).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The growing concerns for ensuring safe schools and meeting the needs of at-risk students have resulted in the implementation of many methods and increased numbers of students being placed in alternative school settings as one component of school discipline. What is known about alternative school settings and the students who are at-risk for being placed in alternative schools are discussed within an ecological model. Risk and protective factors that may precipitate placement in alternative school settings are presented, paying particular attention to factors in relation to African American males.

African American Youth

The African American community as a whole has experienced both racism and discrimination. Many African American youth have been vulnerable to academic problems. Adolescence tends to be marked by psychological and physiological changes (Gutman, Sameroff, Eccles, 2002). Not surprisingly, research has suggested that African American youth tend to start out at similar levels in terms of their academic test scores as compared to their White peers (Steele, 1992). Surprisingly, this changes by the time African American youth are in middle school (Steele, 1992). For example, they tend to be two grade levels behind their White peers (Steele, 1992).

Many African American males have experienced additional challenges. They tend to be disproportionately represented among students who fail as well as students

who are suspended and expelled. They also tend to have high dropout rates in inner cities (US Census Bureau, 2000). Research concerning African American males has involved substance abuse, gang violence, increased homicide rates, inadequate use of coping skills, alienation from mainstream America, and academic failure (Haynes, Troutman, & Nwachuku, 1998). For example, African American males tend to be 11 times more likely to be killed in community violence as compared to White males (Rodney, Johnson, & Srivastava, 2005). In addition, African American males tend to be retained at significantly higher rates as compared with African American females (Wiley, 2006). Many of these issues concerning African American youth, males in particular, have been identified and supported throughout the literature and have been termed risk factors.

Risk and Protective Factors Among African American Youth

Risk factors have been characterized as variables that increase the chances of maladaptive outcomes both emotionally and behaviorally (Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002; Hanlon et al., 2004). They have been researched throughout the literature in terms of the adjustment, academic development, and deviant behaviors of African Americans. Gutman et al. (2002) found in a sample of seventh grade students that as risk factors increased, students had lower GPAs, more absences, and lower achievement scores.

In terms of deviant behaviors, Hanlon et al. (2002) examined a sample of 375 African American youth to determine common predictors, antecedents, and correlates of engaging in deviant behavior. Results of the study showed that the participants' age at the time of the deviant act, deviance among peers and family, and the school problem

behaviors were good predictors of deviant behaviors among the sample. Throughout the literature it has been found that individuals with multiple risk factors are more likely to engage in problematic behaviors compared to individuals who have a single risk factor (Arthur, et al., 2007; Gutman et al. 2002; Hanlon et al., 2004; Li, Nussbaum, & Richards, 2007; Sameroff, Gutman, & Peck, 2003). Some common risk factors that have been linked to African Americans include poverty, maternal education, income, maternal occupational status, single family homes, larger family size, large number of children in the home, feelings of disengagement to school, growing up in less affluent neighborhoods, deviant peers and neighborhood exposure to violence (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand, 1993; Gutman et al., 2002; McLoyd, 1998; Smith & Hasbrouck, 2006; Woods, 2005). One common goal in the literature concerning risk factors is the need to decrease risk factors many individuals are experiencing and enhance the presence of protective factors (Arthur, et al., 2007; Hanlon et al., 2004).

Protective factors have differed from risk factors in terms of their direction and the nature of their effect (Sullivan & Farrell, 199). They have been characterized as "those attributes of person's environments, situations, and events that appear to temper predictions of psychopathology based upon an individual's at-risk status" (Gutman et al., 2002, p.370). These factors have been examined throughout the literature in terms of positive social adjustment and healthy psychosocial well being (Perlow, Bowman, & Weaver, 2007; Vanderbilt-Adriance & Shaw, 2008). Protective factors have also been linked to resiliency. Some common factors that have been mentioned throughout the literature include lack of family conflict, family functioning, avoidance of deviant peers,

high level of school interest, consistent discipline, family connectedness, school connectedness, parent involvement, social support, positive adult role models, high self-esteem, high self-efficacy, peer support, and positive racial identity (Buckner, Mezzacappa, & Beardslee, 2003; Gutman et al., 2002; Fulkerson, et al., 2006; Hanlon et al., 2004; Smalls et al., 2007). Although there is a dearth of information concerning protective factors in the literature, there is a lack of information addressing the identification of risk and protective factors among African American middle school boys in urban environments. This study addressed this gap in the literature by examining both risk and protective factors among African American middle school males both in urban alternative and general education settings. To better organize and understand some of these risk and protective factors, each risk and protective factor will be divided into categories based on Garmezy's ecological model.

Ecological Model

Following from Bronfrenbrenner's ecological model of human development, Garmezy (1985) found that the examination of risk and protective factors in an individual's environment should be done both internally (within the child) and externally (contexts surrounding the child). Garmezy (1985) identified three consistent categories throughout the literature of risk and protective factors: individual-based, family-based, and community-based (see Table 1). The community-based category can be further expanded to focus on school factors such as peer and teacher relationships. For purposes of this study, a four level ecological model will be adopted to explore what factors

predict the likelihood of African American males being placed in alternative school settings (see Figure 1).

Table 1. Factors within Levels of the Ecological Model

Individual	*Family*	*Community*	*School*
Self-Efficacy	Parental Involvement	Exposure to Violence	Peer Relationships
School Engagement	Family Structure	Socially Supportive Relationships	Grade Retention
Racial Identity	Parental Criminality		
	Parental education		

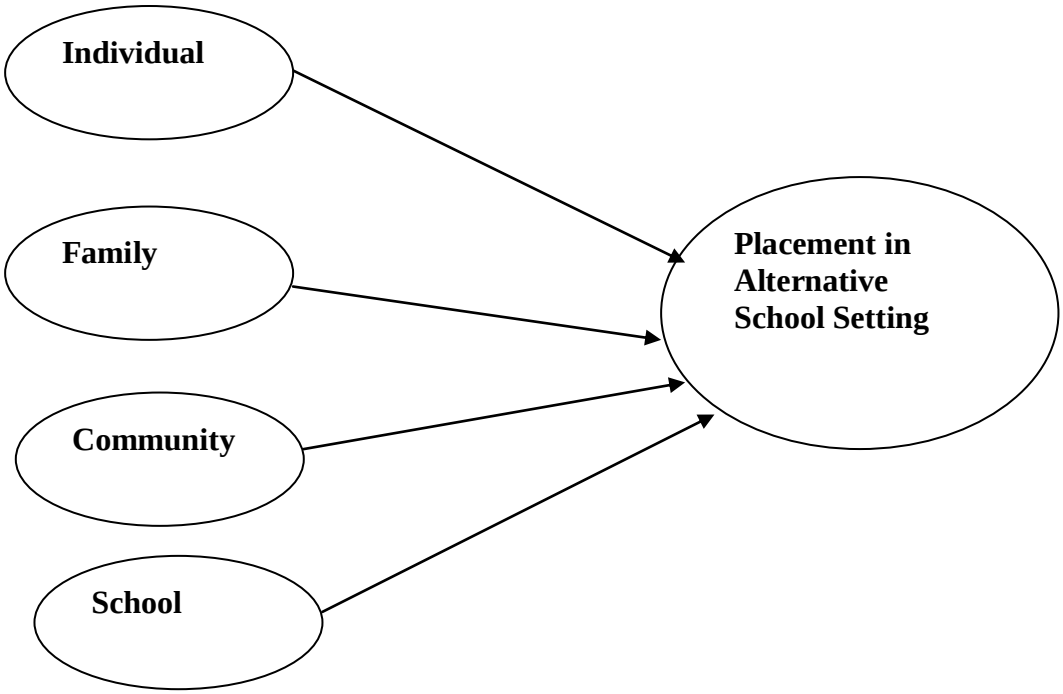

Figure 1. Ecological levels (factors within) predicting the likelihood of placement in alternative school settings.

Individual Factors

Individual-based factors are characteristics that are present within the child. These factors can include factors such as racial identity, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and school engagement. A child's perceptions of these factors can have an affect on his or her adjustment, whether it is in an adverse or prosocial manner (Bandura, 1977). For example, racial identity can affect a child's adjustment. Developing a positive racial identity may help buffer any negative experiences of racism and discrimination that may plague some African Americans (Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006). Although there are many individual factors that affect African Americans, self-efficacy,

school engagement, and racial identity are examined in detail for the purpose of this study.

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy has been seen as a critical protective or risk factor as it relates to African American youth and academic achievement (Barrow, Armstrong, Vargo, & Boothroyd, 2007). It is defined as "the confidence individuals have in their ability to execute specific behaviors" (Robbins, Pender, Ronis, Kazanis, & Pis, 2004, p. 436). For example, unless individuals believe that they can achieve and be successful in their actions, they will be less likely to pursue goals in the face of adversity (Bandura, Pastorelli, Barbaranelli, & Caprara, 1999). High levels of self-efficacy have been linked throughout the literature to better coping skills and higher levels of depression when dealing with adverse or stressful situations (Bandura, 1977; Hamill, 2003). This is due to the fact that people with higher levels of self-efficacy are less likely to get discouraged in adverse or stressful situations (Rollins & Valdez, 2006). In the study by Bandura et al. (1999), the relationship between self-efficacy and depression after 1 and 2 years of follow-up were examined. Results of the study showed that lower levels of self-efficacy were predicative of depression. Self-efficacy has also been linked to the development of positive social support systems (Bandura, 1997).

Bandura (1997) argued that we get our information about self-efficacy through four sources, which are often related to three areas of self-efficacy. They are mastery experience, vicarious experience, social persuasions, and emotional and physiological states. Mastery experience can be defined as a person's belief about his or her past

successes on academic tasks. Vicarious experience can be defined as observations of another's actions. With vicarious experience the person observes someone else to get a sense of a model's success and failure. If the person identifies with the model, then he or she will adjust his or her self-efficacy beliefs based on their observations. Social persuasions can be defined as judgments and evaluations that we receive from people in our lives. Emotional and physiological states can be defined as the arousal, anxiety or other emotional or physiological states the one experiences. These states give people an insight into their personal competence levels. For the purpose of this study, only the three areas of self-efficacy were examined: academic self-efficacy, emotional self-efficacy, and social self-efficacy.

Academic self-efficacy refers to a person's ability to master academic tasks and challenges. Higher levels of academic self-efficacy have been associated with setting higher goals, engaging in more challenging situations, and showing a greater interest in academic work (Usher & Pajares, 2006). Usher and Pajares (2006) examined the sources of self-efficacy in relation to academic and emotional self-efficacy. The sample consisted of 263 sixth grade students. Results indicated for the entire sample of students that mastery experience was the strongest predictor. For middle school girls, mastery experience and social persuasions were predictive of both academic and emotional self-efficacy. For middle school boys, mastery experience and vicarious experience were predictive of academic self-efficacy. For middle school boys it was their belief in their previous academic tasks as well as having the opportunity to observe the actions of other people influences their academic self-efficacy.

In another study conducted by Alliman-Brissett (2006), a sample of 108 middle school students in eighth grade were used to examine factors associated with mathematics career self-efficacy. Results of this study also found that there was also an importance of students in the sample to have support from both parents and teachers. Having role models and verbal feedback from people who are important to you will increase your self-efficacy in certain areas.

Social self-efficacy refers to a person's ability to maintain and develop peer relationships (Anderson & Betz, 2001; Muris, 2001). It has been linked to both psychological and career development. For example, lower levels social self-efficacy has been associated with social anxiety and depression (Anderson & Betz, 2001). In a study conducted by McFarlane, Bellissimo, and Norman (1995), 793 tenth grade students in a high school mathematics class were used to examine the relationship between social self-efficacy and social support from both family and friends to depression. Results indicated that both social self-efficacy and social support from both family and friends had a negative relationship to depression in the high school sample. Findings also showed that social support from friends had a stronger association than social support of family. This study outlines the importance of both family and peer interactions as well as the need for adolescents to have a strong belief in their abilities to maintain and develop relationships to buffer against psychological problems.

Emotional self-efficacy refers to a person's ability to cope with negative situations and emotions (Muris, 2001). Forms of emotional self-efficacy has been linked to peer acceptance, fewer associations with being aggressive and disruptive, and

psychological well-being (Mavroveli, Petrides, Rieffe, & Bakker, 2007; Petrides, Sangareau, Furnham, Frederickson, 2006). In a study by Mavroveli et al. (2007), a sample of 282 students ages 11 to 15 were used to examine trait emotional self-efficacy, psychological well-being and peer-rated social competence. Results of the study showed that as emotional self-efficacy increased so did adaptive coping styles among the adolescents. The authors found that a negative association between emotional self-efficacy and depressive thoughts and somatic complaints. In terms of peer ratings, results showed that students with high levels of emotional self-efficacy receive more nominations from their peers.

Throughout the literature, high levels of self-efficacy have been associated with better academic, psychological, and relationship functioning. It has shown to be an adequate protective factor for individuals who posses it. There have been studies that have used African Americans to examine the different areas of self-efficacy. However, there have not been studies that have examined all three areas of self-efficacy among African American males in both the alternative and general education settings. The present study will address this gap by examining the alternative school population and comparing the difference among this population to African American males in the general education setting.

School Engagement

A lack of school engagement has been linked to negative outcomes such as delinquency, teenage pregnancy, and school dropout (Caraway, Tucker, Reinke, & Hall, 2003; O'Farrell, Morrison, & Furlong, 2006). School engagement has been consistently

characterized throughout the literature as being comprised of three components: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. Behavioral engagement can be characterized as drawing on the participation aspect of school (Blumenfeld et al.2005; Caraway et al., 2003; Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Fredericks et al., 2005). It includes things such as participating in extracurricular activities and participation in classroom and academic tasks. Emotional engagement is characterized as drawing on the affective component of school engagement (Blumenfeld et al. 2005, Caraway et al., 2003; Fredericks et al., 2004; Fredericks et al., 2005). It includes both the negative and positive reactions of the student towards the school and the teacher. It also includes an identification aspect which includes things such as a sense of belonging to one's school. Cognitive engagement is characterized by drawing on investment (Blumenfeld et al.2005, Caraway et al., 2003; Fredericks et al., 2004; Fredericks et al., 2005). It includes things such as going beyond what is expected of you at school.

School engagement can be viewed as an important risk or protective factor to identify among African American males because students who are not engaged in school are more likely to experience adverse outcomes (Fredricks et al. 2005; O' Farrell et al. 2006). Notably, school engagement has been linked to self-efficacy. Students with high levels of self-efficacy tend to feel more engaged to school. In the study conducted by Caraway and colleagues (2003), a sample of 123 ninth through twelfth grade students were used to examine self-efficacy, goal orientation, and fear failure's association with school engagement. Results indicated that self-efficacy and goal orientation were positively associated with school engagement. Results also indicated that fear of failure

was negatively associated with school engagement. These findings suggest that having a clear understanding of goals and self-confidence can aide in being in engaged in the school setting. It should be noted that African Americans made up 24% of the sample.

School engagement has also been linked to academic competence. For example, students who feel connected to their school or report a sense of belongingness also tend to feel more competent academically (O'Farrell et al., 2006). In a study conducted by Sirin and Sirin (2004), a sample of 336 African American students and their mothers were used to examine school engagement and educational expectations. Results of the study indicated that both school engagement and educational expectations were predictive of school engagement. Findings also suggest African American students who have clear well-defined expectations and are engaged in school will more likely do well academically in school.

Throughout the literature, being engaged in school has been associated with better academic functioning. It has also been associated with better decision and goal setting behaviors. It has shown to be an adequate protective factor for individuals who possess it. There have been studies that have used African Americans to examine the different areas of school engagement. However, there have not been studies that have examined all three areas of school engagement among African American males in both the alternative and general education settings. Many of the studies look at only one or two areas of school engagement. In addition, few studies use a predominantly African American sample. The present study will address this gap by examining the alternative

school population and comparing the difference among this population to African American males in the general education setting.

Racial Identity

The time during adolescents is critical for youth because it is the time when they are developing an identity (Seaton, Scottham, & Sellers, 2006; Sellers et al., 2006). Racial identity can be seen as a risk or protective factor as it relates to African American adolescents. It can be viewed as an important risk or protective factor for African Americans because research has found that racial identity plays a role in African American's views and concepts of academic achievement and thought processes (Daniels, 2004; Harper & Tuckman, 2006). Developing a positive racial identity may also help buffer the negative connotations of racism and discrimination that plague some African Americans. Racial identity is defined "as that part of the person's self-concept that is related to her or his membership within a race" (Rowley et al. 1998). It can guide one's interactions with others and the physical environment (Harper & Tuckman, 2006). Some past models of Black racial identity have used stages to characterize having a healthy or unhealthy racial identity (Cross, 1991). These models tended to focus on one construct of racial identity that affects African American's perceptions of how they view their race as well as others (Harper & Tuckman, 2006). Newer models of racial identity have focused on multidimensional aspects of racial identity (Harper & Tuckman, 2006).

The Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) views racial identity as being only one aspect within the individual that influences how he or she views himself or herself and the environment. Depending on the situation, one's racial identity would

be a minor aspect influencing the situation or a salient aspect. There are four dimensions of racial identity that are defined by the MMRI: 1) racial salience, 2) racial ideology, 3) racial regard, 4) racial centrality (Rowley et al., 1998). Racial salience is the extent to which race is relevant at a particular moment in a person's life. Racial ideology is characterized by the beliefs and attitudes a person holds based on his or her perceptions of how members of his or her race should act. Racial centrality is how a person defines himself or herself in terms of race. Racial regard is the evaluative judgment that is placed on one's race. Racial regard and further be divided into two components: private regard and public regard. Private regard refers to how positively or negatively a person views African Americans or being apart of that racial group. Public regard refers to how positively or negatively a person views how others view African Americans (Rowley et al., 1998; Sellers et al., 2006).

There have been few studies that have examined adolescent racial identity. This is surprising because adolescents experience racial discrimination as well and begin to form their views of their identity during this stage of development. The present study addressed the gap in the literature dealing with the study of racial identity among adolescents by examining racial identity among African American males in both an alternative and general education setting.

Family Factors

The family is seen as a critical part of adolescent development. Research has shown that parents can influence a child's development both positively and negatively (Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002). Family based factors are characterized as variables

that are present within the family (Carr & Vandiver, 2001). The following family factors will be discussed: parental involvement, poverty, family structure, and parental criminality.

Parental Involvement

There have been many views of parental involvement. Because of this, there is not a concise definition that has been used throughout the literature. For the purpose of this study, parental involvement is defined as having three parts: "1) ensuring that children have proper school supplies 2) monitoring the amount of sleep that children receive and 3) supporting the child in arriving at school on time" (McKay et al., 2003, p. 108). Parental involvement has been seen as a critical factor across all grade levels for students. It has been positively associated with school achievement, academic grades, and development among children (Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002; Marcon, 1999). It has not only been viewed as enhancing the development and academic achievement of students, but it has also been viewed as a foundation for future learning of students (Keith et al., 1998).

Poverty/SES

While poverty and socioeconomic status (SES) are not the focus of this study, a discussion on the topic is warranted being as though both poverty and lower SES have been linked to negative outcomes including indicators of academic achievement such as failure and grade retention, especially for children who are poor and of low SES (McLoyd, 1998). Poverty can be defined as "not having adequate income to provide the basics in life such as food, clothing, and shelter" (Flannery, 1997, p. 68). Over the past

two decades, poverty has been concentrated in inner-city African American communities. The rates of poverty among African American youth is two to three times higher as compared to non-Latino White youth**.** Poverty has placed many at a disadvantage in terms of having access to services, such as employment opportunities, community centers, and childcare (McLoyd, 1998). In addition, poverty has been linked to school achievement. For example, poor children tend to perform significantly less as compared to children who are not poor (McLoyd, 1998). Poverty has also been linked to increased environmental stressors in the community such as drugs, negative role models, and street violence (McLoyd, 1998).

Family Structure

An individual's family structure has been shown to have either positive or negative effects on their development. For example, large family sizes tend to have a negative effect on children in terms of the level of neglect from parents. Households with four or more children tend to be characterized by the parent having less time to spend with the children (Moore, Vandivere, & Redd, 2006). In addition, to family size, two parents vs. one parent households may also pose as a risk factor, particularly for African Americans because of the large number living in a single parent home. For example, 53% of African American children were living with either a single mother or father in 2002 (McLoyd, Hill, & Dodge, 2005). It is also not uncommon for African American children to be raised by extended family. Extended family in the African American community has been seen as extra support for single parents. It should be noted that when economic disadvantages are controlled for, the relationship between

single parenting and negative outcomes is diminished. It is the multiple risk factors contributing to single parenting that creates negative outcomes for children and adolescents (Barbarin, McCandies, Coleman, & Hill, 2005).

Parental Criminality

Research concerning parental criminality has dealt with parental incarceration. Research has suggested that children of an incarcerated parent tend to deal with the absence of the parent in mixed ways. For example, some children may not be affected at all by the incarceration of a parent. These children may be able to move on with their daily lives. However, some children tend to be affected in negative ways when a parent is incarcerated. Research has also shown that children of parents who are incarcerated tend to be at-risk for acting out in school (Stroble, 1997). Many of these students may see a drop in their grades, may be more truant from school, and tend to be at-risk for dropping out. In addition, these children may become more involved with delinquent peer groups and may even engage in criminal activity (Stroble, 1997).

Community Factors

At the most global level, community factors can be characterized as those environmental factors that result in positive or negative development. Research has shown that having a safe and positive environment can help buffer against negative influences (Rodney, Johnson, & Srivastava, 2005). The following community factors will be discussed: socially supportive relationship with an adult and exposure to violence. In addition, for purposes of discussion, one component of community, school, will be discussed in more detail.

Supportive Relationships

Social support has been defined as "information leading the individual to believe that he or she is cared for, loved, esteemed, and valued" (Gutman et al., 2002, p. 372). Having a supportive relationship with a nonfamily member can foster resiliency in at-risk individuals through modeling of positive behaviors. It should also be noted that supportive relationships can also been a risk factor for children. For example, children were more likely to engage in illegal activity if their nonfamily member role model engaged in illegal activity (Greenberg, Lengua, Coie, & Pinderhughes, 1999).

Exposure to Violence

Exposure to violence has been shown to be prevalent in inner cities, which are mostly inhabited by minorities. Throughout the literature, exposure to violence has been linked to both internalizing and externalizing behaviors in children and adolescents (Luthar & Goldstein, 2004). Concerning African Americans and exposure to violence, research has shown that African Americans tended to live in areas where there is high exposure to violence. African Americans also tended to witness more violent crimes as compared to Hispanics (Hammack et al., 2004; Luthar & Goldstein, 2004).

School Factors

School environments try to buffer against negative outcomes and risk factors; however, for some individuals, some aspects of the school environment can be seen as more risk factors that add to negative or adverse outcomes. For these individuals, many tend to struggle with succeeding in these environments. African American males in particular tend to have a lower high school completion rate than African American

females (U.S. Census, 2000). These trends among African Americans sparks a concern into what-risk or protective factors are present at the school level. For the purpose of this study the following will be discussed: peer relationships, and grade retention.

Grade Retention

Retention refers to repeating a grade after an individual has been in that grade for a full academic year (Wiley, 2006). Grade retention has been viewed as a controversial practice (Reynolds, 1992; Wiley, 2006). The primary goal of retention is to give students who have not mastered the lessons an additional year to grow and get on track. However, grade retention puts students at-risk for school dropout and poorer attitudes to school (Reynolds, 1992). In addition, in some cases grade retention has not been related to academic readiness. For example, "boys, poor and minority children, children who attend urban metropolitan schools, and misbehaving children are more likely to be retained than similarly performing grade-level peers" (Reynolds, 1992, p. 102).

Peer Relationships

Peer relationships can be very influential among adolescents. For example, research has shown that antisocial adolescents tend to search out those individuals who also display antisocial behaviors (Snyder, Horsch, & Childs, 1997). Peer relationships with individuals who engage in delinquent acts have been found to be strong indicators for future delinquent acts (Beam, Gil-Rivas, Greenberger, & Chen, 2002). On a more positive note, students who feel more connected to their peers in the school setting are

more likely to experience school success and social adjustment (McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blunn, 2002).

Suspensions, Expulsions, and Alternative Education Settings

Suspensions and expulsions both result in the student being removed from the classroom setting. These forms of discipline often lead to the student being exposed to community risk factors more abundantly because the student is not in school. Another form of discipline that also results in the student being removed from the classroom setting is placement alternative education setting. Historically, alternative school settings have been used to serve at-risk students who have not been served well in the general education setting (McCants, 2006; Richards, 2005; Van Acker, 2007). Depending on the purpose of the alternative school, students may be enrolled because of academic failure or disruptive/inappropriate behaviors that may hinder others from learning in the classroom setting. Some alternative school settings are seen as the last step before suspension or expulsion. In the 2005-2006 school year, there were 6,448 operating alternative school settings out of a total of 97,382 schools including regular, vocational, and charter schools. Out of the 6,448 alternative schools, 504 were newly added that year (Hoffman, 2007). Some alternative school settings also serve students who are in special education, advanced placement, or home-schooling. Many of the students who attend alternative schools enter with different educational and discipline needs. As such, these students pose a challenge for many educators (Foley & Pang, 2006; Tsang, 2004).

Types of Alternative Education Settings

Alternative school settings were created in the early 1960s to better serve at-risk students, as well as ensure the safety of all students (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002). There are three types of alternative school settings that have been described throughout the literature (Raywid, 1994): Type I, Type II, and Type III. Type I alternative settings, sometimes called alternative education programs, are programs that concentrate on curriculum. These settings tend to refer schools of choice (Foley & Pang, 2006; Lange, 1998); and have the highest rates of success in terms of their effect on the outcomes of youth that attend. Because attendance in these schools is voluntary, and not necessarily the result of disciplinary action, this type of alternative school is not the focus of the current study.

Type II alternative settings, sometimes called alternative discipline programs, are programs that concentrate on behavior modifications to help students improve their behavior while decreasing the risk to the larger student population (Foley & Pang, 2006). Students tend to be sent to these settings as the last step before expulsion or as an alternative to suspension (Lange, 1998). They remain until they demonstrate a specified level of compliance and then are returned to the traditional setting. Type II settings tend to have the lowest rates of success in terms of their effect on outcomes for the youth they are intended to serve.

Type III alternative settings, sometimes called therapeutic settings, are programs that focus on rehabilitation with a primary goal that of returning to the traditional school (Foley & Pang, 2006). These settings may be used to address behavioral or emotional

concerns as an alternative to the disciplinary settings. They tend to have variable rates of success in terms of their effect on youth (Van Acker, 2007; Kleiner, Porch, Farris, 2002; Raywid, 1994).

For the purpose of this study, an alternative school setting refers to any public nontraditional school setting that serves students who have been placed there as a disciplinary action. These typically include Type II settings. Problem behaviors include aggression, fighting, defiance of adults, possession of weapons, and threats to school personnel or other students (Tobin & Sprague, 2002; Van Acker, 2007). At the same time, it is recognized that some students are placed following a series of lesser infractions, but still related to discipline. These programs were designed to help keep students who display antisocial, violent, and disruptive behaviors from getting in trouble and away from the larger student population (Tobin & Sprague, 2000).

Type II alternative schools may serve students who are in special education, advanced placement, and home-school. As such, many of the students who attend alternative schools enter with different education and disciplinary needs (Foley & Pang, 2006). Research concerning alternative schools has shown that they have varied results in terms of their effectiveness on the students they serve (Van Acker, 2007). This may be due to the fact that there is no concise, agreed upon operational definition of the goals for students in Type II alternative school settings (Reilly & Reilly, 1983). For example, research that has been conducted on children and adolescents in alternative school settings has examined: (a) academic attainment; (b) attitude change; (c) antisocial, aggressive, and violent behaviors; (d) psychosocial variables; and (e) educational

variables focusing mainly on issues/directions, prevention, and intervention (Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2001; Reilly & Reilly, 1983; Van Acker, 2007). In addition, research concerning Type II alternative school settings has examined: (a) student perceptions; (b) family communication, cohesiveness, and adaptability; (c) psychosocial variables such as self-esteem, depression, locus of control, life skills; and (d) educational variables such as attendance, school status, and grades (Carpenter-Aeby & Aeby, 2001; Masselam & Marcus; 1990; Saunders & Saunders, 2001).

Risk/Protective Factors and Alternative Education Settings

Individual Factors

Research that has been conducted using disciplinary alternative school populations have focused on a variety of topics at the various levels of the ecological model (see Table 1). Concerning individually-based factors, researchers have identified factors concerning perception of school, self esteem, depression, locus of control, and life skills (Carpenter-Aeby, 2001; Mccants, 2004). Carpenter-Aeby (2001) conducted a study examining self-esteem, depression, locus of control, and life skills, using a pretest and posttest design. Results showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the measures of self-esteem and life skills at exit from the alternative school. That is, students improved in their self-esteem and life skills exiting the setting compared to when they entered the program. No significant effects for level of depression and locus of control were found.

Student Perceptions. Saunders and Saunders (2001) conducted a study at a suburban alternative school to examine the perceptions of students' counselors, teachers, and administrators from their traditional school and their alternative school setting. Participants consisted of 85% White males. It was not specified if African Americans were used in the study. Findings showed that students rated teachers in their traditional school setting negatively, indicating that teachers did not understand them, and positively in terms of teachers helping them with schoolwork when they had trouble. Students rated counselors in their traditional school setting negatively in terms of counselors helping them deal with personal problems, and positively in terms of counselors providing academic guidance. They also rated the administration at their traditional school setting negatively in terms of administrators caring about them and helping them solve school problems. In terms of perceptions of alternative school settings, results also showed that students rated teachers in their alternative school setting overall positively indicating that having teachers who understand them, treat them fairly, and help them with schoolwork when they are having trouble. Students rated counselors/caseworkers at the alternative school setting overall positively in terms of having counselors/caseworkers who care about them, help them solve school problems, and give them academic guidance. Students rated administrators in their alternative school setting positively as treating them fairly.

Family Factors

Research has also been conducted with the alternative school population concerning family factors such as parent-adolescent communication, family functioning,

family discipline, substance abuse, and illegal activities (Masselam & Marcus, 1990; Tsang, 2004). Masselam and Marcus (1990) conducted a study examining parent-adolescent communication and family functioning in a sample of adolescents and their families. The study compared adolescents who attended alternative school, and their families, to adolescents who attended traditional school, and their families. Both groups were predominantly White and middle class. Adolescents in the traditional school and their families reported better communication and fewer problems than adolescents in the alternative school setting and their families. This would suggest that communication may act as a protective factor for adolescents in a traditional school setting. Similarly, there was a higher percentage of adolescent and parent self-reports in the balanced range of functioning for students in the traditional setting. In contrast, the majority of adolescents and their families in the alternative school sample reported functioning in the mid to extreme range. In terms of adaptability and cohesion, results of analysis of variance indicated that cohesion distinguished between the two the public school and alternative school group.

School Factors

Research with students in alternative school settings has examined school-based factors such as academic attainment, attitude toward school, and pupil reentry (Reilly & Reilly, 1983). For example, Reilly and Reilly (1983) examined issues and directions of alternative schools throughout the literature in terms of academic attainment, attitude change, and pupil reentry into their designated traditional school. Results showed that students who entered into the setting behind in their academics, but spent more time in

the alternative school setting showed improvement in reading and math. Results for attitude change showed that children and adolescents in alternative schools had an attitude change from a negative to positive viewpoint toward school, teachers, and others in the alternative school. Despite this positive change, research also showed that students in alternative schools continued to have a negative view of their traditional home school.

In terms of student reentry, many students who return to their home schools from alternative school settings are more likely to drop out or be expelled (Reilly & Reilly, 1983). This may be due to the fact that many students feel isolated upon their return to their home school. Many times when students return to their home school they find that things have changed. For example, the friends they used to hang out with before being sent to the alternative school may hang out with different people. Also, the seat they used to sit in the classroom or area in the cafeteria where they hung out for lunch might be occupied by someone else. In addition, many of these students may be labeled by their teachers or school personnel as “troublemakers” or “bad kids.” As a result, many of these students feel left out or “pushed out” of their home school and may return to engaging in antisocial behaviors that may lead to adverse outcomes including delinquency (Tobin & Sprague, 2002). Once students return to their traditional setting, they are returning back to the environment in which they were unsuccessful, with the stressors and problems that they had before they left. Many of the students tend to resort back to the behaviors that resulted in their placement in the alternative school setting (Carpenter-Aeby, Aeby, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

There is continued and increased concern with both the negative outcomes for many African American males and the rising problems of violence in the schools. The extant research identifies a number of factors that ultimately contribute to the positive and negative outcomes for students at various levels; many of these are particularly salient for African American males. At the community level, these include supportive relationships and other neighborhood characteristics, such as exposure to violence. At the school level, these include grade retention and relationship with peers. At the family level, these include parent level of education, parent involvement, family structure, and parental criminality. At the individual level, these include self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity. The purpose of this study is to examine these factors as they apply to African American males who are placed in alternative schools as a result of significant disciplinary concerns as compared to students in general education settings.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to compare the differences in risk and protective factors between African American adolescent males, who have been placed in alternative school settings for disciplinary reasons, and African American males in the general education settings, who have not been placed in alternative school settings within the past academic year. This study also seeks to examine what pathways in terms of risk and protective factors predict the likelihood of African American males being placed into alternative school settings. The variables of interest will include at each ecological level: self-efficacy, school engagement, racial identity, parental involvement, family structure, parental criminality, exposure to violence, supportive relationships, peer relationships, and grade retention.

Participants

Description of Sample

Descriptive analyses were used to further describe participants in the study. Participants in this study came from a large urban school district with an adequate African American population. There were a total of 118 male middle school students who participated in the study. Twenty-six (22%) were sixth graders, 40 (34%) were seventh graders, and 52 (44%) were eighth graders. The participants were further divided into two groups based on their educational setting: African American males in alternative education settings (AES, 59% of sample) and African American males in

general education settings (GES, 41% of sample). The AES group included sixth through eighth grade African American males currently placed in alternative school settings. The GES group included sixth through eighth grade African American males who either have never been placed in an alternative education setting or have not been sent to an alternative education setting within the past academic school year. The age range for the students in the study ranged from 11 to 16 years of age. The mean age was 13 (SD=1.145). For exclusionary purposes the students' records were verified to ensure their current or previous status of placement in alternative education settings.

Procedures

Approval was obtained from the Texas A&M Institutional Review Board (IRB), as well as an urban school district in Dallas, Texas. The principals of each school were asked to provide a list of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade teachers to begin the recruitment process. For the GES group, African American males from each class were given parent consent forms (see Appendix A). Once consent was obtained, student assent (see Appendix A) was obtained. Both forms provided the parent and student with an overview of the study. For the AES group, newly placed African American male students and their parents were approached during their orientation session at the alternative education setting. Students were given a consent form to be filled out by their parent. Once consent was obtained, student assent was obtained.

All students in each group were asked to complete a sequence of questionnaires that took between 20-30 minutes to complete. Each student received a packet with a cover letter, Demographic Questionnaire, Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children,

Engagement Scale, and Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity-Teen (see Appendix A for all surveys). Each packet was given a three digit number in the right hand corner of the questionnaire to protect the identity of each student. Information was confidential; results will be reported only in group format. It should also be noted that consent forms, assent forms, and surveys were stored in a locked cabinet.

For both settings, the questionnaires were administered in groups of 7 to 10 in a room during school hours as requested by the principal. Students were given a pencil along with the packet of questionnaires. Students were instructed not to begin until instructions were given. Once the instructions were read, the researcher asked the students if they had any questions. If so, the researcher clarified any questions that the students had concerning the questionnaires. After the students completed the packets, the packets were picked up and the students were thanked for their participation in the study and were asked to return to class quietly.

Materials

The following forms and questionnaires were included in this study: parental consent form, student assent form, the Demographics Questionnaire, the Self-efficacy Questionnaire for Children, and the School Engagement Index. These measures were used to examine the variables of interest for the study.

Demographic Questionnaire

The Demographic Questionnaire was created by the researcher to obtain demographic information from the student. Some of the information obtained included grade level, name of school student attends, school characteristics, parent criminality,

and questions concerning the student's neighborhood and family structure. Questions on the questionnaire map onto community, school, family, and individual factors as indicated in Table 1.

Self-efficacy Questionnaire for Children

The Self-efficacy Questionnaire for Children (SEQ-C) contains 21 items that encompass three domains of self-efficacy: social self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy (Muris, 2002). The SEQ-C uses a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = not at all to 5 = very well. Higher scores on the SEQ-C suggest a higher perception of the student's self-efficacy. In terms of reliability, the SEQ-C has been shown to have an internal consistency of 0.88 for the total score and 0.85 to 0.88 for subscale scores (Muris, 2002). Sample items are "how well can you study a chapter for a test," "how well can you control your feelings," and "how well can you give yourself a pep talk when you feel low." The scores obtained on the SEQ-C will be converted to z scores to ensure that all scores from the questionnaire are on the same scoring system. The internal consistency of the SEQ-C items for the study sample is 0.88.

Engagement Scale

The Engagement Scale contains 19 items that encompass three domains of school engagement: emotional engagement, cognitive engagement, and behavioral engagement (Fredricks et al., 2005). The Engagement Scale uses a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = never to 5 = all of the time. Higher scores on the Engagement Scale suggest a higher perception of the student's school engagement. The Engagement Scale

has been shown to have an internal consistency ranging from 0.72 to 0.83 for the subscale scores (Fredricks et al., 2005). Sample items are “I like being at school,” “I feel excited by my work at school,” and “I check my schoolwork for mistakes.” Scores were converted to z scores to ensure that all scores from the questionnaire are on the same scoring system. The internal consistency of the engagement scale items for the study sample is 0.84.

Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity-Teen

The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity-Teen (MIBI-T) contains 21 items that encompasses seven scales and subscales measuring racial identity for African American adolescents (Sellers et al., 2006). The MIBI-T uses a 5-point Likert indicating the extent to which they agree or disagree with items. Specifically, the MIBI-T measures three stable dimensions of racial identity: racial centrality, racial regard, and racial ideology. In terms of reliability, the MIBI-T has been shown to have internal consistency ranging from 0.63 to 0.73 for the scales and subscale scores (Sellers et al., 2006). Sample items are “I am happy that I am Black,” “Blacks should think of themselves as individuals, not as Blacks,” and “whenever possible, Blacks should buy from Black businesses.” Scores were converted to z scores to ensure that all scores from the questionnaire are on the same scoring system. The internal consistency of the MIBI-T items for the study sample is 0.78.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The major findings of this study are presented in this chapter. The purpose of this study was two-fold. First, to examine whether there is a difference in self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity between students placed in alternative school settings and students in traditional or general educational school settings. Second, to examine certain risk and protective factors to determine whether they predict the likelihood of African American males being placed in alternative education settings. The first part of this chapter presents the descriptive data. The second part presents the analyses from hypotheses testing.

Design and Planned Analyses

This study used a two group design that compared risk and protective factors of African American males. The experimental group included African American males from AES. The control group included African American males from the GES group. Data on risk and protective factors were collected from four components: the Demographic Questionnaire, the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children, the School Engagement Index, and the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity – Teen. Any subject with missing data from the questionnaires was not included in the study. Prior to any analyses, descriptive analyses were completed; scale scores on the SEQ and SEI were converted to z-scores, and the analyses conducted to ensure that assumptions of the proposed analyses are met were also completed.

A power analysis was conducted using the program GPOWER 3.0 (Faul & Erdfelder, 1992) to determine the sample size to achieve desired power for the independent samples t-test. A sample size of 111 was needed to detect a medium effect size of 0.30 with a power = 0.95 (β=0.05) using a statistical significance level of 0.05. Another power analysis was conducted using the PASS 2008 to determine the sample size to achieve desired power for the logistic regression analysis. A sample size of 104 for an odds ratio of 2.0 is needed for power = 0.90 using a statistical significance level of 0.05. An original sample size of 118 allowed for sufficient power to conduct the planned analyses.

Descriptive Data

Descriptive analyses were used to further describe the sample for the study. All variables were examined to ensure that assumptions were met for both the independent samples t-test and logistic regression. All variables in the study are assumed to be normally distributed. Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis for self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity. Tests of normality using skewness and kurtosis showed that self-efficacy and school engagement were normal; however, racial identity was not normally distributed. Due to the asymmetry of racial identity, the data was examined for outliers. Three cases were deleted resulting in a final sample size of 115. The deletion of these cases fixed the problems with normality and continued to allow for sufficient power to conduct the planned analysis.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations (S.D.), Original & Corrected Skewness, and Kurtosis for Self-efficacy, School Engagement, and Racial Identity after the Deletion of Cases

	Mean	S.D.	Original Skewness	Original Kurtosis	Corrected Skewness	Corrected Kurtosis
Self-efficacy	3.39	0.59	-0.24	0.23	0.003	-0.37
Engagement	2.88	0.72	0.21	-0.45	0.19	-0.46
Racial Identity	3.44	0.59	-0.62	1.65	0.19	-0.25

Note: Original skewness and kurtosis based on N=118; Corrected skewness and kurtosis based on N=115; Engagement refers to School Engagement

Family Level

Family Structure. In the GES group, 72% of students reported that they live with their mother. Twenty-three percent live with their father. In addition, 85% of students have one or more siblings living in the home. It should also be noted 36% of students reported having a grandparent who lives in the home. In the AES group, 81% of students reported that they live with their mother. Eighteen percent live with their father. Nineteen percent of students reported having a grandparent living in the home. In addition, 87% of students have one or more siblings living in the home.

Parent Employment. In the GES group, 66% reported that their mother is currently employed. Sixty percent of students reported that their father is currently employed. In the AES group, 60% of students reported that their mother is currently employed. Fifty-two percent of students reported that their father is currently employed.

Parent Education. In terms of mother's education among the GES group, 15% of students reported that their mother attended high school but did not graduate, 36% reported that their mother graduated from high school, 11% reported that their mother received a GED, 6% reported that their mother attended a technical, vocational, or training school, 21% reported that their mother attended college but did not graduate, and 11% reported that their mother graduated from college.

In terms of father's education among the GES group, 23% of students reported that their father attended high school but did not graduate, 36% reported that their fathers graduated for high school, 6% reported that their fathers received a GED, 4% reported that their fathers attended college but did not graduate, and 19% reported that their fathers graduated from college.

In terms of mother's education among the AES group, 32% of students reported that their mother attended high school but did not graduate, 44% reported that their mother graduated from high school, 3% reported that their mother received a GED, 10% reported that their mother attended college but did not graduate, and 10% reported that their mother graduated from college.

In terms of father's education among the AES group, 32% of students reported that their father attended high school but did not graduate, 32% reported that their fathers graduated for high school, 4% reported that their fathers received a GED, 6% reported that their fathers attended college but did not graduate, and 10% reported that their fathers graduated from college.

Parent Criminality. In the AES group, 67% reported that either their mother or father had spent time in jail or prison. In the GES group, 49% reported that their mother or father had spent time in jail or prison.

Parental Involvement. In the GES group, 92% reported that they have someone at home who can help with their homework. Seventy-five percent of students reported that their mother helps them with their homework; 31% reported that their father helps them. Fifty-seven percent of students reported that their mother gets them to school on time. Thirty-four percent of students reported that their father gets them to school on time.

In the AES group, 93% reported that they have someone at home who can help with their homework. Eighty-one percent of students reported that their mother helps them with their homework. Thirty-two percent of students reported that their father helps them with their homework. Seventy-nine percent of students reported that their mother gets them to school on time. Twenty-four percent of students reported that their father gets them to school on time.

Community Level

Exposure to Violence. In the GES group, 47% live in a neighborhood where there is violence. However, 74% of the students in the AES group live in a neighborhood where there is violence.

Supportive Relationships. In the GES group, 85% of students have a person who is a nonfamily member whom they can seek out for advice. Among those students, 23% reported that they can talk to a coach, 23% can talk to a pastor, 28% can talk to a

teacher, counselor, or principal, 11% can talk to a youth minister, and 26% can talk to a neighbor. It should also be noted that 2% of the GES group reported that they would seek the advice of a fellow gang member. In the AES group, 88% of students have a person who is a nonfamily member whom they can seek out for advice. Among those students, 38% can talk to a coach, 19% can talk to a pastor, 28% can talk to a teacher or principal, 24% can talk to a counselor, 27% can talk to a neighbor, and 13% can talk to a youth minister. Twenty-nine percent of the AES group reported that they would seek the advice of a fellow gang member.

School Level

Grade Retention. Among the students in the GES group, 23% had been retained. Among the AES group, 54% had been retained.

Peer Relationships. Both the GES and AES group reported having peer relationships with other students who have problems in school (GES=70%, AES=71%), involvement in gangs (GES=36%, AES=68%), skip school (GES=53%, AES=69%), have been arrested (GES=38%, AES=77%), and have been sent to an alternative education setting (GES=60%, AES=90%). See Table 3 for more details for all descriptive data.

Table 3. Descriptives of Participants (N=115)

	GES Sample (*n*=47)		AES Sample (*n*=68)	
Select Participant Characteristics	*n*	%	*n*	%
Living in Home				
Mother				
Yes	34	72.3%	55	80.9%
No	13	27.7%	13	19.9%
Father				
Yes	11	23.4%	12	17.6%
No	36	76.6%	56	82.4%
Grandmother				
Yes	15	31.9%	9	13.2%
No	32	68.1%	59	86.8%
Grandfather				
Yes	2	4.3%	4	5.9%
No	45	95.7%	64	94.1%
Siblings				
0	7	14.9%	9	13.2%
1	19	40.4%	19	27.9%
2	11	23.4%	16	23.5%
3	4	8.5%	11	16.2%

Table 3 (Continued)

Select Participant Characteristics	*n*	%	*n*	%
4	3	6.4%	5	7.4%
5	3	6.4%	2	2.9%
More than 5			6	8.8%
Parent Employment				
Mother				
Yes	31	66.0%	41	60.3%
No	11	23.4%	20	29.4%
I Don't Know	5	10.6%	7	10.3%
Father				
Yes	28	59.6%	35	51.5%
No	11	23.4%	17	25.0%
I Don't Know	8	17.0%	16	23.5%
Parent Education				
Mother				
Attended HS	7	14.9%	22	32.4%
Graduated HS	17	36.2%	30	44.1%
GED	5	10.6%	2	2.9%
Attended Tech, Voc. School	3	6.4%		
Attended College	10	21.3%	7	10.3%
Graduated College	5	10.6%	7	10.3%

Table 3 (Continued)

Select Participant Characteristics	*n*	%	*n*	%
Father				
Attended HS	11	23.4%	22	32.4%
Graduated HS	17	36.2%	22	32.4%
GED	3	6.4%	3	4.4%
Attended Tech, Voc. School			1	1.5%
Attended College	2	4.3%	4	5.9%
Graduated College	9	19.1%	7	10.3%
Parent Criminality				
Mother/Father				
Yes	23	48.9%	46	67.6%
No	21	44.7%	16	23.5%
I Don’t Know	3	6.4%	6	8.8%
Homework Help				
Yes	43	91.5%	63	92.6%
No	4	8.5%	5	7.4%
Homework Help (Mother)				
Yes	35	74.5%	55	80.9%
No	12	25.5%	12	17.6%
Homework Help (Father)				
Yes	14	29.8%	22	32.4%

Table 3 (Continued)

Select Participant Characteristics	*n*	%	*n*	%
No	33	70.2%	45	66.2%
Get to School (Mother)				
Yes	27	57.4%	54	79.4%
No	20	42.6%	14	20.6%
Get to School (Father)				
Yes	16	34.0%	16	23.5%
No	31	66.0%	52	76.5%
Neighborhood Violence				
Yes	22	46.8%	50	73.5%
No	25	53.2%	18	26.5%
Advice Help				
Yes	40	85.1%	60	88.2%
No	7	14.9%	8	11.8%
Advice from Coach				
Yes	11	23.4%	26	38.2%
No	36	76.6%	42	61.8%
Advice from Pastor				
Yes	11	22.9%	13	19.1%
No	36	76.6%	55	80.9%

Table 3 (Continued)

Select Participant Characteristics	*n*	%	*n*	%
Advice from Teacher/Principal				
Yes	13	27.7%	19	27.9%
No	34	72.3%	49	72.1%
Advice from Counselor				
Yes	13	27.7%	16	23.5%
No	34	72.3%	52	76.5%
Advice from Youth Minister				
Yes	5	10.6%	9	13.2%
No	42	89.4%	59	86.8%
Advice from Neighbor				
Yes	12	25.5%	18	26.5%
No	35	74.5%	50	73.5%
Advice from Gang Member				
Yes	1	2.1%	20	29.4%
No	46	97.9%	48	70.6%
Grade Retention				
Yes	11	23.4%	37	54.4%
No	36	76.6%	31	45.6%
Problems in School (Friends)				

Table 3 (Continued)

Select Participant Characteristics	*n*	%	*n*	%
Yes	33	70.2%	48	70.6%
No	14	29.8%	20	29.4%
Members of Gang (Friends)				
Yes	17	36.2%	46	67.6%
No	30	63.8%	22	32.4%
Skip School (Friends)				
Yes	25	53.2%	47	69.1%
No	22	46.8%	21	30.9%
Arrested (Friends)				
Yes	18	38.3%	52	76.5%
No	29	61.7%	16	23.5%
Sent to Alternative School (Friends)				
Yes	28	59.6%	61	89.7%
No	19	40.4%	7	10.3%

Note. HS = high school, AES = alternative education setting, GES = general education setting

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: African American males in the general education settings will evidence higher levels self-efficacy than African American males in alternative education settings.

Results of the SEQ are presented in Table 4. An independent samples t-test was used to test Hypothesis 1. It compared the means of African American males in the general education and alternative education settings for levels of total self-efficacy. The difference between the GES total level of self-efficacy (M=3.62, SD=0.44) and the AES total level of self-efficacy (M=3.26, SD=0.59) was found to be statistically significant [t(df=113) = 3.52, p = .001]. A 95% confidence interval of 0.16 to 0.56 shows that the null hypothesis can be rejected. The GES group reported higher levels of total self-efficacy.

To further explore self-efficacy, three components were examined. It compared the means of African American males in the general education and alternative education settings for academic, social, and emotional self-efficacy. The difference between GES level of academic self-efficacy (M=3.65, SD=0.67) and the AES level of academic self-efficacy (M=3.22, SD=0.82) was found to be statistically significant [t(df=113) = 2.94, p=.004]. A 95 % confidence interval of 0.14 to 0.71 show that the null hypothesis can be rejected, which means there is a difference between GES and AES level of academic self-efficacy. The difference between the level of social self-efficacy for the GES (M=3.80, SD=0.54) and AES (M=3.41, SD=0.61) was found to be statistically significant [t(df=113) = 3.52, p=.001]. A 95% confidence interval of 0.17 to 0.60 show that the null hypothesis can be rejected, which means there is a difference between GES and AES

level of social self-efficacy. The difference between the level of emotional self-efficacy for the GES (*M*=3.41, *SD*=0.62) and AES (*M*=3.15, *SD*=0.82) groups was found not to be statistically significant [*t*(df=113) = 1.85, *p* = 0.66]. A 95% confidence interval of -0.02 to 0.54 shows that the null hypothesis can not be rejected.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics (Means, Standard Deviations, *t*-test significance) for Self-efficacy

	GES (n=47)	AES (n=68)	*t*-test significance
Total self-efficacy	3.62 (0.44)	3.26 (0.59)	.001**
Academic self-efficacy	3.65 (0.67)	3.22 (0.82)	.004**
Social self-efficacy	3.80 (0.54)	3.41 (0.61)	.001**
Emotional self-efficacy	3.41 (0.62)	3.15 (0.82)	.066

Note. ****p* < .001, **p<.01*p < .05 (two-tailed). GES=general education setting, AES = alternative education setting.

Hypothesis 2: African American males in the alternative education setting will evidence lower levels of engagement with their home school (general education setting) as compared to African American males in the general education setting.

Results of the school engagement survey are presented in Table 5. An independent samples t-test was used to test Hypothesis 2. It compared the means of African American males in the general education and alternative education settings for

levels of school engagement. The difference between the GES total level of school engagement (*M*=3.13, *SD*=0.71) and the AES total level of school engagement (*M*=2.71, *SD*=0.68) was found to be statistically significant [*t*(df=113) = 3.21, *p* = .002]. A 95% confidence interval of 0.16 to 0.68 show that the null hypothesis can be rejected. The GES group reported higher levels of school engagement.

To further explore school engagement, three components, behavioral, emotional, and cognitive school engagement were examined. The difference between the GES (*M*=3.67, *SD*=0.66) and AES (*M*=3.02, *SD*=0.60) groups' level of behavior school engagement were found to be statistically significant [*t*(df=113) = 5.45, *p* <.001). These findings suggest that the GES and AES group differ in terms of their level of behavioral engagement. The difference between GES (*M*=2.91, *SD*=1.10) and AES (*M*=2.75, *SD* = 0.96) groups' level of emotional school engagement was not found to be statistically significant [*t*(df=113) = 0.81, *p*=.419], which suggests that the groups did not differ in terms of their emotional school engagement. The difference between GES (*M*=2.97, *SD*=0.81) and AES (*M*=2.49, *SD*=0.86) groups' level of cognitive school engagement were statistically significant [*t*(df=113) = 3.02, p=.003].

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics (Means, Standard Deviations, *t*-test significance) for School Engagement

	GES (n=47)	AES (n=68)	*t*-test significance
Total school engagement	3.13 (0.71)	2.71 (0.68)	.002**

Table 5 (Continued)

	GES (n=47)	AES (n=68)	*t*-test significance
Behavioral engagement	3.67 (0.66)	3.02 (0.60)	.000**
Emotional engagement	2.91 (1.10)	2.75 (0.96)	.419
Cognitive engagement	2.97 (0.81)	2.49 (0.86)	.003**

Note. **$p < .01$ level (two-tailed). GES = general education setting, AES = alternative education setting

Hypothesis 3: African American males in general education settings will report a more positive racial identity as compared to African American males in alternative education settings.

Results for the racial identity measure are presented in Table 6. An independent samples t-test was used to test Hypothesis 3. It compared the means of African American males in the general education and alternative education settings for levels of racial identity. The difference between the GES total level of racial identity (M=3.56, SD=0.52) and the AES total level of racial identity (M=3.44, SD=0.49) was not statistically significant [t(df=113) = 1.31, p = 0.193]. A 95% confidence interval of -0.06 to 0.31 show that the null hypothesis can not be rejected.

Due to the multidimensional concept of racial identity, racial identity was further examined using three components: centrality, ideology, and regard. The GES (M=3.87, SD=0.81) and AES (M=3.80, SD=1.05) groups did not differ in terms of their level of

racial centrality. The results were not statistically significant [t(df=113) = 0.34, p=0.737]. The GES (M=4.05, SD=0.68) and AES (M=3.97, SD=0.66) groups did not differ in terms of their level of racial regard. The results were not statistically significant [t(df=113) = 0.61, p=0.546]. Finally, the GES (M=3.25, SD=0.62) and AES (M=3.08, SD=0.64) group did not differ on racial ideology [t(df=113) = 1.37, p=0.173]. The findings suggest that across components of racial identity African American male students in both general education and alternative education settings are similar in terms of how they perceive their racial identity.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics (Means, Standard Deviations, *t*-test significance) for Racial Identity

	GES (n=47)	AES (n=68)	*t*-test significance
Total Racial Identity	3.56 (0.52)	3.44 (0.49)	0.193
Racial Centrality	3.87 (0.81)	3.80 (1.05)	0.737
Racial Regard	4.05 (0.68)	3.97 (0.66)	0.546
Racial Ideology	3.25 (0.62)	3.08 (0.64)	0.173

Note.*p <.05. GES=general education setting, AES=alternative education setting

Hypothesis 4: Risk factors at the individual level will significantly contribute above and beyond to placement status in alternative education settings after controlling for variables at the family, school, and community level.

Twenty-one risk factors were originally used to test the impact of individual, family, school, and community level variables on placement status in alternative education settings. At the individual level, self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity were used as predictor variables. At the family level, family structure variables such as the number of siblings in the home, mother or father living in the home, parent's level of education, parent involvement with homework and getting the student to school, and parent criminality were used as predictor variables. At the school level, grade retention, and peer relationships specifically looking at peers who have problems in school, skip school, have been arrested, members of gangs, and have been sent to alternative school were used as predictor variables. At the community level, exposure to neighborhood violence and having supportive relationships with members in the community whom one can seek advice were used as predictor variables. Before the individual effects of the variables on placement status in alternative education settings were examined, multicollinearity was examined. Results indicated that the tolerances and VIFs were not acceptable for some of the variables. As a result, variables were combined to help with multicollinearity. The averages or means were calculated to combine the variables. For example, mother and father living in home was combined into parents living in home, mother and father education was combined into parent education, mother and father help with homework and mother and father involvement in getting the student to school were combined into parental involvement, and peers who have problems in school, get arrested, skip school, are members of gang, and get sent to alternative school were combined into peer relationships.

To test which risk factors were related to the dependent variable, placement status in alternative education settings, logistic regressions were run to test each risk factor individually. Results showed that lower self-efficacy, lower school engagement, a history of grade retention, a higher number of siblings living in the home, a lower education level of the parent, exposure to neighborhood violence, and having peer relationships that are characterized by gang involvement, skipping school, previous history of alternative school, and being arrested were all related to placement status.

After the individual effects of the variables on placement status were examined, the simultaneous effects of variables at the individual, family, school, and community level were examined using a hierarchical logistic regression. Because school engagement and self-efficacy were significantly positively correlated with one another, each was used in separate analyses to help problems of multicollinearity. Racial identity was also used in a separate analysis to examine its effects to see if it predicted above and beyond the variables that were used. After problems with multicollinearity were examined, the following analyses resulted in a total number of 12 risk factors being used to test the impact of self-efficacy, school engagement, racial identity, parent living in home, number of siblings in the home, parent education, parent criminality, parent involvement, exposure to neighborhood violence, adult advice, grade retention, and peer relationships on placement status in alternative education settings. Placement status in alternative education setting is the dependent variable. Placement status was coded as no history of placement in alternative schools as 0 and history of placement in alternative schools as 1.

Results of the first hierarchical logistic regression analysis are reported in Table 7. Siblings living in the home, parent criminality, grade retention, advice help, parents living in the home, parent education, peer relationships, and neighborhood violence were entered in block 1 of the analysis as control variables. The model consisting of control variables was significant [χ^2=33.11, *df*=9, *N*=115, *p* <.001]. Self-efficacy was entered into block 2 to see whether after controlling for the variables entered in block 1 it adds above and beyond the predictors entered in block 1. Results for the overall model, with all predictors, were significant [$\chi 2$ =38.72, *df* = 10, *N*=115, *p* < .001]. Results from the chi square difference test for the two models were significant which suggests that self-efficacy adds to the predictive power of placement status. Grade retention (*p*=.03), peer relationships (*p*=.01), and self efficacy (*p*=.02) were all significant predictors in the model. Odds ratio suggest that students who have been retained are twice more likely to be placed in alternative schools than students who have no history of grade retention. Also, students who have negative peer relationships are more than seven times likely to be placed in alternative schools than students who do not have negative peer relationships. With the overall model, 66% of students who have not been placed in an alternative education setting and 87% of students who have been placed in an alternative education can be predicted correctly. Overall, results from the model show that 78% of students were predicted correctly.

Table 7. Hierarchical Logistic Regression Analysis for Placement Status Using Self-Efficacy in Block 2 (*N*=115)

	Model 1			Model 2		
Predictor Variables	B	Wald Chi Square	Odds ratio	B	Wald Chi Square	Odds ratio
Parents living in home	-0.51	0.32	0.61	-0.55	0.35	0.58
Siblings living in Home	0.26	2.91	1.30*	0.20	1.63	1.23
Parent Education	-0.24	2.33	0.79	-0.17	1.21	0.84
Parent Criminality	-0.004	0.00	0.99	0.02	0.004	1.02
Parental Involvement	0.78	0.74	2.17	1.06	1.29	2.89
Neighborhood Violence	0.68	2.02	1.97	0.79	2.54	2.21
Advice Help	-0.04	0.004	0.96	-0.12	0.03	0.89
Grade Retention	1.17	6.27	3.23*	1.05	4.86	2.87*
Peer Relationships	2.12	8.28	8.32**	2.04	7.04	7.69**
Total Self-efficacy				-1.04	5.29	0.35*

***p<.001, **p <.01, *p < .05

Results of the second hierarchical logistic regression analysis are reported in Table 8. Siblings living in the home, parent criminality, grade retention, advice help, parents living in the home, parent education, peer relationships, and neighborhood violence were entered in block 1 of the analysis as control variables. The model consisting of control variables was significant [χ^2=33.11, *df*=9, *N*=115, *p* <.001]. School engagement was entered into block 2 to see whether after controlling for the variables entered in block 1 it adds above and beyond to the variables entered in block1. Results for the overall model, with all predictors, were significant [$\chi 2$ =36.57, *df* = 10, *N*=115, *p* < .001]. Results from the chi square difference test were not significant, which suggest that school engagement does not add to the predictive power of placement status. Grade retention and peer relationship (*p*'s < .05) were significant predictors. School engagement was not a significant predictor. Odds ratio suggest that students who have been retained are more than three times more likely to be placed in alternative schools than students who have no history of grade retention. Also, students who have negative peer relationships are more than seven times likely to be placed in alternative schools than students who do not have negative peer relationships. With the overall model, 62% of students who have not been placed in an alternative education setting and 87% of students who have been placed in an alternative education setting can be predicted correctly. Overall, results from the model show that 77% of students were predicted correctly.

Table 8. Hierarchical Logistic Regression Analysis for Placement Status Using School Engagement in Block 2 (*N*=115)

	Model 1			Model 2		
Predictor Variables	B	Wald Chi Square	Odds ratio	B	Wald Chi Square	Odds ratio
Parents living in home	-0.51	0.32	0.61	-0.60	0.43	0.55
Siblings living in Home	0.26	2.91	1.30*	0.25	2.56	1.00
Parent Education	-0.24	2.33	0.79	-0.19	1.44	0.83
Parent Criminality	-0.004	0.00	0.99	0.002	0.00	1.00
Parental Involvement	0.78	0.74	2.17	0.85	0.85	2.33
Neighborhood Violence	0.68	2.02	1.97	0.57	1.35	1.77
Advice Help	-0.04	0.004	0.96	-0.15	0.05	0.86
Grade Retention	1.17	6.27	3.23*	1.22	6.53	3.91*
Peer Relationships	2.12	8.28	8.32**	1.97	6.73	7.20**
School Engagement				-0.62	3.28	0.54

***p<.001, **p <.01, *p < .05

Results of the third hierarchical logistic regression analysis are reported in Table 9. Siblings living in the home, parent criminality, grade retention, advice help, parents living in the home, parent education, peer relationships, and neighborhood violence were entered in block 1 of the analysis as control variables. The model consisting of control variables was significant [χ^2=33.11, *df*=9, *N*=115, *p* <.001]. Racial identity was entered in block 2 to see whether after controlling for the variables entered in block 1 it added above and beyond. Results for the overall model, with all predictors entered, were significant [$\chi 2$ =35.87, *df* = 10, *N*=115, *p* < .001]. Results from the chi square difference test were not significant which suggests that racial identity does not add to the predictive power of placement status. Grade retention (*p*=.01) and peer relationships (*p*=.003) were significant predictors. Racial identity was not a significant predictor. Odds ratio suggest that students who have been retained are more than three times more likely to be placed in alternative schools than students who have no history of grade retention. Also, students who have negative peer relationships are more than nine times likely to be placed in alternative schools than students who do not have negative peer relationships. Racial identity was not a significant predictor when all predictors were used. With the overall model, 64% of students who have not been placed in an alternative education setting and 82% of students who have been placed in an alternative education setting can be predicted correctly. Overall, results from the model show that 75% of students were predicted correctly.

Table 9. Hierarchical Logistic Regression Analysis for Placement Status Using Racial Identity in Block 2 (*N*=115)

	Model 1			Model 2		
Predictor Variables	B	Wald Chi Square	Odds ratio	B	Wald Chi Square	Odds ratio
Parents living in home	-0.51	0.32	0.61	-0.32	0.12	0.73
Siblings living in Home	0.26	2.91	1.30*	0.23	2.29	1.26
Parent Education	-0.24	2.33	0.79	-0.24	2.42	0.79
Parent Criminality	-0.004	0.00	0.99	- 0.01	0.00	0.99
Parental Involvement	0.78	0.74	2.17	0.97	1.12	2.65
Neighborhood Violence	0.68	2.02	1.97	0.69	2.02	1.98
Advice Help	-0.04	0.004	0.96	-0.13	0.03	0.88
Grade Retention	1.17	6.27	3.23*	1.18	6.22	3.25*
Peer Relationships	2.12	8.28	8.32**	2.27	8.94	9.66**
Racial Identity				-0.77	2.69	0.46

***p<.001**p <.01, *p < .05

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The primary purpose of this study was to examine whether there are differences in levels of self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity between African American middle school males who are placed in an alternative education setting and those in a general or traditional education setting. The secondary purpose of this study was to examine possible predictors of placement status in alternative education settings. A two-group design, using self-report measures was used.

Summary

Hypothesis 1, which predicted a difference among levels of self-efficacy between African American middle school males in alternative and general education settings was supported. When self-efficacy was examined further, results indicated that the GES and AES group differed on academic, social, and emotional self-efficacy; the differences were statistically significant. Results indicate that students in general or traditional education settings tend to possess higher levels of self-efficacy compared to students in alternative school settings. Students in the general education setting group possessed more confidence in mastering academic tasks, maintaining and developing friendships, and coping with negative situations and emotions.

Hypothesis 2, which predicted a difference in levels of school engagement between African American middle school males in alternative and general education settings, was partially supported. While there were statistically significant differences

among the groups on their total levels of school engagement, behavioral engagement, and cognitive engagement, the groups did not differ in terms of their level of emotional engagement. This suggests that the groups are similar in terms of the affective components of school engagement. The general education setting group possessed higher levels of behavioral and cognitive school engagement. These results suggest that students in the general education setting tended to participate more in their schools and go beyond what was expected of them in school.

Hypothesis 3, which predicted a difference among racial identity between African American middle school males in alternative and general education settings was not supported. Results showed that the groups did not differ on racial identity. When the components of racial identity (centrality, ideology, and regard) were further examined, results showed that the groups were similar.

Hypothesis 4 was partially supported. When risk factors at the community, school, and family level were controlled for only self-efficacy proved to be significant as an individual level variable. Both school engagement and racial identity were not significant predictors. These findings suggest that the levels of self-efficacy should be considered when dealing with students in alternative schools. It should also be noted that grade retention and peer relationships were significant when all risk factors were entered together.

A major finding of the study, at the individual level, is the role of student perceptions of themselves. Consistent with the extant literature (Bandura, 1997; Barrow, Armstrong, Vargo, & Boothroyd, 2007), self-efficacy can be seen as an important

protective factor for individuals who possess it. When examining the findings of the study, explanations of the differences that were found for self-efficacy and school engagement were examined. Why does this difference occur among the different groups? Why are students who have never been placed in alternative school settings evidencing with higher levels of self-efficacy and school engagement? One explanation is that self-efficacy and school engagement are truly risk factors for placement in alternative school settings. A second explanation is that the lower levels of self-efficacy and school engagement could be a consequence of being placed in an alternative school setting.

This study also found that peer groups continue to play a role in outcomes of young people (Beam et al., 2002). Findings from the hierarchical logistic regression found that when all risk factors were entered, peer relationships were consistently significant in the overall models that were tested. In addition to peer relationships, grade retention also plays a role. It was also consistently significant in all models that were tested. It should also be noted that grade retention was significantly positively correlated with peer relationships, particularly peer relationships involving deviant behaviors.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of the study is in regards to the measures used for the study. The data from the measures are all self-report measures. Future research might use multiple respondents for measures. Although the measures were written on a middle school reading level or lower, many of the items were difficult for some of the

participants to understand. This could have affected the understanding and interpretation of items for some of the participants.

The second limitation of the study dealt with the predictors that were used at the family and community levels, particularly dealing with relationships. This study did not allow for an in-depth examination of the type of relationships with family and individuals in the community. More research is needed to examine the types and characteristics of relationships to examine the role that these relationships may have in an adolescent being successful or engaging in behaviors that could lead to negative outcomes. For example, when dealing with family predictors within the African American community, one should consider the role of the extended family member. It is not uncommon for grandparents to take the role as parent in some African American families. At the community level, a more in depth examination of supportive relationships is warranted.

The third limitation is that the study was conducted in a single urban school district using only one general education setting and one alternative education setting. This limitation suggests that these settings may not be completely representative of African American male adolescents who live in the entire district. Future research should include more than one setting across the district.

Future Directions

Future research should focus on examining why there is a difference in self-efficacy and school engagement among African American male adolescents in alternative and general education settings. Future research needs examine the levels of

self-efficacy and school engagement of African American male students prior to and during placement in alternative schools. Examining students' level of self-efficacy and school engagement at different times can provide more information as to whether or not there is a change that occurs in the levels as a result of being placed in an alternative school setting.

Also, future research needs to examine other ethnicities and females to see if the same patterns exist. Examining whether there are differences among self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity among genders in other ethnicity groups can allow for comparisons to African Americans and other groups. In addition, future research needs to examine the levels of self-efficacy, school engagement, and racial identity among high school students to see if the same patterns exist.

Implications for School Psychology

Because there are significant differences among self-efficacy and school engagement, it is important for school psychologists to work with students and school personnel to instill confidence in students to be successful in school settings. Also, since self-efficacy was shown to be a significant predictor of placement status in alternative school settings, it is important for school psychologists and school personnel to get involved with these students before they even become at-risk. This can be done by developing a universal screener to identify those students who may be at risk for placemen t in alternative school settings. Also, this can be done by implementing prevention strategies that concentrate on building self-esteem and confidence in students at early ages.

Another implication deals with the system response regarding school personnel's policy of sending students to alternative school settings. One thing that school personnel and administrators should keep in mind is that when giving students consequences for behaviors, one must consider not jeopardizing a student's self-efficacy and school engagement when sending students to alternative schools. For example, counseling interventions such as group, individual, or family counseling should be considered before sending a student to alternative schools. Also, behavioral consultation with teachers should also be considered. In addition, school personnel and administrators should consider the role that grade retention and deviant peer relationships have on placement status in alternative schools.

Concerning self-efficacy and school engagement, it is important for administrators to examine their school climate. Is the school climate one where a student feels like he or she can belong? Is the school climate welcoming to students? Also, is the school climate welcoming to students who have trouble both behaviorally and academically? This implication can be useful to school personnel to consider school-wide interventions to enhance school climates so that students build their self-confidence and engagement to school.

Also, another implication for administrators, teachers, and parents is to be mindful of ways to increase students' self-efficacy. For example, Bandura (1997) stated that self-efficacy is experienced through mastery experience, vicarious experience, social persuasions, and emotional/physiological states. To increase self-efficacy through mastery experiences, tutoring programs that provide students with the opportunity of

mastering their schoolwork should be implemented. To increase self-efficacy through vicarious experiences and social persuasions, parents, administrators, and teachers should provide positive role modeling experiences of so that students can learn from observing others having success in various areas. In addition, providing positive feedback and compliments to students can help increase self-efficacy.

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APPENDIX

STUDY PACKET MATERIALS

PARENT PERMISSION FORM

Exploring Risk and Protective Factors Among African American Males in Alternative and General Education Settings

Introduction
The purpose of this form is to provide you (as the parent of a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to let your child participate in this research study. Also, if you decide to let your child be involved in this study, this form will be used to record your consent.

If you agree, your child will be asked to participate in a research study to help understand how African American adolescent males feel about their relationships, school, and their neighborhoods. Your child will be asked demographic information such as date of birth, school, and grade. He/she was selected to be a possible participant because he/she was nominated by his/her teacher or principal.

What will my child be asked to do?
If you allow your child to participate in this study, they will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. This questionnaire will ask your child demographic information such as date of birth, school, and grade. The questionnaire will also ask your child to complete several rating scales that will be used to investigate how you child views themselves, their relationships, school, and home.

What are the risks involved in this study?
The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks your child ordinarily encountered in daily life.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
Your child will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, your child's participation will enhance the research field on risk and protective factors that affect African American males.

Does my child have to participate?
No, your child doesn't have to be in this research study. You can agree to allow your child to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty.

What if my child does not want to participate?

In addition to your permission, your child must agree to participate in the study. If your child does not want to participate they will not be included in the study and there will be no penalty. If your child initially agrees to be in the study he/she can change their mind later without any penalty.

Who will know about my child's participation in this research study?
This study is confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you or your child to this study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Tia Billy, the principal investigator, will have access to the records.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Tia Billy at 214-932-5244, tmbilly@tamu.edu or Cynthia Riccio, Ph.D. (979) 845-1831, criccio@tamu.edu.

Whom do I contact about my child's rights as a research participant?
This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979)458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Signature
Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to allow your child to participate in this study.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name:_____

Printed Name of Child_____

Signature of Person Obtaining Permission: _____**Date:** _____

Printed Name:_____

ASSENT FORM

Exploring Risk and Protective Factors among African American Males in Alternative and General Education Settings

Introduction
You have been asked to take part in a research study. This study is interested in looking at how you feel about your relationships, school, and yourself. You were picked to be one of the students from your class to fill out this questionnaire.

What will I be asked to do?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to fill out this questionnaire, which will take about 20-30 minutes to complete.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study; however, your responses to the questions will help society learn more about African American males.

Do I have to participate?
No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time. If you decide not to participate, it will have no affect on your relationship with your school.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?
This study is confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. Your records will be stored securely and only Tia Billy, the principal investigator, will have access to the records.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Tia Billy at 214-932-5244 or tmbilly@tamu.edu or Cynthia Riccio, Ph.D. (979) 845-1831, criccio@tamu.edu.

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Signature
Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to participate in this study.

Signature of Participant: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name:_____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name:_____

Cover Letter/Directions for the Packet

Hi Students,

This questionnaire will be given to 6th, 7th, 8th grade boys. This questionnaire should take you less than 30 minutes to complete it. The questions ask you about yourself and your experiences at home, school, and in your community. Your answers will help us understand how students feel and help us improve school programs.

This questionnaire will not be shared with your teachers, parents, other students, or administrators. This questionnaire will be kept confidential, which is why you are asked to NOT write your name anywhere on the questionnaire. This is not a test. There is no right or wrong answers. Please answer each the question as honest as possible. If you have any questions, please raise your hand and I will come help you. I can help you read a word or explain a question to you, so please feel free to ask.

Please keep these things in mind

1) Take your time and read each question
2) Read the directions before the questions
3) Be as honest as you can about how **you** feel.
4) Raise your hand if you have a question.
5) Try to answer each question. Pick the answer that is closest to how **you** feel.

When you finish, raise your hand and I will come collect your questionnaire.

Thank you for your help with this study!

CODE: ____ ____ _____

Demographic Questionnaire: Please answer the following questions on the space provided below

1) **What is your date of birth?** Month: _____ Day:_____ Year:_____

2) **How old are you? _____**

3) **What school are you attending?**

_____

If you are currently at the alternative school, what school did you attend before you were placed at the alternative school?

_____

4) **What grade are you currently in?**

☐ 6th grade ☐ 7th grade ☐ 8th grade

5) **What is your ethnicity?**
(Please put a check in the box that best explains your ethnicity or race.)

☐ African American ☐ White/Non-Hispanic ☐ Asian/ Pacific Islander

☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ Native American ☐ Other: _____

Family-Based Questions: The following are questions about your family. Remember to raise your hand if you need help.

6) Who lives in your house with you?
(Please put a check in the box next to the people who live with you at your house. Please put a check next to everyone who lives with you.)

☐Mother ☐Father ☐Stepmother

☐Stepfather ☐Guardian or Foster Parent ☐Grandmother

☐Grandfather ☐Sister ☐Brother

☐Aunt ☐Uncle ☐Other:

_____

7) How many brothers and sister do you have living at home with you?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ More than 5

8) My mother: (check which one)

☐Attended High School ☐Graduated High School

☐Received a GED ☐Attended Technical, vocational or training school

☐ Attended College ☐Graduated from College

9) My father: (check which one)

☐Attended High School ☐Graduated High School

☐Received a GED ☐Attended Technical, vocational or training school

☐ Attended College ☐Graduated from College

10) My mother is currently employed or has a job? ☐ yes ☐no ☐I don't know

11) My father is currently employed or has a job? ☐ yes ☐no ☐I don't know

12) Has your mother or father ever been to jail or prison?

☐ yes ☐no ☐I don't know

13) If I need help with my homework, there is someone at home I can ask to help me. ☐yes ☐no

If yes, please check all of the people who would help you with your homework if you ask.

☐Mother ☐Father ☐Stepmother

☐Stepfather ☐Guardian or Foster Parent ☐Grandmother

☐Grandfather ☐Sister ☐Brother

☐Cousin ☐Aunt ☐Uncle

☐Other:_____

14) Who makes sure you get to school every morning on time?

☐Mother ☐Father ☐Stepmother

☐Stepfather ☐Guardian or Foster Parent ☐Grandmother

☐Grandfather ☐Sister ☐Brother

☐Cousin ☐Aunt ☐Uncle

☐You ☐Other:_____

School-Based Questions: These are questions about school. You are doing great!

15) Have you ever failed or had to repeat a grade? ☐ yes ☐ no

16) Have you ever been sent to alternative school? ☐ yes ☐ no

b) How many times have you been sent to an alternative school?

☐ Never ☐ 1 time ☐ 2 times ☐ 3 or more times

17) Have you participated in any of these activities or groups at school within the last academic school year?

☐ none ☐ band or orchestra

☐ chorus or choir ☐ drama club

☐ honor society ☐ student council

☐ foreign language club ☐ debate or speech

☐ club in a subject area (math, science, history, computer)

☐ Sports team (Football, Basketball, Track, Baseball, etc.) ☐ other _____

18) Have you participated in any of these non-school activities or groups within the last academic school year?

☐ none ☐ religious youth groups

☐ non-religious youth groups ☐ a gang

☐ Big Brother/Big Sister organization ☐ Boy Scouts

☐ boy's or girl's club

☐ Non-school team sports (football, soccer, baseball, basketball, karate, etc.) ☐ other _____

Peer Group Questions: Pease place a check in the box that best answers the question.

19) Do any of your friends have problems in school?

☐ yes ☐ no

20) Are any of your friends in a gang?

☐ yes ☐ no

21) Do any of your friends skip school?

☐ yes ☐ no

22) Have any of your friend been arrested by the police?

☐ yes ☐ no

23) Have any of your friends been sent to an alternative school?

☐ yes ☐ no

Community-Based Questions. These are questions about your community.

24) Which non-school activities or groups have you participated in within the last academic school year?

☐religious youth groups ☐non-religious youth groups

☐Big Brother/Big Sister organization ☐a gang

☐boy's or girl's club ☐Scouts

☐Non-school team sports (football, soccer, baseball, basketball, karate, etc.) ☐ None

☐ other_____

25) If you had a problem or need advice is there an adult who is not a family member that you would talk to:

☐ yes ☐no

b) Who would you talk to or seek advice from?

☐Coach ☐Priest/Pastor ☐Gang Member ☐ Teacher /Principle

☐Counselor ☐Youth Minister ☐Neighbor ☐Other:_____

26) Do you live in a neighborhood where there is violence?

☐ yes ☐no

Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children

PLEASE CHECK THE BOX THAT BEST ANSWERS THE QUESTION.

27) How well can you express your opinions when other classmates disagree with you?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

28) How well do you succeed in cheering yourself up when an unpleasant event has happened?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

29) How well can you study when there are other interesting things to do?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

30) How well do you succeed in becoming calm again when you are very scared?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

31) How well can you become friends with other young people?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

32) How well can you study a chapter for a test?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

33) How well can you have a chat with an unfamiliar person?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

34) How well can you prevent yourself from becoming nervous?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

35) How well do you succeed in finishing all your homework every day?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

36) How well can you get along with your classmates while working together?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

37) How well can you control your feelings?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

38) How well can you pay attention during class?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

39) How well can you tell other young people that they are doing something you don't like?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

40) How well can you give yourself a peptalk when you feel low?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

41) How well do you succeed in passing all school subjects?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

42) How well can you tell a funny story to a group of young people?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

43) How well do you succeed in satisfying your parents with your schoolwork?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

44) How well are you able to remain friends with other young people?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

45) How well do you succeed in holding back unpleasant thoughts?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

46) How well do you succeed in passing a test?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

48) How well do you succeed in not worrying about things that might happen?

☐ Very Bad ☐ Not Well ☐ Okay ☐ Well ☐ Very Well

Engagement Scale

Each sentence below describes how some people feel about school or what they do at school. I will ask you to think carefully about each sentence and check the answer box that is most true for <u>you</u>.

49) I follow rules at school.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

50) I get in trouble at school.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

51) When I am in class, I just act as if I am working.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

52) I pay attention in class.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

53) I complete my work on time.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

54) I like being at school.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

55) I feel excited by my work at school.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

56) My classroom is a fun place to be.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

57) I am interested in the work at school.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

58) I feel happy in school.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

59) I feel bored in school.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

60) I check my schoolwork for mistakes.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

61) I study at home even when I don't have a test.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

62) I try to watch TV shows about things we do in school.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

63) When I read a book, I ask myself questions to make sure I understand what it is about.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

64) I read extra books to learn more about things we do in school.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

65) When I don't know what a word is when I am reading, I do something to figure it out.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

66) If I don't understand what I read, I go back and read it over again.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

67) I talk to people outside of school about what I am learning in class.

☐ 1 Never ☐ 2 ☐ 3 Sometimes ☐ 4 ☐ 5 All of the time

Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity – Teen

PLEASE CHECK THE BOX THAT BEST ANSWERS THE QUESTION.

68) I feel close to other Black people.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

69) I have a strong sense of belonging to other Black people.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

70) If I were to describe myself to someone, one of the first things that I would say is that I'm Black.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

71) I am happy that I am Black.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

72) I am proud to be Black.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

73) I feel good about Black people.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

74) Most people think that Blacks are as smart as people of other races.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

75) People think that Blacks are as good as people from other races.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

76) People from other races think that Blacks have made important contributions.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

77) It is important that Blacks go to White Schools so that they can learn how to act around Whites.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

78) I think it is important for Blacks not to act Black around White people.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

79) Blacks should act more like Whites to be successful in this society.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

80) Being an individual is more important than identifying yourself as Black.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

81) Blacks should think of themselves as individuals, not as Blacks.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

82) Black people should not consider race when deciding what movies to go see.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

83) People of all minority groups should stick together and fight discrimination.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

84) There are other people who experience discrimination similar to Blacks.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

85) Blacks should spend less time focusing on how we differ from other minority groups and more time focusing on how we are similar to people from other minority groups.

☐ Really Disagree☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

86) Black parents should surround their children with Black art and Black books.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

87) Whenever possible, Blacks should buy from Black businesses.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

88) Blacks should support Black entertainment by going to Black movies and watching Black TV shows.

☐ Really Disagree ☐ Kind of Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Kind of Agree ☐ Really Agree

VITA

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Educational Background

2004-2009	**Texas A&M University**, *College Station, Texas* Ph.D. in School Psychology
2000-2004	**Loyola University New Orleans**, *New Orleans, Louisiana* Bachelor of Arts in Psychology Cum Laude

Professional Experience

2008-2009	**Predoctoral Internship - Dallas Independent School District** *Dallas, Texas*
2006-2007	**Texas A&M University School Psychology Practicum** ***College Station Independent School District:*** **South Knoll Elementary School-Based Practicum,** *College Station, Texas*
2006-2007	**Therapy Practicum - *Bryan Independent School District:* Special Opportunities School,** *Bryan, Texas*
2006-2007	**Therapy Practicum - *Texas A&M University:* Counseling and Assessment Clinic,** *College Station, Texas*

Presentations

Blake, J. J., Lease, A. M., **Billy, T. M**., & Dyer, M. (2008). *The Friendship Motivation and Quality of Preadolescent Interracial Friendships*. SRA Biennial Meeting, Paper Symposium, Chicago, IL.

Billy, T. M., Kocian, B. R., Lemon, D., & Riccio, C. A. (2006). *Transition services and high school students with emotional disorders*. American Psychological Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Doss, A.J., Lopez, M., Hawley, K. M., & **Billy, T. M.** (2006) *Practitioner attitudes regarding evidence-based treatments following a state-wide implementation effort*. American Psychological Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Loyd, L. K. & **Billy, T. M.** (2006). *Effects of children's gender and ethnicity on inflated self-views*. National Association of School Psychologists Conference, Anaheim, CA.