

**AFRICAN AMERICAN URBAN FEMALE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS
OF SOCIAL FACTORS IMPACTING THEIR ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT IN ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT**

A Dissertation

by

RHONDA EVETTE SHELBY-KING

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

May 2010

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

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ABSTRACT

African American Urban Female Students' Perceptions of Social Factors
Impacting Their Academic Achievement in One
Public School District. (May 2010)

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of social factors affecting the academic achievement of secondary African American urban (AAU) female students in an urban school district. This study determined whether the AAU females in this study perceived the social factors in the literature review to impact their academic achievement, the relationship between those social factors and academic achievement, and the differences in academic achievement by socioeconomic status.

One hundred fifty-eight (158) AAU female students from three high schools in one urban district located in southeast Texas participated in this study. A self-generated 51-item questionnaire (Students' Perceptions of Social Factors Affecting Academic Achievement in Urban Schools) was used to collect data for this study. There were three major results in the study. First, there were not any significant factors impacting the academic achievement of AAU females; secondly, AAU females did not perceive any social factors as significantly affecting their academic achievement; and finally, there

were not any statistical differences between socioeconomic status and academic achievement. Specifically, the results did not reveal a difference between AAU 12th grade female students on free and reduced lunch and those not on free and reduced lunch in terms of academic performance.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Stevenson and Tanner McCollister. My parents taught me to believe in myself through them believing in me. To my sons, Ryan Kirk and Rory Konnor, you all are the greatest gifts of all. Always remember, through Christ, all things are possible. Believe in yourselves, because I believe in each of you. Remember, I love you the most.

Kirk King, my husband and my friend, from the words of Ryan and Rory, "You're awesome!" Thanks for the years of love, understanding, and patience.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The achievement gap of American girls has been at the center of research for decades (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Initially, the concern was the achievement gap between the genders. Boys of all races were once perceived to be more academically astute than females. Many studies suggest boys are inherently inferior physically and academically.

During the early 1990's, research began to report that not only were girls lagging behind, but they were lagging immensely behind their male counterparts in science, math, and technology (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Today, Sadker (2005) reports those achievement gaps between the genders are closing. However, the gap is reopening and widening more than ever between the races and the social classes (Viadero, 2000).

While low-achieving African American and Hispanic students made great strides nationwide throughout the last 30 years in narrowing the achievement gap that separates them from their White and Asian American counterparts, the gap is reopening (Viadero, 2000). Nationwide, African American and Hispanic students constitute about one in ten of the students scoring in the top level on National Assessment of Educational Progress tests in reading, math, and science (Viadero, 2000).

While the males are leaving the females behind academically, African American urban (AAU) and other females of color are also lagging behind White and Asian American suburban females. Although African American female students are enrolling

The style for this dissertation follows that of *The Journal of Educational Research*.

in colleges and universities at an increasing rate, unlike the majority of their White counterparts, too few are graduating. If schools are provided adequate funding and all else is presumably equal, policymakers, researchers, school personnel, parents, and students must question why AAU females and other females of color are falling behind their non-urban counterparts. This ethnic educational achievement gap has been well studied; however, resolutions have and are being challenged and negated. Herrnstein and Murray (1994) critically analyzed the achievement gap among ethnic groups concluding that African Americans do not perform as well as Whites. Despite numerous school reforms, a large gap in academic performance is maintained in urban schools because of public schools' failure to (a) educate a significant number of children in marginalized populations living in dearth conditions, (b) provide a culturally relevant pedagogy, and (c) eliminate policies including tracking (Banks, 2001; Woods, 1997) and provide a culturally relevant curriculum (Banks, 2001).

Other studies advocate that urban students may be shortchanged academically because of self-confidence (Woods, 1997); concentrated poverty/cultural diversity (Ford, 1992; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Kincheloe, 2004; Ladson- Billings, 1995); teacher expectations (Ferguson, 1998; Hale-Benson, 1986); school-related factors (Dupper & Myers-Adams, 2002; Pollard-Durodola, 2003; Stewart, 2008); learning styles (Gay, 2000; Hale-Benson, 1986; Ladson-Billings, 1994); education reforms (Tomlinson & Cross, 1991); ethnic stereotyping (Steele & Aronson, 1995); and parental involvement (Comer & Hayes, 1991; Epstein, 1995; Wood, Kaplan, & McLoyd, 2006). Other factors affecting female academic achievement include funding, teacher efficacy, peer

pressures, self-esteem, intrinsic motivation, economics, societal ills including controlled substances, and teen pregnancy (Darling-Hammond, 1998).

The plight of urban students of color in the American educational system is uncertain. A large percent of students of color are struggling academically in schools with a significant number being females. It is evident the American educational system and all of its entities should encourage urban students of color to realize their full potential, achieve economic self-sufficiency, and discover positive, active role models (Banks, 2001; Kozol, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Stewart, 2007). All schools should strive to provide all children, regardless of gender and socioeconomic conditions, with quality instruction and with the same curriculum in order to provide a more uniform academic sense of accomplishment to help produce lifelong productive citizens of society (Cooper, 2004; Haberman, 2005).

Providing equal educational opportunities for males and females is a challenge for today's schools. An equal educational opportunity is affecting all students and has created more barriers for girls (American Association of University Women [AAUW], 1996). Although classrooms are coeducational, males and females are not receiving the same quality or quantity of education, and more disparities can be found between the rich and the poor and the urban and the suburban (Bailey, 1996; Ford, 1995; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). Profound changes in school demographics and new challenges in American education have impacted gender relations and equity (AAUW, 1996; Wood et al., 2006). It is definite that "schools must prepare girls and boys for full and active roles in the family, the community, and the work force" (Wellesley College Center for

Research on Women, 1992, p. 1). To accomplish this, both males and females must seek to obtain a challenging and equitable education both in quantity and quality. However, many education reformists and feminists purport that “the educational system is not [adequately] meeting girls’ needs” (Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1992, p. 1). The AAUW (1996) Report purports “compelling evidence that girls are not receiving the same quality or even quantity of education as their brothers” (p. 3). It also scribed females comprise nearly 50% of our future regardless if viewed from a political, social, or an economic perspective.

Therefore, in order to achieve “an America in which girls and boys are treated, and treat each other with respect and kindness, and in which girls as well as boys are urged and expected to fulfill their potential without restriction...we must begin teaching about gender equity. (Sanders, 1997, p. 1)

Today’s schools reflect society’s confusion about the roles and responsibilities of females, especially urban females (McDaniel, 1994). Racial, class, and ethnic differences and/or prejudices have further complicated the equity question in education (AAUW, 1996). With so many researchers, educators, and parents focusing on the plight of males, many have yet to realize that females, especially urban females, are being cheated out of an academically challenging education that inspires them to seek various fields (mathematics, science, and technology) and leadership roles dominated by males (Ladson-Billings, 1994). *Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendment* made a conscientious effort to rectify gender inequality by prohibiting discrimination based on gender. Thirty-seven years later, *Title IX* appears to be more about words than implementation and action.

However, females in the United States have been fighting for their rights to equality in education long before the Women's Rights Movement. Now that America has made concerted efforts through various legislatures to level the playing fields, other factors are infiltrating the game (socioeconomics, culture, funding) and forcing inequality and injustice to resurface (Bailey, 1996). It is inarguable that all children are entitled to an education; yet, the quality of that education remains debatable. With socio-cultural factors and economics also restricting the quality of education for urban schools, one must begin to question the quality of education being provided for urban females. Not only is the color line a huge factor in determining a child's schooling (Darling-Hammond, 1998), but so too is gender. Urban females in low socioeconomic urban areas do not have the same educational opportunities as their suburban counterparts. As with any female, "in today's coed classroom girls are short-changed" (Sadker & Sadker, 1995, p. 1). Although males and females are attending the same schools, "they are not receiving the same quality or quantity of education – nor are they genuinely learning from or about each other" (Bailey, 1996, p. 75).

Current images and stereotypes view inner-city, urban areas as ghettos of despair with low inspirations (Leadbeater & Way, 1996). Researchers have recorded that urban females "achieve less in school, attain less education, and encounter less success in the labor market later in life" (Sadker & Sadker, 1994, p. 23). If minorities, especially females, continue to lag behind academically, this could thwart long-standing efforts to better integrate the highest levels of business, academe, and government. Other documentation concurs stating that previous research is lacking concrete details to help

alleviate low achievement and low self-esteem among urban females in inner-city schools (Leadbeater & Way, 1996).

As the educational system strives to ‘leave no child behind,’ it must seek to enthruse urban girls to realize their full potential as well as new skills, achieve economic self-sufficiency, and discover positive, active female role models (AAUW, 1996). Leadbeater and Way (1996) also suggest that little research has focused on the actual contexts of urban females’ lives or the *real* factors affecting their education and their investments in their future. The literature on critical race theory in regards to the Black feminist thought, gender equity, and urban education should be reviewed in order to effectively educate the majority of the nation’s schoolchildren.

Sociocultural Theories

It is important for educators to realize what factors impact the academic achievement of today’s AAU females as well as the epistemologies that support the reform needed to successfully educate them in a constantly changing society (Hill-Collins, 1990; Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994). It is equally important for educators to understand those resilient factors that allow urban females to overcome adversities, whether physical or circumstantial to attain academic achievement and a sense of self-worth (Bernard, 1995, 1997; Garmezy, 1994; Pajares, 2002).

Dewey (1933) asserted that doing what is best to supplement student achievement and success (the aim of education) should be the refinement of education. Dewey asseverated that access to knowledge guaranteed a better quality of life, not only for the individual, but also for society. Dewey and other philosophers supported the idea

that educators must utilize curriculum and instructional practices effectively to ensure that all students are properly educated and prepared to become productive, law-abiding citizens in society.

Resilience refers to the ability to spring back from adversity or any resistance to stress (Garmezy & Rutter, 1983). Rutter (1985) also argued that resilience is based on constitutional and environmental factors and processes that vary over time and with context. The research of Bernard (1995) and Garmezy and Rutter (1983) concentrated on the resilient factors youth possess that help them overcome many adversities. Resilience is an important issue when discussing social factors that may impact academic achievement for AAU females. These same authors inferred that everyone is born with an inherent capacity for resilience. This resilience helps to develop “social competence, problem-solving skills, a critical consciousness, autonomy, and a sense of purpose” (Bernard, 1995, p. 1). Bernard’s (1991, 1995) literature and Garmezy’s (1994) literature suggested that if children are provided opportunities to improve their social competence, and discover as well as validate their own identity, they are more likely to overcome adversity. They both agree on six common characteristics of resilient children. Bernard (1991, 1995) and Garmezy (1994) concluded that a resilient child:

- has intrinsic faith;
- displays a sense of humor;
- is persistent;
- has extracurricular interests and skills;
- has extraordinary abilities; and

- seeks and looks for support when a parent is psychologically and physically unavailable.

Their research also purports that if youth are provided caring relationships, along with opportunities for meaningful involvement and responsibility within the school and home, they are more likely to thrive in school (Bernard, 1991, 1995, 1997). Another attribute of resilient youth documented by Bernard (1995, 1997) and Garmezy (1994) is high expectations. If the home and school environment establish an environment of high expectations and give a means of support to achieve them, more youth, namely AAU females, would have higher rates of academic success. Because of urban students' innate resilience, they manage to be successful regardless of the obstacles and circumstances in which they are born.

The research of both Hill-Collins (1990) and Ladson-Billings (1999) focus on an individual's positive response to risk factors in life and are attuned as they both address the ability of the human condition to assert itself despite great adversity or negative societal perceptions. Hill-Collins (1990) focuses on Black feminist thought that was derived from the research on critical race theory by Ladson-Billings (1999). Black feminist thought and critical race theory focus on gender, race, and social class as well as the concept of self and gender empowerment. Hill-Collins (1990) is largely concerned with African American women's emerging power as beings of knowledge. Historically, African American women have always longed to find their place in society. During the Women's Movement, the term "Black" was associated with males and the term

“women” was associated with European American women; thus, the African American women were deemed invisible and silent (Gilligan, 1991; Hill-Collins, 1990, 2000).

Hill-Collins (1990) believes African American females' existence and needs have been ignored too long. Her Black feminist thought seeks to empower African American females, while Ladson-Billings seeks to empower the entire race. While Ladson-Billings portrays the entire race, Hill-Collins portrays African American women as self-defined, independent individuals who are constantly battling issues of race, gender, and class oppression and patriarchy. Hill-Collins (1990) asseverates one distinguished feature of the Black feminist thought: “its insistence that both the changed consciousness of individuals and the social transformation of political and economic institutions constitute essential ingredients for social change” (p. 1). She imparts that knowledge is important for any dimension of change. As a result, she uses the Black feminist thought to empower African American females by providing them knowledge of the Afrocentric Diaspora. She strongly encourages African American females to obtain as much knowledge about themselves in hopes of providing a framework to build a future. Hill-Collins (1990) asserts it is essential that African American women place their historical experiences (race, class, and gender oppression) at the center of analysis, which will provide insight for creating new possibilities for empowering them. This will allow them to obtain the “ability to observe the world critically, and to oppose ideas that are disempowering to themselves” (Ward, 1996, p. 87). Thomas, Townsend, and Belgrave (2003) examined how African Americans were influenced by racial identity

and Africentric values. The results supported combining racial identity and Africentric values to enhance school interest.

Ladson-Billings (1995) contends through critical race theory that the concept of personal identity is defined in large part by race and that it influences the behavior and identification process of all human beings. Thomas et al. (2003) also validated the concept of competence that builds self-esteem, stating that it aides in the process of identity formation in African American children. All students of color must be able to identify with themselves in order to be academically successful and to resist oppressive, demeaning, and judgmental sociopolitical environments (Hill-Collins, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Hill-Collins (1990) and Ladson-Billings (1995) substantiate Garnezy's (1994) and Bernard's (1995) core beliefs that if children are provided opportunities to discover and validate their own identity, they are more likely to achieve.

The works of Epstein (1995) and Comer (1980) validate the significance of parental involvement in the academic success of youth. Through their work, it is evident that family environment and involvement have an impact on a child's academic performance. Current research purports that students who attend urban schools are more likely to encounter problems that affect academic achievement and attainment than students in suburban communities (Comer, 1980; Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sable, 1998). For the average African American family, family involvement and relationships are essential to a child's well-being (Comer, 1986; Delpit, 1995; Diamond, Randolph, & Spillane, 2004; Hale-Benson, 1982; Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Leadbeater & Way, 1996; Wood et al., 2006).

Epstein (1995), Epstein & Sanders (2002), and Comer (1980, 1986, 2005) concluded that parents can play a significant role in enhancing their children's education by participating in their learning and by reinforcing the efforts of the teacher. As a result, Epstein developed a national framework for implementing parental involvement in the schools. This framework incorporates six types of involvement: (a) parenting, (b) communicating, (c) volunteering, (d) learning at home, (e) decision-making, and (f) collaborating with community. Each framework has its own concepts. Epstein's (1995) framework for parental involvement provides a foundation for parents to become more involved in their child's academic success.

Statement of the Problem

Academic achievement of AAU females continues to fall short of the national norm. This group of students is scoring significantly lower on their standardized tests compared to their European American counterparts. In order to level the educational playing field, the factors contributing to the academic achievement of these students should be understood and addressed. Because there is not a preponderance of current research linking the social factors positively impacting academic achievement for AAU females, it is critical for researchers in the field to begin exploring those dynamics that will augment their success in urban schools to help ensure they are meaningful contributors to society.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of specific social factors affecting the academic achievement of secondary AAU female students. This study determined if AAU female students perceived any social factors as impacting their academic achievement; whether there was a relationship between those social factors and academic achievement; and whether they perceived socioeconomic status as impacting their academic achievement.

Research Questions

1. What are the African American urban (AAU) female students' perceptions of social factors impacting their academic achievement?
2. What is the relationship between the African American urban (AAU) females' perceived social factors and their academic achievement?
3. What are the differences in (a) AAU females' perceptions of social factors impacting academic achievement based on socioeconomic status and (b) AAU females' academic achievement by socioeconomic status?

Significance of the Study

In order to address issues of urban public schools, we must begin to research factors affecting academic achievement for urban females. Females comprise nearly 50% of the nation's population and work force. If they are not educated properly, they may not be able to live up to their fullest potential in society. Considering our urban society is rapidly increasing, we must address the needs of urban students, especially

females. Educating all students, including AAU females, will help contribute to the betterment of society.

Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions were used for the purpose of this study:

Achievement: Academic progress based on Reading, Writing, and Math TAAS scores.

African American Urban (AAU) Females: Females of African decent living in a specific region of Texas labeled urban.

Guardian: Adult with custodial rights to a child.

Perceptions: Attaining awareness or understanding as a result of interplays between past experiences and one's own culture (*Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia*).

People/Students of Color: Primarily used to describe all people who are not White and define people by their connected experiences (*Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia*).

Parental Involvement: Positive influence and active participation in a child's academic progress.

Resilience: A term used to describe a set of qualities that foster a process of successful adaptation and transformation despite risk and adversity (Bernard, 1995).

Resilient students are described as good problem solvers who achieve in spite their circumstances.

School Climate: The set of internal characteristics that distinguish one from another and influence the behavior of each school's member (Hoy & Miskel, 2005).

Single-Parent: One biological or stepparent or guardian in the home.

Social Factors: External forces that may affect academic achievement (peer relations, home environment, school environment, self-expectation, teacher expectations, and parental involvement).

TAAS Test: A Texas standardized assessment used to measure student's academic achievement at each tested grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Tracking: Grouping students on the basis of their ability.

Two-Parent: Two-parent home with one biological or stepfather and/or biological or stepmother and/or guardian.

Underachievement: Discrepancy between ability and performance.

Urban: Comprised of all persons living in an area that contains at least one city of 50,000 and 1,000 persons per square mile (U.S. Department of Commerce's Census Bureau, 2000).

Assumptions

The assumptions were:

1. Participants were representative of 12th grade African American urban female students.
2. Participants in this study understood the questions, were honest in their responses to the Likert scale questions, and accurate in the duplication of their TAAS scores.
3. The TAAS scores represented their academic achievement.
4. The interpretation of the results accurately reflected the participants' perceptions.

Limitations

Limitations to this study were:

1. The sample in this study was limited to one region of Texas schools.
2. Only students who volunteered participated in the study.
3. The TAAS is a test of minimum skills. Therefore, the scores might not reflect the true achievement levels of the students.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter I comprises of an introduction, a statement of the problem, a purpose of the study, research questions, assumptions, limitations, definition of terms, and a significance of the study. Chapter II consists of a review of related literature. Chapter III explains the methodology and procedures followed in the study. Chapter IV analyzes the quantitative data. Chapter V incorporates a summary of the results, recommendations, and implications for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Urban education is in a crisis (Kozol, 2005). To understand the profound dilemmas facing urban education is to recognize that urban public schools in America are confronted with multiple issues. Children comprise nearly 30% of the American population. Nearly half of the six million children in Texas are underserved and more than half are under age six (CHILDRENATRISK, 2008). However, African American children comprise the second largest underserved group of children in Harris County and the state of Texas with Hispanics being the largest. Fifty-seven percent of all African American children are underserved. Therefore, states and urban local school districts have issues they must address in order to close the achievement gap and produce lifelong, productive members of society.

In order to evaluate the achievement gap, a number of factors must be examined to understand how and why urban students of color are not achieving equivalent to their suburban counterparts. Roderick (1993) asserted that student background, school structure, teacher expectations, parental involvement, and a combination of factors attributed to the attrition of dropouts. These same categories can be applied to the underlying principles affecting academic achievement for urban females of color.

Gender

Dahl and Moretti (2004) calculated 19% of men prefer to have daughters while 48% prefer to have boys. Not only are parents consumed with gender issues, but also

society. Gender issues are prevalent everywhere. They are in the home, the culture, the community, and the workforce. The gender issue debate is carried over into the classroom (AAUW, 1996; Bryan, 2000; Davis, 2000; Pajares, 2005; Sadker, 2005). If the majority of people wanted their first born child to be a boy in their personal lives, do these people prefer boys in the classroom and the workforce? If this holds true, one must question whether girls will be treated fairly and equally to their male counterparts, or will they continue to be shortchanged?

Historically, women and other minority groups have been inherently denied freedom, liberty, justice, and equal opportunities, especially regarding education. The United States was built by those minorities who were perceived as inferior – not deserving of humanity, equality, liberty, or life. Equality and equal opportunities are historical issues that continue to plague America today. Many thought the battles had been won with the historical precedents established by such phenomenal cases and enactments including the American Civil Rights Movement, *Brown v Board of Education* (1954), Women's Rights Movement, and the Equal Rights Movement. However, the decision handed down for *Brown v Board of Education* (1954) provided subliminal shades of inequity than most perceived. Critics of the *Brown v Board of Education* asserted the naming of the case itself was a result of indirect gender inequality. It is alleged that the lawyers placed Brown's name first as a legal strategy because he was the only male plaintiff of the 13 plaintiffs. Many critics believed that the gender politics of the late 1940's and early 1950's played a great role in the case naming.

Still, boys and girls are not receiving the same equal educational opportunities (Sadker, 2005). Research over the years has indicated the prevalence of gender bias, or unequal treatment by gender, favoring male students in the classroom at all levels and in all subject areas in school environments (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). “Whether one looks at achievement scores, curriculum design, self-esteem levels, or staffing patterns, it is clear that sex and gender make a difference in the nation’s public elementary and secondary schools” (Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1992, p. 2). More alarming is that the public educational system encourages males to explore, build, evaluate, and synthesize, while encouraging girls to be submissive, supportive, compliant, docile, concerned with physical appearance and receptive to an education conducive for maintaining mediocre, male-dominated lives.

It is reported that girls and boys enter school on the same measured playing fields; however, “twelve years later, girls fall behind their male classmates in key [academic] areas such as higher-level mathematics and measures of self-esteem” (Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1992, p. 2). The AAUW (1996) Report and Sadker and Sadker (1995) purport it is evident that the educational system is shortchanging girls, and thus, indirectly shortchanging America. Girls must receive an education that will help them to realize and reach their full potential, discover new skills, and achieve economic self-sufficiency (AAUW, 1996; Irvine, 1990). Opposed to providing a place where girls from diverse backgrounds can develop comprehensive and multicultural academic skills and empowerment to fulfill their dreams, public schools have managed to defer their dreams by ignoring strengths, contributions, histories, and

educational needs of girls and failing to acknowledge that all of today's students are tomorrow's future and will eventually comprise the United States' democratic society. Society can no longer afford to ignore girls' educational needs in discussions of educational reform. Pajares (2005) concluded that when girls receive meaningful messages that they can successfully accomplish something especially academically, these messages are guiding forces for their future attainment.

Girls will be shortchanged educationally that will result in lesser opportunities and long-term effects of poverty for a significant number of females (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). "Schools must help girls and boys acquire both the relational and the competitive skills needed for full participation in the workforce, family, and community" (Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1992, p. 1). This can be accomplished by providing a multicultural and academically challenging curriculum that enhances prior knowledge, stimulates creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking. Equally important is necessity to provide a curriculum rich in history – one indicative of both genders and all races, cultures, and traditions. To improve the American educational system, Baptiste (1979) recommended incorporating cultural pluralism based upon the pillars of equality, respect, and a moral commitment to social justice.

Nieto (1992) reported the American education system would have a beneficial effect if it provided a comprehensive reformation that included a culturally relevant curriculum, confronted all inequities, inculcated instruction that was challenging, and provided opportunities for learning to be facilitated and advances the autonomous principles of communal justice. Pajares (2005) stated "all parents and teachers have the

responsibility of preparing self-assured and fully-functioning individuals capable of pursuing their hopes and their ambitions” (p. 366).

From equality of opportunities of resources and pay whether in athletic programs, the workforce, or whether it is the shortchanging of girls in elementary and secondary schools, gender continues to be an issue. Thirty-seven years after the passage of *Title IX* of the *1972 Education Act*, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any education programs receiving federal funding – girls and boys are still not on equal footing in our nation’s classroom (Bailey, 1996), although most agree that girls have made much progress (Bowman, 2000; Fleming, 2000). Research purports “sexism is built into the social system itself and pervades the values of the cultures” (Byrnes & Kieger, 1992, p. 2). They hold that “the school environment, confounded by society’s sex-role socialization of children, stretches and stresses boys while it encourages girls to let their abilities atrophy” (Marshall & Reinhartz, 1997, p. 337). Consequently, classrooms are an imitation of society, reflecting its strengths and ills: “it follows that the normal socialization patterns of young children that often leads to distorted perception of gender roles are reflected in classrooms” (Goodenow, 1993, p. 5).

Not only are there distorted perceptions of gender equity, but also distorted perceptions between European American and African American females as well as those in middle-class and urban schools. When the subject of gender equity arises, most only think of females and males. On the contrary, the playing field is not leveled between the races and the classes of females itself. People prefer discussing race and gender in isolation of the other. Moreover, most literature separates reports and statistics regarding

middle-class and urban schools. One reason may be that urban schools are in a crisis; thus, by hiding or separating the literature, perhaps less attention will be drawn and the minority will continue to fall further behind the dominant society (Leadbeater & Way, 1996).

Although *Title IX* (1972) allegedly addressed the concerns of gender equity in the classrooms, issues related to gender bias in the classroom resurfaced in 1992 when the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women commissioned *How Schools Shortchange Girls*. Prior to, Sadker and Sadker (1995) implicated in an investigation that the issues of gender equity in classrooms, since the passage of *Title IX*, had improved, but found that some kind of inequity occurs daily in regular classroom interactions. The Sadkers (1995) concluded that girls receive fewer academic contacts, are asked lower level questions and are provided less constructive feedback and encouragement than boys – all of which translates into reduced preparation for independent effort. Sadker and Sadker (1995) posit that this imbalance in attention, coupled with the quality and quantity of interaction, results in the lowering of girls' levels of achievement and self-esteem.

Differences in the understandings of girls and boys about gender behaviors and roles do not occur all at once, but begin very early in life and develop over time (Davis, 2000). Research suggests studies of gender role identity support the idea that children as early as preschool segregate themselves by gender and that a child's perception of role identity is conceived through imitation of adults' praise and encouragement from adults for girl or boy behaviors. As a result, one must ask: Do schools help girls find their

special talents or provide role models needed to help build confidence and competence? Do we help schoolgirls look within for the qualities that will lead them to a productive and equitable educational experience? There is no question that the educational system must emerge and seek to challenge females and provide meaningful experiences so that girls may have brains, courage, and the heart to strive for excellence and compete against boys to soar to greater heights in society. On the contrary, boys must not be tossed to the wayside in society's efforts to address equity for girls (AAUW, 1996; Archer, 1997; Bowman, 2000). Sadker and Sadker (1995) also scribed that girls receive fewer teacher questions, less help, and less praise, less of all intense instruction that makes for academic confidence and success. Meanwhile, boys act as magnets, attracting attention and calling out and misbehaving, demanding teacher time and talent. As a result, well-behaved girls become spectators as boys allegedly soar past them academically and on standardized exams. The Sadkers (1995) also assert that when it comes to gender, parents and teachers have spent most of the twentieth century worrying about boys at school and as a result, girls have become invisible and voiceless.

Female voices are not nearly as obsolete in public schools both in the classroom and the curriculum as they once were. Although females constitute a majority of the nation's students, nearly 30% of the context in textbooks describes the role and experiences of women (Sadker & Sadker, 1995). They do little to give girls a "sense of pride in the past or a feeling of hope in their future" (Sadker & Sadker, 1995, p. 1). Seldom do girls walk into schools and see pictures of women hanging on the walls. After being taught by mostly females throughout their educational experience, rarely, do they

see or have female administrators. It is overwhelming for females to attend school most of their lives with a majority of their teachers being females and a majority of their administrators being male. The American educational system is misleading and inadvertently portrays men as the only true leaders and that women belong in delegated roles serving as followers and helpmates.

Urban Education

Public schools are one of the most vital social institutions in America; therefore, serving an important role in the economic and social vitality of the United States (Lewis & Moore, 2004). It is the pathway to achieving and living the American Dream. Public schools can also be the cause of so many citizens not flourishing in the American society. As of July 2007, The U.S. Census reported that nearly 302 million people live in America. As of July 2006, more than 38 million African Americans lived in the U.S. More than 3 million are high school age children. Of those numbers, 1.7 million are African American females. In 2004, the Urban Institute released its statistics on poverty declaring 24.3% of African Americans and 13.7% of all females to be living in poverty. With the confluence of the two, nearly 38% of African Americans and women are underserved – living below the poverty level.

Essentially, education is the key to delineating poverty among African Americans and women. Therefore, a good quality education is the conduit to improving the economic status of African Americans and women. CHILDRENATRISK (2008) purports that an early education is arguably the most vital link to future academic success. On the contrary, it must be kept in mind that urban schools are not producing

the same quality of students as their suburban counterparts (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Fordham, 1988; Gay, 2000; Haberman, 2005, Kozol, 2005).

Snipes, Doolittle, and Herlihy (2002) reported there are 16,850 public school districts in the United States; 100 of those districts enroll nearly 23% of the nation's students. Urban schools enroll 40% of the country's students of color and 30% of the economically disadvantaged. Greater city urban schools are improving students' academic performance; however, urban school education is not closing the Black-White achievement gap. Casserly (2004) in *Beating the Odds IV* completed an in-depth look at how major urban city school systems are performing on the state assessments. The data reported that math achievement is improving. In more than half the grades tested, 92.6% increased their math scores; and in nearly 85% of all grades tested, math scores increased. As a result, the math achievement gap is narrowing. Nearly 64% of the tenth grade participants in the study narrowed the White-Black achievement gap. The study also revealed that reading achievement is improving and the reading achievement gap is narrowing. Nearly 72% of all grades tested showed gains in reading scores, and at least 38% of the 10th grades tested narrowed the White-Black achievement gap.

In 2008, Snipes, Horwitz, Soga, and Casserly released the 7th edition of *Beating the Odds VIII* detailing students' performance and achievement gaps on state assessments in some of the largest urban school districts. Many of the results are similar. *Beating the Odds VIII* results revealed that urban schools are not only improving in mathematics, but also narrowing the achievement gap between African American and White Americans. "The districts participating in the Council of Great City Schools

lessened the achievement gap between African Americans and their White American counterparts in math and reading” (Snipes et al. 2008, p. iv). However, math and reading achievement remains below the state averages. Despite gains in math and reading, urban schools as a group still score significantly below state and national averages.

Although urban schools are making academic strides, they are still perceived as “inner-city neighborhood ghettos of despair” infiltrated with poverty (Leadbeater & Way, 1996, p. 1), violence, crime, low aspirations, and underachievement (Cokely, 2006; Kozol, 2005; Truscott & Truscott, 2005). Thirty percent of the nation’s African Americans, Hispanics, limited English speaking, and poor students are located in the greater city urban schools. Urban students are more likely to be African American, Hispanic, and Asian; to come from low-income families; to come from non-English speaking homes; and lack adequate financial resources (Casserly, 2004). As a result, urban schools are associated with a lack of commitment to education rather than being associated with the perils impeding its resources to provide equal educational opportunities. “Educational outcomes for students of color are much more a function of their unequal access to key educational resources including skilled teachers and quality curriculum, than they are a function of race” (Darling-Hammond, 1998, p. 28).

The United States public educational system consists of more learning inequities than any other in the world (Darling-Hammond, 1998). Students’ educational outcomes are largely dependent on social status, economics, parental support, parental level of education, and local and state funding. As a result, urban schools lack the resources to attain more qualitative teachers, a resourceful and challenging curriculum, adequate

buildings to reduce class sizes, and teacher-to-student ratios (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Likewise, some urban schools are often described as not meeting the educational needs of students. Some urban schools place students of color in an environment underserved by their districts: they are susceptible of low academic achievement expectation, less motivating context for learning, and low expectations (Wang, 1994). Although *Brown v Board of Education* (1954) declared separate and unequal to be unconstitutional because it sent out subliminal messages that minorities were inferior to Whites and deprived them of equal educational opportunities, urban educational experiences for students of color still remain separate and unequal (Darling-Hammond, 1998). Urban students have become victims of broken promises.

Educational experiences for urban students are alarming. Two-thirds of students of color still attend schools that are predominantly segregated and funded significantly lower than those in suburban areas (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Haberman, 1995). Urban schools serve an overwhelming amount of students of color with far less resources than European American suburban schools. Not only are the resources limited, but also the difficulties life presents itself in urban schools in low-income neighborhoods often overshadow the rich resources in the urban community (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Haberman, 1995; Leadbeater & Way, 1996; Wang, 1994). Urban “public schools have yet to demonstrate a sustained effort to provide quality education for African Americans” (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 4). Lawmakers, educators, and the educational system must focus on the positives of urban life by educating its community and providing educational resources to enhance students’ success in schools (Wang, 1994).

Because of these alarming statistics, the nation cannot afford to ignore these communities.

Urban African American Females

Today's AAU females continue a 300-year-old struggle for equity and equality in America's educational system (Hill-Collins, 1990). Historically, females were banned from American schools for nearly 200 years because they were viewed as inherently inferior intellectually and morally. Centuries later, females are being educated. However, the equity and quality of that instruction is being challenged especially for AAU females.

Although a quality education remains an elusive dream for most students of color, urban school districts are in need of resolutions to overcome oppressive obstacles to at least level and equitably compete with their European American female counterparts (Ladson-Billings, 1994). After more than 100 years after the *Emancipation Proclamation* and more than 30 years after the passing of *Title IX*, public education facilities and funding still are neither equal nor do they provide equal educational opportunities to AAU females and other students of color in urban areas. The lives of AAU females are "still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination" (King, 1963, p. 1). Even more so, AAU females "still languish in the corners of American society" (King, 1963, p. 2) and find themselves in exile in their own urban educational system (Fordham, 1988; Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994). The *Declaration of Independence* (1776) allegedly declared "unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" (p. 1); however, the American educational system

has defaulted as AAU females and other students of color are still being short-changed educationally (AAUW, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sadker & Sadker, 1994, 2005). Urban females must be provided opportunities “to shape and share in the American dream” (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 137).

The shortchanging of AAU females can be attributed to many factors including racism or racial identity (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Research purports urban academic inequities are attributed to cultural miscommunication between schools struggle with the imbalance of the existing power of the dominant society (Delpit, 1995). Because of the disparities in urban schools, many educators are allowed by administrators, school boards, and communities to underestimate urban students’ achievement; provide inferior instruction (teaching on lower cognitive levels); avert teaching meaningful work; and fail to provide urban students with a motivating context for learning using real life experiences and culturally relevant pedagogy (Banks, 1999; Delpit, 1995; Fordham, 1988; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Wang, 1994).

Society often underestimates females in urban communities by assuming their overall achievement and educational values are lower than their suburban counterparts. Ensminger and Slucarcick (1992) found that inner-city students with high expectations for long-term success were more likely to graduate from high school. Hockaday, Crase, Shelley, and Stockdale’s (2000) longitudinal study revealed that African American females with high academic expectations were 50% less likely to overcome social factors impacting their environment.

Gay (2000), Ladson-Billings (1994), and Kozol (1991) asserted that pedagogical problems in urban communities result from a lack of information about teaching strategies. Because of the racialized academic gender stereotypes that support the achievement of AAU females oppose to AAU boys, Eccles and Wigfield (2002) found African American girls' self-confidence about their future attainment including completing high school and other future attainments should be enhanced.

Acknowledging the strength and cultural milieus of the urban female is essential to instituting strategies to improve academic choices and the academic quality of urban females (Adenika-Morrow, 1996). They should be armed "with the knowledge, skills, and attitude needed to struggle successfully against oppression" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 139). They must receive culturally relevant teaching and be afforded opportunities to "choose academic excellence, and yet not compromise their cultural identities" in order to attain the knowledge and wisdom deemed necessary to be productive citizens (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 127). The internalization and acceptance of healthy racial identity directs African Americans to a positive self-image and adoption of a value system that encourages personal and social well-being (Bemak, Chung, & Siroskey-Sabdo, 2005).

If the American public educational system is going to provide an equitable education for all, all females irrespective of race, must begin to see themselves in the curriculum, in the history books, and as leaders and role models (Banks, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Irvine, 1990; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Sadker and Sadker (1994) scribed:

When girls do not see themselves in the pages of textbooks, when teachers do not point out or confront the omissions, our daughters learn that to be female is to be an absent partner in the development of our nation. And when teachers add their stereotypes to the curriculum bias in books, the message becomes even more damaging. (p. 8)

Because of the educational disparities among urban females, schools must find a way to promote positive self-esteem to avert females from being an “absent partner in the development of our nation” (Sadker & Sadker, 1994, p. 8). Urban schools must begin to provide better schools in order to ensure success for all (Haberman, 1995, 2005). Urban schools must provide females with “educational self-determination;” must “honor and respect the home culture;” and abet in urban [female] “students understanding the world as it is and equip them to change it for the better” (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 139).

In order to resolve the gender equity issues, public schools should acknowledge there is a problem and address the school’s effect on student experiences and society’s role regarding gender equity. Secondly, it should address specific approaches educators can employ to accommodate gender differences in the classroom. Teachers might begin with an honest assessment of their own attitudes and practices to discover any classroom biases that work against the comprehensive and academically challenging education of female students. Studies show that teachers, on average, call on boys to answer three times as often as they call on girls – but they *believe that they call on each group equally* (McDaniel, 1994; Sadker & Sadker, 1995; Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1992). Schools should also encourage parents to assist in resolving the gender equity issue. Parents should hold high expectations for their daughters, encourage high levels of activity, promote interests in math and the sciences, and assign chores to boys

and girls on a nonsexist basis rather than the traditional girls wash dishes and boys mow lawns. Researchers purport all of the aforementioned will assist in creating equity at home and at school (McDaniel, 1994; Sadker & Sadker, 1994, 1995; Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1992).

Society and the educational system might benefit from a realization that the equal treatment of girls and boys does not always mean the same treatment. An educational program that accommodates these differences, while challenging both to reach their full potentials can help all children (McDaniel, 1994). To effectively attempt to eradicate gender inequity, one must embrace the following scribed by Sadker and Sadker (1994):

An African proverb says it takes a whole village to educate a child: grandparents, parents, teachers and school administrators, lawmakers and civic leaders. When all these citizens from our American village join forces, they can transform our educational institutions into the most powerful levers for equity, places where girls are valued as much as boys, daughters are cherished as fully as sons, and tomorrow's women are prepared to be full partners in all activities of the next century and beyond. (p. 81)

It takes a whole village to raise a child; therefore, it takes the effective collaboration of parents, students, teachers, administrators, and all stakeholders to help eradicate gender issues and close the achievement gap for urban females in the educational system.

Teachers are in a unique position. They must be provided with opportunities to learn how to equally, justly, and fairly educate the total child regardless of his/her gender.

Effective practices must be established, implemented, and constantly reevaluated to make certain teachers are providing girls and boys opportunities to be equally challenged to succeed. Teachers should not expect girls to be the winners of spelling bees and oratorical recitals while expecting boys to be engineering and math champions. This

process does not start with or end with teachers. Children spend more time with teachers than their parents during the course of a week. Institutions of learning from early childhood development programs should begin instilling social and academic equality in children so that it becomes a lifelong process (Sadker & Sadker, 1994; Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1992). The educational system must begin to take more proactive and effective approaches, oppose its conservative passivism, to make a change for the good of all mankind.

In conclusion, equity in and equality of education means learning about, preparing for, and celebrating diversity (Gay, 2000). Even more so, it requires changes in school programs, policies, and practices to ensure success for all.

Social Factors

Entering high school is one of the biggest challenges for students. It is the last four years of their compulsory learning, of their educational basics that will determine their life outcomes. High school has three microsystems: (a) school, (b) friends, and (c) family (Bronfenbrenner & Hamilton, 1978; Newman, Myers, Newman, Lohman, & Smith, 2000). The key aspects of the school's microsystem consist of teachers, school environment, and peer relations. It is evident that teacher and student and student and peer interactions form a critical component of the schooling experience (Felner, Ginter, & Primavera, 1982; Goodenow, 1993; Stewart, 2007, 2008).

Teacher's Expectations

Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden (2007) reported the single most influential factor impacting learning is the quality of a teacher. They further detailed that

“expert teachers are the most fundamental resources for improving education” (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007, p. 1). Because institutions are educating the most diverse student groups in our nation’s history to higher academic standards, the institutions themselves must implore higher expectations from their leaders and their teachers.

At the beginning of each academic year, nearly 100,000 new teachers enter the field of education (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007). Some are equipped with the best experiences, resources, and rigorous education with the essential skills, knowledge, and clinical training to provide a rigorous education for their students (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007). Larke and Larke (2006) postulated in the culturally meaningful framework that effective educators possess five essential characteristics. They declared that effective teachers are “committed, share co-responsibility in the learning environment, communicate with students, know their content but also have a cultural understanding and have the courage to make a difference in the lives of students” (p. 8). If students are to rise to their teachers’ expectations, first their teachers should be implored with the knowledge and skills to effectively educate culturally diverse students.

On the contrary, tens of thousands of these new teachers have not had a formal educational program and have had little if any experiences with pedagogy, children, or any other essential information that would prepare them formally for the challenges of educating today’s youth (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007). Yet, they are expected to incite today’s youth to learn and critically challenge them to achieve at high

levels. Many question how so many ill-prepared teachers are allowed to assume such critical roles in the lives of children. Knowing that teachers play a vital role in producing the nation's best, educational institutions should pay closer attention to teacher expectations and their relationship with their students.

Consequently, the relationship between teachers and their students is an essential element in the educational success of all students. Too, this relationship can have a direct impact on the academic success of students especially African American students (Diamond et al., 2004; Gay, 2000). Teachers' expectations play an integral part in the academic success and are a critical element in closing the achievement gap (McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Rubie-Davies, Hattie, & Hamilton, 2006). According to Gay (2000) "teacher's assumptions about their students' intellect and behavior affect how they treat students in instructional interactions" (p. 57). Students who are expected to learn are more likely to achieve or, at the least, put forth a greater effort (Diamond et al., 2004; Ferguson, 1998; Gay, 2000; Jussin & Harber, 2005; Rist, 1970; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Teacher expectations and the assumptions they make about their students' academic abilities have a substantial effect on their student's achievement and their desire to achieve (Bamburg, 1994; Rubie-Davies et al., 2006).

It is imperative for teachers of urban students to accept responsibility for their students' learning and ensure their expectations for high standards are radiated consistently in the classroom for urban students of color to be successful and attain high levels of success. In order to compete academically and professionally, their success must be high enough to equal to or surpass their European and Asian counterparts.

Soenens and Vansteenkiste's (2005) study suggests teachers' expectations also significantly enhanced students' self-expectations. Basically, the more supportive teachers are, and the higher their expectations are the higher students' expectations become not only academically, but also socially and professionally.

Frequently, urban students of color often regard their teachers' expectations more than their own; thus, it is imperative that teachers encourage and build a strong self-image in students and foster a self-empowerment attitude within them (Ladson-Billings, 1994). In order for African American and other urban minority youth to be successful, it is essential for teachers to exhibit the spirit of caring; include higher-order thinking skills in all activities; consistently engage all students in problem-solving tasks; provide specific, supportive feedback in a timely manner; use instructional strategies that reflect a variety of learning styles; utilize a culturally relevant pedagogy; use a variety of learning styles; build on students' culture in classroom instruction and activities; develop positive parent-teacher relationships; and avoid academic tracking and provide equitable educational opportunities (Comer, 1998a; Delpit, 1995; Ferguson, 1998; Gay, 2000; Hale-Benson, 1982; Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Teachers who do not exhibit or express high expectations for urban, minority youth have been shown to reduce motivation of students to learn (Thompson, 2002). Perhaps the "most damaging consequence of low teacher expectation is the erosion of academic self-image in students" (Ferguson, 1998, p. 5). Ferguson (1998) also reported that teachers believe that African American students do not put forth a good effort to learn and are more difficult to teach, to motivate, and to discipline in comparison to their

European counterparts. Carter (2001) reported that educators “often view students who live in poverty, come from homes with problems, and live in communities with social ills as possessing deficits that cannot be overcome in the classroom” (p. 64). Teachers’ beliefs are one of the best predictors of teachers’ perceptions and instructional practices (Bandura, 1986; Dewey, 1933; Pajares, 1992; Rubie-Davies et al., 2006). It is this deficit model of thinking that continues to increase the achievement gaps between the races. As a result, it is imperative that schools have high academic standards (Rutter, 1985) and be supportive. It is a necessity for schools to be supportive of its students, especially urban youth (Alva, 1989; Clark, 1983; Garnezy & Rutter, 1983) and their families (Clark, 1983; Hildago, Siu, & Epstein, 2003; Weinstein, Gregory, & Strambler, 2004). The school has so many relationships that are fostered that it is critical that academic and social success is radiated throughout. Support from teachers and other staff members cannot be underestimated (Alva, 1989; Clark, 1983; Garnezy & Rutter, 1983; Jussim & Harber, 2005; Rubie-Davis et al., 2006). Students are true examples of no one rises to low expectations. Teachers must establish high hopes and standards for and motivate their students (Alva, 1989; Diamond et al., 2004; Garnezy & Rutter, 1983; Werner, 1990).

Students’ academic outcomes have also been correlated to their gender and socioeconomic status (Auwarter & Aruguete, 2008; Jones, 2004; Lupart, Cannon & Telfer, 2004). It has been reported that high SES students and girls perform or are expected to perform better academically than their suburban counterparts and boys of lower socioeconomic status (Cook, 2006; Jones, 2004). Auwarter and Aruguete (2008)

conducted a study that revealed teachers are more likely to have negative perceptions of low socioeconomic students and suggest perhaps this is why teacher expectations are lower in economically disadvantaged schools. Research also supports that students from higher socioeconomic statuses are perceived more constructively than are students performing at the same level from lower socioeconomic statuses (Auwarter, & Aruguete, 2008; Farkas, 1996; Rist, 1970). Soenens and Vansteenkiste's (2005) first study concluded that indirect effects of teaching significantly impacted students' ability to be self-motivated as well as having a significant effect on their grade point averages and scholastic competence. The second study concluded that teachers positively predicted self-motivation in students' academic ventures. Soenens and Vansteenkiste (2005) concluded that teachers significantly "contributed to the development of self-determined behaviors in adolescents" and that "self-determination activities was associated with feelings of academic competence, better learning strategies, and with higher school grades" (p. 601).

Because so many of the teachers who instruct African American students are of different backgrounds, they must learn the cultures and subcultures within the schools and of their students (Banks, 1999; Delpit, 1995; Diamond et al., 2004; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Leadbetter & Way, 1996). Knowing who they are teaching and understanding from whence these children are coming, will afford teachers many opportunities for self staff development to aid in better servicing their students. Teachers' acceptance of and respect for African American students' individual and cultural differences are critical elements of quality teacher-student relationships (Gay,

2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994). It is this relationship that will influence and guide students' perceptions of their own abilities and enhance their academic performance. Garnezy and Rutter (1983) affirmed that students are more successful in school when they ascertain communicative relationships with their teachers. Gordon (1995) avowed that students' self-concept and motivational patterns, factors impacting academic performance and achievement, are influenced by teachers, thus, the need for teachers to take more positive actions in managing their relationships with their students.

Peer Relations

As students mature and progress through the educational system, the more outside factors will impact their academic achievement. As students progress to high school, the more likely their relation with their peers will impact their academic performance (Nichols & White, 2001). Peers can provide emotional support, academic guidance, companionship, motivation, sense of belonging, as well as aid in adjustment to environments and educational changes from one grade or school level to another (Eccles, 1999; Goldsmith, 2004; Horvat & Lewis, 2003; Nichols & White, 2001; Stewart, 2007, 2008). Peers have a powerful influence on the achievement motivation of African American students (Fordham, 1988; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Stewart, 2007). Literature suggests that peers who support the development of both ethnic and academic identities help promote academic excellence among African American students. In providing this support, African American students who excel academically do not have to struggle with the "racelessness strategy" (Fordham, 1988) and can avoid the turmoil of either being smart and alienated or being African American and accepted (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986).

Hymel, Comfort, Schonert-Reichl, and McDougall (1996) also suggest that peers can and often negatively impact their friends educational experiences. Sociologists and educational anthropologists have also purported that peers can especially challenge urban students' achievement motivation and their pursuit of higher education (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Hymel et al., 1996; Willis, 1997). Peers of African American urban adolescents often send disapproving messages to students who excel in school. As a result, those students who are actually excelling may downplay their academic abilities in an attempt to acculturate. Thus, these students are torn between interconnecting with their peers, wanting to achieve because of their own personal aspirations, or their willingness to satisfy their parents' expectations. Unfortunately, many of them adopt the middle-of-the-road philosophy. They maintain their grades to a certain average to avert conflict at home and maintain good standing with their peers.

Fordham (1988) also identified a strategy that impacts the academic success of African American urban students. Often, when African American students begin to excel academically, their peers view them as "acting White." They are often ostracized and alienated because of their academic achievement. As a result, many maintain the middle-of-the-road philosophy to avert criticism. They do enough to blend in with the majority. This "racelessness" strategy – behaving in a race neutral manner – forces those minorities wanting to excel to study alone and in secret to preserve their peer relations (Fordham, 1988). These students do not understand and often are not told of the long-term consequences of their actions. Mediocre grades mean attendance to mediocre colleges and universities, which may result in mediocre jobs with mediocre pay, thus,

permeating the problem and aiding the academic achievement gap and the ability to compete for more executive positions in the workplace.

Brown (1990) found that although most students held positive attitudes toward school, some students chose to befriend those peers who shared similar interests and academic values. Over time, these peers reinforced one another's school identities (whether positive or negative), thus contributing to their academic successes or lack thereof in school. Goldsmith (2004) concluded that the better the relationship between peers, the more influence they have on one another. Nichols and White (2001) found supportive evidence declaring that peer relationships impact psychological and life skills for children and enhance academic achievement/intrinsic motivation.

Research concludes peers impact student achievement. For many, friends/peers are the most important reason for attending and staying in school (Cauce, Mason, Gonzales, Hiraga, & Liu, 1996). Educators and parents must begin to encourage their students and children to foster relationships with other children who will encourage and inspire them to achieve academically and to assimilate with those who desire to achieve as well. Stewart (2008) concluded that positive peer relations significantly impacted academic achievement. She further acknowledged that positive peer relationships can cause one to create an attachment to school and to accept the ideologies associated with school.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement and its impact on academic achievement is one of the most overlooked aspects of American education today. It is evident that after years of research

that parents are a hidden resource in their children's education (Comer, 2005; Hill et al., 2004; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2000; Michigan Department of Education, 2001). Over 30 years of research has proven the positive connection between parental involvement and student success. Hill et al. (2004) concluded that parents' expectations for their children's future positively influences their child's self-expectations. Comer and Hayes (1991) conducted a study on two schools in which they concluded that the meaningful involvement of parents improved their children's education. The School Development Program (2001) also conducted a study in which they established that certain family behaviors encouraged and supported student's autonomy for learning. Newman et al. (2000) conducted a high school study in which she reported students are more successful in school when their parents provide positive guidance, have high expectations, and exert parental control in a loving environment. Wood et al. (2006) also concluded that parental expectations of African American youth predict positive outcomes for African American females. After years of proven research, it is apparent that parental involvement plays an integral part of a child's education. Comer (2005) concluded that instituting strong school and family partnerships augment the chances of increasing knowledge and strengthening the school community affiliation.

In order to successfully educate AAU females, it is important for educators to understand those resilient, innate characteristics that inspire them to excel and find ways to bridge the home/school communication gap (Comer, 1980; Epstein, 1995; Garmezy, 1994; Hildago et al., 2003). Parental involvement plays an integral part in the lives of

students of color (Comer, 2005; Delpit, 1995; Fordham, 1988; Gay, 2000; Hale-Benson, 1982; Irvine, 1990; Leadbeater & Way, 1996; Wood et al., 2006).

Parental involvement is critical in creating an effective school and establishing an educational foundation for children (Comer, 1998a; Epstein, 1995; Hendrickson, 1987; Livingstone, Hart, & Davie, 2000). Hendrickson (1987) concluded that “for now the evidence is beyond dispute: parent involvement improves student achievement. When parents are involved, children perform better in school” (p. 1). Swap (1990) concluded that parent involvement is especially crucial for children who are underserved or living in urban areas. Rose, Gallup, and Elam (1997) asserted that parental involvement in their children’s education was twice as predictive of students’ academic success. Hill et al. (2004) noted that parental involvement was more beneficial during the middle and high school years in regard to students’ academic achievement. They also noted the more intensely parents are involved, the more their children would benefit academically. Overwhelming evidence from a review of literature purports that a strong relationship between communication and the school strengthens the academic performance of urban students of color (Comer, 2005; Epstein, 1995; Hill et al., 2004; VanTassel-Baska, 1989; Wood et al., 2006). Researchers stressed that strong parental involvement is particularly important in the success of urban, minority females (Comer, 2005; Hill & Craft, 2003; Prom-Jackson, Johnson, & Wallace, 1987). One reason for this increase of academic success is because urban, minority parents held and expressed high expectations, aspirations, and standards for their children (VanTassel-Baska, 1989). In essence, the most accurate predictor of a student’s achievement in school is the extent to which that

student's family is able to: (a) create a home environment that encourages learning; (b) communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and (c) become involved in their children's education at school and in the community (Henderson & Berla, 1994). It has been documented that when parents are involved, students have higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates; better school attendance; increased motivation; and better self-esteem (Corter & Pelletier, 2004; Rose et al., 1997; Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2005).

In order to increase AAU females' and other minorities' academic achievement, various forms of parental involvement have to be implemented. Not only does parental involvement enhance academic achievement, student aspirations, and attendance, but also decreases discipline problems (Comer, 1998b; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Rose et al., 1997). Corter and Pelletier (2004) revealed that the benefits of positive parental involvement include stronger student achievement and learning, wiser educational choices, greater satisfaction, more trust from community, and builds a sense of caring and trust throughout the community. Although the research details the power of parental involvement, many schools are more concerned with standardized testing than getting their parents involved. Urban schools in particular have a bigger challenge. Too often teachers think that urban children's parents do not spend quality time supporting their children with their academics. In spite of this myth, all schools can reach out to and encourage their parents to get involved in their children's education through various types of parental involvement. The National PTA has adopted Epstein's (1995) research as its standards for parental involvement. Although the standards are closely related,

each one produces distinct and unique gains for students, parents and schools. Epstein et al. (1997) identified six types of parental involvement for schools:

- *Parenting*. Parents simply provide adequate and supportive home environment conducive for learning.
- *Communication*. Parents and school provide home-to-school communication through the use of student agendas, email, notes, the signing of progress reports and report cards to acknowledge student achievement, conferences (personal or telephone), marquee, student programs, and special activities for parents to participate (family reading/math night, Donuts for Dads and Muffins for Moms).
- *Volunteering*. Parents volunteer their time and talents in the classroom (reading, tutoring, grading papers, observing to delineate off task behaviors for their children and neighborhood kids) and school sponsored activities (planning and typing programs/activities, fundraisers, fun-days).
- *School decision making and advocacy*. Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families (PTA/PTO).
- *Learning at home*. Parents help their children with homework, encourage children to set educational goals, and supplement the instruction received at school (by relating activities to home and personal experiences).
- *Collaborating with the community*. Parents encourage partnerships with community resources and services to improve outcomes for students by getting them involved in community service projects and neighborhood extracurricular activities. (p. 8)

According to Epstein et al. (1997), the various types of parental involvement gives an opportunity for all parents to participate in their child's education at a level in which they are most comfortable. She stresses each level has its own significance and plays an integral part in a child's educational success.

Comer (1980) basically reiterates the same philosophy for parent involvement; however, it focuses more on urban students of color. Comer suggested that schools get

parents involved in any measure regardless of how insignificant it may be because every little bit aids in the success of a child. It strongly recommends that schools continue the line of communication. If a parent volunteers once, school personnel should follow up to encourage the parent to return and continue his/her participation. Comer (1998b) stated one of the biggest problems with getting parents involved is the school's inability to monitor and praise parents' participation in order to ensure they return. Basically, parents must feel welcomed and wanted for high levels of parental involvement to sustain. In order for more parents to get involved, Comer (1998b) also cautioned schools to have a variety of activities in which parents participate at varying times due to their work, church, and family commitments. Farkas, Johnson, and Duffett (1999) conducted a survey for The Public Agenda in which they found that 74% of today's parents say they do more for their child's education than their parents did for them, but about 71% also stated they wish they could do more. The problem is that parents do not know what they can effectively do to participate in the schools other than chaperone a field trip, operate the concession stand, or other menial jobs that do not require skills or talents. Parents need to know how they can become involved in the instructional and daily operational side of education. Many parents do not know they can assist with teaching a lesson, serve as a resource for instruction, and assist with school productions, activities, and school/community service projects. Parents need to be told of their value and importance and constantly be encouraged to return and continue to participate in the schools and their child's education.

Hauser, Vieyra, and Wertlieb (1989) researched family interactions in regards to communication and interactions linked with a person's resilience. They identify certain family behaviors as "enabling interactions" that family members use to motivate and sustain their child's expression of autonomous perceptions and thoughts (Hauser et al., 1989, p. 119). Newman et al. (2000) also concluded that for urban students whose parents monitored their child's behavior and academics with warmth and affection responded more positively and are more academically successful. Garmezy (1991) states those children with competence and the ability to adapt under stress, generally have parents with good, caring communication skills and with a good perception and awareness of their children.

Clark (1987) posits that family involvement has specific learning dynamics that impact a child's academic success. He identifies three components of family interactions:

1. the family member's household activities and lifestyles;
2. the psychosocial interaction patterns that occur during family activities; and
3. the learning opportunities provided during these interactions. (p. 29)

In essence, the activities, cultures, and social norms within a family and the environment in which those activities take place will have a direct impact on a child emotionally, socially, psychologically, and academically. Basically, a child's success depends on what he sees, experiences, and overcomes. Instead of "you are what you eat," Clark (1987) suggests you are a product of your environment. A child's internal structure inevitably impacts his/her academic achievement.

Newman et al.'s (2000) study concluded that students who did their best in school and responded positively were those whose parents exerted more control, provided guidance, demonstrated warmth, and compassion especially when disciplining. Garmezy (1991) concludes that parents with good communication skills, good parenting skills (provide discipline, involved, caring, consistent), and are aware of and informed of their children's surroundings produce children who can obtain success despite of their adversities. Other notable researchers such as Werner and Smith (1989) and Masten, Karin, and Garmezy (1990) conducted studies that propose those students from single parent homes and those who are caretakers of younger siblings, were inclined to exhibit the resilient characteristics outlined by Bernard (1995) including self-autonomy and responsibility. Parents who placed the value of responsibility upon their children became more resilient and are more prone to attain academic success.

Home and School Environment

The impact of the home and the school environment on student academic achievement has been a part of the great educational debate. A study conducted by Desforges (2003) revealed that parental involvement comes in many forms. The first form of parent/home involvement is good parenting in the home, such as providing food, clothing, shelter, and a safe and secure environment (Desforges, 2003). This is the most basic form of parental involvement that a parent can provide, which is ensuring that the basic needs of a child are met. This includes, but not limited to shelter, water, food, clothing, love, and affection. The second form of parent/home environment is providing an intellectual stimulation and parent child discussion (Desforges, 2003). This means the

home is conducive to learning, that there is structure and a support system in place for the child to do homework, to read, and study in an orderly environment. It means that there are books and other educational materials in the home that the parents read to or along with the child. The third form of parental/home environment is communication with the school (Desforges, 2003). This involves making contact with schools to share information, participation in school events, participation in the work of school, and participation in school. This involves becoming an active part of the school community. It includes getting involved in school Parent/Teacher Organizations, field day, special programs, being a classroom mom or dad, serving on campus and district committees, as well as serving on the local school board.

School age children spend over 70% of their waking hours outside of school (Michigan Department of Education, 2001). This report argues that the earlier parental involvement begins in a child's educational process, the more powerful the effects. The report advocates that the most effective forms of parental involvement are those that engage parents to work directly with their children on learning activities at home. Thorkildsen and Stein (1998) report that children's academic achievement appears to be more strongly related to their parents' level of involvement or commitment to their education than to their parents' level of education or income. However, Desforges (2003) reports the following: the extent and form of parental involvement is strongly influenced by family social class, maternal level of education, material deprivation, maternal psycho-social health, single parent status, and, to a lesser degree, by family ethnicity. He also reports that the extent of parental involvement diminishes as the child

characteristically takes a very active mediating role. He argues that parental involvement is strongly influenced by the child's level of attainment. In essence, the higher the level of attainment, the more parents get involved. He affirms that parental involvement in the form of "at-home good parenting" has a significant positive effect on children's achievement and adjustment even after all other factors shaping attainment have been taken out of the equation.

Reilly (2008) confirmed that there are three major factors of parental involvement in the education of their children: (a) parent's beliefs about what is important and necessary for them to do with and on behalf of their children, (b) the extent to which parents believe that they can have a positive influence on their children's education, and (c) parents' perceptions that their children and school want them to be involved. In a quantitative study, Thorkildsen and Stein (1998) revealed that when students were grouped into three groups (parent involvement only, parent involvement plus reciprocal peer tutoring program, and a control group that did not participate in either treatment), that there were differences in the students' achievement. Students' scores on a mathematics achievement test and the results of this test revealed both statistically and educationally significant differences. It substantiated that the scores of the students in the parent involvement program plus reciprocal peer tutoring program were statistically and significantly higher than the scores of students in the control group. It also revealed that the scores of students in the parent involvement only group were educationally significantly different from that of the controlled group.

These results are in line with previous studies conducted. Thorkildsen and Stein (1998) report after reviewing a number of studies, that parental involvement appears to account for 10% to 20% of the variance in student achievement. Stewart (2007) asserted, “the family is the basic institution through which children learn who they are, where they fit into society, and what kinds of futures they are likely to experience” (p. 20). She also reported that students’ success was associated with parents’ behavior with or on behalf of their children. Parents who interact with their children regarding their school work and communicated with the school children were more successful in school.

But we cannot forget the impact that the school environment has on the academic achievement of students. A safe and orderly school environment can promote an accelerated student achievement. Furthermore, the actual school facility and environment do have an impact on student learning. Studies have revealed that the thermal environment in the classroom will affect the ability of students to understand the instruction in the classroom. Herrington (1952) found that temperature above degrees tend to produce harmful physiological effects that decrease work efficiency and output of students. This problem is common in urban rural schools because many of the building properties have not been maintained due largely in part to restricted budgets. Herrington (1952) also found that poor ventilation interferes with heat loss from body surfaces produced from the effects of temperature, humidity, and air movement. Air conditioning was considered to be the most critical factor in providing an optimum thermal environment for learning (Manning & Olsen, 1965). In Peccollo (1962), he noted that ideal thermal classroom environments had an effect on the mental efficiency

of students especially in situations where students were performing clerical tasks for quick recognition and response. In his study, he supported a set temperature range for higher academic achievement. Also, in a study conducted by Stuart and Curtis (1964), they reported that greater gains in academic achievement of students in climate control school as opposed to these students in non-climate controlled schools. Finally, in Canter (1976), found that human beings work most efficiently at psychomotor tasks when the environment is a comfortable temperature. One would think that in this day and age, that climate control would not be an issue in our schools today. But, there are thousands of urban schools that still do not have any or inadequate heating ventilation and air conditions systems.

Issues such as drugs on campuses, bullying, and other forms of violence are all factors that can negatively affect student academic achievement. Students must feel safe and secure in order to learn at their highest potential. School climate in regards to the relationship that students have with their teachers also contribute to student academic achievement. Things such as communication gaps between teacher and students, communication gaps between students, and lack of trust between teacher and students, lack of communications between the stakeholders, absence of adequate innovative programs at the school level, low morale, frustration, segregation, stress and the easy access to drugs and guns, all have a negative impact on student achievement (Manlove 1998).

The environment provided by teachers is also important to school success (Good & Brophy, 1986). Graham (1990) reports that a teacher expectation for their students'

achievement influences both the quantity and quality of the support they offer to students. If the teacher has low expectations of her/his students, he/she will deliver the services to the students that are in line with the expectations, which will be low quality and student achievement will be low because of the self-fulfilling prophecy: the children will achieve what is expected of them. Children who perceive their teachers to be fair and caring are more likely to have positive attitudes toward school and increased motivation to achieve (Babad, 1996). The issue of perceived teacher supportiveness is especially important to attitudes toward school and academic achievement for the low-achieving students (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1988).

The impact of substance abuse, gangs, and violence also have a negative effect on student achievement. Washington Kids Counts (2002) reports that groups of middle and high school students with moderate involvement with substance abuse and violence have dramatically lower academic achievement than groups of students with little or no involvement in these behaviors.

Educators and policymakers should recognize and be willing to create a school environment where students feel safe from violence, drugs, and teachers who are not there to achieve academically. Parents should understand that schools cannot be everything for children; the first and best teacher for a child is the parent. Parents need to step up to the plate and acknowledge this fact and do the types of things mentioned above to support the educational process of their children.

Self-Expectations

Self-expectations play a pivotal role in student achievement in such that it shapes children's aspirations and life's journeys. Bandura (1977) described self-expectations or self-efficacy as the accepted wisdom that people have about themselves, their potential and their life outcomes affects their actions, the way they think, and their emotional well-being. Bandura (1986) believes that self-efficacy beliefs impact nearly every facet of a person's life. In essence, what is done to one's self permeates what is done to others. "The beliefs that young people hold about their capability to succeed in their endeavors are vital forces in the subsequent successes or failures they attain in their endeavors" (Pajares, 2005, p. 339). The aphorism, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he," is analogous to the self-efficacy theory and autonomy research. The aphorism not only describes a man's inner being, but also describes his whole state of mind, body, and soul. A man's character and well-being is literally based upon what he thinks. Pajares (2005) posited that "self-efficacy beliefs help determine what people will do with the knowledge and skills they possess" (p. 342).

Bernard (1995) inferred that everyone is born with an inherent capacity for resilience that helps to develop "social competence, a critical consciousness, autonomy, and a sense of purpose" (p. 1). Bernard (1991, 1995) and Garnezy (1994) suggested that if children are provided opportunities to improve their social competence, and discover as well as validate their own identity, they are more likely to overcome adversity. In other words, their self-expectations will contribute to their successes in life. They both agree autonomy and self-expectations are guided by faith, persistence, and support.

It is necessary to instill in students, especially African American urban females, the importance of believing in themselves and guiding them to seek out their dreams. In order to attain the academic achievement that is needed to sustain them in society, it is imperative for them to feel as though they are being supported. For African American urban females to be successful, educators should ensure their students' self-esteem is not being destroyed, but constantly reenergized. The formative years are essential in building self-esteem, self-autonomy, and self-efficacy to ensure African American females establish patterns for success (Wood et al., 2006). Considering African American females are impacted by many social factors, it is imperative that educators are motivators for their students and attempt to meet their basic needs. Once African American urban females believe they can produce desired outcomes in any aspect of their life whether it is academic or a career trajectory, they will develop the endurance and the self-autonomy to face and to overcome adversities to excel. Bandura (1997) reported self-efficacy:

influences aspirations and strengths of commitments, the quality of analytic and strategic thinking, level of motivation and perseverance in the face of difficulties and setbacks, resilience to adversity, causal attributions for successes and failures, and vulnerability to stress and depression. (p. 5)

If urban schools are going to continue to produce lifelong learners, building resilience and acceptance in African American females is a necessity. It is equally important to establish relationships with parents. Smith (2003) reported the “very best support for internal motivation is the family. When children see their parents and other family members work hard to achieve, they tend to do likewise” (p. 1).

African American urban females, along with all students, must believe they have the ability to achieve what is expected of them. Students typically select or attempt to complete tasks they deem are within their ability and evade those beyond their perceived ability (Pajares, 2005). By augmenting the emotional, cognitive, or motivation processes of urban youth, the overall well-being will improve.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of specific social factors affecting the academic achievement of secondary AAU female students in an urban school district. This research used quantitative methods to answer the three research questions. Quantitative research focuses on quantifying relationships between variables, just as they are. It is used to help understand social phenomena regarding how people feel and why they feel as they do. It measures the characteristics of the subject and the independent and dependent variables likely to be associated with the outcome variable. Descriptive quantitative research requires large samples to ensure generalizability (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996).

The following research questions were used to guide this study:

1. What are the African American urban (AAU) female students' perceptions of social factors impacting their academic achievement?
2. What is the relationship between the African American urban (AAU) females' perceived social factors and their academic achievement?
3. What are the differences in (a) AAU females' perceptions of social factors impacting academic achievement based on socioeconomic status and (b) AAU females' academic achievement by socioeconomic status?

Population

This study took place in an urban independent school district located in Northwest Harris County, Texas, covering 111 square miles. This district has a long

history of academic excellence both in Texas and throughout the nation. It ranks among the state's high-performing school districts according to data from the Texas Education Agency website (Texas Education Agency, 2004). It has earned seven Recognized ratings since 1996 and was one of five 2004 and 2005 National Finalists for the Broad Prize for Urban Education and the 2009 Broad Prize Urban Education winner. In 2006, it also received the Texas Award for Performance Excellence – one of two school districts to ever receive this award. It has also been ranked as the second best large school district in Texas for educating African American students according to recent studies conducted by Texas A&M University and the University of Texas – Pan American. This school district was chosen because of its commitment to academic excellence and its national recognition (Broad Foundation) as being a leading urban school district.

The population of the district is diverse. Nearly 75% of the population is considered economically disadvantaged and 65% is considered at-risk. The student population of the district is 56,292, 48.49% (26,850) of which are females. The ethnic distribution in the district is 6.5% European American, 33% African Americans, 58.1% Hispanics, 2.4% Asian American, and 0.1% Native American. There are six high schools with approximately 9,055 students. There are 2,236 African American high school female students in the district. The sample population for this study was African American female students from three of the six high schools in the urban school district. There are a total of 1,804 African American female students in these high schools comprising 49% of the district's high school female population and 2% of the district's total school population. Of the 1,056 female students in these three high schools, only

221 were African American seniors. Of those, only 158 AAU females completed the survey. Eighty-five (85) of the respondents are on free or reduced lunch, 71 are not, and 2 participants did not respond to the question. Therefore, more than one-half of the participants are economically disadvantaged. Table 3.1 details the school district's total high school demographic population.

Table 3.1. District's Overall High Schools' Demographics 2003-2004

Ethnic Gender	Am Indian		Asian		Black		Hispanic		White	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Traditional 2	1	2	37	47	289	295	667	728	61	76
Magnet 1		1	16	9	157	121	124	103	34	38
Traditional 3			8	11	189	192	790	812	50	62
Traditional 1	2	2	58	58	655	613	492	472	53	71
Traditional 4		2	44	37	460	466	410	406	155	167
Traditional 5				2	54	51	95	98	20	14

Only two traditional high schools (T1 and T2) and the magnet school are a part of this study. These three schools were chosen because of their proximity and demographics. All three schools are within eight miles of each other and have a diverse demographic population. Because the three schools are so close to one another, resources, socioeconomics, environments, and funding are somewhat equivalent. As for demographics, Traditional High School One (1) has more African American urban females enrolled wherein Traditional High School Two (2) has more Hispanic American urban females enrolled. Yet, it has a significant number of African American urban

females to participate in this study. Nearly 62% of High School One is considered economically disadvantaged and at-risk. However, eighty percent of the economically disadvantaged students in Traditional High School One graduated. Seventy per cent of High School Two is labeled economically disadvantaged and 65% at-risk. However, seventy-six percent of the economically disadvantaged students in High School Two graduated. The magnet school is located between the two traditional schools selected and is included because students zoned to each of the traditional schools attend the magnet school through lottery. Fifty-five percent of the Magnet High School's student population is considered economically disadvantaged and 41% are at risk. The economically disadvantaged had a graduation rate of 76%. Traditional High School Three (3) is located on the far east side of the district and has different concerns from the schools chosen for this study. Traditional High School Four (4) is located in the far north side of the district in a more affluent area. Traditional High School Five (5) is a night only high school requiring the state minimum to graduate. Students enrolled are at-risk of dropping out. Many of these students are over age and are single parents. Therefore, they stay home during the day with their child and attend school at night. The target population of the 12th grade African American urban females in these schools is chronicled in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. African American Females Target Population by School

School	12 th Grade Population	Target Population 12 th Grade AA Females
Traditional High School 1	655	131
Traditional High School 2	559	69
Magnet High School	80	21

Data Collection

This research study was conducted during the 2003-2004 school year. Permission was obtained to conduct the study from the Deputy Superintendent of Schools via telephone. The Deputy Superintendent followed up with a letter (Appendix A) giving written permission to conduct the study in which he also granted permission to utilize students' public education information management systems (PEIMS) numbers to gain access to their TAAS scores. Access to the TAAS scores would only be necessary if the homeroom teachers did not ensure the scores were placed on the test when the participants completed the survey.

After obtaining approval from the Deputy Superintendent, the principals of each school were notified by telephone and in writing (Appendix B). Each principal assigned the researcher to a counselor to help with the distribution and collection of the assent (Appendix C), consent (Appendix D), and parent information handout (Appendix E) forms. The researcher conducted a meeting with all 12th grade homeroom teachers after school. Also, a meeting was conducted with all seniors in the auditorium of each school during their weekly morning homeroom class. The researcher explained the significance

of the research and why their participation was requested. All 12th grade students in attendance were given parent information handout forms to ensure parents were aware of the school's participation in the study.

During the week after the parent information handouts were due, students reported to their homeroom classes. Although permission was granted at the district and school level, participants 18 or older were given consent forms and those 17 and younger were given assent forms to complete. They were informed that the completion of the forms was strictly voluntary and that there were no adverse consequences for students who did not wish to participate in the survey. Those who chose not to participate continued with the regularly assigned class warm-up. After each student voluntarily completed his/her assent or consent form, he/she was given a 51-item approved survey to complete (Appendix F). Upon reviewing the survey, students were given another opportunity to decide whether they wanted to complete the survey. They were cautioned not to answer any questions that made them feel uncomfortable. Upon completion of the survey, students reported to their teacher's desk and were given their TAAS Reading, Writing, and Math scores. Counselors and the researcher collected the surveys immediately after the students completed them and placed them in a box that was later sealed. Each survey was assigned a letter and number to maintain a distinction between the schools.

All 12th grade students were allowed to participate to prevent anyone from feeling ostracized, alienated, or inferior. Although 658 surveys were completed, only the 158 surveys of students identified as African American females were used in this study.

Sample

Cluster sampling, formed by selecting naturally occurring groups in a population, was used to select the sample for this study (Gall et al., 1996). A list of homeroom teachers in all three high schools was compiled, and the names of 20 teachers were randomly selected from the list of 38. To avoid any suspicions, the surveys were distributed to all 12th grade students regardless of gender and ethnicity. However, the 12th grade African American female students from these teachers' classrooms, totaling 158, formed the sample for this study, thus, yielding a 71.5% return rate.

Instrument

The 51-item instrument, Students' Perceptions of Social Factors Affecting Academic Achievement in Urban Schools (Appendix F), used in this study was generated by the researcher after a review of literature. The content validity of the instrument was determined by professors who are experts in the field. The survey consisted of 12 demographic and academic assessment questions and 39 Likert scale questions. The Likert scale questions consisted of six subscales, each relating to the identified social factors from the literature review. The Likert scale questions consisted of five categories ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree or Disagree, Disagree, to Strongly Disagree. Each question on the survey was scored on a scale of 1 to 5. The following scale was used to calculate the responses: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neither Disagree or Agree, 4 = Disagree, and 5 = Strongly Disagree. The Likert scale is the most common response format and allows for potential variability (Patten, 1998).

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted with students attending a different high school from the same district to determine the reliability of the instrument. The data collected for the pilot study were analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Science computer program based on 57 usable responses (69 total). Twelve participants with responses missing were eliminated from the analysis. The scoring of the negative items on the Likert scale on the survey was reversed for consistency in scoring. This was consistent since all the items on the scale were in the same metric. The reversed items were renamed to ensure accuracy and uniqueness of data.

The reliability of the Likert scale on the instrument, as well as the reliability for all identified subscales (social factors), were determined using the Cronbach's alpha approach, which measures the internal consistency of the instrument based on the item total scale correlation. The reliability of the pilot study survey was 0.609. Principal component analysis, a type of factor analysis, was used to confirm the number of factors on the scale. Absolute eigenvalues and the scree plot were used in combination to extract factors, and varimax rotation was utilized to rotate the factors for clearer understanding. Based on the results, certain statements were reclassified, reconstructed, as well as new statements generated to form the final survey. The final survey comprised of 9 demographic questions, 1 academic achievement question, and 2 social factor questions not utilizing the Likert scale and 39 questions utilizing the Likert scale. The overall reliability of the final instrument was 0.806.

Also, the TAAS scores of the students were used as a measure of academic achievement. The TAAS test is comprised of three parts: writing, reading, and mathematics. The three test scores were compounded to determine students' academic achievement. The test is designed to measure student's academic achievement at the tested grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics. The writing scale score was 1500 for passing (70% standard). The Texas Learning Index (TLI) passing scores for reading and math were both $X=70$. For students to be considered passing on the reading test, they would have had to answer 60.4% of the questions to earn a TLI of $X=70$. For math, only 46.7% of the questions would have had to have been answered correctly to earn a TLI of $X=70$. The tests are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). School districts align their curriculum with TEKS to ensure students are learning what the state deems is minimal to implement the No Child Left Behind Act (2002).

Research Design

Simple survey research, a form of descriptive research, involves the description of "natural or man-made phenomena – their forms, actions, changes over time, and similarities with other experiences" (Gall et al., 1996, p. 4). It collects these data through surveys, interviews, and/or paper/pencil tests. Survey research was used in this study to amass the perceptions of African American females.

Inferential statistics and quantitative descriptive research were used to collect and analyze the participants' responses for this study. The purpose of the research is to examine individuals, events, and processes and involves collecting quantitative data to

answer questions and develop a precise description of an educational phenomenon (Gall et al., 1996). Inferential statistics collect and analyze information from samples in order to draw conclusions, or inferences, about the larger population. The adequacy of the sample is crucial because the more generalizable the result, the better it will reflect the population from which the sample was selected.

Although there are four main types of descriptive research, only two were used for this study: (a) measures of central tendency and (b) measures of variability. Measures of central tendency permit the researcher to describe a set of data with a single, numerical value (Thompson, 2005). This research used the most frequently used measure of central tendency, mean, which is simply the average of a set of scores that takes into account the actual value of all scores in a distribution. Often measures of central tendency are not enough to describe a distribution of scores. If the researcher wants to know the degree to which the scores are spread around the mean, the researcher must integrate measures of variability (Thompson, 2005). The most stable measure of variability, standard deviation, was used for this study because it takes into account every score in the distribution. Standard deviation is the average distance of scores away from the mean and is used when variables are measured on an interval or ratio scale (Thompson, 2005).

There are several factors suggested in the literature that might have potential effects on the academic achievement of urban female African American high school students. The importance of some of these variables has been documented, while others have been cited purely on a theoretical basis, most noted being the Black Feminist

Theory (Hill-Collins, 1990) and Resiliency Theory (Garmezy, 1994; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1994). Among factors that have been cited are: student's expectations, student's environment, parental involvement, teacher's expectations, peer relationships, and extracurricular activities.

Previous research on the academic achievement of AAU female students suggests that these variables individually or collectively might affect the scholarly achievements of students in certain environments. Research also suggests that there is a close relationship between each of these variables and the academic achievement of students as shown in Figure 3.1.

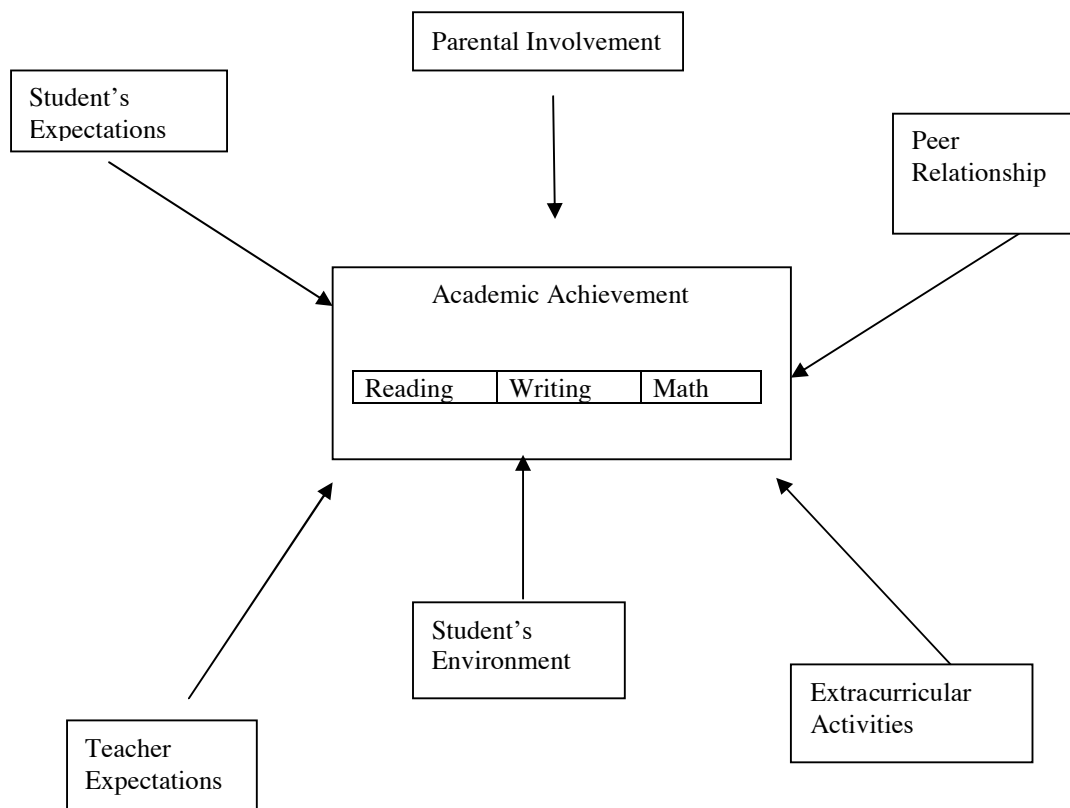


Figure 3.1. Relationship of variables and academic achievement.

The study sought to answer three questions:

1. What are the African American urban (AAU) female students' perceptions of social factors impacting their academic achievement?
2. What is the relationship between the African American urban (AAU) females' perceived social factors and their academic achievement?
3. What are the differences in (a) AAU females' perceptions of social factors impacting academic achievement based on socioeconomic status and (b) AAU females' academic achievement by socioeconomic status?

Plan for Analysis

Statistical analysis was performed with the software program SPSS. Tests for significance were conducted at the 0.05 significance level. Quantitative descriptions and percentages of responses, principal component factor analysis, multiple linear regression, and a t-test were all used to answer the three research questions for this study.

Factor analysis, used to answer research question 1, is a technique used to identify factors that explain common variance among variables (Gorsuch, 1983). This statistical method is often used to reduce data by grouping variables that measure a common construct. Essentially, factor analysis is the process by which the number of variables is reduced by determining which variables "cluster" together, and factors are the groupings of variables that are measuring some common entity or construct (Williams, 1992).

Principal component analysis is one of the most commonly used methods of extraction since this method evaluates all sources of variability for each variable. Factors or components can also be rotated to make the components more interpretable. Varimax rotation results in uncorrelated factors and is the most frequently used method. The initial analysis retained only eight factors. To determine the appropriate number of factors to be retained, three criteria were used: (a) eigenvalue, (b) variance, and (c) scree plot.

An eigenvalue is defined as the amount of total variance explained by each factor. The “Kaiser’s Rule” was implemented when determining how many factors would be retained and interpreted. Developed in 1960, the Kaiser Rule states that components whose eigenvalues are greater than 1 should be retained. A scree test, a graphical method for determining the number of components, was also used.

Multiple linear regression, used to answer research question 2, involves using several independent variables to predict a dependent variable. The multiple linear regression equation that predicts urban female African American high school students’ academic achievement from the several independent variables can be modeled as:

$$\text{AdmAch} = \text{constant} + B_1 \text{PI} + B_2 \text{PRel} + B_3 \text{TExp} + B_4 \text{SExp} + B_5 \text{ECurr} + B_6 \text{SEnv}$$

AdmAch represents academic achievement, B1 represents parental involvement, B2 represents peer relationships, B3 represents teacher expectations, B4 represents student expectations, B5 represents extracurricular activities, and B6 represents student environment.

Descriptive statistics, used to answer research question 3, are mathematical techniques for organizing and summarizing a set of numerical data (Gall et al., 1996). It provides the simplest form of summarizing the sample and the measures of a study. There are three techniques used in descriptive analysis: (a) measures of central tendency, (b) measures of variability, and (c) correlation. According to Gall et al. (1996), a measure of central tendency is an estimate of the center of a distribution of values. The estimates can be attained by either computing the mean, the median, or the mode. For this study, the mean was used to describe and summarize the data using standard deviation to demonstrate the relationship between the mean of the sample.

Summary

This chapter described the methodology used to examine the data collected from the survey in which student's perceptions of the social factors impacting their academic achievement for African American urban females were analyzed. An overview of the district's demographics, procedures, population, the instrument, and the research design were discussed. Also, data collection and data analysis methods and procedures were detailed.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter provides the results for the three research questions in this study. Chapter IV is divided into five parts. Part one provides an overview of the data analysis. Parts two through four present a summary of the responses to each of the three research questions. The last part provides a synopsis of the results to each research question.

Data Analysis

This descriptive study examined specific social factors that are affecting academic achievement for AAU females in urban public schools. The sample for this study consisted of 158 participants completing Students' Perceptions of Social Factors Impacting Academic Achievement in an Urban School District survey. The ethnic and gender distribution of all participants is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Ethnicity and Gender of All Respondents

Ethnicity	Male	Female	Gender Missing	Total
Asian	26	29		55
African American	134	158	3	295
Hispanic	139	169	2	310
European American	12	12	1	25
Other	23	16	3	42
Total	334	384	9	727

Only the responses of the 158 African American urban female students are used in this study (Table 4.2). Respondents were requested to complete questions regarding demographics, extracurricular activity participation, and TAAS scores. The demographic results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Frequency of Responses to Demographic Questions From AAUF (n=[158])

Question	Response				
1 – Age	15 or less	16	17	18	
	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	60 (38%)	96 (60.1%)	
2 – Ethnicity	Asian	African American	Hispanic	White	Other
		158			
3 – Gender	Male	Female			
		158			
4 – Free or Reduced Lunch	Yes	No	Missing Data		
	85 (53.8%)	71 (44.9%)	2 (.6%)		
5 – I live with...	Father/Mother	Father	Mother	Relative	Other
	49 (31%)	8 (5.1%)	83 (52.5%)	13 (8.2%)	4 (2.5%)
6 – Mother/Female guardian completed college	Yes	No	Missing Data		
	49 (31%)	106 (67.1%)	3 (1.9%)		
7 – Father/Male guardian completed college	Yes	No	Missing Data		
	39 (24.7%)	108 (68.4%)	10 (6.3%)		
8 – Type of class	GT/Honors	Spec. Ed.	Reg. Ed.		
	40 (25.3%)	0	118 (71.2%)		
9 – Children	0	1	2	3+	Missing
	144 (91.1%)	12 (7.6%)	1 (0.6%)	0	1 (.6%)
10 – Work hours	0	1-10	11-20	20+	
	91 (57.6%)	6 (3.8%)	25 (15.8%)	36 (22.8%)	
12 – Extracurricular Activities	Yes	No	Missing Data		
	99 (62.7%)	58 (36.7%)	1 (.6%)		

Table 4.3 provides the percentage of responses to the 39 Likert scale questions on the survey. Only the responses of the 158 African American female students are reported. The columns indicate the percentage of African American female students who strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

Table 4.3. Frequency of Responses to the Likert Scale Questions (n=[154])

Question	SA	A	N	D	SD	Missing Data
13 I plan to attend a college or university immediately after graduation.	123 9.4%	16 10.1%	13 8.2%	3 1.9%	3 1.9%	0
14 At least one of my parents/guardians inquires about my school work.	88 55.7%	47 29.7%	12 7.6%	8 5.1%	2 1.3	1 .6%
15 My parents/guardians are not concerned about my education.	5 3.2%	4 2.5%	6 3.8%	18 11.4%	125 79.1%	0
16 My peers consider me to be a leader.	33 20.9%	57 36.1%	56 35.4%	2 1.3%	10 6.3%	0
17 I form study groups with my friends/peers.	11 7%	26 16.5%	40 25.3%	40 25.3%	39 24.7%	2 1.3%
18 My school expects me to fail.	8 5.1%	15 9.5%	46 29.1%	35 22.2%	53 33.5%	1 .6%
19 I know I will be successful.	130 82.3%	22 13.9%	4 2.5%	2 1.3%	0	0
20 I put forth a good effort in my classes on a daily basis.	60 38%	80 50.6%	13 8.2%	4 2.5%	1 .6%	0
21 My part-time job prevents me from studying as much as I should.	6 3.8%	12 7.6%	32 20.3%	34 21.5%	71 44.9%	3 1.9%
22 My school promotes academic achievement.	48 30.4%	68 43%	27 17.4%	5 3.2%	7 4.4%	3 1.9%
23 Most of my friends have no plans to go to college.	3 1.9%	7 4.4%	27 17.1%	46 29.1%	74 46.8%	1 .6%
24 When things bother me, I talk with my parents or guardians.	32 20.3%	45 28.5%	24 15.2%	24 15.2%	33 20.9%	0
25 My peers encourage me to achieve academically.	51 32.3%	57 36.1%	31 19.6%	8 5.1%	11 7%	0
26 I enjoy going to school.	20 12.7%	49 31%	47 29.7%	20 12.7%	21 13.3%	1 .6%
27 I have a job to help take care of home.	9 5.7%	38 24.1%	27 17.1%	28 17.1%	52 32.9%	4 2.5%
28 My teachers seldom tell me they care about my academic performance.	22 13.9%	39 24.7%	42 26.6%	30 19%	24 15.2%	1 .6%
29 My parents/guardians are not contacted by my teachers when I fail to complete.	15 9.5%	28 17.7%	37 23.4%	41 25.9%	35 22.2%	2 1.3%
30 I look forward to going to school daily.	17 10.8%	42 26.6%	52 32.9%	26 16.5%	20 12.7%	1 .6%

Table 4.3 (continued)

Question	SA	A	N	D	SD	Missing Data
30 I look forward to going to school daily.	17 10.8%	42 26.6%	52 32.9%	26 16.5%	20 12.7%	1 .6%
31 I do not like to miss school.	32 20.3%	51 32.3%	42 26.6%	21 13.3%	10 6.3%	2 1.3%
32 My teachers express the need for me to go to a college or university.	46 29.1%	63 39.9%	28 17.7%	13 8.2%	7 4.4%	1 .6%
33 I expect to make good grades.	88 55.7%	60 38%	7 4.4%	2 1.3%	0	1 .6%
34 My parents do not expect me to make good grades.	5 3.2%	1 .6%	6 3.8%	27 17.1%	116 73.4%	3 1.9%
35 I set high academic goals for myself.	76 48.1%	58 36.7%	14 8.9%	5 3.2%	4 2.5%	1 .6%
36 My teachers criticize me when I make mistakes or make low grades.	8 5.1%	19 12%	50 31.6%	36 22.8%	43 27.2%	2 1.3%
37 I expect to earn a lot of money from my occupation.	110 69.6%	27 17.1%	13 8.2%	3 1.9%	3 1.9%	1 .6%
38 My family does not expect me to go to college.	1 .6%	5 3.2%	4 2.5%	25 15.8%	119 75%	4 2.5%
39 My teachers challenge me to do my personal best.	42 26.6%	59 37.3%	32 20.3%	9 5.7%	14 8.9%	2 1.3%
40 My friends distract me from my school work.	3 1.9%	7 4.4%	22 13.9%	52 32.9%	71 44.9%	3 2%
41 I do not feel safe at school.	4 2.5%	12 7.6%	45 28.5%	48 30.4%	47 29.7%	2 1.3%
42 I would be a better student if my parents were involved in my schooling.	12 7.6%	10 6.3%	46 29.1%	34 21.5%	55 34.8%	1 .6%
43 My peers encourage me to study.	19 12%	45 28.5%	47 29.7%	23 14.6%	22 13.9%	2 1.3%
44 My job or extracurricular activities interfere with me completing my homework	7 4.4%	17 10.8	25 15.8	41 25.9%	65 41.1%	3 1.9%
45 I only work to get the things I want.	25 15.8%	32 20.3%	34 21.5%	27 17.1%	39 24.7%	1 .6%
46 My peers influence me to complete my homework.	28 17.7%	96 60.7%	17 10.8%	8 5.1%	7 4.4%	2 1.3%
47 My teachers give me positive feedback to help me do better.	36 22.8%	70 44.3%	34 21.5%	7 4.4%	9 5.7%	2 1.3%
48 My friends seldom get into trouble.	28 17.7%	49 31%	40 25.3%	17 10.8%	22 13.9%	2 1.3%
49 I spend a lot of time with my friends doing non-school-related activities.	32 20.3%	55 34.8%	28 17.7%	25 15.8%	14 8.9%	4 2.5%
50 My teachers do not commend me when I make good grades.	10 6.3%	20 12.7%	49 31%	52 32.9%	24 15.2%	3 1.9%
51 My parents/guardians visit my teachers other than open house, athletic events.	17 10.8%	23 14.6%	28 17.7%	34 21.5%	54 34.2%	2 1.3%

Before the administration of a survey, the researcher should ensure the instrument's reliability. Best and Kahn (1998) contend that reliability depends on consistency. Whatever is being measured should do so consistently. Gall et al. (1996) echo that reliability is the ability to reuse the same data or instrument time and time again and reproduce the same results with little or no error. Prior to administering the survey for the study, a pilot study was conducted to determine the reliability of the survey. Sixty-nine responses yielded an initial reliability rating of .65 of the pilot survey. After the removal of seven questions, which had low item-test correlation, the reliability of the final instrument increased to .806. Table 4.4 reports Chronbach's alpha while Table 4.5 summarizes the number of participants whose data were valid and invalid.

Table 4.4. Reliability Statistics of Final Instrument

Chronbach's Alpha	Chronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.806	.840	44

Table 4.5. Case Processing Summary

	N	%
Cases Valid	154	97.5
Excluded	4	2.5
Total	158	100

In the survey instrument, a review of literature guided the initial factors. The review of the literature summated that peer relations, parental involvement, extracurricular activities, school environment, self-expectations, and teachers' expectations impacted student achievement. The 39 questions in the survey were initially

grouped into these categories. Each of these questions was developed in hopes of determining the impact of students' perceptions of peer relationships, parental involvement, extracurricular activities, school environment, self-expectations, and teacher's expectations on AAU females and their academic achievement. Of the 39 questions, 11 were worded in a negative format. To ensure accuracy, the scores for the 11 negative questions were reversed prior to the data analysis.

Research Question 1

What are the African American urban (AAU) female students' perceptions of social factors impacting their academic achievement?

The independent variable in this question is the social factors and the dependent variable is the academic achievement of the participants. The instrument for this study was a 39-item Likert scale survey and the data used to answer this research question were data for 154 African American urban 12th grade female students.

To answer this research question, a factor analysis was conducted to determine what underlying structure exists for measures on the 39 items. After the variables were clustered, eight components were extracted using the principal component analysis (Table 4.6). Three constructs were used to decide the number of factors to retain: (a) eigenvalue, (b) scree plot, and (c) factor pattern co-efficients.

Table 4.6. Total Variance Explained (n=[154])

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.448	19.200	19.200
2	3.078	6.995	26.195
3	2.496	5.672	31.866
4	2.231	5.070	36.937
5	2.026	4.603	41.540
6	1.849	4.201	45.741
7	1.750	3.977	49.719
8	1.615	3.671	53.389

As shown in Figure 4.1, a scree test was also used to determine the number of factors to be retained. Stevens (1992) recommends retaining all components with eigenvalues in the sharp descent of the line before the first one where the leveling effect occurs. As a result, components other than 1-8 were eliminated.

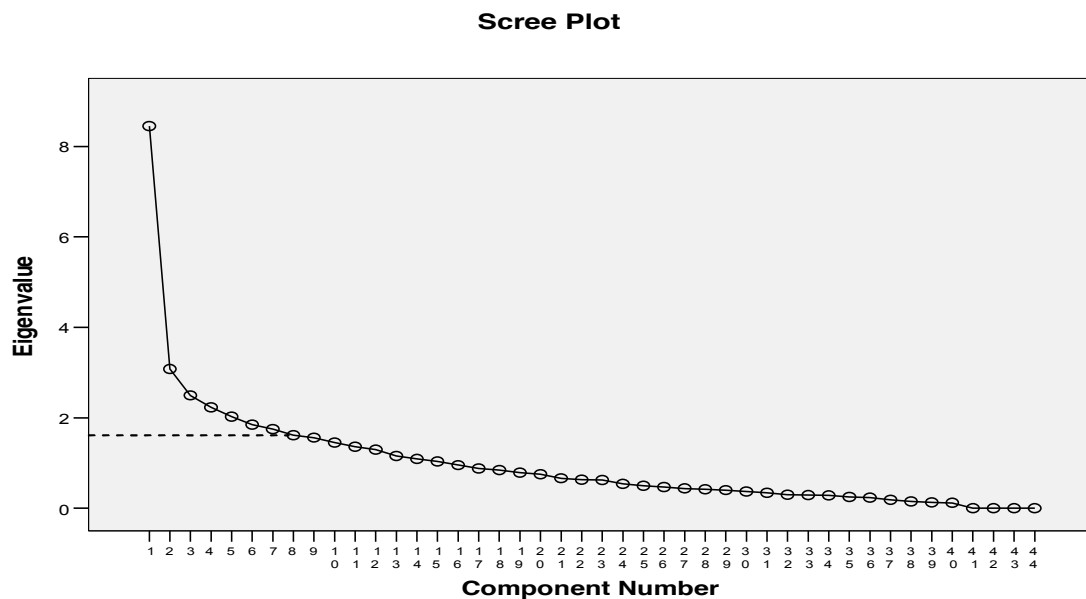


Figure 4.1. Scree plot of components retained.

After the rotation, the first component accounted for 19.2% of the variance, the second for 6.9%, the third for 5.6%, the fourth for 5.0 %, the fifth for 4.6%, and the sixth accounted for 4.2% of the variance. Component 7 accounted for 3.9% of the variance and Component 8 accounted for 3.6%. Component number 1 was named self-expectations. Component number 2 was named school environment. Component number 3 was named parental involvement. Component number 4 was named peer influences. Component number 5 was named encouragement. Component number 6 was named extracurricular activities. Component number 7 was named outside interests and Component number 8 was named teacher expectations. Additionally, since the cut-off score for factor pattern co-efficients was 0.4 or above and factors 9 and above did not contain any factors or pattern co-efficients 0.4 or above, factors 9 and higher were eliminated.

George and Mallery (2003) stated that once factors have been selected, the next process is to rotate them. They agree that the original factor structure is correct; however, it is difficult to interpret and needs to be written in a simpler structure. In the rotated factor structure, the factor loadings are sorted in such a way that the highest factor loadings for each factor are selected and listed in separate blocks, and within each block, the factor loadings are sorted from largest to smallest (George & Mallery, 2003). This facilitates the easy extraction of the factors from the tables as shown below in Table 4.7. Table 4.8 shows the components' factor pattern co-efficients retained for this study.

Table 4.7. Rotated Component Matrix (n=[154])

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Q38	.844	-.018	.150	.067	.153	-.030	.138	.289
rev38	.844	-.018	.150	.067	.153	-.030	.138	.289
Q13	.688	-.045	-.071	-.016	.089	-.011	-.026	-.031
Q19	.682	.225	.188	.099	.000	-.034	.015	-.025
Q33	.634	.314	.123	.193	.069	-.008	.081	-.212
Q35	.601	.427	.200	.075	.020	-.020	.034	-.012
Q20	.474	.328	.070	.230	.112	-.029	.047	-.154
Q18	.163	-.022	.062	-.020	.092	-.145	.082	.123
Q30	.142	.770	.035	-.080	.106	.002	.083	.008
Q26	.088	.734	.079	.002	.176	-.117	.236	-.062
Q31	-.117	-.635	-.035	.051	-.057	.076	-.011	.137
Q29	-.120	.482	-.218	.180	-.095	-.016	.244	.357
Q32	.114	.476	.102	.245	.317	.046	-.057	.451
Q47	.127	.434	.341	.227	.367	-.023	-.168	.203
Q22	.068	.379	.330	.090	.274	-.067	.041	.122
Q41	.314	.337	.075	.145	-.151	-.114	-.265	-.022
Q15	.222	.038	.904	-.023	-.055	-.046	.026	.009
rev15	.222	.038	.904	-.023	-.055	-.046	.026	.009
Q14	.234	.280	.523	.130	.109	-.261	.083	-.090
Q39	.099	.408	.506	.137	.333	.070	.018	.281
Q48	-.097	-.032	.424	.249	.085	.010	.038	-.183
Q23	.122	.001	.070	.872	.078	-.235	.003	.087
rev23	.122	.001	.070	.872	.078	-.235	.003	.087
Q40	.031	-.085	-.039	.520	-.010	.258	.195	-.269
rev34	.350	.381	.254	.488	-.026	-.019	-.244	.161
Q34	.350	.381	.254	.488	-.026	-.019	-.244	.161
Q43	.079	.204	.029	.038	.728	.066	-.015	.058
Q46	.215	-.004	-.165	-.014	.672	.148	-.048	-.019
Q25	.184	.029	.184	.230	.623	-.170	.189	-.280
Q24	.143	.210	.112	.044	.345	-.283	.034	-.036
Q51	.054	.299	.247	-.033	.308	.138	.261	-.100
Q44	-.190	-.064	.049	-.120	.002	.727	.027	.126
Q21	-.067	-.085	-.124	-.128	-.106	.686	.053	-.128
Q36	.025	-.222	.069	-.111	.209	.556	.078	.043
Q45	.112	.091	-.113	.067	-.445	.472	.050	-.046
Q37	.106	.157	-.035	.012	.193	.293	.081	.020
Q12	.154	.127	-.179	.195	.040	-.087	.575	-.052
Q16	.199	.288	.294	.086	.041	-.015	.558	-.107
Q49	.159	.087	.190	-.021	-.047	.167	.509	.033
Q17	-.110	.284	.059	-.029	.473	.036	.474	.108
Q50	.155	.178	.076	.246	-.045	-.227	-.454	.058
Q28	-.007	-.004	-.055	-.002	.086	.063	-.037	.530
Q42	-.197	.083	.005	-.075	.292	.076	.070	-.519
Q27	.046	.130	-.051	.162	.184	.361	-.368	-.408

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Table 4.8. Components' Factor Pattern Co-efficients (n=[154])

Component	Loadings
Component 1: Self-Expectations	
Q13	.688
Q19	.682
Q20	.634
Q33	.601
Q35	.474
Q38	.844
Component 2: School Environment	
Q26	.770
Q29	.734
Q30	-.635
Q31	.482
Q32	.476
Q47	.434
Component 3: Parental Involvement	
Q14	.523
Q15	.904
Q39	.506
Q48	.424
Component 4: Peer Influence	
Q23	.872
Q34	.488
Q40	.520
Component 5: Encouragement	
Q25	.623
Q43	.728
Q46	.672
Component 6: Extracurricular Activities	
Q21	.686
Q36	.556
Q44	.727
Q45	.472
Component 7: Other Interests	
Q12	.575
Q16	.558
Q17	.474
Q49	.509
Q50	.454
Component 8: Teacher Expectations	
Q27	.408
Q28	.519
Q42	.530

The next process required the computation of the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to measure the internal consistency within each factor. A .75 Cronbach Alpha (Nunnally, 1978) is considered to be a satisfactory level of internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha range for the components was between .51 and .80; thus, the factors can be considered reliable. According to Landis and Koch (1977), an alpha value of (a) .0-.20 is slightly reliable; (b) .21-.40 is fairly reliable (c) .41-.60 is moderately reliable; (d) .61-.80 is substantially reliable; and (e) .80-1.0 is almost perfect (Landis & Koch, 1977). Cronbach's reliability of each component is shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9. Component Names and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (n=[154])

Components	Cronbach's Reliability	With Item Deleted
Factor 1: Self-Expectations Q13, Q19, Q20, Q33, Q35 Q38	.797	
Factor 2: School Environment Q26, Q29, Q30, Q31, Q32, Q47	.495	.732 Q31
Factor 3: Parental Involvement Q14, Q15, Q39, Q48	.574	.635 Q48
Factor 4: Peer Influence Q23, Q34, Q40	.205	.608 Q40
Factor 5: Encouragement Q25, Q43, Q46	.663	
Factor 6: Extracurricular Activities Q21, Q36, Q44, Q45	.518	
Factor 7: Q12, Q16, Q17, Q49, Q50	.316	
Factor 8: Q27, Q28, Q42	.170	

Table 4.9 reports the results or values of Cronbach Alphas when certain items were deleted for each factor. Although the rotated component matrix yielded three items for Factor 4, peer influence, the Cronbach Alpha's reliability was relatively low (.205). However, when question 40 was deleted, the reliability increased to .608. Because the

review of literature suggests peer influence was a factor impacting academic achievement and the possibility that it may be a critical variable in the perception of the participants, Factor 4, was retained. Because the Cronbach Alpha on Component 7 and Component 8 were relatively low, both were eliminated. According to the analysis, the resulting factors are self-expectations, school environment, parental involvement, encouragement, and extracurricular activities are the social factors that may be capable of impacting the academic achievement of African American urban females.

Table 4.10 gives a summary of the group questions related to each variable together with the means and standard deviation for each variable. All of the means except for extracurricular activities were below 3.0 with the lowest mean being 1.5 for self-expectations. The average range of the scores was between 1 and 5 with 1 being strongly agree and five being strongly disagree. The standard deviations were all below 1.0, which suggests that there were not any outliers or major deviations between the scores. The dependent variable, academic achievement, with a range between 1 and 100 has a mean of 78 and a standard deviation of 8.8415.

The range of the scores was between 1 and 5 with 1 being strongly agree and 5 being strongly disagree. On the survey, the lower the score on the scale, the stronger the perception of students. This implies that the lower the mean score of the scale, the stronger the perception of the students is about the factor. All of the means except for extracurricular activities were below 3.0, with the lowest mean being 1.5 for self-expectations. This means that the perceptions of the AAU females, respectively, on self-expectations, peer influences, parental involvement, encouragement, and student

environment are relatively high, which suggests these AAU females value the impact these factors have on their academic achievement. The mean of the fifth factor, extracurricular activities, was higher than 3.0, which suggests that the students do not perceive extracurricular activities as impacting their academic achievement.

Table 4.10. Means and Standard Deviations of Variables (n=[154])

Subscale	Question	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Academic Achievement	11a, 11b, 11c	0.00	100.00	78.8941	8.8415
Self Expectations	13, 19, 20, 33 35, 37	1.17	4.83	1.5054	.5511
Student Environment	26, 29, 30, 31 32, 47	1.00	5.00	2.7266	.6193
Parental Involvement	14, 15, 39, 48	1.00	5.00	2.0162	.7178
Encouragement	23, 34, 40	1.00	5.00	2.4215	.8596
Peer Influences	25, 43, 46	1.00	5.00	1.7078	.7548
Extracurricular Activities	21, 36, 44, 45	1.75	5.00	3.6552	.7858

The standard deviations were all below 1.0, which suggests that there were not any outliers or major variations between the scores. The dependent variable, academic achievement, with a range between 1 and 100, has a mean of 78 and a standard deviation of 8.8415, indicating that there was not much of a variation among the academic achievement of the AAU female participants.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between the African American urban (AAU) females' perceived social factors and their academic achievement?

A multiple regression analysis was conducted at the 0.05 probability level in order to answer research question 2. Multiple regression was used to determine the relationship between the dependent variable, academic achievement, and the six independent variables. The six independent variables, identified in the factor analysis, are the 12th grade AAU female students' self-expectations, environments, parents' involvement, peer influence, encouragement, and extracurricular activities.

The criterion variable, academic achievement, is the average composite score of the AAU females' TAAS scores expressed as a percentage as of their total score on the individual's respective TAAS tests. This composite score is the average aggregate score of each student's math, reading, and writing scores on the TAAS test. The predictor variables are composite subscale scores based on the total scores of the questions on the survey related to the factor, as indicated in Table 4.10. Of the 158 AAU 12th grade female responses, only 137 had all the data complete for the multiple regression analysis.

Table 4.11 gives the model summary of the multiple regression analysis used to determine the relationship of the variables and how well the independent variables predicted the dependent variable, academic achievement. The effect size was 0.02, indicating that approximately 2% of the variance of the students' academic achievement in the sample can be accounted for by the linear combination of predictor measures.

Table 4.11. Model Summary (n=[137])

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	.124	.015	-.027	8.8523

Predictors: (Constant), EC, SENV,PIN, ENC, SEXP, PI.
 Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement.

The linear combination of the predictor variables was not statistically significant related to the academic achievement of the students, $F(5, 117) = 0.368$, $p > 0.05$ as seen in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12. ANOVA (n=[137])

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	144.287	5	28.857	.368	.869
Residual	9168.652	117	78.365		
Total	9312.939	122			

Table 4.13 shows the standardized weights (mean of zero and standard deviation 1.0) labeled Beta that gives the prediction equation for the standardized variables as follows:

$$Z_{\text{pred ACDACH}} = -.123Z_{\text{SEXP}} + .091Z_{\text{SEnv}} + .038Z_{\text{PInv}} - .053Z_{\text{Pinf}} + .045Z_{\text{Enc}} + -.028Z_{\text{ECurr}}$$

Table 4.13. Regression Coefficients (n=[137])

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1(Constant)	75.434	6.352		11.875	.000
Factor 1	-.327	.280	-.123	-1.136	.258
Factor 2	.235	.277	.091	.851	.397
Factor 3	.117	.332	.038	.352	.726
Factor 4	-.104	.188	-.053	-.554	.580
Factor 5	.152	.339	.045	.448	.655
Factor 6	.077	.263	.028	.292	.771

Dependent Variable: acdachv.

The regression coefficients in Table 4.13 give an indication of how much the value of each dependent variable changes for a unit change in the value of the independent variable, with all the other independent variables being held constant. But overall, the factors as indicated by the level of significance in the analysis of variance ($p > .05$) did not contribute significantly toward academic achievement.

In addition, three multiple regression analyses were performed using each of the academic indicators (math, reading, and writing) as dependent variables and social factors as the independent variable. The results indicated that there was no significant difference and that none of the social factors made a significant contribution to the math scores ($p = .873$), reading scores ($p = .299$), and writing scores ($p = .120$) of the students.

Research Question 3

What are the differences in (a) AAU females' perceptions of social factors impacting academic achievement based on socioeconomic status and (b) AAU females' academic achievement by socioeconomic status?

Multiple regression was used to determine if the AAU females' perceptions of the social factors impacting academic achievement were based on their socioeconomic status. Two separate multiple regression analyses (one for free and reduced lunch and the other for non-free and reduced lunch) were conducted. Students identified as having free and reduced lunch were considered to have a low socioeconomic status, while those considered not on free and reduced lunch were not.

Free and Reduced Lunch

Table 4.14 gives the model summary of the multiple regression analysis used to determine the differences of the variables and how well the independent variables predicted the dependent variable, academic achievement, for students on free and reduced lunch.

Table 4.14. Model Summary for Free and Reduced Lunch (n=[85])

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	.375	.141	.053	8.11516

Predictors: (Constant), EC, SENV, PIN, ENC, SEXP, PI.

Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement.

The linear combination of the predictor variables was not statistically significant in predicting academic achievement of students on free and reduced lunch, $F(6, 59) = 0.160$, $p > .05$ as seen in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15. ANOVA for Students on Free and Reduced Lunch (n=[85])

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	636.896	6	106.149	1.612	.160
Residual	3885.489	59	65.856		
Total	4522.385	65			

Table 4.16 shows the standardized weights (mean of zero and standard deviation 1.0) labeled Beta that gives the prediction equation for the standardized variables as follows:

$$Z_{\text{pred ACDACH}} = -.231Z_{\text{SExp}} + .232Z_{\text{SEnv}} + .171Z_{\text{PInv.}} - .178Z_{\text{Pinf}} - .180Z_{\text{Enc}} + .044Z_{\text{ECurr}}$$

Table 4.16. Regression Coefficients for Students on Free and Reduced Lunch (n=[85])

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1(Constant)	64.992	7.324		8.873	.000
Factor 1	-.485	.301	-.231	-1.614	.112
Factor 2	.547	.329	.232	1.663	.102
Factor 3	.450	.387	.171	1.163	.250
Factor 4	-.110	.178	-.178	-.618	.539
Factor 5	.630	.501	.180	1.257	.214
Factor 6	.105	.303	.044	.347	.730

Dependent Variable: acdachv.

The regression coefficients in Table 4.16 give an indication of how much the value of each dependent variable changes for a unit change in the value of the independent variable, with all the other independent variables being held constant.

Students on free and reduced lunch socioeconomic status as indicated by the level of significance in the analysis of variance ($p > .05$) did not contribute significantly toward academic achievement. The effect size was .053, indicating that approximately 5.3% of the variance of the students' academic achievement in the sample can be accounted for by the linear combination of predictor measures.

Non-Free and Reduced Lunch

Table 4.17 gives the Model Summary of the multiple regression analysis used to determine the differences of the variables and how well the independent variable predicted the dependent variable, academic achievement, for AAU females not on free and reduced lunch.

Table 4.17. Model Summary for Students Not on Free and Reduced Lunch (n=[71])

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	.286	.082	-.038	9.6252

Predictors: (Constant), factor 6, factor 3, factor 5, factor 1, factor 2, factor 4.
Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement.

The linear combination of the predictor variables was not statistically significant related to the academic achievement of the students, $F(6, 46) = 0.662$, $p > 0.05$ as seen in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18. ANOVA for Students Not on Free and Reduced Lunch (n=[71])

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	381.161	6	63.527	.685	.662
Residual	4264.590	46	92.708		
Total	4645.750	52			

Table 4.19 shows the standardized weights (mean of zero and standard deviation 1.0) labeled Beta that gives the prediction equation for the standardized variables as follows:

$$Z_{\text{pred ACDACH}} = -.020Z_{\text{SExp}} - .053Z_{\text{SEnv}} - .212Z_{\text{PInv.}} - .011Z_{\text{Pinf}} - .133Z_{\text{Enc}} + .044Z_{\text{ECurr}}$$

Table 4.19. Regression Coefficients for Students Not on Free and Reduced Lunch (n=[71])

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1(Constant)	90.509	12.273		7.375	.000
Factor 1	-.085	.780	-.020	-.120	.905
Factor 2	-.157	.463	-.053	-.340	.736
Factor 3	-.874	.628	-.212	1.391	.171
Factor 4	-.057	.920	-.011	-.062	.951
Factor 5	-.375	.487	-.133	-.770	.446
Factor 6	-.144	.494	.044	.291	.772

Dependent Variable: acdachv.
N=154.

The regression coefficients in Table 4.19 give an indication of how much the value of each dependent variable changes for a unit change in the value of the independent variable, with all the other independent variables being held constant. Students' perceptions as indicated by the level of significance in the analysis of variance ($p > .05$) did not contribute significantly toward academic achievement. The effect size was .038, indicating that approximately 3.8% of the variance of the students' academic achievement in the sample can be accounted for by the linear combination of predictor measures. The above analyses suggest that there are no differences in AAU females' perceptions of social factors impacting academic achievement based on socioeconomic status.

AAU Females' Academic Achievement by Socioeconomic Status

A t-test was conducted at the 95% confidence interval to see if there was a significant difference in the students' academic achievement based on their SES. The independent variable was the 12th grade AAU female students' socioeconomic status as measured by their participation in the free and reduced lunch program. The dependent variable, academic achievement, was the average composite score of the AAU females on the TAAS test.

Table 4.20 gives the mean and standard deviation of the two groups. The AAU female students who do not participate in the free and reduced lunch program had the higher mean scores compared to those who participated in the free and reduced program.

Table 4.20. t-test Group Statistics (n=[136])

Lunch	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean
Acdachv Yes	74	79.0858	8.15227	.94768
No	62	79.4592	9.41230	1.19536

Even though the students who did not participate had a higher mean score compared to the students who participated in the free and reduced lunch program, the t-test results suggested that there was not a statistically significant difference between the NRL and the FRL in terms of academic performance ($p=.805$). This was an indication that the academic performance of AAU female students is not directly impacted by their socioeconomic status. The effect size was low (.04) confirming the results of the t-test that there was no difference between FRL and NRL in terms of academic achievement.

The above analyses suggest that there are no differences in AAU females' perceptions of social factors impacting academic achievement based on socioeconomic status and that there is no difference on academic achievement based on SES. This, therefore, would lead us to suspect that something else may be operating to mediate the achievement of the AAU female students. Further analysis was conducted to see if this unknown influence was the perception of social factors based on SES.

In response to this, a t-test was conducted with the average total scale score being the dependent variable and the SES being the independent variable. To obtain the average total score for all the responses on the perceptions of the students on the various factors, the scores of all the factors were aggregated and averaged to obtain an average total score of all of the factors. The results of the t-test indicated that the mean of

students on FRL was 2.39 and for NFRL was 2.29. The test further indicated that there was no significant difference on the students' perceptions of all social factors based upon their SES ($n=141$, $p>0.05$). The standard deviation for each was very low indicating that there was not much variance between the scores in each group.

Summary of Results

A component factor analysis was conducted to identify factors that impact the academic achievement of AAU female high school students in an urban district (research question 1). As a result, five factors (self-expectations, school environment, parental involvement, encouragement, and extracurricular activities) were extracted from the variables. These factors identified were used to generate a prediction equation for the academic achievement of AAU females.

The results of the multiple regression analysis suggested that there is not a statistically significant relationship between the social factors and academic achievement for AAU female students (research question 2). Further multiple regression analyses using each academic indicator (reading, math, and writing) also suggested that there is not a statistically significant relationship between the social factors and each academic indicator.

Multiple regression using ANOVA was conducted to answer the first part of research question 3. The results did not indicate that any of the factors were statistically significant. A t-test was conducted to answer the second part of research question 3. The t-test indicated that there was not a significant difference between the academic performance of AAU females regardless of their socioeconomic status.

However, the finding that the factors are not significant in this model does not mean that they are not good predictors of AAU female student's academic achievement when considered alone or in combination with other variables. They did not contribute significantly only to the model currently considered. Probably using a different sample, academic achievement measure, different social factors, or a different survey tool would yield different outcomes.

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Summary

African Americans have been fraught by the American public education system since its inception (Anderson, 2004). From initially being denied the opportunity to read and write, to the creation of the Emancipation Proclamation's segregated schools, and Brown v Board of Education's (1954) end to the Jim Crow laws, many people still question why African American students still lag behind their European American counterparts academically.

African American urban students face many challenges in public schools. In order for African Americans to be more successful, urban school districts and all entities involved must determine and implement culturally relevant strategies in the daily lives of African American students to help them enhance their academic experiences and ensure their success.

The purpose of this study was to record and document high school African American urban females' perceptions of social factors impacting their academic achievement. The following questions guided this study:

1. What are the African American urban (AAU) female students' perceptions of social factors impacting their academic achievement?
2. What is the relationship between the African American urban (AAU) females' perceived social factors and their academic achievement?

3. What are the differences in (a) AAU females' perceptions of social factors impacting academic achievement based on socioeconomic status and (b) AAU females' academic achievement by socioeconomic status?

Research Question 1

What are the African American urban (AAU) female students' perceptions of social factors impacting their academic achievement?

The review of literature acknowledged that there were several social factors (teacher expectations, peer relations, parental involvement, home and school environment, and self-expectations) impacting academic achievement of high school AAU females. The component factor analysis yielded eight factors (self-expectations, student environment, peer influences, parental involvement, encouragement and extracurricular activities) that the AAU female participants perceived to impact their academic achievement.

Contrary to the literature review, the factor analyses for question 1 did not reveal any statistically significant factors that the AAU females perceived to impact their academic achievement. Although this study did not reveal any statistically significant factors impacting academic achievement for urban females, this study is not to be disregarded. Instead, this study validates the need to explore the rationale for the academic success of not only these African American urban females who participated in this study, but all African American females across the nation who are excelling regardless of their social milieus.

As a result, this study advocates investigating the practical relevance of this research. AAU females are aware of and appreciate their surroundings. Most of them, if not all, have an innate desire to be successful and want more for themselves. Many of these urban females have family support considering more than 30% are from a two-parent home; 31% of their mothers completed college, and 25% of their fathers completed college. Despite so many claims that urban females are distressed by pregnancy, 91% of these females do not have any children. In addition 25% are enrolled in GT and/or advanced placement (AP) classes, 63% participate in extracurricular activities. It is obvious these AAU females and so many more have a strong sovereignty. As Bandura (1997) posited, these urban students are “reachable and teachable” and “direct their efforts at resolving problems when faced with academic stressors” (p. 242). Pajares (2002) concluded that “economic conditions, socioeconomic status, and educational and familial structures do not affect human behavior but influence an individual’s aspirations, self-efficacy, personal standards, emotional states, and other self-regulatory influences” (p. 2). These data alone support the necessity to focus on the practical relevance of this research. Because of the limitations of the survey, teacher expectations, peer relations, and self-expectations were not further analyzed.

The purpose of this study was to present the social factors AAU females in one public school district perceived to impact their academic achievement. Contrary to the results of the survey, the results should be further evaluated.

Practically, the statistical relevance of this research demystifies the deficit model and the culture of poverty theory. The deficit model proclaims “disadvantaged people

have underlying deficiencies, attributable to genetic and/or social pathology, which will limit the probability of their achievement and social adjustment” (Bennett, 1970, p. 90). Nieto (1996) went on to clarify the deficit model by scribing “school failure is believed to be the fault of either of the students themselves, who are genetically inferior, or of the social communities, which suffer from economic and cultural disadvantages and thus are unable to provide their children with the necessary preparation” (p. 229). The AAU females in this study disprove this belief. With their socioeconomic conditions, the AAU females had a compounded mean average of 78, which is eight points more than the passing rate of 70. In addition, at the time the data were collected, those not passing still had three additional opportunities to take the test in hopes of passing. Considering the participants had a compounded average of 78 on the TAAS test, achievement was considered to be high.

The cultural deficit model suggests that the culture of African Americans is naturally debauched which ultimately is the origin of its academic inferiority. Also, this model suggests African Americans have become self-satisfied with their current economic and social conditions. Even more so, this model suggests that African Americans have low self-esteem and do not see the value of academic achievement. As a result, according to this model, African Americans will continue to consistently struggle to be equal or superior to their European counterparts academically and that their self-worth will continue to be lower as well.

Although the findings suggest there are not any significant social factors impacting academic achievement of AAU females, it does not support the findings of the

cultural deficit model. It debunks it. Although these AAU female participants are enclosed by so many obstacles, they do not allow them to affect their ambition to succeed academically.

This study does not seek to purport that those factors listed in the literature review or those yielded in the factor analysis are inconsequential. However, the results of this study suggest that there might be an alternative theory that explains the academic performance of African American urban females. The results not only debunk the culture of poverty, but parallels with the resilience theory as well as the Black feminist thought theory. Bernard's (1991) resilience theory advocates that many students are excelling from self-autonomy and perhaps positive, influential parental involvement. Hill-Collins (1990) boasts that one of the most significant factors perpetuating urban African American females' academic achievement is their desire to overcome their obstacles to accomplish something in life. One of the four tenets of the Black feminist thought is the ethic of personal responsibility. Stevens (2002) also reported the historical disadvantaged position that has threatened African American females has also imposed an expansion of resilient competences in order to assure survival.

Hauser et al. (1989) researched family interactions in regard to communication and interactions linked with a person's resilience. They identify certain family behaviors as "enabling interactions" that family members use to motivate and sustain their child's expression of autonomous perceptions and thoughts (Hauser et al., 1989, p. 119).

Stewart (2008) also concluded that for urban students whose parents monitored their

child's behavior and academics with warmth and affection responded more positively and are more academically successful.

Hill-Collins' (1990) Black feminist theory takes on an ethnic, feminist approach. Hill-Collins asserts that in order for African American urban females to attain academic success, they must be provided a means for attaining an inner peace, tranquility, and an attitudinal development to overcome their social and environmental pressures. She also affirms that it is imperative for African American urban females to know who they are historically and to be responsible for their actions and destiny to be strong, lifelong learners and productive citizens.

Hill-Collins (1990) stresses it is essential that African American females place their historical experiences (race, class, and gender oppression) at the center of analysis that will provide insight for creating new possibilities for empowering them while obtaining what Ward (1996) describes as the "ability to observe the world critically, and to oppose ideas that are disempowering to themselves" (p. 87). Ladson-Billings (1995) maintains through critical race theory that the concept of personal identity is defined in a large part by race and that it influences the behavior and identification process of all human beings. Students of color must be able to identify with themselves in order to be academically successful and to resist oppressive, demeaning, and judgmental sociopolitical environments (Gay, 2000; Hill-Collins, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

This study does not seek to invalidate decades of prior research, but to explore other factors that may be currently impacting academic achievement among African American urban females. Although research question 1 did not yield any statistically

significant factors, it does not suggest those factors are not important. However, it should be remembered that the study examined the perceptions of the students participating in this study.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between the African American urban (AAU) females' perceived social factors and their academic achievement?

A multiple regression analysis was conducted at the 0.05 probability level in order to answer research question 2. Multiple regression was used to determine the relationship between the dependent variable, academic achievement, and the five independent variables. The five independent variables, identified in the factor analysis by the 12th grade AAU female students' perceptions, are self-expectations, environments, parents' involvement, encouragement, and extracurricular activities.

The results determined the relationship of the variables and how well AAU female students' expectations, environments, parental involvement, encouragement, and extracurricular activities measures predicted their academic achievement. The passing of the TAAS test was used to determine if the students were excelling academically. The results yielded there were not any significant social factors affecting the academic achievement of these African American urban females.

As the review of literature emphasizes, there are social factors that directly correlate to the academic success of all students. Because this study did not statistically yield any perceived social factors impacting the academic achievement of the participants, questions were further evaluated for a plausible explanation. With 25% of

these AAU females enrolled in rigorous coursework and the majority of the participants excelling academically, it is perceptible that autonomy (self-expectations) is a prevalent mitigating factor affecting these young ladies. Nearly 49% of these AAU females reported having positive relationships with their parents, while 79% reported their parents were concerned about their education. These parents must radiate their expectations to these females as 90% reported their parents held them to high expectations and another 95% reported their parents expected them to enroll in college. Based upon the participants' responses, parental involvement plays a pivotal role in the academic success of these AAU females. It should be mentioned again that the results were based on the perceptions of the participants. If the participants view parental involvement as normalcy, they may not have perceived it to be a social factor impacting their academic success.

Although the results of this study were statistically insignificant, practically it may suggest that there are other innate factors that might be responsible for impacting the academic achievement of these AAU females. According to Garmezy (1985), there are personality traits (including self-esteem), family milieus, and unity along with external support systems that promote and reinforce children's coping mechanisms and protective factors that help underserved children resist or ameliorate risk.

Although this peer influence was not perceived by the participants to impact their academic achievement, it was noted based upon their responses that the participants had a positive relationship with their peers. Of the 158 responses, 57% reported their peers viewed them as leaders; 68% motivated them academically; and 76% of their peers

planned to attend college. These responses suggest that the participants in this study had positive relationships with their peers that contributed to their academic success. This may warrant researchers to further examine the impact of perceived peer relationships as it correlates to academic achievement.

Bandura (1997) espouses the resilience theory by stating that self-efficacy is simply believing in one's self. He proposes that self-efficacy influences the overall outcomes of an individual's life as well as affects his/her motivation and resilience to adversity. Building self-esteem to ensure self-autonomy is essential especially during the formative years and is fundamental for success to be obtained (Bandura, 1997). Having positive expectations for one's self is vital for resilient children to be effective (Bernard, 1997).

Although this study focuses on students' perceptions of social factors impacting their achievement, the results of this study seem to conflate with the resilience theory. Therefore, parents, teachers, and the schools should seek opportunities to build self-esteem, be proactively involved, build three-way communication (child, parent, and school), provide an inviting and nurturing environment for all, and establish and radiate high expectations for everyone.

Research Question 3

What are the differences in (a) AAU females' perceptions of social factors impacting academic achievement based on socioeconomic status and (b) AAU females' academic achievement by socioeconomic status?

A multiple regression was conducted with the variable academic achievement of students on free and reduced lunch. The results did not indicate that any of the factors were statistically significant. Socioeconomic status was determined by students who indicated whether they were on free and reduced lunch. The results signified that there are not any significant statistical differences in academic achievement between students on free and reduced lunch and those who are not which contravenes popular research that augurs students' socioeconomic status has a direct impact on their academic achievement. The findings of this study suggest that the academic achievement of AAU female students is independent of their socioeconomic status.

Lewis (1998) portends that “not all people who are poor necessarily live in or develop a culture of poverty” (p. 7). The culture of poverty suggests that individuals have a brawny feeling of vulnerability, of reliance, along with a pervasive feeling of inadequacy and personal disrepute (Lewis, 1998). Valentine (1968) reported that the theory “constitutes misunderstandings of the poor and contradictions of the idea of culture” (p. 181).

Nearly 54% of the AAU females in this study specified that they were on free and reduced lunch; yet they have attained academic success, have desires of attending college, and being productive members of society. In all practicality, these students are exemplars of those researchers who herald that the culture of poverty does not exist (Billings, 1974; Carmon, 1985; Gorski, 2008; Ortiz & Briggs, 2003). Gorski (2008) reported “the culture of poverty concept is constructed from a collection of smaller stereotypes which, however false, seem to have crept into mainstream thinking as

unquestioned fact” (p. 33). These AAU female participants in this study are resilient to many of the vices periling their communities. Based upon their responses, it is perceivable that through their eyes, socioeconomic status does not impede their learning or their readiness to overcome what society has perceived as barriers to achieve.

Conclusion

This study investigated the perceptions of African American urban females with regards to their discernment of social factors influencing their academic achievement; their discernment of the relationship between those factors and their academic achievement; and their discernment of whether socioeconomic status influences their academic achievement. For each of the research questions, the data did not reveal any statistically significant findings.

Recommendations for Further Research

The present study has challenged the research on the influence of selected factors on the academic achievement of African American urban female students. As a result, it is necessary to continue conducting studies regarding African American urban females with the latest data from research proposing that the deficit model and the culture of poverty are insignificant when analyzing the trajectories of African American urban female students.

- It is recommended that a qualitative study be conducted by gender and race to determine if there are any statistically significant social factors impacting academic achievement for AAU females’.

- It is recommended that a qualitative study be conducted to examine the perceived relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement to determine if resilience is more prevalent than the social factors prior research suggests.
- It is recommended that a study be conducted focusing on the positive correlates impacting academic achievement for African American urban females so that the best practices that evolve can be further evaluated and implemented across the nation in order to successfully motivate and teach African American urban females.
- It is recommended that a study be conducted to investigate teachers' perceptions of African American urban females' perceived trajectories.
- It is recommended that a study be conducted investigating the relationship between teachers' instructional behaviors regarding African American urban females and its impact on their academic achievement.
- It is recommended that the study be replicated utilizing a magnet school campus that is more equivalent in size to that of the traditional schools.
- It is recommended that a study be conducted that focuses on enhancing the educational experiences of African American urban females in a multi-faceted, highly technological and diverse world.

Answers to these questions may help shed some light on the best practices that should be implemented when educating African American urban females. Urban students of color comprise of more than half of the American school population. It is

imperative that researchers focus on the positive correlates that are influencing academic success on all urban students in order to make them productive members of society.

Implications for Further Research

There has been extensive research on the social milieus and inequitable education of African American urban students. However, the African American female is often grouped into various categories; thus, she does not stand alone. For more than two decades, social organizations have been citing the need to focus on African American females' unique and diverse needs. Although the latest research has focused on the differences among girls, more research is considered necessary to produce more comprehensive, precise representations of students' identities as well as influences impacting social and academic achievements. Efforts should be made to discern how to create resistant and resilient African American females in urban environments who excel academically. As researchers, we cannot continue to provide a litany of deficit model statistics focusing on the perils plaguing our African American urban females. We should seek opportunities to take a proactive approach to revitalize our mission and adopt the Young Women's Christian Association's (YWCA) philosophy of eliminating racism, empowering women to make certain African American females who have been historically disadvantaged to discontinue fostering social injustices. African American urban females oftentimes live under fragile economic conditions, yet, they are assertive, confident, independent, and strong (Buckley & Carter, 2005). Henry (1996) wrote, "stories of Black girls' lives need to be researched and analyzed in the context of and against existing social science research, especially interpretive inquiries" (p. 10). Prelow

and Guarnaccia (1997) postulated that Black students are resilient because they have strong support systems, such as family bonds, neighborhood ties, and religious involvement.

Even though this study on AAU female students' perception of factors influencing academic success was statistically insignificant; the review of literature suggests just the opposite. The implication of this major contradiction is that if AAU female students are not educated on the risk factors in achieving academic success, the disconnect between what they consider risk factors and what the true risk factors are will widen. Previous studies have been consistent in identifying factors that affect the academic achievement of AAU female high school students. However, the results in this study should be considered.

Summary

Among the variables included in this study, none appears to statistically impact the academic achievement of AAU female students. The evaluation of the findings must be approached with the purpose of the study in mind. The purpose of this study was to use students' perceptions of these factors as a representation to shed some light on the academic achievement of these students. The study implicates that students who are identified in society by hardships including socioeconomic labels may not be governed by the perceptions of others including researchers. For example, students who are identified as economically underserved may not perceive themselves to be as such. In other words, they have not accepted society's view of their social and economic status. In the practical sense, some of these students are wearing name brand clothes and tennis

while their parents are driving status quo vehicles regardless of their parents' economic hardships. The findings of this study may cause educators to question or second guess those who believe that poverty is the reason for a student's lack of academic achievement, when in actuality, the student does not have the perception "of poverty" as a mindset. This contradicts those in the literature who say a so-called "culture of poverty" (Payne, 1993) causes students to behave and respond in a certain manner that will hinder their academic success.

The findings also suggest there might be other mitigating reasons over and above the effect of these suggested variables that might account for the academic performance of these students. It is well documented that AAU female students, compared to other female students, face steeper academic challenges (Fordham, 1988; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sable, 1998). These challenges may be a result of socioeconomic status, institutional racism, gender inequity, home and school environment, dysfunctional families, limited community and school resources, school funding, self-esteem, parental support, relationship with peers, teacher expectations, teen pregnancy, drugs and alcohol, or any other perils plaguing the urban community (Comer, 1998a; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Garmezy, 1991; Hauser et al., 1989; Stewart, 2008; Werner & Smith, 1989).

African American urban female students' ability to overcome these challenges to succeed academically in school was the focus for this research. It is palpable that these females possess some innate characteristics that compel them to continue on despite their obstacles. According to Hauser et al. (1989) and Stewart (2008), school and home environment are plausible factors that foster resilience and support the academic

achievement of urban students. Bernard (1995) identifies those environments as the family, social milieus including peer relations, and self-aspirations. It must be assumed that the significance of these relationships and environments play an integral and important part in the educational attainment for African American urban female students.

In spite of their urban areas, gender, socioeconomic status, unequal access to resources, and other challenges, AAU females undoubtedly understand the roles their parents, their peers, their home and school environment, as well as their own personal aspirations play in their academic success. Their ability to wield their innate abilities to establish social competence (form relationships), to develop a sense of identity (autonomy), and to plan and to hope (a sense of purpose and future) validates their resilience (Bernard, 1995). It is palpable that these 158 African American urban females have an understanding of what it takes to achieve.

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APPENDIX A
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT'S CONSENT



ALDINE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 14910 Aldine-Westfield Road.

Houston, Texas 77032-3099. (281) 985-6315

October 23, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

Mrs. Rhonda Evette Shelby-King has been granted permission to visit the following schools: Aldine Senior High, Carver Senior High, and Eisenhower Senior High Schools to collect data for her dissertation on *Students Perceptions' of Social Factors Affecting Academic Achievement of African American Females in An Urban Public School District*.

Please allow her to have access to students' PEIMS numbers (to be placed on surveys) and their TAAS scores, as well as distribute surveys to all students classified as 12th graders. Please direct a specific counselor or administrator to work with Mrs. Shelby-King when soliciting for student participants and collecting of TAAS scores.

Your assistance and cooperation is greatly appreciated. You may contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully

Archie Blanson
Deputy Superintendent

APPENDIX B
PRINCIPAL'S CONSENT FORM

Principal's Consent Form

I have been asked to allow my twelfth grade students to participate in a research study. The study is entitled, *Students' Perceptions of Social Factors Affecting Academic Achievement of Urban Students in a Public School District*. The survey that will be distributed is designed to report the social factors affecting academic achievement and ways to assist urban students to reach their full potential academically. My school was selected to be a participant because of its demographics and economic diversity. A total of approximately 1200 students have been asked to participate in this study.

If I agree to allow my students to participate in this study, I will be asked to review with the students the necessity to complete the survey honestly and completely. I will encourage them to ask as many questions for clarity as possible. I will also inform them their participation is strictly voluntarily and that there are not any rewards or compensation. This study will only take twenty minutes for participants to complete. If they are absent on the day the original survey is distributed, they will be allowed one more opportunity to complete and return the survey. There are not any risks associated with this study. There are not any benefits for participating in this research. There will not be any monetary compensation for my schools' or my participation.

This study is confidential. Students will only use their Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS) number, not their social security number on their survey. The PEIMS number will be used to collect students' most recent TAAS scores. The most recent TAAS scores will be used to determine each student's academic achievement. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking my students or me to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Drs. Norvella Carter, Patricia Larke, Stephanie Knight, and Kenneth Paprock will have access to the records. My students' or my decision whether or not to participate will not affect their or my current or future relations with Texas A&M University or the Aldine Independent School District. If I decide to participate, my students and I are free to refuse to answer any of the questions that may make them or me uncomfortable. The students and/or I can withdraw at any time without our relations with the university, job, benefits, et cetera being affected. I can contact Rhonda Evette Shelby-King at 281-633-2969 or via US postal service at 918 Rock Springs Dr., Richmond, TX 77469 and/or via email at rsheby@aldine.k12.tx.us or evetteking@hotmail.com. I may also contact Evette Shelby-King's graduate advisor, Dr. Norvella Carter at 979-862-3802, College of Education, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843-4232 or ncarter@tamu.edu.

This research study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board-Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, I can contact the Institutional Review Board through Dr. Michael W. Buckley, Director of Research Compliance, Office of Vice President for Research at (979) 845-8585 (mbuckley@tamu.edu).

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this consent document for my records. By signing this document, I consent for my students to participate in the study.

Signature of Principal: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C
ASSENT FORM

Assent Form

I have been asked to participate in a research study. The study is focuses on *students' perceptions of social factors affecting academic achievement of students in urban school districts*. The survey that will be given to you is designed to report what the social factors are and ways to assist urban to reach their full potential academically. Your school was selected to participate because of its demographics and economic diversity. A total of approximately 1200 students have been asked to participate in this study. The purpose of this study is to determine what social factors affect academic achievement for urban females. Also, it will detail what is the least and most significant factors impacting academic achievement?

If I agree to participate in this study, I will be asked to complete the survey honestly and completely. I have been informed my participation is strictly voluntarily and that there are not any rewards or compensation. This study will only take twenty minutes for me to complete. If I am absent on the day the original survey is distributed, I will be allowed one more opportunity to complete and return the survey. There are not any risks associated with this study. There are not any benefits for participating in this research. There will not be any monetary compensation for my participation.

This study is confidential. I will only use my Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS) number on this survey. The PEIMS number will be used to collect my most recent TAAS scores. The most recent TAAS scores will be used to determine my academic achievement. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking me to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Drs. Norvella Carter, Patricia Larke, Stephanie Knight, Kenneth Paprock, and Jeff Guidry will have access to the records. My decision whether or not to participate will not affect my current or future relations with Texas A&M University or my grades in any of y classes. If I decide to participate, I am free to refuse to answer any of the questions that may make me uncomfortable. I can withdraw at any time without my relations with the university, my school or my grades, et cetera being affected. I can contact Rhonda Evette Shelby-King at 281-633-2969 or via US postal service at 918 Rock Springs Dr., Richmond, TX 77469 and/or via email at rsheby@aldine.k12.tx.us or evetteking@hotmail.com. I may also contact Evette Shelby-King's graduate advisor, Dr. Norvella Carter at 979-862-3802, College of Education, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843-4232 or ncarter@tamu.edu.

This research study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board-Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, I can contact the Institutional Review Board through Dr. Michael W. Buckley, Director of Research Compliance, Office of Vice President for Research at (979) 845-8585 (mbuckley@tamu.edu).

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this consent document for my records. By signing this document, I consent for my students to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D
CONSENT FORM

Consent Form

I have been asked to participate in a research study. The study is entitled, *Students' Perceptions of Social Factors Affecting Academic Achievement of African American Females in an Urban School District*. The survey that will be distributed is designed to report what the social factors are and ways to assist African American urban females to reach their full potential academically. Your school was selected to be a possible participant because of its demographics and economic diversity. A total of approximately 1200 females have been asked to participate in this study. The purpose of this study is to determine what social factors affect academic achievement for African American urban females; and what is the least and greatest factors?

If I agree to allow my students to participate in this study, I will be asked to review with the students the necessity to complete the survey honestly and completely. I will encourage them to ask as many questions for clarity as possible. I will also inform them their participation is strictly voluntarily and that there are not any rewards or compensation. This study will only take twenty minutes for participants to complete. If they are absent on the day the original survey is distributed, they will be allowed one more opportunity to complete and return the survey. There are not any risks associated with this study. There are not any benefits for participating in this research. There will not be any monetary compensation for your schools' or your participation.

This study is confidential. Students will only use their Public Education Information Management Systems (PEIMS) number on their survey. The PEIMS number will be used to collect students' most recent TAAS scores. The most recent TAAS scores will be used to determine each student's academic achievement. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking my students or me to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Drs. Norvella Carter, Patricia Larke, Stephanie Knight, Kenneth Paprock, and Jeff Guidry will have access to the records. My students' or my decision whether or not to participate will not affect their or my current or future relations with Texas A&M University or the Aldine Independent School District. If I decide to participate, my students and I are free to refuse to answer any of the questions that may make them or me uncomfortable. The students and/or I can withdraw at any time without our relations with the university, job, benefits, et cetera being affected. I can contact Rhonda Evette Shelby-King at 281-633-2969 or via US postal service at 918 Rock Springs Dr., Richmond, TX 77469 and/or via email at rsheby@aldine.k12.tx.us or evetteking@hotmail.com. I may also contact Evette Shelby-King's graduate advisor, Dr. Norvella Carter at 979-862-3802, College of Education, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843-4232 or ncarter@tamu.edu.

This research study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board-Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, I can contact the Institutional Review Board

through Dr. Michael W. Buckley, Director of Research Compliance, Office of Vice President for Research at (979) 845-8585 (mbuckley@tamu.edu).

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this consent document for my records. By signing this document, I consent for my students to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX E
PARENT INFORMATION HANDOUT

Parent Information Handout

Dear Parents:

Your child's school has been selected to participate in a dissertation research study approved by the International Review Board at Texas A&M University and Mr. Archie Blanson, Deputy Superintendent of Schools for Aldine Independent School District. The study addresses social factors impacting academic achievement for urban students. The person conducting the study, Evette Shelby-King, will be distributing the surveys to all eleventh and twelfth grade students on January 14, 2004.

Students will be asked to complete a forty question survey. The survey will take approximately twenty minutes to complete. There are not any risks or consequences associated with the study. The following is a sample question: My teachers encourage me to do my best. The students will mark one of the following responses: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

There are not any incentives for the students to participate. All surveys will remain confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking the students to the survey will be included in any report that may be published. If students decide to participate, they are free to refuse to answer any of the questions that may make them feel uncomfortable. They can withdraw at any time without any consequences.

If you do **not** want your child to participate, please contact either the school or return this Information Sheet with your signature stating your disapproval. If you have any questions, you may contact the school or Evette Shelby-King at evetteking@hotmail.com or rshelby@aldine.k12.tx.us. You may also contact Shelby-King's graduate advisor, Dr. Norvella Carter at (979) 845-8585, College of Education, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77846-4232 or ncarter@tamu.edu.

This research study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board-Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, you can contact the Institutional Review Board through Dr. Michael Buckley, Director of Research Compliance, Office of Vice President for Research at (979) 845-8585 (mwbuckley@tamu.edu).

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this consent document for my records. If I do not return this document or contact the school, I am giving my child permission to participate in the study.

No, I do not want my child to participate.

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX F
SURVEY QUESTIONS

Students' Perceptions of Social Factors Affecting Academic Achievement in Urban Schools

Survey Questions

PEIMS Number: _____ (Located on ID Card)

Please do **not** write your name on this paper or identify yourself in any way.

Demographics:

1. You age is:
 - a) 15 or less
 - b) 16
 - c) 17
 - d) 18+

2. Your ethnic background is:
 - a) Asian/Pacific Islander
 - b) African American
 - c) Hispanic
 - d) European American
 - e) Other _____

3. Your gender is:
 - a) Male
 - b) Female

4. I qualify for free or reduced lunch.
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

5. I live with my:
 - a) father/mother
 - b) father
 - c) mother
 - d) aunt, uncle, grandparent, cousin
 - e) other _____

6. My mother/female guardian completed college:
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

7. My father/male guardian completed college:
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

8. I am enrolled in:
- Honors/GT/AP courses
 - Special Education Courses
 - Regular Education Courses
9. Do you have a child(ren)?
- 0
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3+
10. I work
- 0 hours per week
 - 1-10 hours per week
 - 10-20 hours per week
 - 20+ hours per week
11. My TAAS scores are:
- Reading _____
 - Math _____
 - Writing _____

Your teacher has your TAAS scores.

12. I participate in extracurricular activities:
- yes
 - no

For each of the statements below, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement by selecting the appropriate answer.

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither disagree nor agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
13 I plan to attend a college or university immediately after graduation.	1	2	3	4	5
14 At least one of my parents/guardians inquires about my school work.	1	2	3	4	5
15 My parents/guardians are not concerned about my education.	1	2	3	4	5

		<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
16	My peers consider me to be a leader.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I form study groups with my friends/peers.	1	2	3	4	5
18	My school expects me to fail.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I know I will be successful.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I put forth a good effort in my classes on a daily basis.	1	2	3	4	5
21	My part-time job prevents me from studying as much as I should.	1	2	3	4	5
22	My school promotes academic achievement.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Most of my friends have no plans to go to college.	1	2	3	4	5
24	When things bother me, I talk with my parents or guardians.	1	2	3	4	5
25	My peers encourage me to achieve academically.	1	2	3	4	5
26	I enjoy school.	1	2	3	4	5
27	<i>I have a job to help take care of home.</i>	1	2	3	4	5
28	My teachers seldom tell me they care about my academic performance.	1	2	3	4	5
29	My parents/guardians are not contacted by my teachers when I fail to complete my assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
30	I look forward to going to school daily.	1	2	3	4	5
31	I do not like to miss school.	1	2	3	4	5
32	My teachers express the need for me to go to a college or university.	1	2	3	4	5

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
33 I expect to make good grades.	1	2	3	4	5
34 My parents do not expect me to make good grades.	1	2	3	4	5
35 I set high academic goals for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
36 My teachers criticize me when I make mistakes or make low grades.	1	2	3	4	5
37 I expect to earn a lot of money from my occupation.	1	2	3	4	5
38 My family does not expect me to go to college.	1	2	3	4	5
39 My teachers challenge me to do my personal best.	1	2	3	4	5
40 My friends distract me from my school work.	1	2	3	4	5
41 I do not feel safe at school.	1	2	3	4	5
42 I would be a better student if my parents were involved in my schooling.	1	2	3	4	5
43 My peers encourage me to study.	1	2	3	4	5
44 My job or extracurricular activities interferes with me completing my homework.	1	2	3	4	5
45 I only work to get the things I want.	1	2	3	4	5
46 My peers influence me to complete my homework.	1	2	3	4	5
47 My teachers give me positive feedback to help me do better.	1	2	3	4	5
48 My friends seldom get into trouble.	1	2	3	4	5
49 I spend a lot time with my friends doing non-school related activities.	1	2	3	4	5

		<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
50	My teachers do not commend me when I make good grades.	1	2	3	4	5
51	My parents(s)/guardian(s) visit(s) my teachers other than open house, athletic events, and disciplinary reasons.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX G

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES TO SURVEY QUESTIONS

Frequency Tables

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15 or less	1	.6	.6	.6
	16	1	.6	.6	1.3
	17	60	38.0	38.0	39.2
	18	96	60.8	60.8	100.0
	Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Ethnicity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	African American	158	100.0	100.0	100.0

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	158	100.0	100.0	100.0

Reduced Lunch

I live with

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Father and Mother	44	31.7	31.7	31.7
	Father	5	3.6	3.6	35.3
	Mother	75	54.0	54.0	89.2
	Aunt/Uncle/Grandparent/ Cousin	11	7.9	7.9	97.1
	Other	4	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	139	100.0	100.0	

My mother/female guardian completed college

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	42	30.2	30.7	30.7
No	95	66.3	69.3	100.0
Total	137	98.6	100.0	
Missing System	2	1.4		
Total	139	100.0		

My father/male guardian completed college

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	37	26.6	27.4	27.4
No	97	69.8	71.9	99.3
3.00	1	.7	.7	100.0
Total	135	97.1	100.0	
Missing system	4	2.9		
Total	139	100.0		

I am enrolled in

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Honors/GT/ AP classes	40	28.8	28.8	28.8
Regular Education classes	99	71.2	71.2	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Number of Children

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0	127	91.4	91.4	91.4
1	11	7.9	7.9	99.3
2	1	.7	.7	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Number of Hours Worked per week

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0	78	56.1	56.1	56.1
1 to 10	6	4.3	4.3	60.4
11 to 20	23	16.5	16.5	77.0
Over 20	32	23.0	23.0	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Participating in extracurricular activities

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	93	66.9	67.4	67.4
No	45	32.4	32.6	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 13

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	107	77.0	77.0	77.0
2	13	9.4	9.4	86.3
3	13	9.4	9.4	95.7
4	3	2.2	2.2	97.8
5	3	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q14

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	76	54.7	55.1	55.1
2	40	28.8	29.0	84.1
3	14	10.1	10.1	94.2
4	5	3.6	3.6	97.8
5	3	2.2	2.2	100
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing system	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 15

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	109	78.4	78.4	78.4
2	16	11.5	11.5	89.9
3	6	4.3	4.3	94.2
4	3	2.2	2.2	96.4
5	5	3.6	3.6	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 16

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	31	22.3	22.3	22.3
2	51	36.7	36.7	59.0
3	49	35.3	35.3	94.2
4	2	1.4	1.4	95.7
5	6	4.3	4.3	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q17

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	6	4.3	4.3	4.3
2	21	15.1	15.2	19.6
3	37	26.6	26.8	46.4
4	41	29.5	29.7	76.1
5	33	23.7	23.9	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 18

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	45	32.4	32.4	32.4
2	36	25.9	25.9	58.3
3	39	28.1	28.1	86.3
4	12	8.6	8.6	95.0
5	7	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 19

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	116	83.5	83.5	83.5
2	17	12.2	12.2	95.7
3	4	2.9	2.9	98.6
4	2	1.4	1.4	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 20

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	53	38.1	38.1	38.1
2	71	51.1	51.1	89.2
3	12	8.6	8.6	97.8
4	2	1.4	1.4	99.3
5	1	.7	.7	100.0
Total				

Q21

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	6	4.3	4.4	4.4
2	12	8.6	8.8	13.2
3	30	21.6	22.1	35.3
4	31	22.3	22.8	58.1
5	57	41.0	41.9	100.0
Total	136	97.8	100.0	
Missing System	3	2.2		
Total	139	100.0		

Q22

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	42	30.2	30.9	30.9
2	63	45.3	46.3	77.2
3	23	16.5	16.9	94.1
4	4	2.9	2.9	97.1
5	4	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	136	97.8	100.0	
Missing System	3	2.2		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 23

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	63	45.3	45.7	45.7
2	44	31.7	31.9	77.5
3	25	18.0	18.1	95.7
4	4	2.9	2.9	98.6
5	2	1.4	1.4	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 24

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	29	20.9	20.9	20.9
2	31	22.3	22.3	43.2
3	24	17.3	17.3	60.4
4	23	16.5	16.5	77.0
5	32	23.0	23.0	100
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q25

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	45	32.4	32.4	32.4
2	54	38.8	38.8	71.2
3	26	18.7	18.7	89.9
4	9	6.5	6.5	96.4
5	5	3.6	3.6	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 26

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	17	12.2	12.3	12.3
2	43	30.9	31.2	43.5
3	44	31.7	31.9	75.4
4	17	12.2	12.3	87.7
5	17	12.2	12.3	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q27

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	39	28.1	28.7	28.7
2	29	20.9	21.3	50.0
3	25	18.0	18.4	68.4
4	34	24.5	25.0	93.4
5	9	6.5	6.6	100.0
Total	136	97.8	100.0	
Missing System	3	2.2		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 28

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	24	17.3	17.4	17.4
2	27	19.4	19.6	37.0
3	36	25.9	26.1	63.0
4	38	27.3	27.5	90.6
5	13	9.4	9.4	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 29

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	26	18.7	18.8	18.8
2	43	30.9	31.2	50.0
3	34	24.5	24.6	74.6
4	25	18.0	18.1	92.8
5	10	7.2	7.2	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 30

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	16	11.5	11.5	11.5
2	38	27.3	27.3	38.8
3	46	33.1	33.1	71.9
4	23	16.5	16.5	88.5
5	16	11.5	11.5	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q31

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	24	17.3	17.4	17.4
2	44	31.7	31.9	49.3
3	42	30.2	30.4	79.7
4	18	12.9	13.0	92.8
5	10	7.2	7.2	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 32

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	43	30.9	30.9	30.9
2	56	40.0	40.3	71.2
3	24	17.3	17.3	88.5
4	9	6.5	6.5	95.0
5	7	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 33

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	73	52.5	52.5	52.5
2	58	41.7	41.7	92.8
3	6	4.3	4.3	98.6
4	2	1.4	1.4	100.0
5				
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 34

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	105	75.5	76.1	76.1
2	23	16.5	16.7	92.8
3	6	4.3	4.3	97.1
4	1	.7	.7	97.8
5	3	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 35

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	62	44.6	44.6	44.6
2	58	41.7	41.7	86.3
3	11	7.9	7.9	94.2
4	5	3.6	3.6	97.8
5	3	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 36

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	9	6.5	5.5	6.5
2	22	15.8	15.9	22.5
3	36	25.9	26.1	48.6
4	37	26.6	26.8	75.4
5	34	24.5	24.6	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q37

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	98	70.5	70.5	70.5
2	25	18.0	18.0	88.5
3	10	7.2	7.2	95.7
4	4	2.9	2.9	98.6
5	1	.7	.7	99.3
25	1	.7	.7	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 38

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	107	77.0	70.5	70.5
2	21	15.1	15.2	92.8
3	4	2.9	2.9	95.7
4	5	3.6	3.6	99.3
5	1	99.3	.7	
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 39

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	37	26.6	26.8	26.38
2	54	38.8	37.1	65.9
3	29	20.9	21.0	87.0
4	7	5.0	5.1	92.0
5	11	7.9	8.0	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 40

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	54	38.8	38.8	38.8
2	49	35.3	35.3	74.1
3	25	18.0	18.0	92.1
4	8	5.8	5.8	97.8
5	3	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 41

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	42	30.2	30.2	30.2
2	45	32.4	32.4	62.6
3	39	28.1	28.1	90.6
4	9	6.5	6.5	97.1
5	4	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q42

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	10	7.2	7.2	7.2
2	11	7.9	7.9	15.1
3	38	27.3	27.3	42.4
4	33	23.7	23.7	66.2
5	47	33.8	33.8	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 43

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	16	11.5	11.6	11.6
2	39	28.1	28.3	39.9
3	39	28.1	28.3	39.9
4	27	19.4	19.6	87.7
5	17	12.2	12.3	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q44

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	8	5.8	5.8	5.8
2	15	10.8	10.9	16.8
3	22	15.8	16.1	32.8
4	41	29.5	29.8	62.8
5	51	36.7	37.2	100.0
Total	137	98.6	100.0	
Missing System	2	1.4		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 45

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	23	16.5	16.5	16.5
2	27	19.4	19.4	36.0
3	33	23.7	23.7	59.7
4	26	18.7	18.7	78.4
5	30	21.6	21.6	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	

Q 46

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	27	19.4	19.6	19.6
2	80	57.6	58.0	77.5
3	20	14.4	14.5	92.0
4	7	5.0	5.1	97.1
5	4	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 47

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	32	23.0	23.2	23.2
2	66	47.5	47.8	71.0
3	26	18.7	18.8	89.9
4	6	4.3	4.3	94.2
5	8	5.8	5.8	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 48

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	21	15.1	15.2	15.2
2	52	37.4	37.7	52.9
3	34	24.5	24.6	77.5
4	19	13.7	13.8	91.3
5	12	8.6	8.7	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q49

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	15	10.8	11.0	11.0
2	30	21.6	22.1	33.1
3	24	17.3	17.6	50.7
4	40	28.8	29.4	80.1
5	27	19.4	19.9	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q 50

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	16	11.5	11.7	11.7
2	37	26.6	27.0	38.7
3	45	32.4	32.8	71.5
4	27	19.4	19.7	91.2
5	12	8.6	8.8	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Q51

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	15	10.8	10.9	10.9
2	21	15.1	15.2	26.1
3	26	18.7	18.7	44.9
4	27	19.4	19.6	94.5
5	49	35.3	35.5	100.0
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

APPENDIX H
STATISTICAL DATA RESULTS

N Valid	138
Missing	2

Extracurricular Activities

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	93	66.9	67.4	67.4
No	45	32.4	32.6	
Total	138	99.3	100.0	
Missing System	1	.7		
Total	139	100.0		

Regression

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
ACDACH	79.3484	9.2198	120
SEXP	9.2167	3.1787	120
SENV	14.9333	4.3420	120
PI	16.2750	3.8522	120
TEXP	18.4250	3.9208	120
PR	22.8250	4.4300	120
EC	13.3417	2.8030	120

Pearson Correlation ACDACH	ACDACH	SEXP	SENV	PI	TEXP	PR	EC
SEXP	1.000	-.010	.173	.130	.171	.081	-.205
SENV	-.010	1.000	.445	.530	.328	.480	-.226
PI	.130	.530	.430	1.000	.294	.517	-.213
TEXP	.171	.328	.432	.294	1.000	.381	-.239
PR	.081	.480	.369	.517	.381	1.000	-.302
EC	-.205	-.226	-.164	-.213	-.239	-.302	1.000
Sig. (1 – Failed) ACDACH	.	.455	.029	.079	.031	.189	.012
SEXP	.455	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.006
SENV	.029	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.037
PI	.079	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.010
TEXP	.031	.000	.000	.001	.	.000	.004
PR	.189	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
EC	.012	.006	.037	.010	.004	.000	.
N ACDACH	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
SEXP	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
SENV	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
PI	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
TEXP	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
PR	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
EC	120	120	120	120	120	120	120

Variables Entered/Removed^b

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	EC, SENV,PR,TEXP, SEXP, PI ^a	.	Enter

a. All requested variables

b. Dependent Variable: ACDACH

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.310 ^a	.096	.048	8.9940

a. Predictors: (Constant), ES, SENV, PR, TEXP, SEXP, PI

ANOVA^b

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean of Squares	f	Sig.
1 Regression	974.703	6	162.450	2.008	.070 ^a
Residual	9140.779	113	80.892		
Total	10115.481	119			

Coefficients^a

Model	B	Std. error	Beta	t	Sig.	Correlations	
						Zero Order	Partial
1 (Constant)	80.589	7.844		10.274	.000		
SEPX	-.577	.330	-.199	-1.747	.083	-.010	-.162
SENV	.312	.231	.147	1.347	.181	.173	.126
PI	.287	.276	.120	1.040	.301	.130	.097
TEXP	.252	.244	.107	1.030	.305	.171	.096
PR	-7.56E-02	.237	-.038	-.319	.750	.081	-.030
EC	-.611	.313	.186	-1.953	.053	-.205	-.181

ANOVA

Univariate Analysis Variance

Between-Subject Factors

	N
Student # 1	21
2	26
3	92

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

Dependant Variable: SEXP

F	Df1	Df2	Sig
.079	2	136	.924

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of
The dependant variable is equal across groups

a. Design: Intercept + Student

Test of Between Subjects Effects

Dependant Variable: SEXP

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected Model	6.980 ^a	2	3.490	360	.698	.005
Intercept	8006.315	1	8006.315	825.452	.000	.859
STUDENT	6.980	2	3.490	.360	.698	.005
Error	1319.106	136	9.699			
Total	13150.000	139				
Corrected Total	1326.086	138				

a. R Squared = .005 (Adjusted R Squared = .009)

Univariate Analysis of Variance

Between-Subjects Factors

	N
Student # 1	20
2	26
3	88

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances ^a

Dependant Variable: SENV

F	Df1	Df2	Sig
.0792.266	2	131	.108

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of
The dependant variable is equal across groups

a Design: Intercept + Student

Dependant Variable: SENV

Source	Type III sum of Squares	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected model	109.609 ^a	2	54805	2946	.056	.043
Intercept	18457.3374	1	18457.374	992.280	.000	.883
STUDENT	109.609	2	54.805	2.946	.056	.043
Error	2436.727	131	18.601			
Total	31951.000	134				
Corrected Total	2546.338	133				

^a R Squared = .043 (Adjusted R Squared = .028)

Univariate Analysis of Variance

Between-Subjects Factors

	N
Student # 1	21
2	25
3	89

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances ^a

Dependant Variable: SENV

F	Df1	Df2	Sig
.065	2	132	.937

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of
The dependant variable is equal across groups
a Design: Intercept + Student

Tests Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: PI

Source	Type III sum of Squares	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected model	3.593 ^a	2	1.796	.122	.885	.002
Intercept	23258.940	1	23258.940	1579.185	.000	.923
STUDENT	3.593	2	1.796	.122	.885	.002
Error	1944.155	132	14.728			
Total	36925.000	135				
Corrected Total	1947.748	134				

^a R Squared = .043 (Adjusted R Squared = .013)

Univariate Analysis of Variance

Between-Subjects Factors

	N
Student # 1	20
2	26
3	87

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances ^a

Dependant Variable: SENV

F	Df1	Df2	Sig
2.614	2	130	.077

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of
The dependant variable is equal across groups

^a Design: Intercept + Student

Dependent Variable: TEXP

Source	Type III sum of Squares	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected model	38.592 ^a	2	19.296	1.333	.267	.020
Intercept	29939.311	1	29939.311	2067.515	.000	.941
STUDENT	38.592	2	19.296	1.333	.267	.020
Error	1882.506	130	14.481			
Total	47274.000	133				
Corrected Total	1921.098	132				

^a R Squared = .043 (Adjusted R Squared = .005)

Univariate Analysis of Variance

Between-Subjects Factors

	N
Student # 1	20
2	26
3	87

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances ^a

Dependant Variable: PR

F	Df1	Df2	Sig
.901	2	130	.409

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of
The dependant variable is equal across groups
a Design: Intercept + Student

Dependent Variable: PR

Source	Type III sum of Squares	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected model	46892 ^a	2	23.446	1.186	.309	.018
Intercept	44924.624	1	44924.624	2272.895	.000	.946
STUDENT	46.892	2	23.446	1.186	.309	.018
Error	2569.499	130	19.765			
Total	70828.000	133				
Corrected Total	2616.391	132				

^a R Squared = .043 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)**Univariate Analysis of Variance**

Between-Subjects Factors

	N
Student # 1	20
2	26
3	89

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances ^a

Dependant Variable: EC

F	Df1	Df2	Sig
1.126	2	132	.328

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of
The dependant variable is equal across groups
a Design: Intercept + Student

Dependent Variable: EC

Source	Type III sum of Squares	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Corrected model	19.296 ^a	2	9.648	1.212	.301	.018
Intercept	16412.513	1	16412.513	2061.527	.000	.940
STUDENT	19.296	2	9.648	1.212	.301	.018
Error	150.896	132	7.961			
Total	25284.000	135				
Corrected Total	1070.193					

^a R Squared = .043 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)

VITA

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EDUCATION

2010	Doctor of Philosophy, Curriculum and Instruction Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas
1996	Master of Education, Secondary Education Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas
1991	Bachelor of Arts, Radio-Television, Journalism University of Houston-Central Campus, Houston, Texas

EXPERIENCE

1999-Present	<p>Aldine Independent School District, Houston, Texas</p> <p>Jewell Simpson Houston Academy Magnet School Curriculum Assistant Principal (2004-Present)</p> <p>Charles R. Drew Academy Magnet School Curriculum Assistant Principal (2002-2004)</p> <p>Dwight Eisenhower Senior High School Educational Services Manager (2000-2002)</p> <p>Stovall Middle School, Language Arts Instructor With Inclusion Support (1999-2000)</p>
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