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## Factors related to college matriculation decisions among same residents African American youth.

Frankie Jeanelle Charles  
*University of Nebraska at Omaha*

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**FACTORS RELATED TO COLLEGE MATRICULATION DECISIONS  
AMONG SAME RESIDENT AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH**

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Counseling

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Frankie J. Charles

April 1998

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## THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the College of Graduate Studies, the University of Nebraska,  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts, the University of  
Nebraska at Omaha.

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Date

*April 21, 1998*

## DEDICATION

To the pillars of my strength and character, I offer this work as a token of my gratitude for what you have instilled within and have passed on to me.

My Grandmother, L. Charles, my example of undying strength and unbending faith.

M. R. Dacus for epitomizing ambition and exemplifying an allegiance to knowledge and academic achievement. You nurtured the motivation that has guided me through my academic endeavors.

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# CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>DEDICATION</b> .....                                     | <b>i</b>  |
| <b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b> .....                                | <b>ii</b> |
| <b>CHAPTER I      Introduction</b> .....                    | <b>1</b>  |
| Purpose .....   | 3         |
| Statement of the Problem .....                              | 4         |
| Significance of the Problem .....                           | 4         |
| Theoretical Framework .....                                 | 7         |
| Hypotheses .....  | 8         |
| Assumptions .....   | 9         |
| Delimitations and Limitations .....                         | 9         |
| Definition .....  | 11        |
| Overview .....  | 13        |
| <b>CHAPTER II      Literature Review</b> .....              | <b>14</b> |
| <b>CHAPTER III     Methodology</b> .....                    | <b>54</b> |
| Preferred Participants .....                                | 54        |
| Design .....  | 55        |
| Procedures .....  | 57        |
| Instrumentation .....                                       | 58        |
| Data Analysis .....   | 59        |
| <b>CHAPTER IV      Findings and Data Presentation</b> ..... | <b>61</b> |
| Primary Hypothesis Question .....                           | 62        |
| Hypothesis Question 2 .....                                 | 67        |
| Hypothesis Question 3 .....                                 | 67        |
| Hypothesis Question 4 .....                                 | 72        |
| Research Question 5 .....                                   | 75        |

|                   |  |           |
|-------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>CHAPTER V</b>  | <b>Summaries, Conclusions, and Recommendations</b> | <b>79</b> |
| Summaries         |  | 79        |
| Conclusion        |  | 91        |
| Implications      |  | 93        |
| Recommendations   |  | 93        |
| <b>REFERENCES</b> |  | <b>95</b> |
| <b>APPENDIXES</b> |  | <b>98</b> |



## Abstract

This qualitative analysis investigates eight sets of African American youth (16 students). Student sets were from same households and attended the same high school. Subjects were administered a 21-item paper and pencil survey to determine 1) if they have a familial value for education, and 2) what influences promote or negate that value, in turn encouraging or impeding college attendance. Value is determined by the proportion of student sets with identical responses to survey item three and those with contrasting responses to that same item. Influences are determined by the frequency of responses to a particular survey item. Comparisons are made between and within households to include: congruents versus incongruents, first student versus second student, and college bound students versus work bound students. Percentages for congruents versus incongruents showed a 3:1 ratio, suggesting education as a value. A chi square goodness-of-fit test yielded an insignificant value, suggesting that college is not a familial value among these student sets; however, the small n-value leads to the assumption that increased subjects could improve the chi square value. The 3:1 ratio is accepted and background literature is provided as support. Findings are summarized in four tables and one pie graph.

## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

African Americans are underrepresented in areas of work and education, such as engineers, scientists, and doctoral level students, to name a few. Educational factors may contribute to the underrepresentation of Black Americans in these aspects. African Americans have increased their high school graduation rates, yet their college matriculation rates are disproportionate. For some, college plans become reality, for others plans are never implemented or are simply nonexistent. What entices high school graduates to enroll into collegiate programs, and what factors intervene to prevent the transition? Examining familial interactions, peer affiliations, or other social contacts may provide an explanation to that question. The current study examines the decision making processes of same household African American youth, regarding college attendance. Same household investigation focuses on interactions between paired students. When two (minimum) students concurrently reside in a home there may be an expectation that they hold fundamentally similar educational values, yet their unique interaction and experiences may determine their postsecondary aspirations. Hence, both high school graduates may pursue college, both may decline further education, or one student may express college plans while the other has no college intentions. What are the decision patterns of college bound sets, noncollege bound sets, and contrasting student sets? When decisions of college attendance arise in a family, additional questions may arise,

for example: Has college attendance been a precedent set forth by students' families? Are students' decisions about college self-motivated: if so, where does the notion originate? If college is a value within a family then what may impede the transition from high school graduation to college enrollment: what halts the implementation of college plans into reality? If both students in a set have no plans for college pursuit then what has negated the value of higher education for that family? If one student in a household has college plans and the other does not then why may disparity exist within a student set? Students' individual perspectives may provide answers to these inquiries. Siblings have unique perspectives on the origin of their college plans, and their distinctive experiences and interactions may yield original or common explanations for attending or not attending college, respectively: (a) desire for further education, potential to obtain a good paying job, or participation in college sports; students may further suggest being highly encouraged by a significant person; or (b) employment directly after high school, enlisting in armed services, marriage, or simply viewing college as unaffordable. French and others (1957) noted:

As well as the number of siblings, factors that related to college attendance more closely than to plans were: professional nature of fathers' occupation, extent of fathers' education, proportion of college expenses which the family was able to pay, professional aspirations, and academic reasons for desiring college (p, vi).

To the contrary, students attributed lack of college plans to financial problems (French et al., 1957).

In summary, exploring the participants' decision-making processes may present higher education as a viable option (directly after high school) for non-college-bound students and those already contemplating college enrollment. Examination of dual student households may uncover remedies to disproportionate college matriculation rates for African American youth, which generally lead to their low representation on college campuses and, ultimately poor representation in work and study areas such as: science, engineering, and doctoral level course work.

### The Problem

#### Purpose

Employing a qualitative research design, the investigator seeks to ascertain which life experiences, interactions, or self-determined factors same household African American youth (enrolled in grades 9-12 at one mid-sized Nebraskan public high school) describe as influences for deciding to attend or not attend college. This research seeks to determine the values that same household African American student sets (two students minimum) hold for higher education and the influences involved in college matriculation decisions made by the youth. The factors are investigated as a means to modify the low college entrance rates among African American minors.

Students' educational value is established by comparing the number of identical households versus the number of contrasting households. If the ratio of identical to

contrasting is any number that is not 1:1 then decisions about education may be related to value and not chance. Influences are established by frequency of responses.

### Statement of the Problem

African Americans have increased their high school graduation rates, yet their matriculation rates into collegiate programs are disproportionate. Black American youth lag behind their Caucasian counterparts in local and national averages for college matriculation rates. To address the problem the investigator examines educational values among same household African American youth and the influences that reinforce or negate those educational values.

### Significance of the Problem

It is necessary to uncover influences related to African Americans' college matriculation decisions as a means to increase the number of African American youth who will be motivated to aspire to higher levels of education. Influences are accumulated, based on responses to closed and open-ended survey items.

Previous research has provided rationale for why African Americans have low college matriculation rates. Some explanations are provided with discussions of academic achievement, socioeconomic status (SES), financial assistance, motivation, and mentoring. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education (1997) notes that 64.3%

Whites, 51.2% Blacks, and 53.7% Hispanic's high schools graduates were enrolled in institutions of higher learning, directly after high school, showing that African Americans lag behind their White and Hispanic counterparts. Jorgensen's (1996) longitudinal study followed students until the Fall immediately after high school graduation, to determine who implemented college plans. The study revealed consistencies between the national matriculation rates and the local rates for the school in question. African American youth were enrolled in colleges or universities 44.8 percent of the time, while their Caucasian counterparts showed a rate of 64.0 percent, both compared to a total school attendance mean of 58.0 percent. Comparing students at the surveyed school to the entire secondary system (consisting of seven schools), Black Americans were enrolled in colleges or universities at a rate of 43.5 percent, White Americans were enrolled 63.4 percent of the time, compared to system average of 58.0 percent.

In general, there may be a substantial number of youth that have the scholastic aptitude to attend college, yet only half of potential college students will actually attend college (French, Johnson, Mollenkopf, & Stice 1957). Although the subjects of this study are highly motivated toward college, literature supports the need to increase the number of minority youth who pursue higher education: specifically, the proportion of Black youth who attend college. The alarmingly low matriculation rates for African Americans lead to inadequate representation of this group in career fields and positions that include: faculty and administrators, therapists, math instructors, and science teachers.

Manuel R. Mazon and Howard Ross (1990) in *Minorities in the Higher Education Pipeline: A Critical View* note that in 1983 among full time faculty in White four year colleges and universities, African Americans only accounted for 2.3% of faculty. In addition, a modest enrollment of Black Americans on college campuses may yield lower enrollment into higher level courses in science, engineering, and math, which decreases the number of African Americans qualified for doctoral studies in these fields.

Blackwell noted (as cited in Brown, 1992):

The participation of African Americans in postsecondary education has declined over the past two decades. Declines at the doctoral level are most alarming; for example, in 1979 blacks earned 4.4 percent of all doctorates, but in 1987 their share of earned doctorates dropped to 3.8 percent. . . . These declines coincide with the sharp drop in the percentage of black doctorates who are choosing faculty careers in higher education, giving rise to the question of whether black faculty losses influence the number of black students in higher education which is also declining. According to the available data, the low trends may be related. (p. 133)

The National Science Foundation (as cited in Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993) suggests, generally, the nation has a shortage of scientists and engineers. However, the literature continues to point out that the less than 3% of Black Americans represented in the already scarce workforce indicates that African Americans "are losing ground academically" (p. 234). College matriculation rates among African American youth remain low; there is a necessity to uncover rationale for how to increase the national and local averages. Mazon and Ross (1990) contend:

Unfortunately, recruitment of minority "superstars" alone does not alleviate the critical shortage of minority faculty and administrators in

predominantly White college and universities, nor does it help to increase the enrollment and retention rate of minority students. Successful, long-term solutions to the shortage of minorities in higher education must be aimed at increasing the pool of talented minority students and faculty. The supply of minorities scholars must be increased. This can only be accomplished by increasing the pool of minority students. (p. 162)

Researchers have investigated the following groups to ascertain the rationale for low college entrance rates among Black American youth: males, adolescents, male adolescents only, male and female secondary students, students from different socioeconomic levels (low SES largely studied), and college students compared to other ethnic group. There has been no known study that focuses on same household secondary students.

### Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frame of the present research is based on motivation theory. The literature review will discuss motivation generally, and specifically as Graham (1994) applies it to African Americans. Investigators seek to discern factors related to college matriculation rates among African Americans, yet additional research must determine underlying rationale for why some African American students surpass obstacles to obtain higher education. Yet, some Black American youth's plans for college are impeded or stopped, or they are simply nonexistent for higher education, although it has been deemed a means to help African Americans aspire to higher qualities of living. The disparity is



especially interesting as it occurs among siblings.

### Primary Hypothesis Question

#### Alternate

There is a difference in the number of student sets who express congruent or identical plans about college attendance and the number of student sets who express incongruent or contrasting plans about college attendance.

#### Null

There is no difference in the number of student sets who express congruent or identical plans about college and the number of student sets who have incongruent or contrasting plans about college.

### Secondary Hypothesis Questions

If higher education is a familial value then how do households compare and what other factors influence postsecondary plans to attend college?

- 2) Does gender contribute to differences in postsecondary plans?
- 3) Do social influences relate to the decision to choose or not choose college (i. e., peer interactions, school [personnel] interactions, community or public role models, and religious affiliations)?
- 4) Do familial interactions relate to the decision to choose or not choose college (i. e., family constellation and size, parental education, parental influence, and

educational financial support)?

### Additional Research Questions

- 5) How do congruent household responses compare to incongruent household responses? How do "yea" students from congruent households compare to "yea" students from incongruent homes? How do "nay" students from congruent households compare to "nay" students from incongruent homes, in their most common responses? How do first students compare to second students in their most common responses survey items 1-20?

### Assumptions

It is assumed that students reared in the same household have the same fundamental values and influences. Yet, students with identical familial "upbringing " may have different interactions and experiences which uniquely shape their decision making processes. In addition, students reared in a consistent home environment may internalize similar experiences very distinctly.

### Delimitations and Limitations

African American student pairs currently enrolled in grades 9-12 at one local high school were preferred for this study. Student pairs were same resident participants who both met the above criteria.

The 87 eligible student sets were restricted by the 10% return rate of parental consent forms, in which parents/legal guardians granted permission for their minor

children to participate in this research. In addition, purposive selection may have limited sample size. Suen (1989) describes purposive research as selecting “typical” or “representative” subjects based on prior knowledge of the population (p. 44). The small sample size intervenes with generalizable findings. This research may be apropos to students outside the surveyed campus if they meet the criteria for the original subjects that is African American, identical school enrollment, and same residence. Additionally, the small sample size was affected by the school district’s administrative protocol. Student Information Services suggests there is no marginal percentage of error when searching the Student Information System for specific parameters; however, alternative rationales for the elimination of some students are provided:

- 1) Transfer process--potential subjects could have transferred to the school after the subjects list was generated, thus excluding them from the list. This alternative is a feasible explanation because the subjects list was generated mid-semester, therefore likely candidates could have enrolled at the school after the subjects list was generated.
- 2) Racial inquiry--students who did not provide racial orientation to the school were automatically classified as Caucasian by the school district, hence their names were not generated on the subjects’ list. This is the most plausible explanation for the elimination of students from the subject list.
- 3) Post-dated entry--students may be scheduled to attend the school but they were not enrolled at the time the subjects’ list was generated. This is least plausible because students not enrolled when the instrument was administered would not have met the criteria for inclusion into the study.
- 4) Administrative request--student’s parents may request their children’s names be excluded from any directory information, thus eliminating those students from any lists generated. This is a viable rationale for why certain students were omitted from the original subjects’ list.

Although aware of the eliminated students, it was not time effective to survey them.

The methods and measurements used to understand participants' values toward higher education are not exhaustive. The survey items covered demographics, college questions, social influences, and family questions, which provided students with the opportunity to select their own best responses. The questions were designed to be applicable to many students. In an attempt to balance the biases of survey items 3-17, students were given the opportunity to complete four open-ended questions.

### Definition of Terms

#### African American/Black American

Determined by the students' responses to the race inquiry on the high school's Student Information Packet (SIP). These two terms are used interchangeably.

#### Congruence

Determined by identical responses to survey item three. Both students must reply A. go to college or both students must not mark letter A.

#### Extended Family

Those persons whom students consider to be their family but excludes nuclear family members, friends that are not blood related, and those not marriage related. For example extended family may include grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, step parents, or step siblings.

#### External Influences

Described as influences gained through interactions with friends or acquaintances who do not reside in the same household with the students or belong to the student's extended family.

### Household

Described as the current residence of each student set.

### Incongruence

Determined by contrasting responses to survey item three, one participant must respond A. go to college, while the second student replies B. go to the military, C. get a job, or D. none of the above.

### Influence

Responses most commonly represented among congruent and incongruent households. Each question represents particular variables. Students had the opportunity to choose those variables that applied to them and list what they considered the most important influences in their decision to attend or not attend college.

### Inter-household Comparisons

Comparing factors that influence postsecondary plans among students residing in separate households.

### Internal Influences

The influences that are gained through interactions with individuals within the students' household or by interactions with members of the students extended family.

### Intra-household Comparisons

Comparing factors that influence postsecondary plans between students residing in same households.

### Student Set

Having two or more students currently residing in the same household, and to-date enrolled at the local public high school in question. The term is used interchangeably with household.

### Value

Determined by distinct proportions of students' replies to survey item three.

### Overview of the Research

Current research is presented in five chapters and appendixes A-E. Chapter one contains purpose, significance of the study, and the problem statement, the theoretical framework, research questions, definition of terms, and assumptions, delimitations, and limitations of the research. Chapter two focuses on related and relevant research and literature. Chapter three highlights participants, research design, procedural techniques, instruments employed, and data analysis. Chapter four presents findings and data. Chapter five includes summaries, conclusions, recommendations, and implications for the research. The appendixes present: the pilot, the instrument, Nebraska Institutional Review Board approval, and samples of parental consent and youth assent forms (Appendixes A-C); coding (Appendix D); and a participants' response chart (Appendix E).

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

Journal articles, technical reports, and monographs referenced in bibliographic databases and a computerized card catalogue provided background research literature for this study. The following databases were utilized: Educational Resources Information Center (Eric), Psychlit (Psychology), Sociofile (Sociology), and Genisys. The background literature relates to many aspects of the present research project, specifically: (a) how to motivate Blacks toward college, variables related to academic success, and barriers to college entrance; (b) the rate at which Black Americans enter college and how to increase participation of African Americans in collegiate programs and ultimately completing graduate or professional degrees, particularly in science and mathematical fields; and (c) the college retention of African American students. Although the research has a wealth of support for the current problem, no known authors cover same household youth. However, the sample is reflective of populations that need more investigation. Current research will explore the related areas, as well as consistencies or inconsistencies among same household youth and their cohorts. Donna Y. Ford (1993) cited in *Black Students' Achievement Orientation as a Function of Perceived Family Achievement Orientation and Demographic Variables* notes the need for studies on Black families that extend "beyond family and sociological demographics (such as parents' level of education, occupation, and employment status) . . ." (p. 47). This research gives subjects

the opportunity to share their perspectives about higher education. It is a challenge to categorize the reviewed literature into specific subsections without much overlap. Thus, literature is discussed in sections most befitting.

#### Factors Related to the Pursuit of Postsecondary Education

Although the following study is not current, it provides history of the interest that past researchers had in ascertaining which factors are related to secondary students' decisions to attend or not attend college. The article details consistencies between past findings and the present study. J.W. French and others (1957) in *Background Factors Relating to College Plans and College Enrollment among Public High Schools Students* "partly under the auspice of the College Entrance Examination Board with support of the National Science Foundation," (p. i) addressed why only approximately half of students with the academic ability for college level work, actually attend. As part of the investigation, it was necessary to determine "the underlying factors that pertain to this apparent waste of intellectual resources" (p. i). In January and February of 1955, more than 35,000 seniors from 516 schools were studied to uncover explanations for the apparent waste of academic ability. Subjects' completed questionnaires revealed the number of students with college plans, factors impacting those plans, and the possibility to increase the number of college students with financial or circumstantial support provided. The study compared students based on high versus low entrance exam scores.



The questionnaire reflected variables such as: family background, high school experience, plans for college, reasons for college plans, and reactions to hypothetical scholarship in specific academic areas. Gender was established, however, there was no inquiry of race or ethnicity noted within the technical report or the appendixes. Based on the sampling technique there is a assumption of applicability to African Americans; even though it is not reflective of historical times. The U.S. Office of Education (in 1952) provided the authors with a roster of all public high schools. The investigators noted the only way for a school to be excluded from the study was to be categorized as a class six or undivided school, which did not divide grade levels within the school, the study population had 16% of them.

The investigators' data analysis showed that high and low scoring students were impacted by background factors in much the same way for males and females in the following areas: (a) college plans decreased with ability level, (b) fathers' professional occupation and the extent of their education were positively related to college plans, (c) students with two or more siblings were less likely to have college plans than those with one or no siblings, and (d) students expecting support for college had more plans to attend than those with little expectation for support. French and others noted, "support from the family was even more vital to college plans for the girls than for the boys" (p. i). Geographic location had little or no relationship to college plans. French and others (1957) specified school experience, good grades, friends with college plans, and

interactions with teachers and school counselors about college as other factors highly related to the students' plans for college. Also, college bound students had completed more mathematics and science courses than noncollege bound students. Contrary to the investigators' expectations, the high school academic program did not significantly relate to students' plans. Students' rationales (non statistical) for college plans included: the need for a college degree, which was the most popular response for males and females; income, experiencing different types of work; and enjoying learning were other reasons. Rationale for not attending college was most commonly contributed to financial reasons.

Focusing on the hypothetical scholarship offer, emphasis was directed at high scoring students who did not have college plans: (a) 50% of the boys alluded to accepting full scholarships in engineering, (b) 27% would accept full tuition remission to study business or scientific fields, (c) 66% of girls would accept to enter business fields, and (d) 38% would accept to pursue educational fields. Although the study ensued historically when educated women were not conducive to societal structure it showed that girls desired to be educated. Female participants had college plans less than boys, their college plans were prompted by acceptance of a hypothetical scholarship, and the confidentiality of the study reflected the desire for education that many girls did not verbalize.

The Fall 1995 follow-up study revealed discrepancy in the percentage of students who implemented college aspirations into actual attendance. Follow-up information was provided by 105 of the original 516 schools, at a rate of 99%. Among the twelfth graders,

36% of the females and 27% of the males had attended college the Fall semester after high school graduation. Overall, only 65% of those students who planned to attend college actually enrolled, and seven percent of those without college plans enrolled. Among the students scoring high, 78% carried out their initial plan to attend college.

French and others (1957) summarized:

Most of the family background and other factors which had been found to be related to college plans were found to be related even more closely to actual college attendance. That is, if a factor is related to plans, it can usually be used also to predict which students will carry out their plans. . . those who "enjoy studying" or "need a college degree" are very likely to carry out their plans. Those who desire to attend college because college graduates earn more money are less likely to go, and those who have athletic reasons in mind are least likely to go. (p. v)

As present research seeks to uncover explanations to parallel questions, more to-date literature provides an abundance of information specifically regarding African Americans. D.L. Tan (1994) in *Matriculation Decisions among Asian-American and African-American College Students* does not explain race as a barrier or passage to decisions about college. However, he offers a wealth of insight into the perceptions that African Americans have about higher education. The study is based on college enrolled Asian Americans and African Americans with particular emphasis on the distinctions between factors surrounding their college matriculation decisions. He contends that Asian Americans have a higher rate of participation, retention, and completion of college than other minority groups. However, he noted: "it would be interesting to examine if Asian-American college students were in fact different from other ethnic minorities in

terms of their attitudes toward the value of education and more importantly, the reasons for their participation” (p.23). Hence, lending supports for research that would uncover explanations that people of color give for their participation in higher education, specifically, African Americans.

Tan hypothesized that values placed on education would be different between Asian Americans and African Americans. Upon surveying Asian and African Americans, the figure difference on a 5.00 scale (5.00 being the highest rating) shows that Asian Americans value education at a rate of 4.62, while African Americans rate it 4.46. There is no significant differences in the two ethnic groups' ideas about college value, thus similarities may exist. From this point, emphasis will be given to Tan's findings that are pertinent to the African American subjects. All questions in his study were posed to both ethnic groups, however it will be noted if Asian American responses are being discussed.

Tan examines "the way in which young people were socialized and cultivated into accepting the value of education" (p. 23). When asked the degree to which specific individuals influenced students' ideas about college values African Americans listed: friends, high school counselors, high school teachers, siblings, relatives, and parents ranging from 1.91 to 2.68 on a scale of 3.00 as the highest. Black Americans stated, "their parents emphasized the importance of education to them, and . . . served as examples to them and provided them with guidance about what it was like to be in college" (p. 23). Siblings urged them to excel in school and to continue with their

education, and . . . . served as examples to them and provided them with guidance about college" (p. 24). When asked the degree to which the following people impacted African American students' decisions to attend college, self (2.86), parents (2.48), and siblings (2.15) were highly influential with relatives (2.10), school personnel (2.05), and friends (1.90) being less influential on the 3.00 scale. Students "own desire" (p. 25) rated as the most popular reason for attending college. Tan (1994) inquired about the five factors most influential in decisions to attend college, subjects answered in the following order: "to be part of the academic or intellectual environment," "to satisfy family expectation," "to get knowledge or education," "to fulfill personal ambition or goals," and "to seek career or professional job and to gain financial security" (p.26). Knowledge and family were high motivating factors, while money was the least important factor presented by African American students.

Tan (1994) proceeded to ask what the students hoped to gain from their educations. Students' five most important goals for education include: "career/professional identity," "knowledge/education," "experiencing/learning their own cultures," and "financial security," "making friends," "self-development, independence, leadership," and "community service" all important to a much lesser degree than the formerly mentioned factors (p. 27). The research shifts from its original intent of differences, to examining similarities that apparently exist between African American and Asian Americans' educational values and the factors surrounding ideals. Tan emphasizes

that the commonalities between these groups may be related to all students being enrolled in college programs at the time of the study. Tan (1994) notes, "Were all potential college students surveyed, including those who chose not to go to college, a significant differences would have occurred" (p. 28).

The article closes with a re-emphasis on the role of parents in instilling the value perceptions that students have toward college, and self-prompted decisions to pursue higher education. Although parents exerted great influence on the decisions to go to college, students' own desire was a more important influence. Yet, it is noted: "the influence from family or parents lingered" (Tan, 1994, p. 28). Also, similarities between the two groups are abundant, with dissimilarities arising in the college experience, which is not discussed in the context of the article. Tan suggests that college admissions personnel should build rapport between themselves and potential college enrollees early on, to increase the participation of Asian Americans and African Americans in such institutions. Interestingly, Asian Americans did not cite cultural awareness as a goal for their college education, as did their counterparts. It supports that African Americans need and want the opportunity to learn and explore this phenomena that traditionally has not been a large part of their precollege curriculum. African Americans had some desire to make friends, but Asian Americans did not reciprocate that goal.

Omega S. Gardner (1992) in *Postsecondary Education Opportunities as Perceived by Black High School Seniors* studied 48 Black females and 36 Black males

who were graduates from six Floridian high schools. The study examines and documents the facts and untruths about postsecondary access as perceived by the subjects and their families. The author poses questions such as the following: the differences between school and work experiences of college bound and noncollege bound students, the differences in perceptions that college bound and noncollege bound students have about the benefits of a college education, the relationship between school type (urban/rural, number of black students) and desire for higher education, and the congruency between college intention and preparation.

Seventy-five percent of subjects expressed desire for continued education. College bound ( 87%) students viewed high school course work as more useful than their noncollege bound counterparts (76%). Females and males showed no significant difference in their decisions for postsecondary goals. Family was highly influential regarding educational and career goals. Immediate family was influential to the majority of subjects (73%). Students' career goals were more statistically related to parental expectations than to peers'. Plans and attitudes for postsecondary education differed according to school environment and the size of the Black student body. Rural and urban schools with less Black students had a higher percentage of subjects with college intentions. Rural schools with a medium Black student body had the lowest number of subjects with college intentions (Gardner, 1992).

Findings related to specific research questions reveal similarities between college

bound and noncollege bound subjects. Yet, the subjects differed on school, community, work, and church (attendance) experiences. Noncollege bound students were more satisfied with high school grades than their counterparts. Noncollege bound students did not see the usefulness of their grades after college, as did their counterparts. College bound subjects participated more in academic activities, while noncollege bound students played more sports. All students were generally satisfied with their jobs, but college bound students were less satisfied with pay than noncollege bound subjects. Church was important to both groups, however college bound students attended church more frequently. Perceptions of the benefits of college differed between noncollege bound and college bound groups. Expected income at the close of five years was much higher for college bound youth. There is an incongruence in students' preparedness for college and college intentions. Students' contact with high school counselors, ACT/SAT registration and requirements, and college application completion were not indicative of the number of students who expressed a desire to continue their educations (Gardner, 1992).

Gardner (1992) recommends that areal colleges and universities implement programs designed to inform students and parents of various career and educational opportunities, as well as prerequisites to gain access to colleges and universities. In addition, the school district should provide job councils to employ students in positions that give them more insight in to potential career fields. He recommends that campuses improve programs designed to familiarize Black students with campus life and



programming. Campuses should enlist Black churches and various community organizations (e.g., sororities and fraternities) to help increase interest in attaining education, especially higher education.

### Summary

French and others (1957) did not discuss race or ethnicity as a barrier or predictor of college matriculation among high school graduates. It is unknown why ethnicity was not discussed within the scope of the study. The instruments and correspondences included in the appendix of the study did not indicate any questions relating to race or ethnicity. Assuming the study is reflective of African American youths' perspectives, the report offers a historical overview of factors related to the pursuit of postsecondary education. The findings offer a basis for comparison for more current studies. The article suggested important points of family income, academic performance at the high school level, parent educational level, and professional aspirations, all as predictors of a student's plans to enter college and even more related to college attendance. Also, increased scholarships would increase matriculation rates among college bound and noncollege bound students. In addition, fathers' occupations impacted students' college plans and course of study. A benefit and perhaps more reflective of current times, the present study seeks to determine which parent(s) is instrumental in the students decisions to attend college or not attend college, as well as which parent is primarily present in the

student's life.

Tan's article offers great support for the present study; it provides vast information on students' decisions to attend college. Tan contends that African Americans are similar to their Asian American counterparts, in their values and perceptions about college attendance. Parents highly influenced their value of education. Self-desire and parents were the major impacts on the decisions to attend college. Being in an intellectual environment was the most important factor influencing college attendance. Career aspirations and education were the most important reasons to attend college. The perspective of Tan's research that leaves room for further investigation was the sample: students were college enrollees. Surveying college students eliminates insight regarding noncollege bound students. In addition, college enrollees give a skewed perception of why one goes to college.

Gardner's (1992) chapter in *Strategies for Retaining Minority Students in Higher Education* focuses on graduates from six Floridian high schools. He revealed that college bound and noncollege bound students differed on several points: satisfaction with high school grades, the benefit of those grades and of a college education, expected income within five years, and rate of church attendance. Consistencies among the group included parents as highly influential about students' educational aspirations and plans (peers were not as influential as parents). Students were incongruent in their postsecondary plans and preparedness to carry out those goals. Gardner uncovered key points related to the focus

of the current study. Upon discussing factors related to students choosing college it is necessary to discuss matriculation rates for African American youth. The following sections will focus on the rate that Black American youth enroll into college.

### African American College Matriculation

Martin Carnoy (1994) in *Why Aren't more African Americans Going to College* examines the trend of African American enrollment in four year collegiate programs. He compared Black, White, and Latino college matriculation rates in 1976, with the groups (18-24 years) being equally represented at 33%. He notes that enrollment declined for Whites and minorities in the late 1970s; however, the recovery for Whites in the 1980s was not paralleled by Blacks. Another statistic revealed a "decline in the absolute number of bachelor's degrees awarded to blacks. . ." (p.66) in that time frame. Mazon and Ross (1990) support Carnoy's quote with their note of African Americans receiving only 5.9% of Bachelor degrees that were awarded in 1984-85. The final years of the 1980s marked only a 10 percent increase in Blacks' college matriculation, even though African American's had an increase in high school graduating numbers (Carnoy, 1994).

Carnoy discussed society's explanations for the decrease in African American college enrollment: (a) African Americans were not motivated to pursue expanded opportunities to enroll in four year collegiate programs--"second wave" (p. 66) and (b) a racist society embraced limits on job opportunities for Black Americans and nurtured

hostility toward Black progress--"racism" (p. 66). Carnoy (1994) termed these views "individual responsibility" (p. 66) and "pervasive racism" (p. 67), respectively. He denotes his opposition to the explanations: "neither of these explanations is consistent with the totality of information we have about blacks' educational and economic performance in the 1980s" (p. 67); hence, he provides rationale for the decline in African American college matriculation. Carnoy notes the former explanation disregards African American national test results during 1975 to 1988, which narrowed the "achievement gap" (p. 67) between this group and their White counterparts, and in turn should have increased college matriculation for Black Americans. Carnoy boasts that the closing gap is more fascinating because it befell when American schools were in "crisis" and African American communities were steadily becoming impoverished. The author suggests the latter analysis is incorrect because Blacks with college degrees had high incomes in the 1980s. He argues that the drop in African American enrollment rates occurred as a result of government moving that discrimination was obsolete. Therefore, suggesting income discrepancies between Blacks and Whites to be attributed to "inadequacy" or "dependence" on the part of African Americans (p. 68). Carnoy points out that policies that increased college accessibility to "low-income minorities" were changed--financial aid grants were decreased and loans were increased, thereby, lowering the college enrollment rates of that group. There is argument that the low rate of African American college matriculation will trickle down as a barrier to precollege grades. To remedy the

effect, the literature suggests "increasing expectations among teachers and students about Blacks' opportunities to enroll in four-year college could have a major impact on pupil performance in the precollege grades" (p. 69). Carnoy's (1994) research supports the themes of the past and current research literature. He has established that African Americans do have motivation for higher education, however, the decline in the rate, at which they pursue higher learning is directly affected by changes in financial aid, namely the increased government loans and the decreased grants (for low-income minority students).

In conclusion, Carnoy's (1994) explanation for disproportionate college matriculation rates is supported by Blanchette's (1994) testimony that increasing grant eligibility to students would lower their probability of school dropout rates. He also suggests the need to raise the teacher expectation levels for minority students. His discussion suggests the need for more programs that focus on individualized attention and higher expectations for minority students. One program that accomplishes this goal is the University of Maryland Baltimore County's Meyerhoff Scholars Program to follow.

Ronald B. Head (1995) in *Minority Enrollment Report, Fall 1994* noted an increase in minority student population (excluding Blacks) by 14.3% and a decrease by 18.0% in African Americans, between 1993 and 1994, based on reports for the Office of Institutional Research and Planning at Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC). With the decline, the report noted that during 1991 and 1993 the African American

student population was at an all time high; suggesting the decline in 1994 to be an adjustment in numbers. Noteworthy, Head stated "elasticity" and tuition hikes convincingly suggest "adverse affects" on African American students: "Clearly, cost must be considered by college officials as they develop recruiting and retention strategies for minority students" (p. 2).

### Summary

Carnoy's explanations of decreased financial aid grant eligibility and low teacher expectations for African Americans are legitimate culprits of the low enrollment of Black Americans into collegiate programs. The report from PVCC simply supports the larger enrollment of African Americans in a two year college as opposed to four year White college and universities. The author does offer legitimate rationale and remedies for the decrease in the Black American student body. The explanations that Carnoy (1994) and Head (1995) offer are legitimate obstacles to acquired higher to African Americans; however, their focus are on external locus of control. Therefore it is necessary to discuss factors that involve proactive participation from students.

### Factors Contributing to High School and College Academic Success

Freeman A. Hrabowski and Willie Pearson (1993) in *Recruiting and Retaining Talented African-American Males in College Science and Engineering* discuss the

Meyerhoff Scholars Program in Baltimore County, Maryland, which attempts to remedy the low proportion (3%) of African American scientist and engineers. The program's mission is to increase the numbers of Blacks, especially males, who matriculate and "succeed in undergraduate and ultimately, doctoral or professional programs in science and technology" (p. 234). The success of the initial program and its indication for improving the 3% representation of African Americans in the science and engineering workforces are discussed after background information is presented (Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993).

The Meyerhoff program, generally, relates to the current study in the goal to increase African American college matriculation rates, although male subjects. The authors noted that even though more African Americans are graduating from high school, college enrollments for these students are down. Gibbs' study (as cited in Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993) notes although there was evidence of an increase of Black male high school graduates (11.9% from 1970 to 1985), the number of postsecondary enrollments for the group decreased by 6.3% from 1980 to 1984. An explanation for the decline, also concentrates on the secondary educational experience, particularly for many Black males. McJamerson and Pearson suggested (as cited in Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993) this subgroup may have more "criticism" and less "praise and attention" (p. 234) exerted upon it; Serwatka noted (as cited in Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993) these youth are viewed as "disruptive" (p. 234) and high risk to classroom settings, which causes them to be placed

in classes for mentally or emotionally affected students. In turn, such singled-out students will dodge advanced placement in science and math courses, perhaps due to the lack of teachers' confidence that the students have abilities to perform at the higher levels of these courses. African American males who do not value education, specifically mathematics and sciences, also lessen their probability of entering related fields of work. According to Anderson (as cited in Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993) these same students are "less convinced" (p. 234) [than their white counterparts] of the applicability of science related fields to society, and lack support for scientific research. To the contrary, Austin (1985), Slavin (1987), and Treisman (1985) [as cited by Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993] suggested that encouraging familial, school, and community contacts reinforce higher academic achievement among students and lessen seclusion from support systems and positive influences. Notably, support networks are important for Black male youth, as their efforts are sometimes sabotaged by peers groups. Galbraith (as cited in Ford & Harris, 1994, p. 212) also notes that some gifted youth yearn for peer acceptance: "they have poor peer relationships, are often teased about being gifted, and do not like being labeled gifted. . . ." Goldstein's article (as cited by Hrabowski and Pearson, 1993) offers rationale for the low college matriculation rates among African American males that extend beyond the scope of unpreparedness: financial resources, negative peer influences, enlisting in armed services, or "vocational programs" (p. 235) may be related. Carzile and Woods' study (as cited in Hrabowski and Pearson) suggests increased drug



use and incarceration are also culprits for low enrollment.

The article shifts to discuss college retention rates for students who actually matriculate into collegiate programs. Pincus and DeCamp (as cited in Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993) note that maintaining enrolled status is affected beyond increased tuition, decreased financial aid, and lost income, it is affected by student-instructor interactions and "students' social integration" (p. 235). The authors provide data for which African Americans earn higher level degrees. To show a pattern of decline in such degrees, Brown (1992) note African Americans earned Ph.Ds at a rate of 3.8% in 1987. The following passage links a steady decrease in the number of advanced degrees that Black Americans earn:

It is no wonder that, between 1976 and 1987, the number of bachelor's degrees earned by African-American males fell 12.2 percent, and number of master's degrees earned fell 34 percent (Carter & Wilson 1989). Indeed, many college graduates decide not to pursue graduate degrees. Of the 33,456 doctorates conferred in 1988, only 2.8 percent were awarded to African-American males (McJamerson & Pearson 1989). In fact, fewer than three percent of doctorates in science and engineering are awarded to African-Americans annually. (Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993, p. 235)

Hrabowski and Pearson (1993) discuss the Meyerhoff Scholarship Program as a means to improve the rates of African Americans represented in science and mathematical related jobs: "To increase these numbers, we must identify high achieving students and provide them special academic and emotional support" (p. 235). Initial recipients received:

Full four-year scholarships, a personal computer, and special academic support, including a precollege summer program, academic advising, special counseling, and tutoring. They attended special lectures, took science and cultural field trips, and, the following summer, were to receive summer internships that focus on science and technology. (p. 236)

Additional students were given academic scholarships to participate in the program. All students were in the upper 5% of their high school graduating classes and met criteria for GPA and standardized exam results. All students had been accepted to “Stanford, MIT, Yale, and other nationally eminent universities” (p. 237). A survey of recipients personal characteristics, revealed: two parent families (90%), always lived with biological father (75%), first born (66%), parent(s) with college degrees (100%), viewed religion as important (80%), regular church attendance (63%), important to marry the right person (75%), academic counseling from mother or teacher (80%), academic counseling from father or counselor (70%) and , considered math skills better than peers (80%).

When students were asked what they attributed to their success, religion and spirituality were high on the list. Changing inequalities in social and economic realms were important, community leadership, steady income, living close to nuclear and extended family were all important, and being able to provide better opportunities to offspring later in life. Almost all students placed high priority on friendship and leisure time.

Harbowski and Pearson (1993) concluded that the scholars had a mean GPA of

3.7 while finalist ranked at 3.1 at the close of the first semester and holding at a 3.5 average for the year. Hrabowski and Pearson (1993) contend that only 12% of all freshman at UMBC earn at or above this GPA; scholarship recipients earned academic honors first and second semester, in honors chemistry, biology, calculus and foreign language. The four students who received a C raised grades to As or Bs with individual and group sessions. Students attributed lower grades to lack of hard work in specific areas of study. It is noted that the "Meyerhoff Scholars not only earned solid academic records but also adjusted well to college life" (p. 238). Much of Meyerhoff's success is attributed to the mentoring, study groups, precollege programs, special tutoring, and problem solving groups that are provided for the scholars. Offering credibility to the scholarship program, UMBC noted:

. . . a review of the records of all African-American science and engineering majors at the UMBC over the past five years found that even students with similar backgrounds had earned one or more Ds in freshman math and science courses. The shortage of scientist and engineers is in part explained by the movement of students, white and African-American, from majors in science and engineering to other fields because of poor performance in freshman level math and science courses. (p. 238)

The description of how to increase the number of African Americans in science and mathematics is a huge necessity if Blacks and specifically Black males are to become more represented in related workforces.

Once students are in college it is necessary to focus on how to assist them in maintaining enrolled status until completion of their programs. Gail Delicio and others

(1993) in *Dimensions of Success as Identified by High-Achieving, Black, Precollege Students* worked with high achieving secondary juniors and seniors in a two week study, in which students provided reports of “what they perceived to be the chief determinants of academic success” (p. 3). Black female and male participated in the 1992, “Summer Career Workshop at Clemson University in South Carolina” (Delicio, 1993, p. 4). The goal of the study is to prepare the participants to advance into higher education, with an emphasis on mathematics, sciences, engineering, and allied health professions. The instrument was developed from group interview with students. Recurring explanations for academic success, per the students, were grouped into a list of open-ended questions. Participants' replies showed common themes to generated a list of self awareness, hard work, receiving assistance upon request, achievement expectation by others, “understanding each other,” “being with people just like me,” (p. 4) family support system, and fair treatment as influences for a school success.

Delicio and others (1993) show that there is a need for high school graduating students to be prepared to continue on to higher education. It is not automatic that increasing high schools graduation numbers will necessarily increase college entrance numbers for Black Americans. Delicio and others are consistent with Hrabowski and Pearson (1993) in the need for African Americans to be academically prepared and motivated to attend institutions of higher learning.

### Summary

Hrabowski and Pearson (1993) are thorough in their remedies for increasing the African American representation among science and technology. The study seemingly included only males, however gender was not mentioned for the additional students that received scholarships. The authors focused on students from precollege to retaining them in college. Simply knowing why students consider higher education important and the rates at which they enroll into college is not enough. Retaining students in collegiate programs is the next step to accomplishing the goal to more African Americans in professional programs and careers (especially in science and math). Delicio and others (1993) uncovered explanations regarding what makes African Americans successful in academic endeavors. The article show that the students were internally motivated, as well as wanting external stimulation.

College retention of African Americans is important to the goal of increasing college enrollment rates. Marvel Lang (1992) in *Barriers to Blacks' Educational Achievement in Higher Education: A Statistical and Conceptual Review* discusses transition points from which African Americans are lost: (a) high school to college, (b) junior college to completion of 4 year schools, (c) undergraduate to graduate or professional school, (d) entering graduate or professional school and graduating from that particular program, and (e) before obtaining the advanced degree initially sought. This

research primarily focuses on a point similar to Lang's first concept of the disproportionate number of high school graduates that do not matriculate into college programs upon high school graduation. Retention is closely related to present research. Accomplishing the goal of higher matriculation rates is not enough. It is necessary to broach the topic of retaining those students who do enroll into college programs and ultimately those who continue on to graduate or professional schools. Thus the literature review includes background information that may appear off topic.

### College Retention

*"Initial enrollment increases among certain groups has limited value if those students never complete their educations"* (Blanchette, 1994, p. 2).

College retention is closely related to increasing college enrollment rates among Black American students. There is overlap in the factors that may assist to make both successful, to name a few: mentorships, increased grant eligibility, and parental involvement. C.M. Blanchette (1994) in *Higher Education, Grants Effective at Increasing Minority Chances of Graduating: Testimony before the Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities, Committee on Labor and Human Resources* testified about the results of a longitudinal study on African Americans high school graduates and their families from 1980-1986. The author notes that increasing students' grant eligibility in lieu of loans, would lower their probability (7 percent) of dropping out of school. In

addition it is noted that “family income, parent educational attainment (at least one parent who graduated from college would decrease the students probability of dropping out by 34 percent), student test scores, and good high school grades, were also reliable predictors of college attendance and persistence” (p. 1). The nationwide sample included 370,000 African Americans and 240,000 Hispanics who entered four year institution upon graduation in 1992-93. Blanchette notes their is no mention of enrollment numbers for Whites. Despite the intervention of “direct federal student aid. . . the percentage of minorities graduating college continues to lag behind that of whites. . . . in a nationwide sample of high school seniors graduating in 1980, 21 percent of whites, 10 percent of African-Americans, and 7 percent of Hispanics had earned bachelors degrees 6 years later" (p. 2). Additional data showed in 1991 25% whites and only 16% of minorities had completed four years of college (p. 2).

The article gives support for the current research in that it specifies how financial aid eligibility affects postsecondary education for minority groups, particularly African Americans and Hispanics. This study gives support for the need of the current research in that it does not focus on how to increase college enrollment rates for the minority group discussed. The author notes that no focus was given to “the initial decision to enroll” (Blanchette, 1994, p. 2).

As a means to empower African Americans to achieve academic success, Gary and Booker (1992) stated:

. . . Despite impoverished surroundings, single-parent households, and other material impediments to their achievement, many of these youngsters find a way to succeed in the academic environment. The undue focus on the numbers of young black men in jails and prison, or enmeshed in violence, or afflicted by drug addiction, among other problems, has served to overshadow those who overcome the long odds and achieve success in school. (p. 50)

The eight factors that “encourage a positive home environment,” (p. 51) and thus lead to school success among African American students are the following: a transformed peer group, early onset of established goals, racial pride and awareness, African American culture, mentoring programs, academic motivation, and academic stamina (Gary & Booker, 1992).

A positive “home-life” and ultimately academic success has been grounded in spirituality, specifically associated with attending church. Black youth who attend church regularly are less likely to participate in drug usage, and they are academically more likely to earn better grades than their secular oriented counterparts, ultimately obtaining more rewarding careers. Community awareness and involvement will enable students to implement school knowledge into everyday life experiences. Heightened achievement among famous African Americans accredits family involvement, consistent church participation, and other black institutions for success (Gary & Booker, 1992). High expectations of academic success were established early in childhood for Martin Luther King, Jr., and church attendance and community involvement were expected. Maintaining a conducive “home-life” for empowering African American youth to achieve



academic success, focuses on several specific tasks. Peer groups are noted as "generally detrimental to educational and moral development of youth" (p. 51) and "may inhibit the upward mobile aspirations of its members"(p. 51). A certain degree of (although not quantified) individualism is presented as key in accomplishing social mobility. Contrary, peer groups may encourage academic success, but "generally occurring in higher socioeconomic social contexts" (p. 51). Gary and Booker (1992) suggests remedies for negative peer affiliation are positive group-oriented interactions, based in schools, classrooms, or neighborhoods. Researchers suggest instilling cultural awareness and pride within Black youngsters. Ogbu's study (as cited in Gray & Booker, 1992) noted Black students are deterred from learning by negative association of "acting white" (p. 52). The authors suggest that debilitating anti-black messages can be counteracted by having racial pride and awareness, focusing on Black accomplishments and contributions through history. The article describes African Americans as highly esteemed, which is rooted in personality attributes or activity performance, in lieu of academic achievement. The authors note the need for emphasis on Black youth's ability to achieve academically and non academically, "academic Michael Jordans should be stressed," (p. 52) giving due credit to diligent students and dedicated teachers (Gary & Booker, 1992).

Gary and Booker (1992) suggest that personal and verbal interactions are more conducive to African American learning styles than a "still, passive, teacher-dominated" (p. 52) pedagogy, and they will foster academic success. Educators are encouraged to

facilitate a teaching methodology that is consistent with African American cognitive styles, and they should build upon the talents that each youth brings to the classroom.

Ford and Harris (1994) in *Promoting Achievement Among Gifted Black Students: The Efficacy of New Definitions and Identification Practices*, agree:

Black students tend to be global, relational learners, to be impulsive rather than reflective, to prefer active rather than passive learning situations, to learn best when teaching is experimental, and when they can be mobile rather than stationary. (p. 210)

High achievement may be indicative of students' sense of control, those who have aspired to academic success will describe feelings of empowerment more than their counterparts who are not as successful. The distinction among these two groups are the ability to transcend "personal disaster . . . and rage at being disadvantaged, into strategic and rational goal-directed activity." ". . . an important attribute to success is the ability to channel rage constructively" (Gary & Booker, 1992, p. 53).

Implementing and broadening mentor relationships among African American students and school personnel will help to provide students with knowledge about questions ranging from school to general life concerns. Such interactions will foster more individual attention being given to the Black student body. Mentorships may help to foster a sense of self-confidence, positive risk taking, and assertiveness among the youth. Students can use the mentoring relationship as the basis of a career-based networking system.

"Fostering and cultivating academic motivation" (p. 53) begins with Gary and

Booker (1992) quoting a Nigerian proverb, “Not to know is bad, not to want to know is worse” (p. 53). The authors suggest that youngsters' thirst for knowledge is stunted at the time when they are most open to learning. Teachers and parents must nurture or instill the innate desire for knowledge. For example students should be encouraged to think about their long term goals and have exposure to prospective careers. The article notes that “more than one commentator has described a long-range perspective involving hope and social mobility as the best form of birth control” (Gary & Booker, 1992, p.53). When a student has a sense of life's possibilities for “academic achievement and social mobility,” they can be coupled with other developmental aspects and assist to shape the socialization of youth. The authors suggest that empowering Black students toward academic success has to encompass a youth's ability to sustain motivation throughout academic endeavors. “Success is virtually assured once an individual acquires the inner motivation to persevere when the going gets tough” (Gary & Booker, 1992, p. 54) Students need to muster strength in light of disappointment and defeat. A sense of spirituality is the theme among the concepts presented as tools for empowering African American youth toward a successful academic career. Spirituality is regarded a faith in self, family, friends, and community. The article discusses that students must learn to draw from the victories and failures of African Americans who mark Black American history. The vicarious experience lived through studying and reading about these figures will show that achievement is not paved by a smooth road. Those who are successful

understand the role of developing cognitive abilities, because of its importance in functioning effectively in American society. Gary and Booker (1992) close:

The motivation to achieve a high degree of cognitive development must eventually become internalized. . . . African Americans as well as others must accept learning and skill development as a life-long process. (p. 54)

In conclusion, the strategies seemingly present a focus on a sense of self. All factors mentioned may be grounded in a student having a strong message of "Who am I?" Having productive connections to family or sources external to self are bridged by having the cognitive processes to discern between constructive and destructive interactions. Many students with a sense of self have nurtured inklings (from early life) into goals (in current life). Students who learn to channel rage and destructive behavior to a port of hope and success have an understanding of what works against them and for them, thus empowering themselves toward academic achievement. These students have experienced an internalization process that is inconsistent with individuals who are not empowered toward academic success. Students who have positively internalized outside sources of encouragement have learned to fulfill their needs internally. The discussion of motivation theory will explore the concept of internalization further.

### Summary

The authors in this literature review were, individually, narrow in their discussions of what impedes college matriculation among African Americans. Articles

regarding specific ways to increase academic success among this college-aged African Americans were broader. To get a full spectrum of what encompasses the low representation of African Americans on college campuses, an extensive review was done. Additional authors are cited throughout the text, as they offer support for the current research.

Much of the literature discusses rationale for students achievements, yet few articles mention how support or influences must be internally integrated into the child's values for self. Several articles suggest support or influences must be internally integrate into a students' value of self--internalization to achieve academic success. Seemingly motivation is the key to the internalization process. Motivation exists on a continuum, from internal to external with center as the optimal position. Internal inspiration can be considered as self-motivation (self-praise). Educators and counselors often suggest that students and clients draw from their own source of motivation. It is a vital trait to possess, however, individuals who focus on an extreme self reliability do not gain the strengths of self- motivation, without negative affects. External motivation may be described as the reassurance or strokes received from sources other than self (praise), this facet of motivation also has its extreme position. Individuals who depend solely on extrinsic "pushes" will not integrate expectations into internal motivation. Therefore, it appears that students who learn to internalize external sources of motivation to create internal standards for self are in an optimal position along the motivation continuum.

Gary and Booker (1992), Hrabowski and Pearson (1993), and Ford and Harris (1994) agreed on the importance of external expectations for African American students. Even more important is the ability to channel external resources into internal ones. The downfall of many of the articles is that they fail to discuss how students implement college into reality if they do possess or are subjected to the positive factors previously discussed. Nor do they discuss how those lacking positive factors will be motivated to attend college. However, Sandra Graham (1994) in *Motivation in African Americans* provides the basis for which all of the positive factors may be constructed and negative ones leveled. Motivation theory is the framework for the current research.

### Motivation Theory

*Seemingly, parents who are perceived by their children as more adamant regarding the importance of education have children who are more optimistic and achievement oriented. . . . The task of educators and Black parents remains one of helping motivate Black children to achieve and to believe in themselves. (Ford, 1993, pp. 62-63)*

Graham (1994) in discusses and extensive review of literature relating to the motivation of African Americans. The three main factors examined include: “achievement, locus of control, and cause attributes, success expectancy and self-concept” (p. 56). The author notes too many Black Americans impede future options because they

have low expectations, feel hopeless, and deny the importance of individual effort, or give up in the face of failure. These motivational concerns are believed to be just as important to understanding achievement among African Americans as is the more traditional focus on basic

cognitive processes. . . motivation appears to be a key variable in understanding achievement strivings in minority populations. (pp. 55-56)

Graham specifies the purpose of her article is to address the rationale for the disproportionality of African Americans from high school graduation to college enrollment. An extensive literature review is a part of Graham's task to increase the college enrollment rates of African Americans by providing a basis for motivation in the group in question.

Graham (1994) criticizes that the literature is plentiful in its conclusions about African Americans but she finds none of the assumptions to be justified with respect to achievement, locus of control, and self-concept among African American subjects. The combined articles in the literature reviewed have hypothesized the following: African Americans do not have the traits necessary for academic achievement, Black Americans are less likely to believe in an internal locus of control, and African Americans lack confidence in their abilities. Graham (1994) holds that "African Americans appear to maintain a belief in personal control, have high expectancies, and enjoy positive self-regard" (p. 55).

Where many researchers, seemingly, failed Graham concludes her research with guidelines that may aid in future research involving African Americans.

Six concepts for African American motivational psychology include:

- 1) must explicitly be concerned with the self

- 2) must incorporate a range of cognitive and affective determinants of behavior
- 3) must be particularly sensitive to the dynamics of failure.
- 4) must acknowledge the complex relations between race and social class in this society
- 5) should address the socialization (child rearing) antecedents of achievement strivings.
- 6) should be able to contribute to the understanding of general principles of human behavior (Graham, 1994, pp. 104-108)

Richard Ryan, James Connell, and Wendy Grolnick (1992) in *Achievement and Motivation* discuss extrinsic motivation, suggesting that "perhaps the central problem of all education is that of fostering students' motivation to learn" (p. 167). They suggest that the call for motivating students has caused educators and policy makers to step-it-up in the area of extrinsic influences, neglecting intrinsic expectations. The learning process is said to be regulated by "desire for rewards or fear of punishment" (p. 167). This perspective suggests that youth only learn to get what they want or to avoid punishment. Although it has been established that learning may be accomplished by external regulation, an alternative perspective suggests learning may be accomplished by self-regulation: a movement from extrinsic nudges to intrinsic cues. "Finally, it involves a movement away from tentativeness, insecurity, and dependence upon the environment for direction, and toward confidence and responsibility" (p. 168). The authors note the goal of the text is to present the factors that influence motivational regulation.



Traditional theoretical descriptions of achievement on how it is motivated are discussed; yet, they derive their own definitions of motivation into the classes of intrinsic and extrinsic: (a) intrinsic motivation is "an innate, rather than derivative, propensity to explore and master one's internal and external worlds" (pp. 169-170). Elkind and Ryan (as cited in Ryan, Connell & Grolnick, 1992) describe intrinsic motivation as apparent as "curiosity and interest" (p. 170), therefore it is present in the dearth of exterior cues and strokes. Additionally, Csikszentmihalyi noted (as cited by Ryan, Connell & Grolnick, 1992) that intrinsically motivated behavior is done for self: to gain "autonomy and competence" (p. 170); and (b) extrinsic motivation is described as "instrumental and adaptational activity" (p. 170). The spectrum of motivation emphasizes youth.

Ryan, Connell, and Grolnick (1992) discuss extrinsic motivation as two tier: (a) "level-" the degree to which individuals are motivated and (b) "orientation-" (p. 185) why someone is motivated to render a particular behavior. Another degree of separation is the differentiation between "externally regulated motives and more autonomous ones" (p. 185). In turn, a child's motives for learning may be placed along a "continuum from externally controlled to fully self-regulated" (p. 185); the stages deemed: (a) "external regulation, (b) introjected regulation, (c) identified regulation, and (d) intrinsic regulation" (p. 185). These regulation processes are noted to also exist on a continuum of how the child values, which are considered more internalized as they become more independent (Ryan, Connell, & Grolnick, 1992).

In sum, children learn to self-regulate as supportive parents and educators provide them with adequate external cues then gradually minimize that outside control (Ryan, Connell, & Grolnick, 1992).

Floyd (1996) in *Achieving Despite the Odds: A Study of Resilience among a Group of African American High School Seniors* studied 10 Black females and males to determine how youth achieve despite odds (resilience). Interviews with twelfth graders provided an abundance of information. The students contributed their resilience to internal and external cues. The data revealed three factors among the group of 20 African American youth: supportive and nurturing home, interactions with committed adults, and having "perseverance and optimism" (p. 181).

Many impoverished African American youth have low teacher expectations exerted upon them. The author contends that focusing on the problems solely without examining solutions will sustain the problem. Edmonds (1979) [as cited in Floyd, 1996] noted that there are many children who have the ability to achieve academically but they do not. Researchers have sought to find explanations for what leads to the success of students who are impoverished, experience low teacher expectations, and no glorification of their successes. The difference between those who succeed and not is resilience.

Family support is important in an individual's academic success. Specifically, "mothers tend to be the primary source of affection, aspirations, and assistance with regard to their children's educational plans and pursuits" Shade (1983) [cited in Floyd,

1996, p. 182]. Schools that foster resilience encourage "academic learning and opportunity for all students" (p. 182), active parent involvement, and cultural sensitivity (Wang & Gordon, 1994) [as cited in Floyd, 1996].

Teachers were frequently listed as influences for subjects. Students who were persistent and optimistic about their endeavors and lives were likely to achieve in the face of adversity. The author emphasizes that high achievers do live among poor African American families. The adults in these students' lives must work closely to encourage effective schooling for children across the SES spectrum. Schools must be reflective of the multiculturalism in the community. School counselors must promote achievement beyond the secondary level. Schools should acknowledge scholastic achievements in much the same way as athletic achievements. Schools should have clear guidelines and expectations for all youth (Floyd, 1996).

In conclusion, Floyd (1996) notes that the findings of her study have implications for peers, school personnel, community members, and parents and others who have an interest in increasing the success of students despite racial identity or socioeconomic status.

### Summary

Graham (1994) holds that a motivational psychology for African Americans should include six key points: explicit concern with the self, incorporate a range of

cognitive and affective determinants of behavior; sensitivity to the dynamics of failure, acknowledgment of complex relations between race and social class in this society, address the socialization (child rearing) antecedents of achievement strivings, contribution to the understanding of general principles of human behavior.

Ryan, Connell, and Gronick (1992) note that youth must learn to integrate, yet regulate external motives to internal ones. The self-regulation is accomplished when parents and educator provide external reinforcements and gradually minimize the control they have for giving those strokes.

Floyd's (1996) focus on motivation is based in the concept of resilience. The author holds that youth who achieve in the face of adversity (i.e., poverty) have personality traits that include optimism and perseverance. In addition, those high achieving students have a nurturing 'home-life' and a bond with some committed adult who has an interest in enhancing youths' achievement and overall lives. The adults involved are family members, primarily mothers. Other adults influential in resilient youths' lives include teacher, but to a lesser degree than family members.

### Contributions to Existing Knowledge

The present research provides parallels to much of the existing literature; however, the primary distinction is represented by the selected population. First, focusing on high school students improved the possibility to collect data from those who

are college-aged or near college age. The age range allows the investigator to draw conclusions about the time frame in which students actually begin to think about college. Second, surveying high school students in lieu of college freshman, alleviates participants from having to rely on their memories to define specific rationale for why they attended college directly after high school. In addition, surveying college freshman would have disregarded the portion of research which focuses on incongruent households. Hence, data from those not attending college would not have been readily available. Also those already enrolled would yield biased results, not supplying the negative factors that impede college attendance. Third, utilizing the high school population limited the factors related to student retention. For instance, students enrolled in college at initial contact could have withdrawn from classes at the time the survey process began. Equally important, delving into students' (same resident) perceptions helped discern if children would describe analogous conclusions connected to their values for future schooling, specifically, how their experiences and interactions are similar or dissimilar to influence college plans. Research on Black families may be (generally) indicative of the values that African Americans hold for education, and their motives for pursuing college. Ford (1993) and Tan (1994) supports the population chosen for this study, respectively:

“. . . empirical Black family studies represent less than 1% of all empirical family studies” (p. 47) and

Asian and African Americans in college have already assigned a high priority to education. Where additional work needs to be done is at the high school level, where students are unlikely to be influenced by

experiences or information which can enhance their commitment to the goals of education. (p. 28)

## CHAPTER III

### Methodology

#### Preferred Participants

Present research is set in a Nebraskan city with an approximate 441,000 population. Participants were enrolled in the largest public school district within the city. The preliminary search yielded 455 African American student sets who met partial delineation for the study. Further, the district was separated by the total number of qualified student sets enrolled at each school: three schools projected suitable numbers of households for inclusion. The chosen site had the second largest enrollment of potential subjects, and a favorable geographic location. After Nebraska Institutional Review Board approval, the school district's office of Student Information Services provided a list of students who met the parameters for inclusion at the chosen site. Students were African American and currently enrolled in grades 9-12. The list verified 87 households and provided demographics for each student: first and last name, gender, grade, home phone, and address. Survey correspondence was mailed to one hundred eighty-one students.

Eight households (student sets) containing 17 students returned parental consent forms. One household contained three students, yet the graduating senior declined the offer to participate in the study. The other eligible students in that home were surveyed; hence, eight student sets (16 students) comprise the sample for this research.

## Design

Qualitative and quantitative research methods exist on a continuum, both are employed as suitable and appropriate means to approach the research questions of this study. Drew, Hardman, and Hart (1996) state “survey research represents a type of nonexperimental investigation that may collect qualitative data, quantitative data, or a combination thereof” (p. 38). Additionally, descriptive and survey techniques add to the precision of presenting the data in the most effective and efficient manner.

### Qualitative

There are four points that offer support for the qualitative design of this study. One, the non-experimental focus: the present research does not attempt to manipulate variables. Data was collected via a 21 item survey questionnaire, which was comprised of 17 multiple choice items. To conclude the instrument, four open-ended questions were included to balance the quantitative potential of the survey. Best and Kahn (1993) support including such open-ended questions in survey instruments because qualitative research allows the opportunity to pursue the path that the research is following: “qualitative studies leave open the possibility of change, to ask different questions, and to go in the direction that the observation may lead the experimenter” (p. 27). Two, qualitative research attempts to establish non quantified relationships between variables: Short answer question 21 may be considered the most substantive of the instrument; it bid



subjects five opportunities to express their own ideas. Three, qualitative methods represent data in verbal terms rather than mathematical vernacular: Appendix D4 lists verbatim responses to question 21. Four, Bordens and Abbott (1996) described qualitative theory as depicted in verbal terms rather than mathematical jargon and symbols. The present research primarily utilizes qualitative methodology. However, quantitative methodology is generally examined to show the potential this research has for quantitative analysis.

### Quantitative

The quantitative portion of this paper employs Chi square goodness-of-fit to test the primary hypothesis question. The hypothesis determines the difference in the proportion of student sets that express congruent or identical ideas toward college versus the proportion that make incongruent or contrasting decisions about attending college. The quantitative details of the survey were derived from student responses to item three. Questions 18-20, after coding, have potential for qualitative and quantitative analysis.

It is established that present research utilizes suitable points from the definitions of qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Thus, it is shown that the two do not have to exist separately and that each offers support for the research that is presented.

## Observations

This section is not considered naturalistic observation nor is it meant to imply an observational study. The investigator had the opportunity to interact with and observe students two-fold. One, a pilot of the research instrument was given to one student. The participant's inquiries and responses led to revised portions of the questionnaire. Two, observation of participants as they completed the survey, allowed for verbal interaction regarding questions that students thought were unclear or unrelated to them. Several students pointed out unclear items: "How should I answer this one," was asked by three students that were unsure if a particular question applied to them. The questions were numbers 3, 11 (twice) and 16 (Appendix C). There was also opportunity to see and hear students interact with their siblings about the specifics of survey item 19 (Appendix C).

## Procedures

1. Students and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) were sent initial survey packets. Packets included descriptive correspondence, youth assent forms, parental consent forms, and self-addressed stamped envelopes. A drop box was also located in the main office of the school for convenient hand delivery of forms.
2. Half of the 87 household received follow-up phone calls as a result of disconnected phone numbers, non answered phones, non listed phone numbers, and time constraints. Calls were to ensure the following:
  - a) receipt of the information
  - b) questions were answered
  - c) students were encouraged to return authorization forms
  - d) a reminder of the study participation dates.

3. Once authorization forms were received, a survey administration schedule was arranged with school personnel.
4. Data was analyzed by statistical programs (SPSS) and hand computation.

### Instrumentation

#### Pilot

The original version of the survey entailed 15 questions. The final question (unstructured) invited students to provide rationale for wanting to attend or not attend college. Through observations and results of the pilot survey, the instrument was increased by six questions to provide clarity through the following: short answer items were designed from unclear multiple choice questions and reworded objectives attempted to attain more precise data. The clarified questionnaire yielded a revised instrument title that better reflects the nature of the survey. The feedback from the pilot instrument strengthened the instrument's reliability.

#### Questionnaire

Nation (1997) describes survey as a method for investigators to gain knowledge regarding the subjects' "attitudes, beliefs, and opinions on some position" (p. 283). Sixteen participants were given a self-administered paper and pencil questionnaire, comprised of 17 closed questions, with 2 to 5 distinct responses per item, and four

opened-ended questions had 2-8 responses per item, after coding (Appendix D). The instrument covered demographics, college questions, social influences, and family questions. Completion time for the survey was 20-25 minutes.

There are several points for the construction of a good survey according to Nation (1997): "the kind of items to be included, the construction of these items, and physical feature of the survey" (p. 286). Also, a survey may consist of unstructured items (i.e., the item does not restrict a participant's response, it is intentionally ambiguous); and structured items (i.e., the item intentionally limits the range of responses, only one answer is selected), as well as a continuous rating scale--participants mark along a continuum of unanchored values (i.e., low to high); and discontinuous rating scale-- a respondent chooses one of the values designated by the investigator (i.e., very low-low-neutral-high-very high) [Nation, 1997, p. 287]. This research utilizes continuous and discontinuous rating scales.

### Data Analysis

Proportions of congruent (identical) versus incongruent (contrasting) households were analyzed by Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS); they are represented in percentages relative to the total number of subjects. To confirm a significant difference in the proportions, a Chi square goodness-of-fit test was computed. The data were separated into two parts and were not analyzable by SPSS, thus the Chi square test

and the 2 x 2 contingency table were hand computed. Variable relationships are represented in percentages. The level of significance ( $\alpha$ ) employed is .05.

## CHAPTER IV

### Findings and Data Presentation

This section reflects intra- and inter-household comparisons about postsecondary plans of same resident youth, and factors influencing those plans. Findings are presented under hypotheses and additional research questions. Gender is equally represented among sixteen students who completed the 21 item instrument. Students' enrollment status (assumed to coincide with family birth order) ranged from freshman to senior at 44.0%, 19.0%, 31.0, and 6.0%, respectively. Student replies are tabled as individual and grouped responses. Data reveals that all student sets were reared by biological parents, and a sibling relationship exists between the student sets in each same residence. There were no blended families among the participants of the study. Two families shared households with an aunt and cousins, respectively. In addition, students noting that particular questions did not apply to them were instructed to leave the scan sheet blank and write comments on the survey sheet. Raw data is presented in Appendix E.

The hypothesis questions are separated into two main research ideas: value and influence. Hypothesis question one focuses on the aspect of college as an educational value, as it pivots on household responses to survey item three. Hypothesis questions two through four focus on influences that reinforce or negate plans to attend or not college. Research question five further examines consistencies and inconsistencies between and among same household African American youth.

Students had four opportunities to respond to survey questions directly related to decisions about college attendance: Q3, Q4, Q5, and Q21; respectively, *What will you do directly after graduating from high school? On a scale of 1 to 5, how sure are you about the answer marked for question number 3? What is the main reason that you want to go to college? What is your most important reason(s) for going to college or not going to college?* The following section will focus on the sequential responses to the four items mentioned. The items are examined separately from other discussions of congruent versus incongruent, as they directly relate to students' postsecondary plans and related rationale. Certainty and rationale are discussed in terms of congruents versus incongruents. Survey item 21 is discussed relative to first and second students, yet separate from other discussions of first versus second student.

### Primary Hypothesis Question

Hypothesis Question 1. *Is the proportion of congruent households to incongruent households due to chance? If chance is irrelevant, is college held as a value?*

Postsecondary intentions. Hypothesis question one centers on survey question three (Q3), to which every student replied. Responses to survey item three indicated college pursuit for 12 of 16 students, the remaining subjects proposed work as an alternative. Among eight households, seventy-five percent of the respondent sets had congruent responses to item three on the Influences Survey (IS), the remaining students listed incongruent responses about future plans. The proportions of congruents to

congruent responses to item three on the Influences Survey (IS), the remaining students listed incongruent responses about future plans. The proportions of congruents to incongruents (3:1) represented college as a value. The modest sample size resulted in an incomputable chi square via SPSS; however, a hand computation of chi square goodness-of-fit test showed a conflicting result of insignificance. The chi square value did not support the percentages of congruent versus incongruent: the outcome did not establish significant difference. Further interpretation of the assumptions and restriction for chi square referenced alternative nonparametric statistics that are more effective than chi square. Christensen and Stoupe (1991) note: "the expected frequencies should not be smaller than 5" (p. 387). Bordens and Abbott (1988) agree that "a problem arises if any of your expected cell frequencies are less than five. . . . In such cases the value of chi-square may be artificially inflated (Gravetter & Wallnau, 1985)" [p. 352]. In agreement, the authors referenced the Fisher Exact Probability test or the 2 x 2 contingency table as alternatives to the chi square goodness-of-fit test. The present research has expected values of four, the chi square value is 2.00 with  $df = 1$ . The small  $\chi^2$  falls below the critical value of 3.84. Computing the 2 x 2 contingency table yielded a chi square of 1.066 still resulting in a  $p > .05$ .

Examining the six sets of congruent households, five sets (or 10 students) concluded that they would attend college and both students in the sixth set expressed that they would not go to college. In addition, within the congruents households one student



chose college as the best description for the Air Force Academy rather than military.

Shifting focus to the two incongruent households, each set consisted of one student with college plans, and the second student with no intentions for higher education. Question three (Q3) was a precursor to variables reflecting certainty and explanations of why students decided to attend or not attend college; certainty was based on a 5 point scale and rationales were gathered via a closed item (Q5) and an open-ended item (Q21), respectively. At the close of survey question three, twelve students are going to attend college and four will work directly after high school. Common responses to survey items 3, 4, 5, and 21 (as chosen and listed by congruent versus incongruent students sets) are summarized in Table 1. Subsequent sections will examine congruent versus incongruent with respect to survey items 6 through 20.

Respondent certainty. In survey question four subjects had the opportunity to choose the best response to a Likert-type scale, with one as *a little sure* and five as *very sure* about postsecondary plans. Having established future intentions in survey question three subjects replied to survey question four in the following manner. Among five congruent sets, 50% of respondents were *sure* (4) about their responses to Q3, and 50% were *very sure* (5). In the sixth congruent set both students were *sure* (4) about going to work directly after high school.

Among two incongruent households, student set three had one student who was *a little sure* (1) about working directly after high school while the sibling was *very sure* (5)

Table 1

*Inter-household Comparisons of Popular Responses by Congruent and Incongruent Sets*

| Item | Inter-household compared responses                      |   |
|------|---|---|
|      | Congruents  | Incongruents  |
| 3    | will go to college                                      | will go to college; will get a job                        |
| 4    | I am sure; I am very sure                               | I am sure   |
| 5    | to get a good paying job; to get an education           | to get a good paying job                                  |
| 6    | scholarship will pay for most of college                | parents will pay for most of college                      |
| 7    | loans will subsidize college tuition                    | loans will subsidize college tuition                      |
| 8    | friends say nothing about college                       | most of my friends encourage me to go to college          |
| 9    | none of my friends discourage me from going to college  | none of my friends discourage me from going to college    |
| 10   | no school personnel was influential                     | teacher and counselors were most influential              |
| 11   | *professional athletes; community leaders               | public officials  |
| 12   | ministers and sister at church                          | ministers   |
| 13   | 11 or more years with sibling participant               | 11 or more years with sibling participant                 |
| 14   | *2-4 other children in the home; question did not apply | *2-4 children in the home; 5-6 other children in the home |
| 15   | no children attend college                              | 2-4 children in college                                   |
| 16   | both parents have college education                     | one parent has a college education                        |
| 17   | parent encourage college attendance very often          | parents encourage college attendance very often           |
| 18   | mother most influential parent                          | father most influential parent                            |
| 19   | reared with both parents for majority of life           | reared with both parents for majority of life             |
| 20   | residing with both parent to-date                       | residing with both parents to-date                        |

*Note.* \*Responses represented equally.

about attending college; moreover, in student set six both students *sure* (4) about their decisions to go to college and get a job after high school, respectively.

Rationale for college attendance. Among six congruent households students 44% of students want to go to college to get a good paying job and 42.0% want college for an education, 8.3% of students want to go to college to play sports or other extra curricular activities. Two incongruent sets replied that their main reason to go to college is to get a good paying job, 50%. At the close of question five, fourteen students chose rationale for attending college, showing that two students changed in post high school intentions.

Verbatim rationale for college decisions. Responding to survey item 21, students provided their own most important reason for choosing to attend or not attend college. For clarity, students' responses are not categorized as congruent and incongruent for this section. Verbatim responses are categorized as student one and student two, in order to compare within and between households. Examining verbatim responses (Appendix D4) for 8 student sets, 13 held that they will attend college, 2 will not attend college, and one participant did not reply. The most prevalent explanations for attending college were further education, good paying job, and college sports.

Summary. Responses to survey question three indicate twelve students going to college and four going to work. Survey question four reflects that most students are *sure* (4) or *very sure* (5) about postsecondary intentions selected in Q3. Survey question five reflects fourteen students choosing rationale for college attendance and two with

work plans. Verbatim responses to item 21 reflect thirteen students going to college, two students going to work and one student who did not reply. Students are mostly interested in college to get an education, to get a good paying job, or to play college sports.

Students not going to college are not going because they do not want to continue school or they do not want to go to college for nothing. Hypothesis questions 2-4 focus vastly on responses listed by college versus work bound students as summarized in Table 2, and first student versus second student in household sets (Appendix D).

### Secondary Hypothesis Questions

Hypothesis Question 2.      *Does gender relate to postsecondary plans?*

Among sixteen students, six female and six males are planning to attend college, and two males and two females are work bound. There is no suggestion that gender directly relates to college plans. Gender may be related to other variables within this study, however they are not addressed in current research.

Hypothesis Question 3.      *Do social influences relate to the decision to choose or not choose college (i.e., peer affiliations, school (personnel), and community or public role models, and religious affiliations)?*

Peer affiliations.      Socially, students' interactions with peers, school (personnel), role models, and religion are listed often among college bound students. Students with college intentions receive peer encouragement or no comments regarding college from friends. None of the college bound students are discouraged by peers.

Table 2

*Cross Lists of Postsecondary Plans and Specific Influences for Same Resident Youth*

| Influences                                 | 3. Postsecondary plan |            |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
|  | College Bound         | Work Bound |
| <b>Demographics</b>                        |                       |            |
| <b>1. Gender</b>                           |                       |            |
| F  | 6                     | 2          |
| M  | 6                     | 2          |
| <b>2. Grade level (constellation)</b>      |                       |            |
| 9th  | 6                     | 1          |
| 10th                                       | 2                     | 1          |
| 11th                                       | 2                     | 2          |
| 12th                                       | 1                     | 0          |
| <b>College Questions</b>                   |                       |            |
| <b>4. Certainty</b>                        |                       |            |
| not sure                                   | 0                     | 0          |
| a little sure                              | 0                     | 1          |
| don't know                                 | 0                     | 0          |
| sure                                       | 5                     | 3          |
| very sure                                  | 6                     | 0          |
| <b>5. Rationale for college attendance</b> |                       |            |
| good paying job                            | 5                     | 2          |
| sports                                     | 1                     | 0          |
| education                                  | 6                     | 0          |
| not going to college                       | 0                     | 2          |
| <b>6. Tuition benefactor</b>               |                       |            |
| self                                       | 0                     | 0          |
| parents                                    | 1                     | 2          |
| scholarship                                | 11                    | 0          |
| financial aid                              | 0                     | 0          |
| not going to college                       | 0                     | 2          |

(table continues)

| Influences                             | 3. Postsecondary plan |            |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
|  | College Bound         | Work Bound |
| <b>7. Tuition responsibility</b>       |                       |            |
| work and college together              | 5                     | 0          |
| work then go to college                | 1                     | 1          |
| get a loan                             | 6                     | 1          |
| not go to college if I have to pay     | 0                     | 0          |
| not going to college                   | 0                     | 2          |
| <b>Social Influences</b>               |                       |            |
| <b>8. Peer encouragement</b>           |                       |            |
| all my friends encourage college       | 2                     | 0          |
| most of my friends encourage college   | 3                     | 2          |
| some of my friend encourage college    | 2                     | 2          |
| none of my friends encourage college   | 0                     | 0          |
| my friends say nothing about college   | 5                     | 0          |
| <b>9. Peer discouragement</b>          |                       |            |
| all of my friends discourage college   | 0                     | 0          |
| most of my friends discourage college  | 0                     | 0          |
| some of my friend discourage college   | 1                     | 0          |
| none of my friends discourage college  | 6                     | 4          |
| my friends say nothing about college   | 5                     | 0          |
| <b>10. School personnel influences</b> |                       |            |
| a teacher influenced me                | 3                     | 1          |
| a counselor influenced me              | 2                     | 2          |
| a principal influenced me              | 3                     | 0          |
| someone else influenced me             | 0                     | 0          |
| no adult at school has influenced me   | 4                     | 1          |
| <b>11. Other Role model</b>            |                       |            |
| community leader                       | 3                     | 0          |
| neighbor                               | 1                     | 2          |
| public official                        | 2                     | 1          |
| professional athlete                   | 4                     | 0          |
| an entertainer                         | 1                     | 0          |
| no response                            | 1                     | 1          |

(table continues)

| Influences                                   | 3. Postsecondary plan |            |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
|  | College Bound         | Work Bound |
| <b>12. Religion</b>                          |                       |            |
| a minister influenced me                     | 5                     | 1          |
| a sister in the church influenced me         | 0                     | 1          |
| a brother in the church influenced me        | 1                     | 0          |
| a youth group participation influenced me    | 3                     | 1          |
| no one in church influenced me               | 2                     | 1          |
| no response                                  | 1                     | 0          |
| <b>Family Questions</b>                      |                       |            |
| <b>13. Time with second student</b>          |                       |            |
| no other student in the home                 | 0                     | 0          |
| 0-1 years                                    | 0                     | 0          |
| 2-5  | 0                     | 0          |
| 6-10   | 0                     | 0          |
| 11 or more                                   | 12                    | 4          |
| <b>14. Children in the household</b>         |                       |            |
| no other children in the household           | 0                     | 0          |
| only one other child                         | 3                     | 0          |
| 2-4 other children                           | 8                     | 3          |
| 3-6 other children                           | 1                     | 1          |
| 6 or more other children                     | 0                     | 0          |
| <b>15. Students in college</b>               |                       |            |
| no other children in the household           | 8                     | 3          |
| only one other children                      | 2                     | 0          |
| 2-4 other children                           | 2                     | 1          |
| 3-6 other students                           | 0                     | 0          |
| 6 or more other children                     | 0                     | 0          |
| <b>16. Parental/legal guardian education</b> |                       |            |
| one parent attended college                  | 3                     | 1          |
| both parents attended college                | 7                     | 1          |
| neither parent went to college               | 1                     | 2          |
| not sure if parents attended college         | 1                     | 0          |

(table continues)

| Influences                                     | 3. Postsecondary plan |            |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
|  | College Bound         | Work Bound |
| <b>17. Parental encouragement for college</b>  |                       |            |
| very often                                     | 10                    | 4          |
| often  | 1                     | 0          |
| not much                                       | 0                     | 0          |
| at least one time                              | 1                     | 0          |
| never  | 0                     | 0          |
| <b>18. Most important college influence</b>    |                       |            |
| mother   | 5                     | 1          |
| father   | 2                     | 1          |
| mother and father                              | 2                     | 0          |
| mother and sisters                             | 1                     | 0          |
| mother, father, and cousin(s)                  | 0                     | 1          |
| mostly all                                     | 0                     | 1          |
| none   | 1                     | 0          |
| no response                                    | 1                     | 0          |
| <b>19. Adult resided with for most of life</b> |                       |            |
| mother and father                              | 11                    | 4          |
| no response                                    | 1                     | 0          |
| <b>20. Adult reside with currently</b>         |                       |            |
| mother and father                              | 10                    | 1          |
| mother, father, and sisters                    | 1                     | 2          |
| mother, father, and cousin(s)                  | 0                     | 1          |
| no response                                    | 1                     | 0          |

*Note.* Categories 18-20 derived from coded data (Appendix D).



Work bound students receive encouragement to go to college by some or most of their friends. Work bound students say none of their friends discourage college.

School, community, and public role models. Teachers and principals are most influential while counselors follow. The rate of school influence to no school influence is 2:1 for the college bound group. Teachers and counselors are most influential to work bound students. Influence versus no influence is 3:1. College bound students were mostly influenced by community leaders and professional athletes. Neighbors and public officials influenced work bound students the most.

Religious affiliation. Religion influenced both college bound and work bound students. College bound students are mostly influenced by ministers or youth group activity. Work bound students were influenced by all aspects of religious involvement except deacons in the church. Only three students from combined groups selected the response indicating no church affiliation influenced them to attend college.

Hypothesis Question 4. *Do familial interactions relate to the decision to choose or not choose college (i.e., family constellation and size, parental education, parental influence, and educational financial support)?*

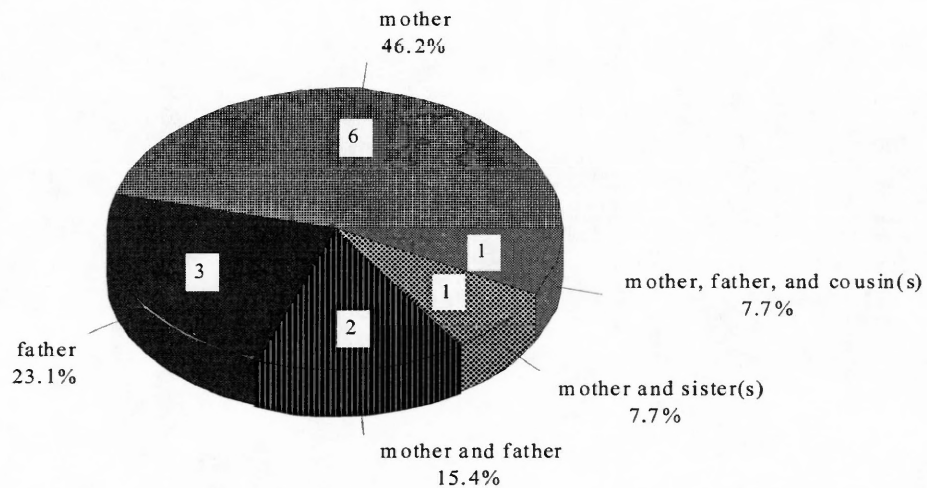
Family birth order and size. Most college bound students are freshmen with 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders also represented. Work bound students are mostly juniors with freshmen and sophomores represented. Students from both groups have lived with their resident sibling for 11 or more years. College bound and work bound students mostly

2-4 other children living in the home with them. College bound youth mostly had no other siblings in college (only four students expressed having a siblings currently in college).

Work bound students mostly had no other siblings in college (only one student expressed having siblings in college).

Parental education and influences. Among twelve college bound students, seven students responded that both parents were college educated, three noted that one parent attended college, one student said neither parent attended college, and one student was unsure of parental education. In work bound homes, one student noted having two college educated parents, one student had one parent who attended college, and two students said neither parent went to college. In both groups parents encouraged college *very often*. College bound students have listed mothers as the people most influential in their decisions to attend college. Work bound students show a variety of influences however, mothers are mentioned among the majority of influential groups of people. The pie graph highlights mothers as common influences among all students. Mothers were listed as influences with other adults approximately 77% of the time and 46% alone. Students had resided with both parents all their lives and at the time of the study.

Educational financial support. College bound students expect that scholarships will pay for them to attend college, and if not they will get loans or work and go to college simultaneously to pay tuition. Work bound students either chose parents as their tuition benefactors, or they chose *will get loans or work then go to college later*.



Pie graph. Subjects listed the person(s) most influential in their decisions to choose or not choose college. The pie graph depicts percentages based on the specific responses that 13 of 16 students provided to survey item 18.

### Additional Research Questions

**Research Question 5.** *How do congruent household responses compare to incongruent household responses? How do "yea" students from congruent households compare to "yea" students from incongruent homes? How do "nay" students from congruent households compare to "nay" students from incongruent homes, in their most common responses? How do first students compare to second students in their most common responses survey items 1-20?*

Congruent versus Incongruent. The most indicated responses to items three through twenty on the Influences Survey showed congruents and incongruents differed on eight of 15 points. The influences most disagreed upon were peer, school personnel, community, religious, parental education, parental influence, the number of children in the home, and the number of children attending college. A summarization of frequent responses by congruent and incongruent households are listed in Table 1 with previously mentioned comparisons among these sets. In examining the consistency within the congruent homes, college bound siblings agreed within households 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 at rates of: 53%, 47%, 65%, 53%, and 53%, respectively. There were two households that had students who made incongruent decisions about college attendance.

Congruent versus incongruent comparisons have been made for items 3-20. Additional comparisons emerge from these parallels, such as nay : nay and yea : yea. Nay to nay comparisons involve those work bound students from congruent household versus those work bound students from incongruent households. Yea comparisons involve college bound students from congruent households compared to those from

incongruent households.

Yea versus yea. Congruent college bound students (in households 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8) are compared to their counterparts from incongruent households (student sets 3 and 6). College bound students unanimously agree that they resided with siblings for 11 or more years. Questions six (tuition benefactor) and nineteen (parent resided with mostly) were agreed upon by all college bound students except one in each incident (Appendix C). Table 3 compares rate of agreement (on survey items 4-20) between congruent college bound students and incongruent college bound students.

Table 3

*Agreement Between Incongruent and Congruent College Bound Students by Household*

| Percentage of agreement for college bound students by household (%) |            |    |    |    |    |
|---|------------|----|----|----|----|
| Incongruents  | Congruents |    |    |    |    |
|   | 1          | 4  | 5  | 7  | 8  |
| 3   | 24         | 35 | 35 | 29 | 24 |
| 6   | 24         | 35 | 24 | 29 | 24 |

*Note.* Households three and six agreed 29% of the time.

Nay versus nay. Work bound congruents and their incongruent counterparts responded identically to four items: (a) no peer discouragement, (b) resided with siblings 11 or more years, (c) received parental encouragement *very often*, and (d) resided with both parents for most of their lives. One incongruent work bound student agreed with the other incongruent work bound student on 29% of the items. Congruent work bound students agreed on 53% of their responses.

First versus second. Within households the commonalities between first and second participants' show first students as mostly male and second students as mostly female. First students were mostly freshman and second students were mostly juniors. Assigning students to first or second category was done by who filled out the survey first. Table 4 shows that students differed on seven of 18 points, excluding demographics. Siblings showed contrasting replies to the certainty of postsecondary decisions, main reason for attending college, tuition responsibility, peer encouragement, school personnel influence, social influence, and religious influence.

Table 4  
*Intra-household comparisons of Most Responded Items by Paired Sibling Sets*

| Item | Intra-household compared responses                                 |  |
|------|--|--|
|      | First students   | Second students  |
| 1    | Male   | Female   |
| 2    | freshman   | junior   |
| 3    | will go to college   | will go to college   |
| 4    | sure   | *sure, very sure   |
| 5    | to get a good paying job   | to get an education  |
| 6    | scholarship  | scholarship  |
| 7    | will work and go to college at the same time                       | I will try to get a loan to pay for college                                  |
| 8    | my friends do not say anything about me going to college           | *all and most of my friends encourage me to go to college                    |
| 9    | none of my friends discourage me from going to college             | none of my friends discourage me from going to college                       |
| 10   | *teacher; counselor; principal                                     | no adult at my school has influenced me to go to college                     |
| 11   | a neighbor has influenced me to go to college.                     | a professional athlete has influenced me to attend college                   |
| 12   | my minister has influenced me to go to college.                    | *my minister; religious affiliation has not influenced me to pursue college. |
| 13   | 11 or more years   | 11 or more years   |
| 14   | 2-4 other children live in the household                           | 2-4 other children live in the household                                     |
| 15   | no other children in my house hold are currently attending college | no other children in my house hold are currently attending college           |
| 16   | both of my parents have attended college                           | both of my parents have attended college                                     |
| 17   | my parents encouraged me to attend college very often              | my parents encouraged me to attend college very often                        |
| 18   | mother   | mother   |
| 19   | mother and father  | mother and father  |
| 20   | mother and father  | mother and father  |

Note. \*Response equally represented

## CHAPTER V

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### Summaries

##### Hypothesis Question 1

Postsecondary intention. The purpose of the study was to determine if African Americans consider college as a value and what factors influence that value. Congruents made up 75% of the households and incongruents 25% of the student sets. Chi square goodness-of-fit test suggests that the null hypothesis be accepted, therefore indicating that the proportions of identical to contrasting plans for college are due to chance. Purposive sampling led to a small N-value, it is acceptable to say the chi square value could increase with a larger sample size. Thus, the proportions will be accepted to reflect college a value in lieu of chance. The outcomes of the literature review suggest that African American families have always valued education as a means to a better quality of life. Willie noted (as cited in Bright, 1994) Black families maintain values that they have held for many years: "Foremost among these values is a fundamental respect for learning and the belief that education is the path to success in life. . . ." (p. 5). Ford (1993) contends that "students' beliefs and values are related to their academic achievement and their educational plans" (p. 62). In addition, school success may be attributed to family, however Rich (1985) [as cited in Ford, 1993] notes it is a factor forgotten. Clark (1983)



[also cited in Ford, 1993] agrees that family interactions, particularly the parent-child relationship is more influential on academic success than any demographic variables. Demographic variables such as SES do not necessarily predict African American students' success. White's (1982) [also cited in Ford, 1993] study showed SES to correlate with achievement (for the group studied) at .21 for elementary students and only .17 for secondary students. Other variables such as parental education or family size may be related to achievement for African American youth, familial ties seemingly are a greater influence on the decisions that these students make regarding educational achievement (Ford, 1993).

Respondent certainty and rationale. To add support to the idea of college as a value for African Americans, students' level of certainty was measured. It was necessary to determine how serious students were about their future intentions as it would be more indicative of who will actually implement postsecondary plans as they have stated them. The majority of students were *sure* about the intentions they listed. Seemingly, two students changed their postsecondary plans, from work to college. Between survey questions three and five, two students who were work bound in question three gave rationale for college plans in question five. Both of those students listed money as the rationale for college in question 21. Perhaps those students were motivated by money. French and others (1957) concluded that students listing money as the primary reason to pursue college were less likely to implement college plans into reality. When college

bound students chose their own best response, they indicated certainty levels of *sure* or *very sure*. Work bound students were only *sure* or *a little sure* of postsecondary intentions, which may explain why two of the work bound students chose good pay and education as rationale for attending college despite previously responding that they would go to work. College bound students' dual rationale for pursuing college includes getting an education and obtaining a good paying job.

### Hypothesis Question 2

Gender. Although no significant relationship between gender and the decision to attend college was established, French and others (1957) noted that family support was more "vital" (p. ii) to college plans for girls than for their male counterparts. Hrabowski and Pearson (1993) suggest a gender difference among African American males and females: males often have lower teacher expectations impressed upon them. Males are often viewed as threatening and disruptive to their learning environments. Students who are not "pushed" often do not view college enrollment as a viable course of action to acquire the lifestyle that they desire. Males and females were equally represented among the study in general and the work bound versus the college bound sets specifically. Statistically this study offers no support of a significant relationship between postsecondary intentions and gender. Although no particular patterns stand out to connect gender with postsecondary goals, males and females did answer questions differently in certain instances. Gardner (1992) notes that females and males did not

show significant difference in postsecondary plans.

### Hypothesis Question 3

**Peer affiliation.** Among college bound and work bound students friends are encouraging to a degree of *some* or *most*. No students were discouraged about college by peers' regarding. This is contradictory to Gary and Booker's (1992) concept of peers being basically counterproductive to aspirations of peer group members, unless in the higher SES domains. SES is not measured in this study, but college and work bound students did list peers as positive influences or as saying nothing about college. Peers were never listed as discouraging or negative toward educational aspirations. College bound students listed a large proportion of their parents attended college, perhaps this is indicative of the SES among the group. The two noncollege bound students who maintained that they would not attend college commented that being tired of school and having nothing to study are rationale for not pursuing postsecondary education.

**School, community, and public role models.** Teachers, principals, counselors, neighbors, professional athletes, community leaders, and public officials serve as role models for the African American youth in this study. Counselors, teachers, parents, and other role models interested in the advancement of youth must assist them by planting the seed of motivation early on. The bond that African American youth develop with one or more of these individuals may spark the desire to implement college plans or thoughts

into reality. Gary and Booker (1992) contend that African American youth should learn from the experiences and hardships of historical or present day famous African Americans. When extended family members or external sources reach out to youth, they are more likely to achieve. Hayes and Comer (1990) suggest that when students overcome obstacles that impede on academic success [such as “poverty or mental oppression” (p. 107)], it is due to someone who takes the time to care and share time with them. The author also notes, traditionally helpful and nurturing people that have been sources of inspiration for these youth are fading: “the extended family as a source of nurturance and guidance is all but vanished” (p. 107). The interactions and experiences that youth encounter during school years can shape and nurture thoughts of college attendance and help formulate professional career aspirations. Increased absenteeism and student drop-out rates have been linked to students’ perceptions of the bond between themselves and adults in their schools. Students who bond with an adult in their school have greater opportunity for academic success (Hayes & Comer, 1990). “Teachers must expect, encourage, and promote excellence among all children regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic status” (p. 111). The church used to be a “bastion of hope” (p. 107) for African American families. The effectiveness of the church to rescue at risk youth from community based problems seems to have faded, possibly due to youths’ indifference to religion.

Religious affiliation. Gary and Booker (1992) suggest that students with a sound

religious background will be motivated to attend college. The research has shown students to be highly involved with religion. Ten of fourteen students headed for college, suggest that they have been influenced by some facet of religion. On the contrary, those students who suggest that they will work after high school, listed religion as important to them, while four college bound students were not influenced by religion, or chose to leave the question blank. Although some of the surveyed youth note no religious affiliation influenced them toward college, the majority of them are religious oriented.

#### Hypothesis Question 4

Family birth order and size. Family birth order is not shown to be directly related to college plans or no college plans for this group of subjects. Of the two students not attending college, one was older than the sibling counterpart, while the second student was younger than his sibling. The majority of college bound students are freshman, which supports Gary and Booker's (1992) note that educational aspirations for African American youth are instilled early in childhood. Therefore, African American youth must be enticed to consider and contemplate their educational aspirations before high school. Ford's (1993) agrees, "the transition into adolescence is an important time relative to achievement. It is a time when students begin to make choices that may have an impact on their future educational and career plans" (p. 58).

Parental education and influences. Mothers are listed as major influences on

students' plans for postsecondary studies. All families were headed by two parents. Homes where fathers were most important, had two boys. In a second home the son said father was most influential, while the daughter listed both parents as equal influences. There was an equal number of boys who listed mother as most influential as those who listed father influential. Four girls listed women as most important, while only three listed males and females as most important. This may suggest that mothers are more involved or exert more authority over students decisions about going to college.

Individually, students mostly had two parents that attended college, congruent households also contended that both parents had attended college. Among incongruent households, at least one parent had attended college. Among eight households, only one household consistently noted that parents did not go to college. The second household was inconsistent with the older students listing that neither parent went to college, and the younger student listing that both parents went to college. A second group of inconsistent students, the older student noted uncertainty about the parents educational history, while the younger student listed that both parents went to college. This could support what was observed during the survey process, when some younger siblings were appearing more focused and informed about the survey process than their older siblings. Seemingly, youth with educated parents are more likely to attend college. Also, those students more inclined to attend college were perhaps the ones more willing to participate in the current study, which primarily focuses on decisions regarding college attendance.

Educational financial support. The rationale for college attendance and who will fund the primary means for financing their education is indicative of who will actually attend college. No students will avoid college if financial responsibility is theirs. College bound students will work or get a loan to attend college.

#### Research Question 5

Inter- and intra-household comparisons were made on the subject pairs within the present research.

Congruent versus incongruent. Common responses for congruent households versus incongruent households differ on eight of fifteen points, with several points standing out the most: (a) congruents suggest that scholarships will fund their educations, and incongruents suggest that parents will pay their tuition; congruents held that they were not influenced by school personnel and their incongruent cohorts recalled being influenced by teachers and counselors; (c) professional athletes and community leaders mostly influenced congruents and public officials highly impacted incongruents; (d) most congruents said both parents attend college and their counterparts frequently agreed that one parent attend college; (e) mothers were most influential to congruents and father impacted incongruents more often.

Yea versus yea. Focusing on college bound congruents versus college bound incongruents, the students had less than 40% agreement between them. Students all

agreed that scholarships would pay for their tuition and they resided with mother and father for most of their lives. Nay versus nay show low level agreement among work bound students from congruent and incongruent homes.

First student versus second student. Intra-household comparisons show first students differed from second students on seven of eighteen points. Established earlier, most first students were male and most second students were female, therefore, for this section the investigator will refer to males and females. To examine a few of the responses listed by the two groups: (a) males' main objective was motivated by attaining a prosperous job after college, their female counterparts suggested education as the motivation for college studies; males noted that friends say nothing about college, and females say all or most of their peers encourage them to attend college; (c) male youth were influenced by teachers, counselors, and principles, yet female youth noted that no adult at school influenced them to attend college; (d) interestingly, males stated that neighbors impacted decisions to attend college, while females suggested professional athletes held that spot. Males appeared show more motivation for financial compensation. Boys were more encouraged by school personnel than girls. Again, it suggests that boys may be more externally motivated than girls.



### Final Summary

From 1957 to present some factors remain constant as influences on students' decisions regarding postsecondary educational aspirations (positive and negative). Yet, some factors have become less important as influences for students. Contrary to French and others (1957) the majority of college bound subjects had additional siblings in the home. Also, friends were not a major influence for the subjects of this study. The current study establishes mothers as important, representing change from the past. Similar to French and others, college bound students have a high expectation for financial support. In addition, school personnel were highly related to college aspirations for students.

The findings of this study are highly parallel to Tan's (1994) conclusions. Seventy-five percent of current subjects are college bound. Tan found that African Americans valued education at 4.46 on a 5.00 (highest) scale. Family is highly influential, while religion, school, and peer interactions follow as influences for decisions about college. Mothers were mentioned in over 70% of responses with other adult influences and 46% alone. Students are motivated by parental expectations (Tan, 1994), wanting more knowledge (Tan, 1994), wanting racial knowledge (Gary & Booker, 1992; Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993), and spirituality, (Gary & Booker, 1992; Hrabowski & Pearson, 1993 & Tan, 1994).

Rationale for college attendance includes gaining knowledge and a obtaining a good paying job. According to Tan (1994 ) students have their own reasons for why they

careers, and experiencing or learning about their own culture (Tan, 1994). Gary and Booker (1993) agree that cultural awareness promotes academic achievement among African American youth. The idea is set forth by parents and family; although youth may be self-motivated, nuclear and external families members are sources for college values for Black American youth (Delicio, 1993; Gary & Booker, 1992 & Tan, 1994).

Siblings were together for 11 or more years. Congruent students agreed 53%, 53%, 47%, 65%, 53% and 53% within their own respective households 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8. Incongruents agreed within their respective households 3 and 6, 59% and 29% of the time. The amount of time students lived together showed them to be as much as 65% in agreement on all survey questions. This supports how students experiences and interaction shape their lives differently, yet family values may contributed to yield similarities in their decisions about education. It is difficult to draw conclusions about the work bound students in this study, because there were only two work bound students at the close of the study. French and others (1957) concluded that financial burden was the primary reason for not attending college. Students within the present study who maintained that they will not go to college, complained of confusion about what to study and being tired of school. However, those students were highly encouraged by mothers, lived with both parents, and encouraged by peers to attend college. Students not going to college did not have any known influences that were significantly different from their college bound siblings. There is no definitive explanation for any discrepancy within the

households of this study. However, this researcher believes students perceptions of parents' values for education is important in initiating a child's desire for higher education. In addition, students who perceive themselves as valuable within the family unit may be more motivated toward pursuing postsecondary education. Perhaps findings of this research are not totally generalizable; however, they do yield information about the values and influences that impact the lives of African American student sets discussed.

What intervenes with the implementation of college plans? Barriers such as increased loan eligibility and decreased grant eligibility for tuition support are obstacles that lead to the demise of intellectual talent and college pursuit among African American youth. It has been determined that barriers to college matriculation among African American youth are lack of money, increased loans and decreased grant eligibility (Blanchette, 1994 & Carnoy, 1994) low support system, sabotage by peers for "acting White" (Gary & Booker, 1992, p. 52) resulting in students avoiding their potential. The literature notes that students continue to meet challenges once they have overcome obstacles to college matriculation. For example, lack of mentoring or poor relationships with instructors will decrease retention among many of the same enrollees who worked hard to get into college. Moreover, students not feeling socially integrated into the school environment may not remain enrolled (Bright, 1994).

A major portion of this research focuses on college matriculation decisions and what motivates African American youth to choose or not choose college directly after high

environment may not remain enrolled (Bright, 1994).

A major portion of this research focuses on college matriculation decisions and what motivates African American youth to choose or not choose college directly after high school. Appropriately, a reference is provided, which compiles information about organizations that are directly focused on examining and increasing vital traits (i.e., motivation and positive self-concept) among minority youth, specifically, African American. Webb (1987) discusses the following: (a) research in the area of motivation and achievement among African Americans; (b) programs, their primary focus, and their results of implemented program; and (c) federally funded programs such a nationally recognized Head Start, which focuses on positive self-concept, motivation, and parental involvement during preschool years.

### Conclusion

This research indicates that the African American subjects in this study hold higher education as a priority; although, the small sample size hinders generalizability. The subjects of this study were compared in several ways:

- 1) congruent versus incongruent (generally)
- 2) college bound congruent versus college bound incongruent (yea vs. yea)

- 3) work bound congruent versus work bound incongruent (nay vs. nay)
- 4) college bound versus work bound (generally)
- 5) first student versus second student within households

Yet, variables most responded to regarding college matriculation decisions are scholarships, school (personnel) influences, positive role models such as professional athletes and ministers, parental education, and parental encouragement. Many of the influences have remained constant throughout the literature review and within the current study.

Perhaps the key to increasing the number of African Americans who attend college is to concentrate on the reasons that students do not go to college, and thus, work to alleviate them. In addition, it is to our benefit to find ways to motivate youth (early on) to integrate positive interactions and experience so that they become internally motivated to aspire to higher levels of learning. Although we must attempt to alleviate obstacles that lead to wasted academic ability, we must also help students sustain their abilities in the midst of adversity. These goals must begin with fundamental familial experiences. Students must perceive parental attitudes regarding education and themselves as positive.

### Implications

The present research has implications for educators, counselors, community members, school personnel, and family members. The current research explores the values that African American youth have regarding college attendance, and the influences positively or negatively impacting those values. By providing information, other students may view college a feasible goal beyond high school. There is no insinuation that college is the only viable option after high school. However, it may be a prerequisite to further knowledge, a stepping stone to higher wages and a precursor to a host of experiences and interactions. Pifer (1973) agrees:

Throughout the century or so since emancipation, education, and particularly the higher education of blacks, has been regarded by most Americans, black and white, as the key to black progress in every realm. . . . there is no convincing evidence available to indicate that it does not remain valid. Indeed, there is much evidence which suggest that it is the education of black leadership, more than any other factor, which has been the critical element in the gains made by blacks. This is not for a moment to suggest that education alone can bring about absolute equality or total integration. It is to say that education is a *sin qua non* of progress toward those goals. (p. 5)

### Recommendations

The small N value decreases the significance of computations. Random sampling may have increased the sample size. Perhaps providing follow-up calls to a larger proportion of those addressed in the sample pool would increase the probability of a

bigger N value. Also, conducting interviews in lieu of questionnaires, may increase the probability of a larger sample size.

The outcomes of this research provide rich opportunity to continue investigation along other avenues such as:

- 1) A more statistically oriented methodology (quantitative) could be employed.
- 2) A focus on the effects of employment rate could uncover additional information on how economics or college campus proximity affects matriculation decisions for the group in question.

With proximal and accessible public institutions, college is a feasible decision after high school. In other areas with saturated job markets and higher rates of unemployment, college may be the only opportunity to obtain the skills that lead to gainful employment. Additionally, when students can't find jobs, they may seek education as an alternative. It would be interesting to determine how those students would finance their educations if work is not available to them, and how the financial aid situation would fare at the time of that research.

- 3) Present research focuses on African Americans, and Tan's research (1994) investigated matriculation decisions for Asian and Black Americans. The field is ripe for data to be presented on other minority groups. Does Hispanic culture change the prospective of college as a value, and factors related to that value?
- 4) A longitudinal or follow-up study to determine if students carried out their plans to enrolling in college would increase the reliability of this study. A case study may be another methodology to pursue.

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**APPENDIX A**

**Nebraska Institutional Review Board Approval  
Sample Parental Consent Form  
Sample Youth Assent Form**



Institutional Review Board  
For the Protection of  
Human Subjects

March 4, 1997

Frankie Jeanelle Charles  
4515 N 40 Street  
Omaha, NE 68182

IRB # 250-97

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: Discerning What Influences Distinct Values Toward Attending College,  
Among High School Students Currently Residing in the Same Household

Dear Ms. Charles:

Thank you for submitting your research proposal for IRB review. After careful consideration of your application, the IRB has conditionally approved this research proposal pending receipt of revised consent/assent documents which incorporate all modifications listed below. Please be advised that the official institutional record of human subjects research (IRB Application/Detailed protocol) is subject to on-site review by the HHS Office of Protection from Research Risks (OPRR) and by the FDA for all FDA regulated studies. Your response must be received by the IRB within 30 days from the date of this letter, or the IRB will assume you no longer wish to pursue this research and your application will be processed for termination.

PARENTAL AND YOUTH CONSENT FORMS REVIEW

1. The consent form should be printed on official University of Nebraska letterhead stationery as per IRB Guidelines (p 21). The use of letterhead stationery indicates to the subject that the investigator is a representative of the University of Nebraska.
2. Now that an IRB protocol number has been assigned to your protocol, please place the number at the top of the consent form (IRB Guidelines, p 21).
3. Please provide a letter of approval to conduct the study from the \_\_\_\_\_ system office.

If you have any questions regarding the IRB's review or require assistance in the revision of your consent/assent documents, please contact the IRB administrative office.

Sincerely,

Ernest D. Prentice, PhD  
Vice Chair, IRB

EDP:pk

University of Nebraska Medical Center  
Eppley Science Hall 3018  
600 South 42nd Street  
Box 986810  
Omaha, NE 68198-6810  
(402) 559-6463  
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College of Education  
Counseling Department  
Omaha, Nebraska 68182-0167  
(402) 554-2727  
FAX: (402) 554-3684

**YOUTH ASSENT FORM**  
**IRB #250-97**

**Discerning What Motivates Distinct Values Toward Attending College Among High School Students Currently Residing in the Same Household.**

1. I would like to invite you to be a part of this study. You are eligible because you are a student enrolled at \_\_\_\_\_ High School. Also, you are an African American in grades 9-12, and you are currently living with another student that attends \_\_\_\_\_ High School.
2. Please discuss this with your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) before you decide to participate. Your parent/ guardian will be asked to sign a consent form, before you may participate.
3. If you have any questions please ask.
4. In this study we would like to determine why students who live in the same household, may have different ideas about going to college.
5. To participate, you will be asked to answer a 25 question multiple choice survey. The survey will take you approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey will be given at \_\_\_\_\_ High School during the fourth week of April.
6. All information collected from you will be used as a part of a thesis project. But, your name will be kept strictly confidential.
7. There are no known risk associated with completing the survey.

**YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO BE IN THIS STUDY. SIGNING THIS FORM MEANS THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE AND HAVE READ ALL THAT IS ON THIS FORM. YOU AND YOUR PARENT(S)/ LEGAL GUARDIAN(S) WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS ASSENT FORM TO KEEP.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
STUDENT'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

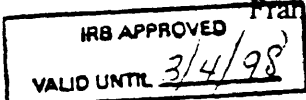
\_\_\_\_\_  
INVESTIGATOR'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

INVESTIGATOR

Frankie Charles, BS

Office telephone: (402) 453-0659





University of  
Nebraska at  
Omaha

PARENTAL  
IRB #250-97

College of Education  
Counseling Department  
Omaha, Nebraska 68182-0167  
(402) 554-2727  
FAX: (402) 554-3684

**Discerning What Motivates Distinct Values Toward Attending College Among High School Students Currently Residing in the Same Household.**

You are invited to allow your children to participate in this research study. The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision whether or not to permit your children to participate. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask.

Your children are eligible to participate in this research because they live in a household that has two or more high school students enrolled at \_\_\_\_\_ High School. Also, your children are African American and enrolled in grades 9-12.

The purpose of this study is to determine what motivates high school students from the same household to have different values about attending college.

The study will involve your children completing a 25 question multiple choice survey that will take approximately 30 minutes. The survey will be given at \_\_\_\_\_ High School during the fourth week of April.

There are no known risks associated with completing this survey.

The information gathered by this study will help to determine the values that African American high school students have toward college. It will also determine the alternatives goals that students have, as opposed to going to college.

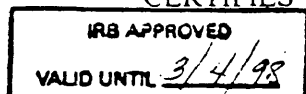
The information collected will be compiled as part of a Master's thesis project. However, your children's names will remain strictly confidential. All information will be assigned a code to identify the students by household number only.

Your children's rights as research subjects have been explained to you. If you have any additional questions concerning your children's rights, you may contact the University of Nebraska Institutional Review Board (IRB), telephone (402) 559-6463.

You are free to decide not to enroll your children in this study or to withdraw your children at any time without negatively affecting theirs or your relationship with the investigator or the University of Nebraska. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which your children are otherwise entitled.

**DOCUMENTATION OF INFORMED CONSENT**

**YOU ARE VOLUNTARILY MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO ALLOW YOUR CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE CERTIFIES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO ALLOW YOUR CHILDREN TO**



**PARTICIPATE, HAVING READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE INFORMATION STATED.  
YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM TO KEEP.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

**IN MY JUDGEMENT THE PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN IS VOLUNTARILY AND  
KNOWINGLY GIVING INFORMED CONSENT AND HAS THE LEGAL ABILITY TO GIVE  
INFORMED CONSENT FOR THE CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH  
STUDY.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
INVESTIGATOR'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

**IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

**PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS**

**Frankie J. Charles, BS**

**office telephone (402) 453-0659**

**APPENDIX B**

**Pilot Instrument**



**Discerning What Motivates Distinct Values Toward Attending College Among High School Students Currently Residing in the Same Household**

Hello, thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. You are being asked to complete this survey to help determine what specific influences encourage different values toward college, among African American high school students who live in the same home. This study is confidential, it is not necessary to provide your name. No one will know the name that accompanies any of the information that you provide. Please read the directions fully before answering any of the questions. It is important that you answer the questions as honestly as possible. Please do not be nervous, this is not a test or an exam.

**Directions:** Please fill in the answer sheet with the information that request: address, age, sex, race, grade level, and date of birth, **ONLY**. Do not put your name on the answer sheet. For other questions, fill in only one response per question. An answer sheet is provided for you. Please fill in the circles completely with a number 2 pencil. You will fill in circle A, B, C, D, or E for each questions. Question 15 will be in your own words. You must answer all questions unless you are asked to skip them. Thank you again for your help!

(Choose A, B, C, D, or E )

**College Questions**

1. What will you do directly after graduating from high school?
  - A) go to college.
  - B) go to the military.
  - C) get a job.
  - D) move away then decide what I will do.
  - E) I am not sure what I will do after high school
  
2. What is the **main** reason that you want to go to college?
  - A) to get a good paying job.
  - B) to play college sports or other extra curricular activities.
  - C) to get an education.
  - D) because my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are making me go.
  - E) I am not going to college.
  
3. Who will pay for **most** of your education?
  - A) I will pay for college.
  - B) my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will pay for college.

- C) a scholarship (academic, sports or other activities) will pay for college.
  - D) financial aid will pay for college.
  - E) I was not going to college in question number 1 (one).
4. If you have to pay for most of your college education yourself, what will you do?
- A) I will work and go to college at the same time.
  - B) I will work to save money then I will go to college.
  - C) I will try to get a loan to pay for college.
  - D) I will not go to college if I have to pay myself.
  - E) I was not going to college in question number 1 (one).

### Family Questions

5. Who were you raised with the majority of your life?
- A) raised with both parents.
  - B) raised with mother only.
  - C) raised with father only.
  - D) raised by grandparent(s).
  - E) raised by other relative(s) or legal guardian(s).
6. Which adult do you live with currently?
- A) both parents.
  - B) mother only.
  - C) father only.
  - D) grandparent(s).
  - E) other relative(s) or legal guardian(s).
7. Does another high school student (who attends North High School) live in your household? And how long have you lived together?
- A) no other North high student lives in my home.
  - B) 0-1 years.
  - C) 1-5 years.
  - D) 5-10 years.
  - E) 10 or more years.
8. Has your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) attended college?
- A) one of my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) has attend college.
  - B) both of my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have attend college.
  - C) neither of my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have attend college.

- D) I am not sure if either of my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have attended college.
9. How often have your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) encouraged you to go to college?
- A) very often.
  - B) often.
  - C) not much.
  - D) I have been encouraged at least one time.
  - E) I have never been encouraged to go to college.

### Social Influences

10. Do your friends **encourage** you to attend college?
- A) all of my friends encourage me to go to college.
  - B) most of my friends encourage me to go to college.
  - C) some of my friends encourage me to go to college.
  - D) none of my friends encourage me to go to college.
  - E) my friends do not say anything about me going to college.
11. Do your friends **discourage** you from going to college?
- A) all of my friends discourage me from going to college.
  - B) most of my friends discourage me from going to college.
  - C) some of my friends discourage me from going to college.
  - D) none of my friends discourage me from going to college.
  - E) my friends do not say anything about me going to college.
12. Which adult at your high school has influenced you to attend college the most?
- A) a teacher has influenced me to go to college.
  - B) a counselor has influenced me to go to college.
  - C) a principal has influenced me to go to college.
  - D) some one else who works at the school has influenced me to go to college.
  - E) no adult at school has influenced me to go to college.
13. Has there been another role model who has influenced your decision to go to college?
- A) a community leader has influenced me to go to college.
  - B) a neighbor has influenced me to go to college.
  - C) a public official has influenced me to go to college.

- D) a professional athlete has influenced me to go to college.
  - E) an entertainer has influenced me to go to college.
14. Has some part of church or religion been an influence in your decision to attend college?
- A) my minister (or pastor) has influenced me to go to college.
  - B) a sister in the church has influenced me to go to college.
  - C) a brother (sometimes called a deacon) in the church has influenced me to go to college.
  - D) being in a youth group or other activities at church have influenced me to go to college.
  - E) church or religion have not influenced me to go to college.

After high school, students do many different things because they have met many different people, events and personal experiences in their lives. Help me to understand what your personal reasons are for going to college or not going to college. **Please answer question 15 as completely as possible, in the space provided below.**

15. **In your own** words, list 5 (five) reasons why you have chosen to attend college. If you will not attend college, list 5 (five) reasons why you will not attend college.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C.  
Influences Survey

**Discerning What Motivates Distinct Values Toward Attending College Among High School Students Currently Residing in the Same Household**

Hello, thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. You are being asked to complete this questionnaire to help determine what specific influences encourage differing views about going to college, among African American high school students who live in the same household. This study is confidential, therefore it is not necessary to provide your name. Please read the directions fully before answering any of the questions.

**Directions:** Please fill in the answer sheet with the information that request: address, age, sex, race, grade level, and date of birth, **ONLY**. Do not put your name on the answer sheet. For other questions, fill in only one response per question. An answer sheet is provided for you. Please fill in the circles completely with a number 2 pencil. You will fill in circle A, B, C, D, or E for each questions unless given different directions. Questions 18, 19, 20 and 21 will be written on the survey sheet not the bubble sheet. It is important that you answer the questions as honestly as possible. Please do not be nervous, this is not a test or an exam. Thank you again for your help!

**Demographics**

(Choose A or B only)

1. What is your gender/sex?

- A) female.
- B) male.

(Choose A, B, C, or D only)

2. What is your grade level?

- A) 9th (freshman)
- B) 10th (sophomore)
- C) 11th (junior)
- D) 12th (senior)

**College Questions**

3. What will you do directly after graduating from high school?

- A) go to college.
- B) go to the military.
- C) get a job.
- D) none of the above.

(Choose A, B, C, D, or E)

4. On a scale of 1 to 5, how sure are you about the answer marked for question number 3?

- A) (1) I am not sure at all.
- B) (2) I am a little sure.
- C) (3) I do not know how sure I am.
- D) (4) I am sure.
- E) (5) I am very sure.

(Choose A, B, C, or D only)

5. What is the main reason that you want to go to college?
- A) to get a good paying job.
  - B) to play college sports or other extra curricular activities.
  - C) to get an education.
  - D) I am not going to college.

(Choose A, B, C, D, or E)

6. Who will pay for most of your education?
- A) I will pay for college.
  - B) my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will pay for college.
  - C) a scholarship (academic, sports or other activities) will pay for college.
  - D) financial aid will pay for college.
  - E) I was not going to college in question number 3 (three)
7. If you have to pay for most of your college education yourself, what will you do?
- A) I will work and go to college at the same time.
  - B) I will work to save money then I will go to college.
  - C) I will try to get a loan to pay for college.
  - D) I will not go to college if I have to pay myself.
  - E) I was not going to college in question number 3 (three)

### Social Influences

8. Do your friends encourage you to attend college?
- A) all of my friends encourage me to go to college.
  - B) most of my friends encourage me to go to college.
  - C) some of my friends encourage me to go to college.
  - D) none of my friends encourage me to go to college.
  - E) my friends do not say anything about me going to college.
9. Do your friends discourage you from going to college?
- A) all of my friends discourage me from going to college.
  - B) most of my friends discourage me from going to college.
  - C) some of my friends discourage me from going to college.
  - D) none of my friends discourage me from going to college.
  - E) my friends do not say anything about me going to college.
10. Which adult at your high school has influenced you to attend college the most?
- A) a teacher has influenced me to go to college.
  - B) a counselor has influenced me to go to college.
  - C) a principal has influenced me to go to college.
  - D) some one else who works at the school has influenced me to go to college.
  - E) no adult at school has influenced me to go to college.

11. Has there been another role model who has influenced your decision to go to college?
- A) a community leader has influenced me to go to college.
  - B) a neighbor has influenced me to go to college.
  - C) a public official has influenced me to go to college.
  - D) a professional athlete has influenced me to go to college.
  - E) an entertainer (music, television or movie) has influenced me to go to college.
12. Has some part of church or religion been an influence in your decision to attend college?
- A) my minister (or pastor) has influenced me to go to college.
  - B) a sister in the church has influenced me to go to college.
  - C) a brother (sometimes called a deacon) in the church has influenced me to go to college.
  - D) being in a youth group or other activities at church have influenced me to go to college.
  - E) church or religion have not influenced me to go to college.

#### Family Questions

13. Does another high school student (who attends North High School) live in your household? And how long have you lived together?
- A) no other North high student lives in my home.
  - B) 0-1 years.
  - C) 2-5 years.
  - D) 6-10 years.
  - E) 11 or more years.
14. How many other children live in your household?
- A) no other children lives in my household.
  - B) only one other child lives in my household.
  - C) 2-4 other children live in my household.
  - D) 5-6 other children live in my household.
  - E) more than 6 other children live in my household.
15. Are any of the above children currently in college?
- A) no other children in my household are currently attending college.
  - B) only one other child in my household is currently attending college.
  - C) 2-4 other children in my household are currently attending college.
  - D) 5-6 other children in my household are currently attending college.
  - E) more than 6 other children in my household are currently attending college.

(Choose A, B, C, or D only)

16. Has your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) attended college?
- A) one of my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) has attend college.
  - B) both of my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have attend college.
  - C) neither of my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have attend college.
  - D) I am not sure if either of my parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have attended college.



(Choose A, B, C, D, or E)

17. How often have your parent(s) / legal guardian(s) encouraged you to go to college?

- A) very often.
- B) often.
- C) not much.
- D) I have been encouraged at least one time.
- E) I have never been encouraged to go to college.

(Fill in the Charts)

**PLEASE WRITE ALL ANSWERS IN THE EMPTY BOXES OF THE CHARTS.**

18. Which family member or relative has had the most important influence on your decision to go to college or not to go to college? I have given examples for you to choose from.

| Which person had the most important influence on your decision to go to or not go to college? mother, father, sister, half sister, step sister, brother, half brother, step brother, aunt (mother's sister), aunt (father's sister), uncle (mother's brother), uncle (father's brother), grandmother (mother's mom), grandmother (father's mom), grandfather (mother's dad), grandfather (father's dad), male cousin, or female cousin)? | What is the age of the person you chose on the left, compared to you? (older, younger, or the same age as you). | Have you ever lived with that person? (Yes or No) | How long did you live with that person? less than 0-1 year, 2-4 years, 5-10 years, 11-15 years, 16 or more years |
|--|---|---|--|
|  |   |   |  |

19. Which adult(s) have you lived with for the most years of your life and how long have you lived with that adult? Please give any combination of people that apply to you. For example if you lived with mother and Grandmother at the same time, tell me that?

| Which adult(s) have you lived with for the most years of your life? mother, father, sister, half sister, step sister, brother, half brother, step brother, aunt (mother's sister), aunt (father's sister), uncle (mother's brother), uncle (father's brother), grandmother (mother's mom), grandmother (father's mom), grandfather (mother's dad), grandfather (father's dad), male cousin, or female cousin)? | How long did you live with the adult you chose on the left? (0-1 year, 2-4 years, 5-10 years, 11-15 years, 16 or more years). |
|--|---|
|  |   |

20. Which adult(s) do you live with currently and how long have you been living with them?

| Which adult(s) do you live with currently? mother, father, sister, half sister, step sister, brother, half brother, step brother, aunt (mother's sister), aunt (father's sister), uncle (mother's brother), uncle (father's brother), grandmother (mother's mom), grandmother (father's mom), grandfather (mother's dad), grandfather (father's dad), male cousin or female cousin)? | How long have you been living with the adult(s) you choose on the left? (0-1 year, 2-4 years, 5-10 years, 11-15 years, 16 or more years). |
|--|---|
|  |   |

After high school, students do many different things because they have met many different people, events and personal experiences in their lives. Help me to understand your most important reason for wanting to go to college or not wanting to go to college.

21. If you will go to college, in your own words, write your most important reason for choosing to go to college. If you will not go to college give your most important reason for choosing not to go to college. Please ONLY fill in one side of the chart.

| If you will go to college, what is your most important reason for going? Write your most important reason first then if you want, you may write up to 5 reasons. | If you will not go to college, what is your most important reason for not going? Write your most important reason first then if you want, you may write up to 5 reasons. |
|--|--|
| 1.   | 1.   |

APPENDIX D

Tables Representing Coding for Open-ended Survey Items

### Coding

To ensure confidentiality, participants were coded with identification numbers. Household were numbered one through eight and students were considered first or second; student one in household one would be represented by ID number 1-1. Open-ended survey items 18-21 afforded the students the opportunity to respond in their own words. To derive numerical data, worded responses were coded then transcribed onto each students original answer sheet. Item 21 is listed verbatim (not coded) to preserve the richness of students' remarks. The collective comments enable the investigator to present how participants fair in their remarks: individually, compared to their paired siblings, and compared to their cohorts. New categories created for coding (Appendix D1-3) are listed:

#### *Question 18*

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| A. mother           | E. mother, father, female cousin, & male cousin |
| B. father           | F. mostly all                                   |
| C. mother & father  | G. none   |
| D. mother & sisters | H. no response                                  |

#### *Question 19*

- A. mother & father
- B. no response

#### *Question 20*

- A. mother & father
- B. mother, father, & sister(s)
- C. mother, father, & cousin
- D. no response

18. *Which person had the most important influence on your decision to go or not go to college?*

Table D1

*Students Specific Responses to Item 18*

| Student identification | Student response                               |
|------------------------|--|
| 1-1                    | mother   |
| 1-2                    | mother   |
| 2-1                    | mother   |
| 2-2                    | mother, father, female cousin, and male cousin |
| 3-1                    | mostly all but it is my choice                 |
| 3-2                    | mother & sisters                               |
| 4-1                    | none influenced me                             |
| 4-2                    | mother   |
| 5-1                    | mother   |
| 5-2                    | mother   |
| 6-1                    | father   |
| 6-2                    | father   |
| 7-1                    | father   |
| 7-2                    | mother & father                                |
| 8-1                    | mom & dad                                      |
| 8-2                    | student did not respond                        |

19. *Which adult(s) have you lived with for the most years of your life?*

Table D2

*Students Specific Responses to Item 19*

| Household                           | Resident parent |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1-7 <sup>a</sup> ; 8-1 <sup>b</sup> | mother & father |
| 8-2                                 | ~               |

<sup>a</sup>student sets 1-7 were reared by both parents mostly; <sup>b</sup>student one in household eight was reared by both parents mostly; ~student two in household 8 did not respond

20. *Which adult(s) do you live with currently?*

Table D3

*Students Specific Responses to Item 20*

| Identification          | Current resident parent  |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1-1 to 8-1 <sup>a</sup> | mother & father          |
| 1, 2, 3 <sup>b</sup>    | mother, father, & sister |
| 6 <sup>c</sup>          | mom, dad, & cousin       |
| 8-2                     | ~                        |

<sup>a</sup>each household listed currently resided with both parents; <sup>b</sup>households 1, 2, and 3 also listed sisters as adults currently in the house; <sup>c</sup>household 6 listed a cousin as another adult currently in the home; student 2 in the household listed no response

21. *If you will or will not go to college, what is your most important reason for going or not going to college. Write your most important reason first then if you want, you may write up to 5 reasons.*

Table D4

*Verbatim Comparisons of First and Second Students*

| Household | Subject response  |  |
|-----------|---|--|
|           | Students 1  | Students 2   |
| 1         | I will go to college because I want a higher education. I know that you need a higher education to make it in the world today.  | I will go because I can get a good education also a good job. I will need a good job to support me and my future family. It is very important to me to go so I will have better in later life. |
| 2         | **My most important reason for going to college is to get a well paying job in my future and to better my education, because I feel that one can never know enough.                 | **I think I would go to college, its just that I have nothing that I want to study. I'm not going to go for nothing.   |
| 3         | **I will not go to college because when I get out of school I don't want to go back to school.  | My most important reason to go to college is to further my education. My second reason is to continue to play basketball.  |
| 4         | To get a higher degree of education also get a good paying job.   | I want to get a good education. I want to learn more. I want a good paying job. I want to be able to show and give my parents my college degree. So I can be encouragement to others.          |
| 5         | sports, education, acting career  | I will go to college because I want to get a good job. I also want to experience many different places. I want to get the best education. and I want to play baseball.                         |
| 6         | money/job, intelligence, to get my head on straight   | **want to get a job at least 60 thousand a year  |
| 7         | To get an education that will help me get a good paying job.  | get a better education and in the future a better paying job   |
| 8         | I am going to college because I want a good paying job. I see people on TV and they can't get good jobs because they are dumb. I want to be educated and I want money in my future. | Student gave no response to question 21.   |

\*\*Student responded as will not go to college in Q3.

APPENDIX E

Participants' Response Chart



Table E  
*Individual Responses to Influences Survey Items One through Twenty*

| Participants | Survey Item |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|              | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 1-1          | 1           | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2  | 1  | 4  | 5  | 2  | 1  | 2  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| 1-2          | 2           | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 5  | 4  | 5  | 5  | 2  | 1  | 2  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 2  |
| 2-1          | 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2  | 2  | 4  | 5  | 3  | 1  | 3  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| 2-2          | 1           | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 5  | ~  | 5  | 5  | 3  | 1  | 3  | 1  | 5  | 1  | 2  |
| 3-1          | 2           | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 1  | 2  | 2  | 5  | 3  | 3  | 2  | 1  | 6  | 1  | 2  |
| 3-2          | 1           | 3 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2  | 4  | 1  | 5  | 3  | 3  | 3  | 2  | 4  | 1  | 1  |
| 4-1          | 2           | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 5  | 2  | 1  | 5  | 3  | 1  | 4  | 1  | 7  | 1  | 1  |
| 4-2          | 1           | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1  | 1  | 1  | 5  | 2  | 1  | 2  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| 5-1          | 2           | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 3  | 4  | 1  | 5  | 3  | 2  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| 5-2          | 2           | 3 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3  | 4  | 4  | 5  | 3  | 2  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| 6-1          | 2           | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 1  | 3  | 3  | 5  | 4  | 1  | 1  | 4  | 2  | 1  | 1  |
| 6-2          | 2           | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 2  | 3  | 1  | 5  | 4  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 1  | 3  |
| 7-1          | 2           | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3  | 3  | 1  | 5  | 3  | 1  | 2  | 1  | 2  | 1  | 1  |
| 7-2          | 1           | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 1  | 1  | 4  | 5  | 3  | 1  | 2  | 1  | 3  | 1  | 1  |
| 8-1          | 1           | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 5  | ~  | ~  | 5  | 3  | 3  | 2  | 1  | 3  | 1  | 1  |
| 8-2          | 1           | 2 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5  | ~  | 5  | 5  | 3  | 1  | 2  | 1  | 8  | 2  | 4  |

Note. Two incongruent households are shaded to distinguish them from the six congruent households. ~No response