2008

An exploratory study of factors that relate to academic success among high-achieving African American males

Kianga Rhea Thomas
College of William & Mary - School of Education

An Exploratory Study of Factors that Relate to Academic Success Among High-Achieving African American Males

---

A Dissertation

Presented to

A Dissertation Committee of the School of Education

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

---

by

Kianga Rhea Thomas

September 2008

An Exploratory Study of Factors that Relate to Academic Success

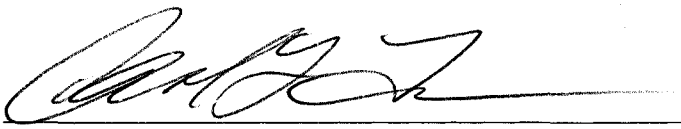
Among High-Achieving African American Males

by

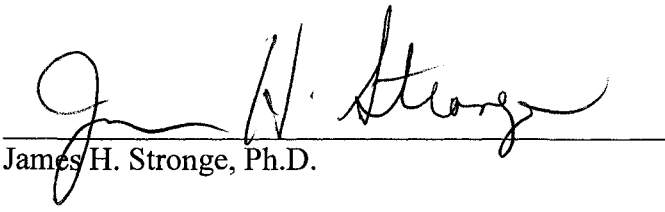
Kianga R. Thomas

Approved September 2008 by

Joyce L. VanTassel-Baska, Ed.D.
Co-Chairperson, Doctoral Committee



Carol L. Tieso, Ph.D.
Co-Chairperson, Doctoral Committee



James H. Stronge, Ph.D.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents,

Claude R. Thomas *(1944-2008)* and Lucille W. Thomas *(1947-2001)*, posthumously.

You have been the guiding light in my life and the most inspirational, talented, and impressive people that I have ever known.

Mom and Dad, thank you for your support, encouragement, and all the sacrifices you have made over the years to ensure that I become the successful man that you expected me to be, while remaining humble and dedicated to my success.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply appreciative of those who have been instrumental in encouraging and helping me in this journey of completing this rigorous task.

- To my wife Shaundalyn -- thank you for the moral and intellectual support through this process. You have been there through the ups and downs and I truly appreciate your unconditional support throughout.

- To my sons, Harrison and Hayden -- you inspire me each and everyday and I am so proud of you both. Harrison, you are the greatest big brother in the world!

- To Dr. Joyce L. VanTassel-Baska -- You have been a blessing in my life. I am truly blessed to have studied under you and to have benefitted from your many talents, creative nature, and overwhelming love for your students. You are the best!

- To Dr. Carol L. Tieso -- You provided that spark that allowed me to take on a new challenge. Thank you for always being there and you are a very talented individual and it has been an honor to have studied under you. Thank you.

- To Dr. James H. Stronge -- You have been extremely patient and supportive throughout this process and I have the greatest admiration for you. You were always there to lend an encouraging voice and you have always been willing to listen to my ideas and provide constructive feedback. Thank you.

- To Dr. DiPaola and Dr. Tschannen-Moran, thank you for your help in the development of my instrument.

- To Kia, my little sister, I love you and continue to reach for the stars. You are very brilliant and I am very proud of you.
- To Leon Faulk, I can't ask for a better and more dedicated lifetime friend, #62.
- To James Walke, you are the man. Thank you for being a good friend and brother.
- To Kipp Rogers, thank you for always being there and keeping me grounded. You are a great brother.
- To Dr. Leon D.E. Cole (#1), thank you for always being encouraging and a good friend and fraternity brother.
- To Fred Spencer, thank you for being a dependable and good friend over the years.
- To Dr. Zina McGee, thank you for your time and willingness to listen.
- Thank you Dr. Zke Zimmerman and Alice Zimmerman, you are a blessing, parents away from home, and great friends.
- To Dr. Leon Spencer, Sr., thank you for your words of encouragement and always believing in me.
- Thank you Pascal and Opel, you are great friends and dedicated brothers.
- Thank you to all of my brothers in Keystone Lodge #22 A.F. & A.M. and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

List of Tables

List of Figures

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF FACTORS THAT RELATE TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS AMONG HIGH-ACHIEVING AFRICAN AMREICAN MALES

An Exploratory Study of Factors that Relate to Academic Success Among High-Achieving African American Males

ABSTRACT

This exploratory study explored three factors – self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership – that relate to academic success in African American male freshman college students. The study explored how self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership interrelate, how a pilot group and study group differ in respect to self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership, and how African American freshman males differ on these factors in respect to key demographic variables.

The study utilized the Student Academic Success Scale *(SASS),* which was an instrument developed by the researcher in a graduate course. The instrument was administered to 104 participants. Descriptive statistics, correlation coefficients, and a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were data analysis techniques used to interpret data.

Data revealed that participants perceive themselves rather highly on the *SASS* and that there were positive correlations among all three variables. Furthermore, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed that freshmen male students perceive themselves higher on the *SASS* than students from a pilot group of upperclassmen. Lastly, an ANOVA revealed that African American male freshmen who participated in art programs rated themselves significantly higher on self-efficacy and leadership, while students who participated in mentorship or internship programs rated themselves significantly higher on self-efficacy and resiliency.

Implications of this study indicate that there is a need to develop mentorship and internship opportunities in the elementary, middle, and high school settings for African American males. Moreover, future research should look closely at studying this group

longitudinally to evaluate perceptions over a period of time. Another implication for research suggests that comparing a group of African American college males at a Historically Black College or University to African American males at a traditionally White institution on similar dimensions.

KIANGA R. THOMAS

PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY, PLANNING, AND LEADERSHIP

THE COLLEGEOF WILLIAM AND MARY IN VIRGINIA

Chapter 1

Introduction to Study

In Bernard Malamud's famous novel, *The Natural*, the main character, Roy Hobbs is a baseball prodigy whose career took a turn for the worse when a lunatic female fan shot him to end his career. Hobbs is forced into a life of wondering what could have been and questions his existence as a true monarch to the game of baseball. Much like Malamud's character, the gifted African American student(s) can be paralleled in a sense that most take a turn for the worse within gifted programs and wonder what might have been. The retention of minority students in gifted programs has become a grave issue in gifted education and suggests that few studies have focused on factors that affect the retention of students of color in gifted programs.

In public school systems around the country, educators – teachers, counselors, and administrators – have made significant progress in identifying and recruiting diverse populations in gifted and enrichment programs (Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005). Yet, a recurring theme in education is the underrepresentation of minority students in gifted education programs. Recruiting diverse students in gifted programs has been the primary focus for addressing their underrepresentation (Bernal, 2002). Bernal (2002) suggested that recruitment efforts – screening, assessment, and placement – have focused on: (a) finding appropriate instruments, namely culturally sensitive tests of intelligence and achievement, to assist with screening, referral, and placement decisions; (b) increasing teacher referrals of diverse students; and (c) creating or improving nomination forms and checklists that capture the strengths of diverse groups. However, another issue is retaining students once they enter gifted or rigorous academic programs (Ford, 1994; Johnsen, Feuerbacher, & Witte, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, many schools in impoverished areas have been receiving negative criticism as failing schools and not meeting the needs of students with special talents. As a result, retention of gifted students has become a great concern. The underrepresentation of economically disadvantaged children and adolescents – especially those from racial and ethnic minority groups – in programs for gifted students is one of the most recalcitrant and troubling issues confronting educators of gifted students (Borland, Schnur, & Wright, 2000). Ford, Grantham, and Whiting (2008) report that "two issues have been heavily debated in education relative to African American students...the first is their lower academic performance compared to White students, referred to as the 'achievement gap', and the second relates to their underrepresentation in gifted education" (p. 216). According to Heck and Mahoe (2005), our high schools continue to provide inequitable educational experiences and outcomes for children of different racial-ethnic and social class backgrounds. Moreover, Heck and Mahoe (2005) state that "the high school preparation and educational attainment of African American and Hispanic students, however, continue to lag behind those of Asian American and white students" (p. 418). Ford et al. (2008) reported that "Black students are underrepresented by as much as 55% nationally in gifted education; although Black students compose 17.2% of school districts, they represent 8.4% of those identified as gifted" (p.217). Furthermore, Van Tassel-Baska, Johnson, and Avery (2002) reported that reorientation in teacher strategies – a large influx of diverse gifted learners will mandate changes in instructional practices to promote student success – carries with it a promise for higher achievement at all levels of the educational continuum.

The many contrasting theories concerning the educational success or failure of students of different social class and racial-ethnic backgrounds suggest that there is no simple

explanation (Heck & Mahoe, 2006; Nieto, 2005). Students who are not academically and socially integrated into their high schools politically resist their educational marginalization, or who are disappointed in the promise of education, are more likely to leave before graduating (Fine, 1991; Mehan, 1997; Heck & Mahoe, 2006). This notion resonates across all aspects of education, but most importantly in gifted education. The retention of minority students in gifted programs has become a grave concern and suggests that few studies have focused on factors that affect the retention of students of color in gifted programs (Johnsen, Feuerbacher, & Witte, 2007). Therefore, Ford (1994) prompted educators to extend themselves beyond recruitment and find more effective and innovative ways of keeping these students in gifted programs.

Conceptual Framework

The discipline of gifted education suggests that human abilities are diverse and that their development may be partially determined by genetic influences. However, environmental events in the home, school, and community, in interaction with people and things, are major determinants of the nature and extent to which talents develop into adult expertise, creativity, and productivity in careers (Feldhusen, 1995). In many important ways, talents arise from, and talented performances over time are influenced by, many social, cultural, or circumstantial (or climate) factors outside the person's internal, testable cognitive abilities (Treffinger, 1995).

According to Gagne (1995), "one can say that a student who succeeds in any subject matter is talented in that discipline, be it mathematics, language, geography, or science, and that this talent is the result of a sustained program of learning, as well as the possession of above average intellectual abilities" (p.106). Furthermore, Gagne (1995) indicates that a given natural ability can express itself in many different ways, depending on the field of activity

adopted by the individual. Gagne's (1995) Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (Figure 1), presents a clear distinction between giftedness and talent. Gagne (1995) defines talent, within the model, as "the superior mastery of systematically developed abilities (or skills) and knowledge in at least one field of human activity to a degree that places a child's or adult's achievements within at least the upper 15% of age peers who are active in that field or fields" (p. 103).

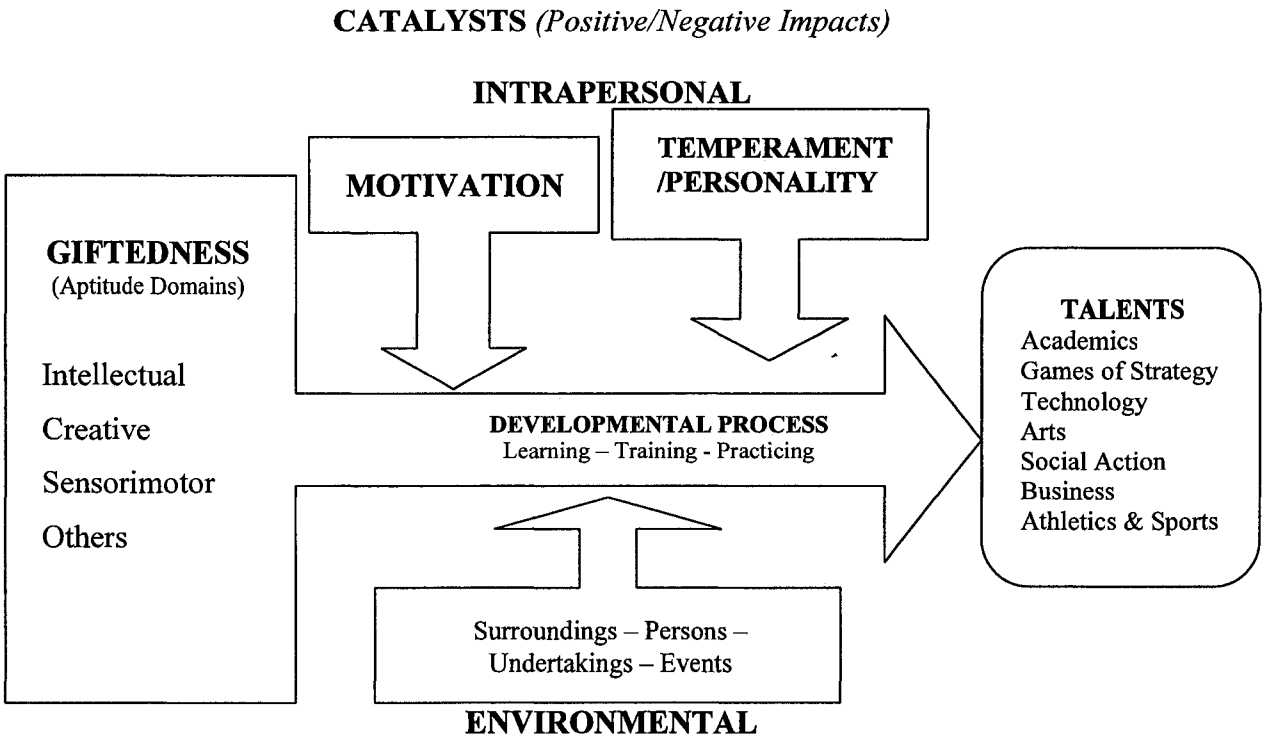


Figure 1. Gagne's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (1993 & 1995)

Moreover, in his model, Gagne (1993 & 1995) emphasizes that "talents progressively emerge from the transformation of aptitudes into well-trained and systematically developed skills characteristic of a particular field of human activity of performance" (p.107). In agreement, Struck (2002) suggests that systematic learning, training, and practice are crucial for the process of talent development to be exhibited, and if high level performance is sought,

and then these three level of activities have to be intensified. In this study, the researcher focused on Gagne's (1995) intrapersonal catalysts as the conceptual framework for the study. Such intrapersonal factors as resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership were examined in the study to understand their relationship to academic success.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership are factors that relate to academic success in a particular sample of high achieving African American males. The study used a self-report instrument that focused on the role of resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership in academic success. In the study, the researcher utilized African American freshmen males at a Historically Black University in the southeast as the target population. The students who were considered as subjects were labeled either bright or gifted. Bright students have the same characteristics as other gifted children, but characteristics may appear earlier in the developmental sequence or in an intensified manner for gifted learners (Van Tassel-Baska, 1998). In this study, bright students were students who were entering into their freshman year in college and had at least participated in an International Baccalaureate (IB) program, taken a minimum of one Advanced Placement (AP) course, or participated in a College Preparatory High School program (Honors).

The study also considered students' extracurricular activities as a key factor. Many students in schools were actively involved in extracurricular activities and being involved requires responsibilities and leadership opportunities. Moreover, coupled with extracurricular activities, students who are enrolled in challenging or rigorous academic settings tend to work harder and remain focused on activities that promote success. According to Tieso (1999), students involved in Honors or Advanced Placement courses (or extracurricular activities) have

a built-in "excuse" for not becoming involved in activities that typically involve negative outcomes or deter students from being successful in education. Moreover, their continued participation is predicated upon their staying out of trouble.

As a means to explore the issue of academic success for retaining students in rigorous programs, the purpose of this study serves to further develop and implement a highly-reliable instrument that can be used in multiple settings and to determine if resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership are strong intercorrelating factors.

Methodology

The study utilized a survey research design using appropriate quantitative analyses to explore factors that relate to academic success among high achieving African American males who are currently enrolled in college as freshman at a Historically Black University. Participants were selected by their past participation in an Honors Program (College Preparatory Courses), Advanced Placement (AP Courses), or the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The study was conducted in a group setting, providing the researcher with immediate access to the students.

The instrument used in the study was the *Student Academic Success Scale (SASS)*, developed by the researcher in a doctoral course at The College of William & Mary. The survey was initially evaluated by a content expert panel and piloted with a similar group as the anticipated sample. The instrument consists of 21 items which were rated on a five-point Likert scale. The factors - resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership - were embedded randomly in the instrument. Upon return of the instrument, the researcher conducted appropriate statistical analyses.

Research Questions

In order to gather the information necessary, the following questions helped guide the research:

1. What are high-achieving university freshmen African American males' perceptions of their academic success in high school?

2. What is the relationship among self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership with high-achieving university freshmen African American males?

3. Are there differences in perceptions of academic success between freshmen African American male students and a comparison group of upper classmen (i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors used as the pilot group for the instrument)?

4. How do high-achieving freshmen African American males differ on self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership in respect to key demographic background variables (i.e., sports, clubs, academic clubs, community service, special interests groups, academic competitions, art programs)?

Definition of key terms

In this study, several terms were used to provide the reader with a conceptual understanding of the research.

Adolescence – the period of time stretching from puberty to the early 20's (Schunk & Meece, 2006).

Advanced Placement (AP) –The College Board's Advanced Placement Program (AP) is an extensive program that offers high school students the chance to participate in college level

classes, broadening their intellectual horizons and preparing them for college work (College Board Advanced Placement Program, 2008).

At-Risk - includes students of low socioeconomic status; students who have difficulty participating in school because they are English language learners; students with a high dropout rate in their community; students who are subject to poverty, homelessness, drugs, violence, life-threatening illness, or teenage pregnancy; and students who have a history of failing school grades and frequent absences (Lemlech, 2006).

Eminence – an individual who has gained the highest achievement in a given field; ex: Albert Einstein, Benjamin Carson, Charlotte Bronte, Richard Lloyd Wright, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Robinson, Shore, & Enerson, 2007).

Honors Program – enriching and sometimes accelerated academic programs that provide students with opportunities to gain new, strong, self-concepts, which inevitably improve their academic skills and gives them the courage and discipline to pursue a college education (Cohen, 1990).

International Baccalaureate (IB) - The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) is an internationally recognized, not-for-profit educational curriculum designed to provide Pre-K-12 learners a rigorous international education; designed to address the cognitive and affective needs of academically and intellectually advanced students (Shaunessy, Suldo, Hardesty, & Shatter, 2006).

Leadership - The ability to guide and direct those around you in a positive direction based on good moral standards. (Fullan, 2001).

Resiliency - Successful adaptation despite risk and adversity (Ford, 1994; Reis, Colbert, & Herbert, 2005).

Self-Efficacy - Beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. (Bandura, 1995 & 1997).

Ethical Safeguards

Because human participants are involved in this study, ethical and legal considerations were of concern. This proposal was reviewed and approved by the School of Education's Human Subjects Research Committee (Appendix A) and the College's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects as well as the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the intended university. A detailed letter (Appendix B) was issued to each participant for their reading and understanding of the study. They were then informed that their participation is voluntary and not mandatory. Moreover, students' grades were not affected if they decide to participate in the study or not. The participants' names were not and will not be disclosed in the publication. Furthermore, the confidentiality of each participant was highly regarded. Confidentiality refers to the researchers not disclosing the identity of the participants or indicating from whom the data were obtained (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009).

Assumptions

There were several assumptions made about this study. The first assumption was that the three factors – resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership – are constructs that relate to academic success. The researcher felt as if the factors that relate to academic success may prove to be highly relevant to academic success, meaning students who are resilient, self-efficacious, and leaders are typically successful students. A second assumption is that the anticipated target population will provide adequate and truthful information that will further help develop the instrument and provide a realistic outlook on similar populations. The researcher used a group of students who were enrolled in a pre-college program and the

students were there on a voluntary basis. Also, students were enrolled in the pre-college program because they could financially afford to be there. A third and final assumption was that the instrument used would capture the overall perceptions of the participants.

Significance of the Study

This study was designed to examine the gifted culture more closely by exploring factors that relate to academic success for African American males. African-American males are faced with many issues, such as violence, school drop-out, drugs, teen pregnancy, and illiteracy than other groups. Focusing on factors that relate to academic success among African-American students in gifted programs was the primary focus in this study, and Ford (1994) indicated that exploring more ways to retain and ensure that African-American male students are successful in gifted programs is vitally important. Understanding what relates to academic success for students in gifted programs should be an agenda throughout American schools, but in particular, for African-American males, because it is evident that gifted students exist in this population and many are taking a turn towards negative activity and not academic success. Moreover, it is important to examine intrapersonal factors during the talent development process to gain an understanding of how each impacts students academically.

Although disproportionate numbers of poor African American students indicate poor performance in schools, many manage to perform at a high level in school. This study sought to explore possible factors that relate to such success. Clark (1983) identified key factors that high-achieving African American students have in order to be successful: 1.) their parents were vigorous in their parent involvement; 2.) parents were updated with their child's academic progress; 3.) developed high, yet realistic expectations; 4.) held positive achievement orientations; 5.) established clear and specific boundaries; and 6.) maintained positive

relationships with parents, peers, and teachers, which identified nurture, support, respect, and an open level of communication.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

This review of the literature provides a foundation for the proposed study. An in-depth analysis of literature on underrepresented populations in gifted programs, the talent development process, resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership has been done. Moreover, this literature review focuses on empirical research, longitudinal studies, and other literature focusing on these constructs.

Underrepresented populations in gifted programs

At-Risk Students

According to Rodgers (2008), "an increased interest in African American students...scholars are responding to the trend of underrepresentation of African Americans in gifted programs by addressing the role of race and culture in the experiences of gifted African American students" (p. 111). One of the major concerns in gifted education is not only identifying more gifted students from lower income backgrounds but also retaining them in special programs (Johnsen et al., 2007). Challenges in serving promising children of poverty include voluntary under-participation in programs for the gifted following identification, resources for educational and non-educational needs, special needs of persistent English learners, and policy-related structural issues (Kitano, 2007). According to Ford (2007), "there is a strong and negative correlation between poverty and school achievement – the greater the poverty, the lower the academic achievement" (p. 37).

Lemlech (2006) defines "at-risk" students from low socioeconomic status as students who have difficulty participating in school because of a language barrier; students with special

needs; students who are exposed to drugs, violence, teenage-pregnancy; and students who have a history of failing school grades and frequent absences. According to Van Tassel-Baska, Patton, and Prillaman (1991), two of the most neglected populations in gifted education are individuals whose talents may not be recognized or actualized because they are (1) culturally different from the mainstream culture, and/or (2) economically disadvantaged. Gallagher (2003) agreed that an increasing concern is the particular needs of racial, ethnic, and cultural subgroups of gifted children. Moreover, Black, Hispanic, and Native American children appear in gifted programs at only about one-half or less their prevalence in the larger society, whereas Asian Americans appear at twice their percentage in the U.S. population (Gallagher, 2003).

In a cross-case study analysis conducted by Johnsen et al. (2007), the researchers investigated the issue of retention of at-risk learners in a university-based program, known as the University for Young People Program (UYP). The researchers were interested in learning more about factors that might be influencing the students who did not choose to remain in the program. Their findings indicate that social factors seem to strongly influence the retention of gifted and talented students from lower income backgrounds in this academic enrichment program. Furthermore, Johnsen et al. (2007) concluded that relationships with peers, mentors, and parents appeared to show the greatest differences between current participants who have been retained in the program for more than two years and former participants who left the program after two years.

It is important to stress that many children have been at risk of not achieving their full potential from the day of their birth, if not in utero (Hodgkinson, 2007). Hodgkinson (2007) recognizes that while poverty is only one of the risks that many children are exposed to, it

magnifies all other factors. Like all gifted children, impoverished gifted children need the opportunity to engage in talent development and enriching experiences, similarly to their peers in more affluent settings, during school and after school. Shumow (1997) examined high ability children in inclusion classrooms from the Milwaukee Public Schools and their affiliation with school and after school activities. The case presented in the study documents the activities, resources, and relationships available in an urban setting and describes their adjustment at home and at school. The students were gifted in mathematics and reading and participated in neighborhood schools. Despite the students' high academic abilities, they received no academic enrichment, adaptations of any kind at school, or talent development practices, but were resilient individuals.

Another aspect of at-risk that tends to have many implications in gifted education is the nature of underachievement. Underachievement syndrome continues in epidemic proportions in our country (Rimm, 2003). According to Rimm (2003), being intellectually or creatively gifted does not assure educational or creative success or productivity; concurrently, there are risks and pressures that accompany high intelligence that detour potentially high-achieving children toward defensive and avoidance patterns. Rimm (2003) identifies three major pressures that are affecting gifted children:

1. the need to be extraordinarily intelligent, perfect, or smartest
2. the wish to be extremely creative and unique, which they may translate as nonconformity;
3. the concern with being admired by peers for appearance and popularity (p. 424).

In addressing the nature of underachievers as a component of at-risk students, Van Tassel-Baska (1998) indicated that in planning intervention, it seems appropriate to abandon the medical

model and introduce alternative schools to provide such an opportunity in many locales, but they should start earlier than the high-school – middle-school level. Reis, Colbert, and Hébert (2005), McCoach (2005), and Reis (1998) summarized the following research findings about underachievement from the last five decades of research:

1. The beginning stages of underachievement occur in elementary school, perhaps due to a nonchallenging curriculum. A relationship seems to exist between inappropriate or too easy content in elementary school and underachievement in middle or high school.
2. Underachievement appears to be periodic and episodic, occurring in some years and not others and in some classes but not others. However, eventually increasing episodes of underachievement will result in a more chronic pattern for many students.
3. Parental issues interact with the behaviors of some underachievers, yet no clear pattern exists about the types of parental behaviors that may influence or cause underachievement.
4. Peers can play a major role in preventing underachievement from occurring in their closest friends, making peer groups that support achievement an important part of preventing and reversing underachievement.
5. Busier adolescents who are involved in clubs, extracurricular activities, sports, and religious activities are less likely to underachieve in school.
6. Regular patterns of work and practice seem to help talented students develop an achievement model in their own lives. Music, dance and art lessons, and regular

time for homework and reading can be very helpful for developing positive self-regulation strategies.

7. A caring adult, such as a counselor, coach or an academic content teacher, can help to reverse the process of underachievement.
8. Few interventions have been tried to reverse underachievement, and more research on interventions is needed.

In addition, Rimm (2003) illustrated that the treatment of underachievement involves the collaboration of school and family in the implementation of six steps: 1. assessment; 2. communication; 3. changing the expectations of important others; 4. role-model identification; 5. correcting skill deficiencies; and 6. modifications of reinforcements at home and school.

Furthermore, the emphasis on higher standards for students has adversely affected at-risk students, many of whom did not meet the previous minimum standards. These students are often labeled as "at-risk". As mentioned previously in the chapter, "at-risk" includes students of low socioeconomic status; students who have difficulty participating in school because they are English language learners; students with a high dropout rate in their community; students who are subject to poverty, homelessness, drugs, violence, life-threatening illness, or teenage pregnancy; and students who have a history of failing school grades and frequent absences (Lemlech, 2006). However, Lee (2003) indicates that "at-risk" students are not necessarily inner city children and may be White as well as any other ethnicity. Additionally, schools have a difficult time helping such students because their problems may require the assistance of other social institutions and involvement of parents (Lemlech, 2006). With the need of more academic assistance, coupled with the "at-risk" barriers, those individuals who are successful despite "at-risk" characteristics are labeled as resilient. Furthermore, Kitano (2007) concludes

that a number of experts in resilience suggest that teaching for the development of self-efficacy and coping strategies can enhance the life success of children and youth at risk.

Gifted African American Students

One of the most persistent, troubling, and controversial issues in education is the disproportionate representation of minority students in special education, including gifted education (Ford, 1998). The underrepresentation of minority students in gifted education programs is a national problem receiving too little attention, especially as it involves African American learners (Daniels, 1998). Evidence of overrepresentation in special education has focused on simple proportions of a given ethnic group (e.g., African Americans) qualified for special education in a given sanctioned disability category (e.g., L.D.) (MacMillan & Reschly, 1998). MacMillan and Reschly (1998) further argued that the underlying assumption is that the proportion of different ethnic groups in any category or program should be equal to the proportion of that ethnic group in the general school population if there is no discrimination. According to Daniels (1998), minority students have always been plagued by inequities within our educational structure, which have pervaded not only gifted and special education, but also general education.

Concerns about racial discrimination and violations of civil rights are raised when African American youth are consistently misidentified and disproportionately placed in special education programs (Patton, 1998). Patton (1992) contended that one problem is that there is no systematic, well-defined logic of inquiry for assessing and identifying gifts and talents among African American learners. Instead, attempts to identify gifts and talents among African-Americans have frequently relied on assessment approaches that are not grounded in African-American worldviews, ethos, and culture and do not consider the types of intelligences

African-Americans have developed consonant with tasks viewed important by this group of individuals (Patton, 1992). As stated in Bonner, Jennings, Marbley, and Brown (2008), Brown (1996) argues that "Black males encounter formidable challenges to their educational development and many of them experience a serious stifling of achievement, aspiration, and pride in school systems throughout the country" (p.93). Hughes and Bonner (2007) illustrate many of the inequalities that serve as barriers for African American males in schools. Those barriers are teachers' inclination to pathologize African American males in their early school experiences, education tracks that lock African American males into substandard classes, and ineffective classroom learning environments (Hughes & Bonner, 2007).

Much attention has been focused on conditions outside schools that adversely affect the academic performance of at-risk students (Hébert, 1997). However, Hébert (1997) argued that examining only outside conditions would only "short-side" the issue and divert attention from the factors that have a positive impact, such as intrapersonal conditions, on the experiences of students who face circumstances that place them "at risk." What occurs within the classroom and between student and teacher also matters (Hébert, 1997).

Steinberg, Dornbusch, and Brown (1992) found that adolescent relationships with peers had a tremendous impact on academic achievement, beliefs about school, and their own academic competence. Bernt and Keffee (1995) declared that achievement motivation is strongly influenced by peers that have supportive and positive relationships. However, the secondary school years seem to identify a diminishing trend of family support versus the elementary years (Slaughter & Epps, 1987). Moreover, students who demonstrated a high level of academic success or achievement, encountered support from both parents and peers (Steinberg et al., 1992).

Perhaps the greatest negative impact on success for African American students is that few of their peers support academic pursuits (Steinberg et al., 1992). Steinberg et al. (1992) indicated in their study that many high achieving African American students choose not to have contact with other African American students, but instead choose to utilize their time with other ethnic groups. Fordham and Ogbu (1986) reported that African American students in mainstream culture deem it necessary to become part of the values and beliefs of the dominant culture. Some adolescents experienced negative social consequences from their peers for conforming to the values and behaviors desired by teachers, and although students knew that teachers reward certain behaviors, they were often cognizant of peer group norms that discouraged commitment to academic tasks (Leak, 2003).

An equally serious problem is that there is no evidence that authors are aware that throughout their history, Black Americans have experienced the "burden of 'acting White" because of their oppositional collective identity and cultural frame of reference (Ogbu, 2004). Ogbu (2004) refers to collective identity as people's sense of which they are, their "we-feeling" or "belonging" (p.3). He further alludes to people expressing their collective identity with emblems or cultural symbols which reflect their attitudes, beliefs, feelings, behaviors, and language or dialect. Ogbu (2004) concludes that many African American students have developed culturally-patterned ways of coping with the dilemma or the burden of "acting White" which one finds both in the contemporary Black community and among the students. Worrell (2008) states that "for ethnic and racial minority students who belong to groups with oppositional frames of reference to the mainstream, being good at school or being identified as gifted may place them on the horns of a personal and social dilemma" (p. 12).

African American students are affected by factors that generate from school. Kennedy (1995) indicates that White students' educational experiences were generally influenced by socioeconomic factors, while African American students' performance and outcomes were related to school factors. Leak (2003) and Bliss (1993) argued that the school climate was one of the primary problems of urban schools. With the influx of violence, over-crowded classrooms, limited funding, and under-qualified teachers, urban climates posed several difficulties that promote success. Waxman, Walker de Felix, Anderson, and Baptiste (1992) found that several features of schools and classrooms that were discordant to students eventually persuaded their judgment to leave school. Rutter (1984) supported the notion that students can gain positive relationships beyond academics, but in other areas such as athletics and music (Bloom, 1995). Moreover, obtaining positions of responsibility in the school (leadership) and developing a working relationship with teachers are key components towards academic success.

Anglin and Wade (2007) conducted a study to examine the effects of racial socialization and racial identity on adjustment in Black college students. The researchers concluded that racial socialization was found to be a significant positive predictor of academic adjustment. To elaborate, Anglin and Wade (2007) explained that students who are in-tune with their Black/African heritage and about the realities of racism tend to feel more satisfied with academic courses and performance, and have a sense of purpose in college. Racial factors in African American students' adaptation to college do not lend themselves to many studies. Sellers, Chavous, and Cooke (1998) conducted a study that correlated racial identity to academic performance using GPA. Their conclusions strongly indicated that those African

American students who have a strong sense of identification with Black people and an understanding of oppressed groups of people in American society had high college GPA's .

In a phenomenological study conducted by Bonner (2001), two African American male students, one student at a Historically Black College/University (HBCU) and one at a Traditionally White Institution (TWI) were studied to learn more about their perceptions of how the relationships with their respective institutions led to the cultivation of their academic giftedness. Bonner (2001) identified six critical themes that influenced cultivation of the students' academic giftedness in his study: 1.) relationship with faculty, 2.) peer relationships, 3.) family influence and support, 4.) factors influencing college selection, 5.) self-perception, and 6.) institutional environment. One key finding in Bonner's (2001) study indicated that one of the two students did not spend an inordinate amount of time discussing his academic prowess, but academics constituted only a minor portion of his response. Lastly, Bonner (2001) identified a significant difference in the amount of support that the HBCU provided the student versus the Traditionally White Institutions (TWI). The HBCU provided assistance to high achieving students, but also to those of average abilities.

Cultural Diversity

Ford (2004) argues that some parents and educators must recognize that culturally diverse students are gifted and culturally diverse. In terms of giftedness, many African American students find that their abilities and academic successes move them farther away instead of closer to members of their peer groups and home communities (Bonner et al., 2008). Educators themselves must become culturally aware and take advantage of all opportunities to learn effective ways of working with gifted and talented Black students (Ford & Harris, 1990). Ford and Harris (1990) further suggest that being culturally sensitive requires an understanding

that gifted and talented Black students, as well as other people of color, experience more educational difficulties than gifted students from the dominant culture. Gaining an understanding and awareness of cultures may help educators develop more appropriate pedagogical skills. Therefore, the challenge before educators is to become sensitive to cultural pluralism, and to become aware of how our own values can hinder the teaching process (Ford & Harris, 1990).

It is important to note that what is considered, noticed, identified, and embraced as gifted in one culture may not be considered, noticed, identified, and embraced in another culture. With this notion in mind, it is important that educators, administrators, and counselors, understand that the culture of many different ethnic groups is vital to the success of respective students. Culturally responsive teachers use a variety of measurements that give their students a chance to demonstrate their understanding and learning in different ways (Ford & Trotman, 2001). Culturally shared traditions are often mentioned when people think about culturally different groups or individuals. According to Moore, Ford, and Milner (2005), culturally shared beliefs refer to a set of fundamental assumptions that people hold dearly and without question which revolve around such questions as those regarding the concept of time, the meaning of life and death, the meaning of space, beliefs regarding the roles of males and females, or beliefs regarding education.

Teaching styles, cultural sensitivity, and expectation levels have been identified as influential factors in the resilience of gifted learners (Bonner et al., 2008). Furthermore, one function of culture is that it is a way to communicate. Flowers, Milner, and Moore (2003) argue that school personnel need to improve their cultural awareness and adjust their teaching and behaviors to meet the needs of the populations being served at the school. In some

cultures, individuals or groups show their feelings more than other groups; and some individuals rely more on nonverbal messages to communicate than verbal messages. Arguably, there are many smart, capable, and intelligent minority students in our country who have the potential to do great things and accomplish great feats. Many of these students may not be considered gifted because they lack the reading, writing, and arithmetic skills typically seen in gifted children and they are identified, in part, by tests of ability that demand school-related knowledge and skills (Naglieri & Ford, 2003).

Summary on Underrepresentation

The educational experiences of African American students, in particular males, are affected by many factors. The majority of these factors tend to be negative and as a result, may lead to disproportionate numbers in rigorous academic programs and/or gifted programs. Culture and inequalities play a major role in both the identification and retention of African American students in gifted programs. African American students face more educational difficulties than gifted students from the dominant culture. Moreover, culturally responsive educators are germane to delineating the underrepresentation of African American students by understanding culture, unique needs, and classroom strategies to foster the needs of students of color. Table 1 provides a review of relevant literature on underrespresentation.

Table 1

Relevant Literature on Underrepresentation

Domains	Social Factors and Risk Factors Influencing Retention	Racial Identity and Socialization of African American Students	Disproportionate Representation	Culture Shared Beliefs
Source				
Anglin & Wade, 2007	●	●		
Bonner, 2001	●	●		
Ford, 1998			●	
Fordham & Ogbu, 1986	●	●		●
Gallaher, 2003		●	●	●
Hébert, 1997	●	●		●
Hughes & Bonner, 2007	●	●		●
Johnsen et al., 2007	●	●		
MacMillan & Reschly, 1998		●	●	
Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005	●		●	●
Rimm, 2003	●	●		
Rodgers, 2008	●		●	
Van Tassel-Baska, Patton, & Prillaman, 1991	●		●	●

Talent Development Process

The field of gifted education has developed its own vocabulary, accumulated over nearly a century of research and thinking about the special educational problems of persons

with above average abilities (Gagne, 1995). Talent development is a complex process involving the individual, the home, the school, and the community (Robinson, Shore, & Enerson, 2007). Sternberg (1991) identified a diagnostic approach to ability, where specific talents or aptitudes became the focus for identification and services. Sternberg's theory identified a number of components of intelligence in three areas: meta-components (planning, monitoring, and evaluation), performance components (skills and abilities), and knowledge-acquisition components (processing and encoding).

Understanding such individuals takes special consideration and should encompass in-depth analysis of their traits. Expression of talents involves opportunities for individuals to showcase their special skills. According to Robinson et al. (2007), "talent development is fostered when the child or adolescent encounters the right teacher at the right time, has the opportunity to connect powerfully with the talent area, and has an outlet to express accomplishments" (p. 45). Much of what is known about the expression of talent in specific domains comes from studies of talented or eminent adults (Robinson et al., 2007).

The study of eminent individuals, in any given field, lends itself to understanding the vast infrastructure of gifted individuals. Adults of eminence have left their mark in helping societies develop technologically, aesthetically, and morally (Colangelo & Davis, 2003). Most of these individuals share similar qualities that promote success in their respective fields. In a study conducted by Bloom (1985), an examination of how talent was evident and developed in young individuals, focused on careers of talented individuals in music, mathematics, sports, and art. Bloom (1985) identified patterns in the factors that facilitated talent development in his subjects. The patterns led to identifying three major influences on talent development: a nurturing and supportive family, a teacher who saw something special and believed in the

child, and lastly, a "master-teacher" who was an expert in this respective field. Throughout their maturation process, the individuals were immersed in competitions, which were used to evaluate their talents. This trial period enabled the individuals to develop self-efficacy towards success in a given area and a high level of resiliency.

In a study by Csikzentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen (1993), motivational aspects of talent development were identified in teenagers. In their study, the researchers used pagers to monitor the day of teenagers. The day consisted of students attending classes and their usual avocations at school. Throughout the day, the researchers would contact the students, via pager, and require them to write down exactly what they were doing at that moment, and how they felt about what they were doing. In their findings, the researchers concluded that talent is developed when it is considered useful in their respective culture and when the individual students are open to experience (Csikzentmihalyi et al., 1993). Furthermore, Csikzentmihalyi et al. (1993) observed that students with learned or adapted habits that contributed to enhancing talent were more successful at developing their talents than those who were not. For example, students who shared challenging pursuits with friends, who had hobbies, and who spent time studying were more likely to develop their talents than students who spent time in nonspecific socializing (Robinson et al., 2007).

Dr. Benjamin Carson, a highly-talented neurosurgeon at Johns Hopkins University, has been identified as an eminent surgeon in the field of medicine. In his autobiography, *Gifted Hands* (1990), Carson's abilities and qualities are synonymous with the attributes in the studies mentioned above. Carson (1990) was an astute student in the areas of math and science and identified his talent early on in life. Open to experience and a belief that challenging tasks could be done, Carson was apt to take on challenging experience and leadership roles that

enabled him to be highly successful as a young adult and in his later years as a surgeon. Similar to the subjects in Bloom (1985), one can concur that Carson fit the same patterns as of those in the study. One distinct aspect in Carson's (1990) autobiography is that he displayed an interest in an area and his mother, an influential factor, quickly provided him with opportunities for support and rigor.

In a study of over 500 students, Shernoff, Csikzentmihalyi, Schneider, and Shernoff (2003) concluded that students who were challenged with rigorous tasks in school and perceived their skills to be up to the challenge, were more engaged in learning. This supports the notion of the relationship between giftedness and leadership (Hollingworth, 1939). Hollingworth (1939) argues that intelligence is a necessity for leadership. However, the intelligence of the leader should "not be too much higher" than those he or she leads. This idea can facilitate leadership within schools, communities, and organizations of many young students. Science learning also provides opportunities for leadership.

It is important that young gifted adolescents have access to service learning with a strong leadership development component early on (Van Tassel-Baska, 2007). According to Van Tassel-Baska (2007), "such programs hold the promise of developing young adults who understand the value of knowledge, accept their social responsibilities, and are confident that they can affect positive change in their environments" (p. 232).

Upon evaluating the research findings surrounding eminent studies, three themes were postulated as identifiers by those who exhibited success. Opportunities to display leadership, a high level of feeling capable of accomplishing tough tasks or self-efficacy, and overcoming great obstacles to maintain a high level of achievement or resiliency, permeated. In the Shernoff et al. (2003) study, when students were given challenging tasks in school, they were

more productive and received maximum achievement in their educational experiences. This outlook on challenge can lead to students having high self-efficacy towards academic tasks. Furthermore, in a study conducted by Shaunessy, Suldo, Hardesty, and Shatter (2006), the school and psychological functioning of 122 gifted and high achieving students was compared to that of 176 general education students in the same school. Based on their results, students who were enrolled in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program reported more positive perceptions of school climate, had higher grades point averages, academic self-efficacy, and reported less externalizing psychopathology and affiliation with negative peers (Shaunessy et al., 2006).

Moreover, as mentioned earlier, Feldhusen (1995) indicated the many environmental events in the home, school, and community, in interaction with people and things, as major determinants of the nature and extent to which talents develop into adult expertise, creativity, and productivity in careers. The many social, cultural, or circumstantial (or climate) factors outside the person's internal, testable cognitive abilities are influenced by these factors (Treffinger, 1995).

Gagne (1995) alludes to the success level of a student in any subject matter displays talent in that particular domain. Furthermore, Gagne (1995) indicates that a given natural ability can express itself in many different ways, depending on the field of activity adopted by the individual. Gagne (1995) defines talent, within his famous model, as "the superior mastery of systematically developed abilities (or skills) and knowledge in at least one field of human activity to a degree that places a child's or adult's achievements within at least the upper 15% of age peers who are active in that field or fields" (p. 103). Moreover, in his model, Gagne (1993 & 1995) emphasizes that "talents progressively emerge from the transformation of

aptitudes into well-trained and systematically developed skills characteristic of a particular field of human activity of performance" (p.107). Furthermore, Struck (2002) supports the notion that systematic learning, training, and practice as crucial for the process of talent development to be exhibited, and if high level performance is sought, and then these three level of activities have to be intensified.

The role of mentoring is vitally important when considering talent development. Enrich, Hansford, and Tennent (2004) suggest that mentoring seems to offer considerably more benefits than drawbacks. In their study, Enrich et al. (2004) analyzed a large volume of literature on mentoring across a variety of disciplines. One of their key findings indicate that "there is a need for planners of mentoring programs to be vigilant in the matching process so that cultural, racial, and gender factors are taken into account" (p. 533).

Summary on Talent Development

A longstanding tradition in gifted education is the notion that students are considered "gifted" by the use of high IQ scores and/or high achievement test scores. As research progressed, the talent development movement has brought to fruition the notion of students fostering their talents. Talent development is a way of introducing students, who were not considered gifted by using traditional methods, into being inclusive in a unique group. When challenged, students demonstrated a high level of participation in various subjects as it applied to their specific talents. When students are paired with other students who demonstrate a commitment to excellence, for example, students who shared challenging pursuits with friends, who had hobbies, and who spent time studying, were more likely to develop their talents than students who spent time in nonspecific socializing activities. Moreover, talent development

works when it has meaning for children and is supported by their peers, family, and teachers. Table 2 provides a list of relevant literature to support talent development.

Table 2

Relevant Literature on Talent Development

Domains	Talent Development as a process with multiple factors	Eminence in understanding Talent Development	Systematic Training and Instruction are crucial to Talent Development
Source			
Bloom, 1985	●	●	●
Csikzentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993	●		●
Colangelo & Davis, 2003		●	●
Feldhusen, 1995	●		●
Gagne, 1995	●		●
Robinson, Shore, & Enerson, 2007	●		●
Shernoff et al., 2003			●
Sternberg, 2001	●		●
Van Tassel-Baska, 2007	●		●

Resiliency

Resiliency on Achievement, Definitions, and Theory

During the past decade, a number of investigators from different disciplines – child development, psychology, psychiatry, and sociology – have focused on the study of children and youths who overcame great odds (Werner, 1995). Werner (1995) implies that "these

researchers have used the term resilience to describe three kinds of phenomena: good development outcomes despite risk status, sustained competence under stress, and recovery from trauma" (p. 81). Bonner et al. (2007) illustrate that students (African American) who have the ability to rise above negative obstacles to develop a protective processes that neutralize and in many ways offset these challenges that inhibit their pursuits for success.

Furthermore, understanding the African American male has become one of the nation's major concerns. Ford (1994) argues that resilient Black youth possess an internal locus of control, strong, yet positive sense of self, and feelings of empowerment. As noted in Waxman de Felix, Anderson, and Baptiste (1992) and Bailin (1985), argued that no single intervention will provide the entire answer in addressing the problems of educationally disadvantaged or at-risk students. The media have portrayed the African American male and other disadvantaged or at-risk students as individuals who are in desperate need of constant supervision, restructuring, and are very problematic. Slavin (1989) describes at-risk as a category of student who is unlikely to finish high school. Many African American youth are faced with barriers that plague the community and place stagnation in their educational experience. However, according to Kitano (2007), "a promising well-studied personal characteristic associated with positive outcomes among children in poverty is resilience as operationalized by employing effective coping strategies" (p. 33). Moreover, individuals faced with barriers, who are resilient, usually succeed with positive outcomes.

According to Reis, Colbert, and Hébert (2005), there is no single definition of resiliency that exists, which indicates that several different definitions and descriptions of resilience are offered in the research literature. Despite incredible hardships and the presence of at-risk factors, some students have developed characteristics and coping skills that enable them to

succeed. They appear to develop stable, healthy personas and are able to recover from or adapt to life's stresses and problems (McMillan & Reed, 1994). Wolin and Wolin (1993) identify seven resiliencies that identify self: insight, independence, relationships, initiative, humor, creativity, and morality. Below are their explanations:

- *Insight* – the mental habit of asking searching questions and giving honest answers.
- *Independence* – the best possible bargain you can drive among competing needs: your right to safe boundaries between you and your troubled parents, dictates of your conscience, and your longing for family ties.
- *Relationships* – intimate and fulfilling ties to other people.
- *Initiative* – the determination to assert yourself and master your environment.
- *Humor and Creativity* – both are safe harbors of the imagination where you can take refuge and rearrange the details of your life to your own pleasing.
- *Morality* – the activity of an informed conscience is your wish for a good personal life grown large and inclusive.

Resilience theory attempts to explain academic achievement among students who encounter negative psychological and environmental situations (Reis et al., 2005). Moreover, they also indicate that no single definition of at-risk exists. Wolin and Wolin (1993) suggest that individuals who demonstrate a high level of resilience are hardy, invulnerable, and invincible. Neihart (2001) notes that gifted children share similar characteristics with resilient children: intelligence and curiosity, self-efficacy, sense of humor, and problem-solving skills.

Empirical data on Resiliency

Research on the impact of higher achievement standards on potential dropouts is mixed (Waxman et al., 1992). In a study conducted by Natriello and Dornbusch (1984), they found that demanding standards in the classroom were very beneficial to retaining students in rigorous programs and challenging coursework. The researchers noted that in classrooms with low standards, students were more likely to miss that class than classrooms with higher standards. Moreover, the researchers indicated that classrooms with higher demanding criteria or challenging work were found to be associated with a high level of student effort. A significant percentage of students in the low demanding classrooms felt that the teacher should implement more challenging assignments.

Resilience in an individual refers to successful adaptation despite risk and adversity (Masten, 1994). Masten, Best, and Garmezy (1990) agree that resiliency is described in three distinct areas of phenomena in reference to the psychology literature:

1). The first type occurs in people from high-risk groups who have better-than-expected outcomes (i.e., those who overcome odds);

2.) Good adaptation despite stressful experiences, and;

3.) Studies of individual differences in recovery from trauma.

McMillan and Reed (1994) identified the need to evaluate how resilience promotes success in students. Resilient at-risk students have a set of personality characteristics, dispositions, and beliefs that promote their academic success regardless of their backgrounds or current circumstances (McMillan & Reed, 1994). Moreover, they interpret resilient at-risk students as those who "have a set of personality characteristics, dispositions, and beliefs that promote their academic success regardless of their backgrounds or current circumstances" (p.

139). Resilient students have a strong sense of self-efficacy and believe they are successful because they choose to be (Reis et. al, 2005).

McMillan and Reed (1993) conducted a study that focused on four factors that present themselves as having a significant impact on resiliency. Those factors are individual attributes, positive use of time, family, and school. Active involvement in events, at school or in other arenas, seems to provide a refuge for resilient students (McMillan & Reed, 1993). Opportunities to grow emotionally and intellectually through various activities help to develop self-esteem through success. McMillan and Reed (1993) state that "being recognized and supported for special talents are also important, but the simple involvement in an activity considered special appears to increase self-esteem and a belief in one's ability to succeed" (p.21). Peng, Lee, Wang, and Walberg (1992) concur with McMillan and Reed's (1993) four attributes. In their large scale study, Peng et al. (1992) concluded that approximately 19 % of students who could be classified as at-risk developed into individuals who were successful in school, had positive goals, and plans for the future. Furthermore, academically talented students and resilient students often have parents or guardians who resist conventionality but capacitate students to develop with some level of autonomy and a positive declarative style (Dai & Feldhusen, 1996).

Hébert and Beardsley (2001) used a critical theory framework to structure an examination of the environmental factors influencing the education of a gifted child. In Hébert and Beardsley's (2001) study, the account of a student named Jermaine, living in an impoverished rural environment, was examined by a university researcher and a classroom teacher. The study illustrated his creativity, resiliency, and his struggle to find a place for himself in his community, and the significant factors that influenced the early formation of a strong self-identity. The study findings suggest understanding the effects of poverty remains especially important when

examining the life experience and reflection of African American children. Though Black children in rural, impoverished environment face adverse conditions, it is important not to oversimplify the problem (Hébert & Beardsley, 2001).

The study indicated importance in understanding the community's ideology *(environment in which the child exists)* and that educators and policy makers must be able to determine appropriate methods of enabling gifted children in rural and urban impoverished communities. The findings of this case study of Jermaine highlight the importance of strong emotional support and understanding from adults who understand and value creativity in young children as well as the factors that will retain students like Jermaine, in gifted programs.

Reis et al. (2005) indicated that little research examines the achievement or underachievement of academically talented high school students who are placed at risk because of poverty. To examine underachievement and resilience in this population, Reis et al. (2005) conducted a study to explore the achievement of some academically talented students and the underachievement of others of similar ability and to further explore how resilience may or may not have been displayed by students in both groups. The findings indicated that the 17 academically talented students who began to underachieve did so in high school. The results of their study also indicated that resilience was developed and displayed by the high achieving students in their study despite numerous obstacles they encountered, including family poverty, parental divorce, drugs and violence and peer problems in their high school. Moreover, these culturally diverse, high achieving students embraced their abilities and worked to achieve at a level appropriate with their abilities, despite difficult obstacles.

In a longitudinal study by Werner and Smith (1992), researchers followed individuals, with relativity little attrition, from the prenatal period through birth to ages 1, 2, 10, 18, and 32.

According to Werner and Smith (1992), The Kauai Longitudinal Study monitored the development of a cohort of children at intervals from birth to 40 years of age, focusing on risk and protective factors and how these related to successful life outcomes. One key finding was that the same factors that promote resilience in at-risk children and youth also promote recovery in young adults who had experienced difficulties. In particular, supportive relationships with caregivers, extended family, and community members were associated with both resilience and recovery.

Summary on Resiliency

Resilient students possess a high level of overcoming great obstacles and an establishment of self-efficacy traits. Studies have indicated that active involvement in extracurricular activities has provided a refuge for resilient students. Moreover, students who are resilient have a set of personality characteristics, dispositions, and beliefs that promote their academic success regardless of poverty or other constraining circumstances. Strong emotional support and the value of creativity from adults and peers seem to be key factors that develop students' high level of resiliency. Table 3 displays relevant literature that supports resiliency.

Table 3

Relevant Literature on Resiliency

Domains	Resiliency Characteristics	Resiliency and High Standards	Resiliency and Achievement
Source			
Bonner et al., 2007	●		
Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990	●	●	●
McMillan & Reed, 1994	●		●
Neihart, 2001	●		
Reis et al., 2005	●		●
Werner, 1991	●		●
Winfield, 1994		●	
Wolin and Wolin, 1993	●	●	

Self-Efficacy

Theories and Definitions

Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce a given attainment (Bandura, 1997). People's levels of motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively the case (Bandura, 1995). Self-efficacy beliefs are domain-specific and refer to perceptions of capabilities to learn or perform given tasks within specified domains (Pajares, 1996, 2006; Schunk & Meece, 2006). According to Bandura (1995), self-efficacy theory provides explicit guidelines on how to develop and enhance human efficacy. Moreover, nature and

function of efficacy beliefs and efficacy-activated processes provide people's beliefs in their causative capabilities that are the major focus of inquiry (Bandura, 1995). Among the mechanisms of human agency, none is more central or pervasive than beliefs of personal efficacy (Bandura, 2006). According to Schunk and Meece (2006), self-efficacy is grounded in the larger theoretical framework of social cognitive theory.

To fully understand personal causation requires a comprehensive theory that explains, within a unified conceptual framework, the origins of beliefs of personal efficacy, their structure and function, the processes through which they operate, and their diverse effects (Bandura, 1995). For example, possessing skill can raise self-efficacy, which in turn can lead to further skill acquisition; but skill and self-efficacy are not synonymous in meaning (Schunk & Meece, 2006).

Self-Efficacy in Academic Domains

Self-efficacy research in academic settings has focused primarily on two major areas: the relationships among efficacy beliefs, related psychological constructs, and academic motivation and achievement (Pajares & Miller, 1995). According to Hsieh, Sullivan, and Guerra (2007), an extensive body of research has examined the relationship between self-efficacy and achievement in the domains of math and reading, suggesting that students with higher self-efficacy perform better in these areas than students who have lower self-efficacy. In their study, Hsieh et al. (2007) addressed students' self-efficacy (defined as students' beliefs about their capabilities to successfully complete a task) and goal orientation. The researchers addressed concerns raised by college educators by examining differences between students in good academic standing and those who are on academic probation. Furthermore, the researchers concluded that students with more confidence generally are more willing to persist in the face of adversity, and students with goals of "mastering a task" tend to invest in focused

effort. In their findings (Hsieh et al., 2007), achieving individuals with high self-efficacy adopted more mastery goals when approaching academic tasks. Students who value effort, persist in the face of difficulty, and take on academic tasks, and obtain high achievement, typically have high self-efficacy and adopt mastery goals (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002).

Educators have long recognized that students' beliefs about their academic capabilities play an essential role in their motivation to achieve, but self-conceptions regarding academic performance initially proved difficult to measure in a scientifically valid way (Zimmerman, 2000). Self-efficacy beliefs differ conceptually and psychometrically from closely related constructs, such as outcome expectations, self-concept, and perceived control (Zimmerman, 2000). Moreover, Zimmerman (2000) states that "there is growing evidence that, although self-efficacy beliefs are correlated with domain-specific self-concepts, self-efficacy measures offer predictive advantages when a task is familiar and can be specified" (p.85). In a study conducted by Pintrich and De Groot (1990), relationships were examined between motivational orientation, self-regulated learning, and classroom academic performance of 173 seventh graders from eight science and seven English classes. The researchers reported that self-efficacy and intrinsic value were positively related to cognitive engagement and performance. Moreover, students who were motivated to learn the material (not just for good grades) and believed that their school work was interesting and important were more cognitively engaged in trying to learn and comprehend the material.

Pajares and Miller (1994) used path analysis techniques to test Bandura's (1986) hypotheses regarding the predictive and meditational role of self-efficacy in the area of mathematics. The researchers focused on the influence of self-efficacy on mathematics because their interest in self-efficacy was founded on a broader interest in education and the

academic performance of students. Their findings substantiated Bandura's (1986) claim that self-efficacy beliefs are key arbiters of human agency and also lend support to researchers who contend that student motivation may be better explained by these beliefs that by other cognitive or affective processes (Pajares & Miller, 1994).

Bong (2001) investigated two primary purposes to determine whether there is any notable difference in construct relations of self-efficacy as a function of domain. The first objective was to investigate the between-domain relations of student motivation and the second objective was to examine the within-domain relations of these motivational constructs (Bong, 2001). Academic self-efficacy refers to students' beliefs about their capabilities to perform given academic tasks at designated levels (Bong, 2001a ,;Schunk, 1991). Pajares (2003) reported that a strong sense of confidence, for example, may serve students well when writing an essay because it engenders greater interest in and attention to writing, stronger effort, and greater perseverance and resiliency in the face of adversity. In addition, confident students are also likely to feel less apprehensive and have stronger feelings of self-worth about their writing (Pajares, 2003). The standard method used in self-efficacy research is to assess students' confidence toward specific tasks and examine how well these perceptions predict performance on the very tasks and there is strong empirical support for the subject specificity of self-efficacy, task-value, and various achievement goals (Bong 2001). However, many of the researchers in self-efficacy have recognized that individuals can take on a broader perspective of tasks and bearings with the same level of self-efficacy and that perception of efficacy towards a task in particular may be generalized to other areas (Bandura 1997; Pajares, 1996).

Self-Efficacy in Group Dynamics

Students' achievement goals, the reasons that students have for doing their academic work, have received extensive study in the area of academic motivation (Pajares, Britner, & Valiante, 2000). One factor gaining increased credence as an explanation for women's continued underrepresentation in most scientific and technical fields is their lack of preparation, relative to that of men, in mathematics (Betz & Hackett, 1983). In their study, the researchers reported that relationships of math self-efficacy expectations to math attitudes are, in general, statistically significant and of moderate magnitude. The study also suggested that self-efficacy expectations, with respect to the domain of mathematics are related to college students' choices of science-based versus non-science-based college majors and that the mathematics self-efficacy expectations of college females are consistently and significantly weaker than those of college males (Betz & Hackett, 1983).

Witherspoon, Speight, and Thomas (1997) examined the extent to which racial identity attitudes, self-esteem, and academic self-concept could predict school performance of an African American high school student population. In their study, Witherspoon et al. (1997) concluded that young men endorsed immersion attitudes significantly more than young women. In other words, young men displayed higher levels of engagement which had a strong correlation to GPA. When students display a high level of positive feelings towards their academic ability, then it has an impact on their GPA.

Gutman (2006) examined the effects of student and parent goal orientations and perceived classroom goal structures on grades and self-efficacy in mathematics during high school transition. According to Eccles, Midgley, Buchanan, Flanagan, Mac Iver, and Reuman (1993), high schools have stricter policies in terms of discipline and control that interfere with

adolescents' developing needs of autonomy and independence. Considering this challenge, among many others, the research that has examined and documented the achievement and attendance declination of low-income and minority students is not surprising (Seidman, Aber, Allen, & French, 1996; Reyes, Gillock, Kobus, & Sanchez, 2000).

Gutman (2006) concluded that student mastery goals are related to higher school grades and more self-efficacy for African American students. Furthermore, the findings indicate that there is a positive relation that exists even during the transition from middle to high school. Gutman (2006) found that student performance goals, on the other hand, did not predict changes in self-efficacy or grades in mathematics for African American students during high school transition. Another unique finding in the study is that African American parents espoused more mastery goals for their adolescents than performance goals. Moreover, African American parents who endorsed mastery goals had adolescents with higher mathematics GPA then their peers whose parents did not endorse mastery goals.

Summary on Self-Efficacy

Students with a strong sense of efficacy are enhanced in human accomplishments and well-being. Students with high self-efficacy approach difficult tasks or accept difficult tasks and typically do not avoid them. They typically set high goals and maintain them until tasks are completed. Set-backs are only minor reminders of road blocks that can be removed in order to be successful in future tasks. Self efficacious individuals approach challenging situations with assurance that they have complete control over the outcome. Such an efficacious outlook produces personal accomplishments, reduces stress and lowers vulnerability to depression (Bandura, 1995).

However, students who display doubt in their capabilities typically shun away from difficult tasks. They have low aspirations and weak commitment to the goals they choose to pursue. When faced with a difficult task, students with low self-efficacy tend to focus on personal flaws, the tribulations to come, and other adverse outcomes, rather than focusing on being successful with the task. Because students with low self-efficacy view low performance as poor aptitudes, slight failure will cause them to lose faith in their capabilities. Table 4 provides a summary of relevant literature on self-efficacy.

Table 4

Relevant Literature on Self-Efficacy

Domains	Theory on Self-Efficacy	Self Efficacy in Academic Domains	Self Efficacy and Achievement	Group Dynamics
Source				
Bandura, 1995	●			
Betz & Hackett, 1983		●		●
Bong, 2001		●		
Hsieh, Sullivan, & Guerra, 2007		●	●	
Pajares, 1996 & 2006	●	●		
Pajares & Miller, 1994		●	●	
Schunk & Meece, 2006		●		
Witherspoon, Speight, & Thomas, 1997		●		●

Leadership Theory

In a study conducted by Christiano and Robinison (1982), the researchers examined individuals they referred to as task-oriented leaders and process-oriented leaders. According to the researchers, task-oriented leaders do not consult with peers and have impulsive behaviors that usually influence others to think or conform to their impulsive type of behavior or task-oriented style. Christiano and Robinson (1982) concur that process-oriented leaders differ from task-oriented leaders in that they employ more input from others during discussions when making decisions. Burns (1978) subscribes to Christiano and Robinson's (1982) notion of a leader by identifying two leadership styles: transactional (task-oriented) and transformational (people-oriented). The transactional leader is one who approaches followers only for the purpose of bartering or considering things of value, such as personal gain, favors, etc. The transformational leader is one who adopts the practice of satisfying the needs of his or her followers. Bennis and Nanus (1985), Tichy and Devanna (1987), and Kouzes and Posner (1987) were key researchers and authors describing the transformational leader.

Tekleab, Sims, Yun, Tesluk, and Cox (2008) examined the influence of leader self-awareness on outcomes such as leader effectiveness, follower satisfaction, and follower leadership. In their study, self description of leadership was generally more favorable than followers' descriptions; more importantly the researchers found variance and diversity in leaders' self-awareness. Moreover, some leaders underestimate their own transformational and empowering leadership.

According to Garrison (1992), there are two broad categories by which leadership styles may be classified: task-oriented and people-oriented. Garrison (1992) concludes that

task-oriented leaders are more interested in accomplishing group goals than individuals' interests and normally do not involve subordinates in solving problems. People-oriented leaders, on the other hand, are as interested in the individuals in the group as they are in accomplishing group goals; they usually involve group members in solving group problems. In a study conducted by Bass (1985), initial and confirmatory factor analyses that revealed seven leadership behavior factors became a basis for the model (Bass, 1985). Conclusively, the seven factors fell into three categories: 1.) Transformational: Charisma, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration; 2.) Transactional: Contingent Reward, Management by Exception; and 3) Nonleadership: Laissez-Faire.

Leadership and Achievement

American schools are under constant pressure to ensure that all students succeed, despite their socioeconomic background, race, creed, or color. According to Karnes and Bean (1990), the mere fact that academic achievement is not as highly correlated with future leadership as extracurricular experience brings forth valued suggestions for promoting the skill of leadership among today's youth. Achievement for all students has constantly remained a topic of rhetoric in all aspects of education. Whether the focus is on achievement in the academic arena or in the extracurricular aspect, concerns for student success in leadership have surfaced as a major priority. According to Bonner et al. (2008), "one of the primary ability areas used to define giftedness that shows great promise in increasing the numbers of African American males identified is leadership" (p. 97).

The accommodations that many American schools must make are quite vital in establishing the leadership qualities in students early and often. For high achieving students, it is imperative that best practices are demonstrated and utilized for the advancement of skills,

knowledge, and capabilities to venture out into the world, but in particularly, helping students realize their leadership potential. For example, when thinking of some the nation's leaders, many of them were accelerated in their learning. According to Colangelo, Assouline, and Gross (2004), many of America's prominent leaders benefited from acceleration, which in turn delineated the myth that students who skip grades rarely fit into society. Eminent individuals such as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., T.S. Elliot, Johsua Lederberg, Sandra Day O'Conner, and W.E.B. Dubois were great leaders who reached society early, and as a result, everyone benefited (Colangelo et al., 2004).

Leadership during the High School Experience

According to Bonner, Jennings, Marbley, and Brown (2008), "leadership is one of the most underemphasized dimensions of high ability cited in the current federal definition of giftedness" (p. 93). The high school experience is more than just preparation for college, life, and the world of work. It also presents an opportunity for high school students to show their leadership potential through participation in extracurricular activities in the form of a school clubs, sport teams, academic teams, etc. (Educational Testing Services, 2004). Educational Testing Services (2004) reported that "mere membership in an organization may not represent any true commitment or accomplishment, but holding a leadership position or earning an honor (such as a journalism prize or a varsity letter) shows a greater degree of involvement" (p.8). Extracurricular programming, particularly school sports, is one of the most widespread and costly practices in our educational system, yet there is relatively little scientific information on the potential academic benefits of the extracurricular (Broh, 2002). Consistent with conventional wisdom, participating in school sports does seem to have real benefits for students (Broh, 2002).

The nurturing and developing of an ethically healthy climate in the relationships and interactions between students and teachers is one of the most important and challenging tasks of schooling. The influence dimension of leadership requires the leader to have an impact on the lives of those being led, and to make a change in other people carries with it an enormous ethical burden and responsibility (Northouse, 2004). In a study that examined the relationship of ethical climate and students' school performance, Luo, Huang, and Najjar (2007) concluded that moral education intervention programs may need to increase their focus on the area of teacher-to-student relationships and interactions and the subgroups of male students, students in higher grades, and students with lower academic achievement. Leadership requires that the individual determines his values and acts consistently with them at all times (Frigon & Jackson, 1996). According to Greenleaf (1970, 1977), the servant leader emerges as a result of being a servant, or being morally in tuned with those to whom he/she is leading. Moreover, Northouse (2004) and Greenleaf (1970, 1977) concur that a servant leader focuses on the needs of followers and helps them to become more knowledgeable, more free, more autonomous, and more like servants themselves.

Leadership and Programming for African American Students

Feldhusen and Kennedy (1988) emphasized interpersonal skills as key for program emphasis as a first step in the process of developing youth leadership. Bonner et al. (2008) suggests that the primary ability areas used to define giftedness, which shows great promise in increasing the numbers of African American males indentified in gifted programs, is leadership. Furthermore, Bonner et al. (2008) mention that it is critical that the leadership potential of African American male students be recognized and developed as part of secondary educational experience. According to Roach (1999), leadership programs with youth need to

derive from field-based studies of the ways youths themselves define, value, and enact leadership. Roach states that "the most promising work in promoting young people to see themselves in positions of leadership will come from situating young people as resources engaged with others in bringing group projects to excellent outcomes" (p.13). Furthermore, leadership opportunities for youth must focus on programs that will to commit to work that will benefit others and not based on programs that equate to leadership with an individual's accumulation of a certain set of characteristics.

In her study, Roach (1999) found that self-knowledge and commitment to relationships that sustain group goals, along with skills necessary for constant collection and assessment of information, stand as dominant in youth leadership. Furthermore, the basic assumption underlying self-awareness in leadership development projects is that youth, once they have a clear understanding of themselves, will be able to lead others appropriately. Roach (1999) reports that "young people active in effective youth-based organizations also achieved academic honors, participated in math and science fairs, and held high expectations for their completion of high school and successful transition through higher education" (p.23).

Chee (2007) suggest that "active participation in well-conceptualized service learning projects can provide the differentiated educational necessary to develop these students into responsible citizens concerned with what happens in their nation, as well as in the world" (p.216). According to Simonton (1984), service learning and leadership programs should be offered to high ability individuals because leadership skills and the potential creator are created during gifted individuals' adolescent and early adulthood years. As noted in Chee (2007), Black (1984) suggests that most gifted adolescents are mature enough to maximize and internalize their experiences, while maintaining an open and curious mind.

Summary on Leadership

The findings from the empirical studies reported, along with leadership theory and descriptive literature, suggest calls for a rethinking of youth leadership such that youth leadership programs should highlight self knowledge and commitment to relationships. Highlighting a situation rather than an individual or institution bears critical importance for understanding youth leadership (Roach, 2008). Coupled with accelerated programs to foster academic needs, youth leadership programs, such as service learning programs, can facilitate skills needed to help develop self-efficacy that students wish or need to obtain to be effective leaders. Table 5 provides a summary of relevant literature on leadership.

Table 5

Relevant Literature on Leadership

Domains	Theory on Leadership	Youth Leadership Programming	High School experiences and Leadership
Source			
Bennis & Nanus, 1985	●		
Bonner, Jennings, Marbley, & Brown, 2008	●	●	●
Broh, 2002		●	●
Chee, 2007	●	●	●
Christano & Robinson, 1982	●		
Feldhusen & Kennedy, 1998	●	●	●
Roach, 1999	●	●	●
Sternberg, 2003			

Summary of Literature Review

In summary, the literature reviewed provides a foundation for the study in exploring self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership as factors that promote academic success. Retaining African American students in rigorous academic programs has been a concern in the field of gifted education for a long time. An examination of "at-risk" literature, gifted minority students, and gifted African American males provided evidence for determining the importance of focusing on college freshman African American males as the target population for the study.

A careful examination of the literature on successful individuals from underrepresented populations reveals three characteristics that promote success in a given profession. These characteristics were significant levels of self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership as qualities contributing to success. Many of the eminent individuals were leaders in their respective fields. However, many of the eminent individuals faced several obstacles or challenging moments in their development, but were able to persevere, which demonstrates their high level of resiliency. Moreover, it was their experiences with leadership and being resilient that enabled them to have a "self-capability" to take on further challenging tasks. The research also suggests that students, who are challenged with rigor and perceived their skills to be up to the challenge, were more engaged in learning and successful in school. Table 6 provides an overview of the literature base for this study by topic.

Table 6

Summary of Research Findings by Literature Strand

Strand	*Source*	*Summary*
Underrepresented Populations in Gifted Programs	Bonner, 2001; Johnsen, Feuerbach, & Witte, 2007	Social factors influence retention in gifted programs and programs and schools should foster the needs of minority students.
	Rimm, 2003; Reis, Colbert, Hebert, 2005; Reis, 1998; McCoach, 2000; Van Tassel-Baska, 1998	There are risks and pressures that accompany high intelligence that detour potentially high-achieving children toward defensive and avoidance patterns; alternative schools can provide meaningful opportunities for underachieving gifted students.
	Naglieri & Ford, 2003	Many educators attribute the poor participation of diverse students in gifted programs to the ineffectiveness of standardized tests in capturing the ability of these students.
	Ford, 1998; Daniels, 1998; MacMillan & Reschly, 1998; Patton, 1998; Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992	There is a disproportionate representation of minority students in special education and an underrepresentation in gifted programs; there is no systematic, well-defined logic of inquiry for assessing and identifying gifts and talents among African American learners; limited support by peers.
	Moore, Ford, & Milner, 2005; Van Tassel-Baska, Patton, & Prillaman, 1991; Gallahger, 2003	Many people's belief-system and daily routines focus around cultural shared beliefs which refer to a set of fundamental assumptions and culturally different from the mainstream and economically disadvantaged students are highly neglected and may not be recognized in gifted programs.

Talent Development Processes	Gagne, 1993 & 1995	There are intrapersonal and environmental factors that foster or enhance talent development.
	Robinson, Shore, & Enerson	Talent development is a complex process involving the individual, the home, the school, and the community.
	Colangelo & Davis, 2003	Eminent adults have left their mark by helping society develop technologically, aesthetically, and morally.
Resiliency	Reis, Colbert, & Hebert, 2005	There is no single definition of resilience which entails several types in the research literature.
	Ford, 1994	Resilient Black youth possess an internal locus of control, strong, yet positive sense of self, and feelings of empowerment.
	MacMillan & Reed, 1994; Werner & Smith, 1992; Wolin & Wolin, 1993	Resilient students have developed characteristics and coping skills that enable them to succeed making them invincible, invulnerable, and able to cope as adults.
Self-Efficacy	Bandura, 1997	Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainment.

	Pajares, 1996 & 2006; Schunk & Meece, 2006	Self-efficacy beliefs are domain specific and refer to perceptions of capabilities to learn or perform given tasks within specified domains.
	Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990	Self-efficacy and intrinsic value were positively related to cognitive engagement and performance.
	Betz & Hackett, 1983; Hsieh, Sullivan, & Guerra, 2007	Students with higher self-efficacy perform better in domains of math and reading than students who have lower self-efficacy.
Leadership	Broh, 2002	Participation in school extracurricular activities has tremendous benefits towards leadership.
	Hughes, Ginnet, & Curphy, 2002	The best leaders recognize and face ethical dilemmas with commitment to doing what is right.
	Chemers, 1997	Leadership is a process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task.
	Chee, 2007; Sternberg, 2003	Service learning programs provide enriching experiences that promote leadership skills.
	Bonner, Jennings, Marbley, & Brown, 2008; Roach, 1999	Programs that promote leadership are essential to building key intrapersonal skills that enable African American students to be successful leaders among their peers.

Chapter 3
Methodology

Introduction

This study focused on African-American males' perceptions of factors related to success in rigorous academic programs. It was vitally important to understand the strategies of success in academics in order to promote success among all students. However, in this study, the focus was African-American male students and the factors – self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership – that promote their academic success in particular academic programs (e.g., Honors, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate).

This chapter presents research methodology for the study and is presented in the following sections: (1) the research design; (2) the development of the *Student Academic Success Scale (SASS)*; (3) research questions for the proposed study; (4) sample; (5) instrumentation; (6) data analysis techniques; (7) ethical safeguards; and (8) limitations and delimitations of the study.

Research Design

The study utilized a survey research design using appropriate quantitative analyses, to be implemented to explore factors that relate to academic success among high achieving African American males who are currently enrolled in college as freshman. The students considered for the study were high achievers who had completed a high school course of study that was designated as rigorous: honors, Advanced Placement (AP), and/or International Baccalaureate (IB). Definitions of each program are provided in Chapter 1.

The *Student Academic Success Scale (SASS)* was formally known as the *Student Retention Scale (SRS)*. The decision to change the name of the instrument was based on the review of the literature. Although retention can be viewed as synonymous to success, the

researcher decided to use "academic success" in the new title because it mirrored the focus of the literature. The instrument was developed as part of a graduate course at the College of William and Mary

Research Questions

In order to gather the information necessary, the following questions helped guide the research:

1. What are high-achieving university freshmen African American males' perceptions of their academic success in high school?
2. What is the relationship among self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership with high-achieving university freshmen African American males?
3. Are there differences in perceptions of academic success between freshmen African American male students and a comparison group of upper classmen (i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors used as the pilot group for the instrument)?
4. How do high-achieving freshmen African American males differ on self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership in respect to key demographic background variables (i.e., sports, clubs, academic clubs, community service, special interests groups, academic competitions, art programs)?

Participants

A convenience sample of 104 freshman African American males was used for this study. The students were enrolled at a private Historically Black University in a Southeastern state. The university is a comprehensive institution of higher education with its curriculum emphasis being scientific and professional with a strong undergirding of liberal arts. The student body is geographically diverse with 30% from Virginia and 70% from 48 states within

the continental United States and 20 other countries (Institutional Advancement and Research Report).

Freshman males were used as subjects for the study. Overall, freshman enrolled at the university have an average age range between 18-19 years, an average high school Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.2 and an average Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score of 1054 – math and verbal (Institutional Advancement and Research Report).

Instrumentation

Instrument Development

A review of the literature on resiliency, self-efficacy, leadership, and eminence studies, as well as limited research in the area of retention of students in gifted programs, did not indicate any such instruments that would be appropriate for this study. Therefore, a questionnaire was developed for the purpose of exploring three factors that may relate to academic success in rigorous programs among college freshman African American male students. The questionnaire, entitled *Student Academic Success Scale (SASS),* was designed to examine three factors – resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership- and their potential role in academic success. The instrument was developed in a doctoral course, to explore factors based on the participants' experience in high school academics and extracurricular activities.

The researcher conducted validation studies to examine the validity and reliability of scores from the *SASS.* The *SASS* was placed into a content-validation format (Appendix A), with open-ended questions at the end for the expert panel to complete. Experts were chosen from the fields of counseling education, leadership, gifted education, statistics, and educational psychology, to complete. The original questionnaire consisted of 65 items with two sections – conceptual definition and relevance rating - to complete for each item. The questionnaires

were mailed out to each participant along with a postage paid, self-addressed envelope for the return of the instrument. The expert panel's role was to rate each item for appropriateness of content and relevancy with respect to the three constructs, and provide feedback to the open-ended items. Ten of the 12 intended expert panel members responded to the instrument in a timely manner. However, the remaining 2 panel members sent their content validation instrument back at a much later date, so their responses were not calculated in the frequencies and mean scores of the Instrument Validation. However, their responses to the open-ended questions were considered in the development of the instrument.

Frequencies and item mean scores were used to narrow the scale to a 21 item scale. Frequency scores with a minimum 90% agreement towards content rating coupled with items with an $M \geq 2.5$ and $SD \leq .75$ were kept for the finalized version of the *SASS*. The panel was charged with responding to items on the content validation document. They were requested to respond to a conceptual definition by selecting the appropriate Roman numeral, which was then calculated by using frequencies. Next, the panel was requested to respond to the relevancy of each item by considering a scale ranging from *Not at all relevant* (1) to *Highly Relevant* (3). Mean scores and standard deviations were used to determine which items to keep or remove from the finalized scale. The shorter version of the *SASS (*21 items) was field-tested with a group of students (N=111) in the researcher's own class and other classes. The results were used to obtain construct validation information. Student feedback, with an *n: p* ratio of 5:1 indicated positive results regarding the items from the scale. When conducting a field-test on an instrument, the *n:p* ratio should reflect a 5:1 ratio (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999). The *n:p* ratio represents the number of participants to the number of items on an instrument. In this case, there were 111 participants in the pilot group and 21 items on the

instrument, which gave the researcher a 5:1 *n:p* ratio. Furthermore, Fabrigar et al. (1999) indicate that a good *n:p* ration is 10:1, but 5:1 is respectable as well.

The instrument also was field tested with the same group for the purpose of reporting and establishing reliability. Students responded to each of the 21 items by indicating their academic experience as high school students. The researcher did not consider the pilot groups' extracurricular activities when developing the instrument. The Likert Scale items ranged from *Never* (1) to *A Great Deal* (5). Students in the pilot sample completed the survey anonymously and the instrument probed demographic information such as gender, race, high school course of study, context of high school, and current academic level. The shortened, 21item instrument demonstrated (Appendix B) an overall reliability score of Cronbach's Alpha = .915. The reliability of the subscale scores ranged from .778 - .831. Descriptive statistics were conducted to display the pilot group's self-perceptions. Mean scores and standard deviations were reported for self-efficacy ($M = 3.78$, $SD = .621$), resiliency ($M = 3.28$, $SD = .519$), and leadership ($M = 3.75$, $SD = .701$).

An exploratory factor analysis (Appendix C) was conducted to examine the interrelations among dependent variables – self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership. Factor analysis indicated that the first factor displayed a blended factor where it loaded high on self-efficacy, resiliency and leadership; moreover, the first factor explained 27% of the variance. A second factor loaded high on leadership and resiliency, which explained 18% of the variance.

The Student Academic Success Scale *(SASS)* was used to gather the pilot group's perceptions of self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership. Means and standard deviations were derived for each subscale. On a scale of 1-5, means ranging from lowest to highest for each subscale were: self-efficacy – 3.78, leadership – 3.75, and resiliency – 3.28. Results suggest

that participants perceived themselves to be *moderate* or *sometimes* in the three areas of the scale, indicating a high self-perception on factors influencing the successful performance of African American males. Table 7 summarizes these descriptive data on subscales.

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations for SASS Subscales on Pilot Group (N=111)

Factor	*Number of items*	*M*	*SD*
Self-Efficacy	7	3.78	.621
Resiliency	7	3.28	.519
Leadership	7	3.75	.701

Procedures for the Study

Once the researcher received permission from The College of William and Mary Human Subjects Review Committee (Appendix D), the researcher immediately informed the director of freshman studies at the intended university. The director agreed to assemble the students in a whole group setting for the purpose of administering the instrument. A letter was given to each student (Appendix E) for their reading and understanding of the proposed research project. Students were given the option of opting out with no repercussions. Once the students read the letter and agreed to participate, the researcher then administered the instrument to the intended population. Since the age range of the intended population of study was 18-19 years, parental permission was not needed because the majority of the students were of the age of consent. However, students were asked to review the directions and sign an assent form and provide their contact information.

Data collection took place in an auditorium setting on a university campus within a one-day period. Participants were not under any time constraints and were given as much time

as needed to complete the survey. Upon completion, the researcher collected the responses. The instrument was completed in less than 10 minutes. A total of 104 students completed and returned the survey constituting a 100% return rate. Once surveys were collected, the researcher conducted data analyses to address the four research questions.

Data Analysis

Data from the *SASS* were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation coefficients, and univariate analyses to address the following research questions: 1.) What are high-achieving university freshmen African American males' perceptions of their academic success in high school?; 2.) What is the relationship among self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership with high-achieving university freshmen African American males?; 3.) Are there differences in perceptions of academic success between freshmen African American male students and a comparison group of upper classmen (i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors used as the pilot group for the instrument)?; and 4.)How do freshmen African American male differ on self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership in respect to key demographic background variables (i.e., sports, clubs, academic clubs, community service, special interests groups, academic competitions, art programs)?

For Research Question 1, the researcher used descriptive statistics to report means, standard deviations, and frequencies to describe the distributions of data. For Research Question 2, the researcher used correlation coefficients to examine the relationship among dependent variables (self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership). For Research Question 3, the researcher conducted an analysis of variance (ANOVA) to measure differences among students on perceptions of academic success. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also conducted to determine the effects of academic success on the three dependent variables: self-efficacy,

resiliency, and leadership. Lastly, for Research Question 4, the researcher conducted an analysis of variance (ANOVA) to measure differences among students, based on the key variables of self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership. Table 8 summarizes the research questions and how each was analyzed using appropriate statistics, including the instruments, and data analysis performed.

Table 8

Research Questions and Data Analysis

Research Questions	*Instrumentation*	*Data Analysis*
1. What are high-achieving university freshmen African American males' perceptions of their academic success in high school?	SASS	Means and Standard Deviations
2. What is the relationship among self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership with high-achieving university freshmen African American males?	SASS	Pearson's Product Correlation Coefficient
3. Are there differences in perceptions of academic success between freshmen African American male students and a comparison group of upper classmen (i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors used as the pilot group for the instrument)?	SASS	ANOVA
4. How do high-achieving freshmen African American males differ on self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership in respect to key demographic background variables (i.e., sports, clubs, academic clubs, community service, special interests groups, academic competitions, art programs)?	SASS	ANOVA

Limitations and Delimitations

A limitation to this study is the nature of the sample. The study will survey students from a small private institution in a southern state. The school is highly reputable and has a small student body. The population of the entire school does not exceed 6,000 students, and the target population does not exceed 400. Therefore, the information from this study will not be highly generalizable because the data retrieved will not reflect the perceptions of students from other institutions in the state and across the country. Another limitation of this study is that the proposed study is a snapshot in time. Participants may change perceptions, especially after they begin college. A third limitation is that it is a self-report scale meaning there is a potential lack of truth-telling on the part of participants.

A delimitation of the study is that the participants are of one race and one gender. Only freshman male participants will be selected for this study and they are all of one race. Another delimitation is that the study focuses on students at one Historically Black University.

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the major methodological aspects of this study including participants, instrumentation, instrument development, procedures, and data analysis techniques. The researcher provided a detailed description of the Student Academic Success Scale *(SASS)* that was used to collect data from the participants. Reliability scores and a brief description of the validation process were provided coupled with a description of the pilot group that was used to obtain alpha ratings for the subscales on the *SASS*. Lastly, this chapter provided limitations and delimitations of the study.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this survey research design was to examine three factors, self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership as they relate to academic success. Furthermore, the study utilized the Student Academic Success Scale *(SASS)* with African American males to analyze how students perceive their academic success. The study also examined students' participation in rigorous academic programs, school context, extracurricular activities, and whether or not they participated in a mentorship or internship program.

Analysis of Results

This study was completed during the summer of 2008 using the following instrument: Student Academic Success Scale *(SASS)*. *SASS* data were collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlations, and ANOVA's. Chapter 4 presents the study's results organized by demographic data and then by research questions. The sample of students was portrayed through participant responses to the demographic section of the *SASS* survey.

Demographic Information

The researcher invited 150 students from a convenience sample to participate; however, there were only 104 participants in the study. This number was much smaller because some of the anticipated number of students were under the legal age of 18 or decided not to take part in the study. The researcher issued 104 surveys and received 104 survey responses from the participants, giving the researcher a 100% return rate. As mentioned in the delimitations section, the researcher only used freshmen African-American male students in this study.

Demographic data on the *SASS* were collected to help define the sample. For the first demographic item, participants identified their course of study by marking all that applied to

their academic course work during high school. Many of the students were enrolled in an honors program *(N* = 54*)* and Advanced Placement *(N* = 26*)*. The students were given the option to select all that applied to their academic experiences, and as a result, some of the students selected more than one experience for their academic coursework. Honors Program constituted the largest percentage of participants followed by Advanced Placement. Although not significant, one student indicated he was home-schooled. Table 9 presents these descriptive statistics.

Table 9

Frequencies on Students' Course of Study (N=104)

Course of Study	*N*	*%*	*c%*
Honors Program	54	51.9	51.9
Advanced Placement (AP)	26	25.0	76.9
International Baccalaureate (IB)	5	4.8	81.7
Home-Schooled	1	1.0	82.7
Honors & Advanced Placement	15	14.4	97.1
Dual Enrollment (AP & IB)	3	2.9	100
Total	104		

The participants selected one of three possible items that best described their school context or school location. The possible choices were urban, suburban, and rural. Table 10 offers a summary of the school context of the sample. A significant percentage of the students were enrolled in either urban or suburban settings, while a smaller percentage of students represented rural areas. Forty-one percent (*N* = 43) of the participants were from an urban

school setting, 52.9% *(N =55)* of the students were from suburban schools while 5.8% *(N=6)* of the participants were from rural school districts

Table 10

Frequencies on School Context (N=104)

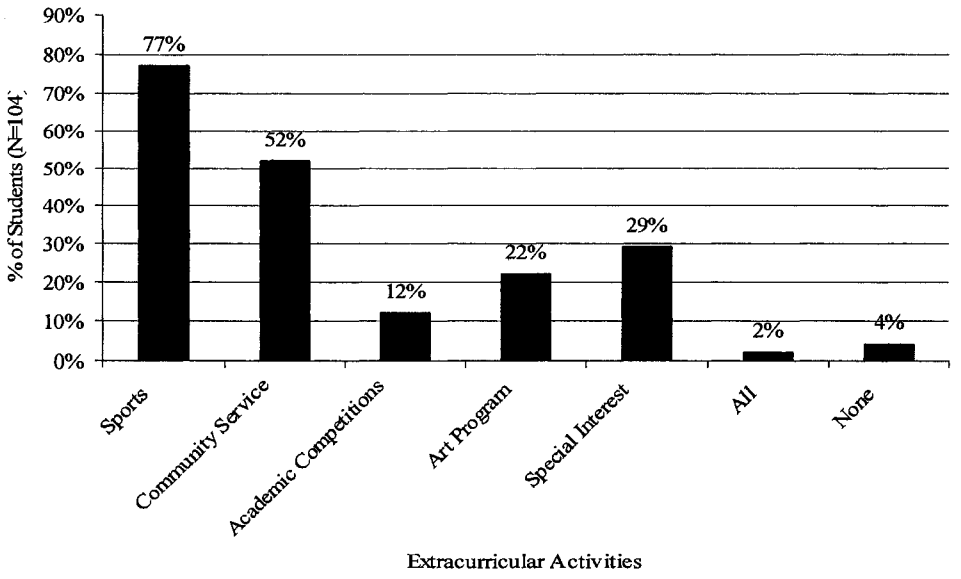
School Context	*N*	*%*	*c%*
Urban	43	41.3	41.3
Suburban	55	52.9	94.2
Rural	6	5.8	100
Total	104		

The following data were collected to describe the extracurricular activities in which the participants took part during their high school experience. The data are presented using frequencies and percentages to describe the participants' involvement in extracurricular activities. However, the data are also presented as percentages going beyond 100%, because participants were instructed to mark all that apply and many of the students were active in multiple extracurricular activities.

A great majority (77%) of the participants were active in sports during their high school experience. Slightly more than half of the students, 52% (*N*=54), participated in community service activities. Of the five possible extracurricular activities, academic competitions (*N*=12) demonstrated the lowest percentage at 12%. Both art programs and special interests were almost identical in participation. Twenty-two percent (*N*=22) of the participants were involved in art programs while 29% (*N*=30) participated in special interest groups. Furthermore, there were two extreme scores that the researcher decided to report to further describe the population. Four percent (*N*=4) of the participants did not participate in any extracurricular

activities. However, 2% (N=2) of the participants were involved in all extracurricular activities, which included sports, community service, academic competitions, art programs, and special interest groups. Figure 2 presents participants' role in extracurricular activities while enrolled in high school.

Figure 2. Participants' Involvement in Extracurricular Activities



The researcher's final demographic item requested participants to indicate their participation in a mentorship or internship program while in high school. Less than half of the participants (39.4%) indicated that they participated in a mentorship or internship experience while slightly more than half (60.3%) indicated that they did not.

Research Questions

In this study, descriptive statistics, correlations, and analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to analyze data from the participants' survey. Statistical analyses were performed using the software SPSS to address the following research questions:

1. What are high-achieving university freshmen African American males' perceptions of their academic success in high school?

2. What is the relationship among self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership with high-achieving university freshmen African American males?

3. Are there differences in perceptions of academic success between freshmen African American male students and a comparison group of upper classmen (i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors used as the pilot group for the instrument)?

4. How do high-achieving freshmen African American males differ on self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership in respect to key demographic background variables (i.e., sports, clubs, academic clubs, community service, special interests groups, academic competitions, art programs)?

Research Question 1

To address Research Question 1, the Student Academic Success Scale *(SASS)* was used to gather the study group's perceptions of self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership. Means and standard deviations were derived for each subscale. On a scale of 1-5, means ranging from lowest to highest for each subscale were: self-efficacy – 4.01, leadership – 4.04, and resiliency – 4.12. Results suggest that participants perceived themselves to be high in all three areas of the scale, indicating a high self-perception on factors influencing the successful performance of African American males. Results for all scale items on study group may be found in Appendix F. A summary of means and standard deviations of the study group's perceptions on the three subscales is provided in Table 11.

Table 11

Means and Standard Deviations for SASS Subscales on Study Group (N=104)

Factor	*Number of items*	*M*	*SD*
Self-Efficacy	7	4.01	.464
Resiliency	7	4.12	.508
Leadership	7	4.04	.533

Research Question 2

To address Research Question 2, the researcher ran a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) to measure the strength and direction of the relationship among self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership. Statistically significant ($p \leq 0.01$) relationships were found between self-efficacy and resiliency ($r = .517$), leadership and resiliency ($r = .428$), and self-efficacy and leadership ($r = .592$). The positive correlations suggested that when students have a strong sense of self-efficacy, they view themselves as resilient individuals. Furthermore, when students perceived themselves as being self-efficacious, they view themselves as good leaders. The data indicated that participants who perceive themselves as having leadership qualities also feel as if they are resilient individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy. Moreover, participants who demonstrated a strong sense of self-efficacy felt as if they are good leaders and that they are resilient individuals. Lastly, resilient students demonstrated a positive relationship with self-efficacy indicating that they are capable of taking on rigorous tasks, assignments, or individuals, while displaying strong leadership skills. Table 12 summarizes these correlation data on subgroups.

Table 12.

Correlation of Factors on the SASS

	Self-Efficacy	Leadership	Resiliency
Self-Efficacy	-	-	-
Leadership	.592**	-	-
Resiliency	.517**	.428**	-

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 3

To address Research Question 3, the researcher computed means and standard deviations on the three factors for the pilot group *(N=111)* and study group *(N = 104).* He then conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare the means of self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership between a comparison group and this study group.

The comparison group consisted of 111 participants who were part of the pilot study group for the development of the *SASS* instrument. This group consisted of African American sophomores, juniors, and seniors at the same university where the study was conducted whereas this study group consisted of 104 freshmen African American males. The only difference discernable between the two groups was age and college level. The pilot group scored a mean range level of 3.28 – 3.78, while the study group scored at a higher mean range level of 4.01 – 4.12. Furthermore, the pilot group and the study group also differed significantly in leadership at the $p < .05$ level. Moreover, the effect sizes, using Cohen's *d*, were computed to identify practical significance of the differences between the study group and the pilot group on *SASS* subscales (Cohen, 1988). The study group and pilot group differed in self-efficacy and leadership, which revealed a small effect on the *SASS* scale at $d =$

.419 and $d = .466$ respectively. However, resiliency revealed a strong effect ($d = 1.636$). Means and standard deviations may be seen in Table 13.

Table 13.

Descriptive Statistics on Comparison Groups (Study Group: N=104 and Pilot Group: N=111)

Factor	Study Group		Pilot Group		Effect Size
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*d*
Self-Efficacy	4.01	.464	3.78	.621	.419*
Resiliency	4.12	.508	3.28	.519	1.636 **
Leadership	4.04	.533	3.75	.701	.466*

Note: Effect size strength were determined using Cohen's (1988) breakdown for small (d =.20-.49), moderate (d = .50-.79), or strong (d = .80 or higher).
*Small effect. **Strong effect.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run, in which the study group and comparison group differed significantly on the self-efficacy scale at the $F(1, 213) = 8.91, p < .05$ level. Participants from the pilot group perceived themselves as having lower self-perceptions towards self-efficacy than the study group. Resiliency also differed significantly between the pilot group and study group at $F(1, 213) = 141.812, p < .001$ level. Participants in the study group displayed higher self-perceptions of themselves on resiliency rating when compared to the study group. Furthermore, the pilot group and the study group also differed significantly in leadership at the $F(1, 213) = 11.942, p < .05$ level. Again, the study group demonstrated a higher self-perception of leadership. Table 14 summarizes the results of the analysis of variance on self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership between the pilot group and the study group.

Table 14.

Analysis of Variance on factors for Pilot Group and Study Group

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
			Between Groups		
Self-Efficacy	2.703	1	2.703	8.910	.003*
Resiliency	37.420	1	37.420	141.812	.000**
Leadership	4.665	1	4.665	11.942	.001*
			Within Groups		
Self-Efficacy	64.621	213	.303	8.910	.003*
Resiliency	56.204	213	.264	141.812	.000**
Leadership	83.198	213	.391	11.942	.001*

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .001$

Research Question 4

Descriptive statistics were run to show the relationship of self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership for students based on their demographic profiles *(Honors Program, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Home-Schooled, Honors & A.P., and Dual Enrollment; Urban, Suburban, & Rural; Extracurricular Activities; and participation in a Mentorship or Internship)*. A one-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed to analyze if African American male freshmen differ on self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership in respect to extracurricular activities: (a) sports, (b) community service, (c) academic competitions, (d) art programs, (e) special interest groups, and (f) participation in a mentorship or internship program. Table 16 summarizes descriptive statistics for the extracurricular subgroups.

In order to examine participants' perceptions by academic preparation, school context, extracurricular activities, and participation in a mentorship or internship program during high school, additional descriptive statistics were conducted. The mean scores for home-schooled participants were lower on self-efficacy in comparison to the other five groups. Home-school participants may have perceived themselves in that manner because they are not in a school climate to interact with peers during the day. Also, there was only one participant in home-school which does not provide significant results. Dual enrollment (AP & IB) participants had the highest score on resiliency ($M = 4.33$, $SD = .506$ among the groups. Table 15 summarizes these data.

Table 15.

Means and Standard Deviations for Academic Programs (N=104)

		Subscales	
Subgroups	Self-Efficacy	Resiliency	Leadership
Academic Preparation:			
Honors Program			
M	3.97	4.09	4.04
SD	.442	.492	.552
N	54	54	54
Advanced Placement			
M	4.04	4.10	4.00
SD	.518	.510	.511
N	26	26	26
International Baccalaureate			
M	3.77	4.09	3.77
SD	.611	.344	.412
N	5	5	5
Home-Schooled			
M	3.71	4.29	3.86
SD	0	0	0
N	1	1	1
Dual Enrollment (IB & AP)			
M	4.27	4.33	4.18
SD	.407	.506	.638
N	18	18	18

Urban students rated themselves higher in both self-efficacy *(M* = 4.12, *SD* = .458*)* and leadership *(M* = 4.17, *SD* = .465*)*. However, rural students rated themselves higher on resiliency *(M* = 4.19, *SD* = .492*)*. Because of the nature and background of rural areas, students may perceive that they have stronger sense of resilience as a result of fewer challenges faced in rural schools in contrast to the many challenges and pressures of students in urban and suburban schools. Table 16 summarizes the results on school context.

Table 16

Means and Standard Deviations on School Context (N=104)

Subgroups		Self-Efficacy	Resiliency	Leadership
Urban	*M*	4.12	4.10	4.17
	SD	.458	.534	.465
	N	43	43	43
Suburban	*M*	3.92	4.12	3.94
	SD	.459	.498	.544
	N	55	55	55
Rural	*M*	4.05	4.19	4.07
	SD	.440	.492	.749
	N	6	6	6

In terms of extracurricular activities, participants in art programs rated themselves higher across all three factors: self-efficacy *(M* = 4.08, *SD* = .586*)*, resiliency *(M* = 4.22, *SD* = .570*)*, and leadership *(M* = 4.32, *SD* = .490*)*. Art programs provide students with the opportunity to experiment and be creative. Means and standard deviations for extracurricular activities and participation in mentorship or internship programs are summarized in Table 17 and Table 18 respectively.

Table 17

Means and Standard Deviations for Extracurricular Activities (N=104)

		Subscales	
Subgroups	Self-Efficacy	Resiliency	Leadership
Extracurricular Activities: Sports			
M	3.99	4.11	4.00
SD	.458	.537	.535
N	80	80	80
Community Service			
M	4.08	4.17	4.16
SD	.450	.463	.512
N	54	54	54
Academic Competitions			
M	4.07	4.01	4.10
SD	.402	.660	.406
N	12	12	12
Art Program			
M	4.08	4.22	4.32
SD	.586	.570	.490
N	23	23	23
Special Interest			
M	4.00	4.14	4.06
SD	.450	.568	.494
N	30	30	30

Table 18

Means and Standard Deviations on Mentorship/ Internship Programs (N=104)

Group	Self-Efficacy	Resiliency	Leadership
Participation in a Mentorship or Internship:			
M	4.08	4.28	4.16
SD	.463	.525	.564
N	41	41	41

Participants in art programs, community service, and mentorship/internships rated themselves higher on at least one of the subscales (self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership)

than other groups, all three scoring 4.08 on self-efficacy to 4.32 for art program students on leadership, and 4.28 for mentorship students on resiliency. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted with a Scheffé post hoc to determine if freshmen students differ significantly on key independent variable related to their school experience. Table 19 summarizes results for the ANOVA on key independent variables.

A one-way ANOVA revealed significant differences for self-efficacy ($F = 5.054, p < .05$) and ($F = 6.590$, $p < .05$) for participants of art programs and mentorship/internship respectively. ANOVA revealed significant differences for leadership ($F = 4.618$, $p < .05$) and resiliency ($F = 10.244, p < .05$). Participants were asked to respond if they participated in a mentorship program or internship program during their high school experience. Sixty-three participants indicated that they participated in such programs.

Table 19.

Analysis of Variance for SASS subscales on Study Group (N=104)

Source	*df*	*F*		
		Self-Efficacy	*Leadership*	*Resiliency*
Sports	1	.202	.135	1.340
Community Service	1	.048	.270	.095
Academic Competitions	1	.258	.155	3.071
Art Programs		5.054*	4.618*	1.013
Special Interests	1	.432	.102	2.182
Mentorship/ Internship	1	6.590*	1.606	10.244*

*p < .05

Summary of Findings Related to Research Questions

The research findings for the Student Academic Success Scale are summarized by research question below.

Research Question # 1: What are university freshmen African American males' perceptions of their academic success prior to college entrance?

Data revealed that participants perceive themselves rather highly on the Student Academic Success Scale. Mean scores revealed that participants identify themselves as individuals with self-efficacy ($M = 4.01$), individuals who are resilient ($M = 4.12$), and who exemplify leadership ($M = 4.04$). These findings indicate that the participants view themselves as highly self-efficacious, resilient, and in possession of the necessary leadership skills that will enable them to be successful in future endeavors.

Research Question #2: What is the relationship among self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership with African American males prior to college entrance?

There were positive significant correlations among all three of the variables of self-efficacy, resiliency and leadership. The levels of the correlation indicate that some aspects of each construct may be present in the others. Furthermore, the overlapping nature of the correlations indicate that the three factors – self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership – are strongly related to each other.

Research Question #3: Are there differences in perceptions of academic success between freshmen African American male students and a comparison group of upper classmen (i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors used as the pilot group for the instrument)?

A one-way factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed that freshmen male students perceive themselves higher on the *SASS* subscales than students from the pilot group

(i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors), using their high school experience as a point of reference. The findings for this question portray African American freshmen males as individuals who strongly believe that they will be successful and in comparison to the upper classmen, will be successful in college.

Research Question #4: How do high-achieving freshmen African American males differ on self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership in respect to key demographic background variables (i.e., sports, clubs, academic clubs, community service, special interests groups, academic competitions, art programs)?

A one-way factoral analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that African American male freshmen who participated in art programs were rated significantly higher on self-efficacy and leadership. Also, the ANOVA revealed that participants in a mentorship or internship program displayed significantly higher degrees of self-efficacy and resiliency. The findings for this question reveal that alternative programs, such as an art program, can serve as vehicles to help develop self-efficacy and leadership potential in individuals. Also, mentorship or internship programs can help foster and develop self-efficacious and resilient individuals, when presented with a positive mentor or provided with real-world experience.

Summary

Overall, the research findings suggest that African American males entering into Historically Black Institutions who take part in rigorous academic programs coupled with various extracurricular programs, perceive themselves as self-efficacious, resilient, and display leadership skills. The results demonstrated that the dependent variables – self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership – are highly correlated and highly predictive of academic success. Moreover, African American freshmen males perceive themselves higher on all three scale

items than the pilot group of upper classmen, indicating that this group of students views these internal characteristics as quite high. Furthermore, students who have an opportunity to take part in high school programs, both academic and extracurricular, appear to be on the road to a successful college experience.

Chapter 5
Discussion, Conclusions, and Implications

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore three factors – self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership - that relate to academic success in African American male college students at freshman level. Furthermore, the study investigated how these three dependent variables intercorrelate, how a pilot group and study group differ in respect to the three dependent variables, and how African American freshman males differ in respect to these dependent variables in respect to key demographic variables.

The study utilized the following instrument to address each research question: Student Academic Success Scale (SASS). The SASS was created by the researcher in a graduate course at The College of William and Mary. Reliability scores and a factor analysis revealed that the instrument was appropriate for the study. Descriptive statistics, correlation coefficients, and a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were data analysis methods utilized to interpret data.

The literature review provided the foundation for the development of the instrument and study. Relevant literature strands consisted of underrepresentation population, gifted African American students, talent development, self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership. This chapter provides discussion and synthesis of research findings and implications for policy, practice, and future research.

Discussion

Data from the Student Academic Success Scale *(SASS)* revealed that participants in a study group (N=104) perceived themselves as being highly efficacious, resilient, and in possession of leadership potential. The participants took part in a rigorous academic program during their tenure as high school students. These programs included honors programs, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and even a home-schooled student. The demanding nature of each program requires students to be exposed to challenging course work, rigorous tasks, and sometimes community service.

The nature of understanding their success was the rationale for conducting this study and led to the development of an instrument that would measure students' perceptions of their success. Understanding why students are successful and not dwelling on why students are failing was the premise of this study and allowed the researcher to focus on factors that enable students to be successful. These factors originated from the literature and demonstrated high intercorrelations. Self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership were identified as three factors that related to students being successful, but more particularly, African American males being successful

Reis, Colbert, and Hébert (2005) indicate that if academically talented students are going to underachieve, they typically began to do so in high school. Because these students were exposed to academic rigor, it is easily assumed that many will feel inclined to withdraw from such coursework and take on a lesser challenge. However, the participants in the study decided to persist and therefore were successful because they are currently enrolled in college. Thus underachievement was not an issue for them in high school.

Extracurricular Participation

Coupled with rigorous academic course work, many of the participants took part in extracurricular activities as students in high school. These extracurricular activities included: sports, community service, academic competitions, art programs, and participation in a mentorship or internship programs. Roach (1999) suggests that participation in youth programs and/or extracurricular activities supports the development of resiliency. The majority of students took part in sports and community service programs, and a significant number of students took part in a mentorship or internship experience during their high school tenure. However, results indicate that participants in art programs and those who took part in a mentorship or internship experience appeared to be significant in positively affecting self-perception. Tracey and Sedlacek (1985) suggest that mentor relationships may positively influence retention and achievement. Erkut and Mokros (1984) reported that participants in a study identified an instructor who had a significant impact on them by displaying skills and several qualities that they saw important and student outcomes associated with gender of the student in relation to his/her mentor. Enrich, Hansford, and Tennent (2004) used a structured analysis of the literature from three disciplines to arrive at a conclusion of their understanding of the mentoring phenomenon. In their study, Enrich et al. (2004) report that of the educational studies reviewed, over 35% reported positive outcomes of being successful and competent as a result of mentoring.

Art programs offered students opportunities to express themselves and lend themselves to creative atmosphere. This creative atmosphere is what allows the student to develop self-awareness and helps develop their self-efficacy. By accomplishing specific art tasks, one can further develop a sense of accomplishment and completing tasks, which in turn is developing

self-efficacy. Furthermore, Cosgrove (1986) indicated that students who participated in an alternative program, such as the mentorship program in his study, were more satisfied with a university setting and demonstrated better skills to accomplish tasks than a control group. Also, leadership in such programs can be enhanced because they tend to allow students an opportunity to learn and develop within their own rite.

Self-efficacy

Participants demonstrated that they were self-efficacious individuals. Self-efficacy theory would predict that students' academic self-concept would be an important mediator of academic performance (Witherspoon, Speight, & Thomas, 1997). According to Woolfolk (2008), "Self-concept is a more global construct that contains many perceptions about self, including self-efficacy" (p.359). According to Bandura (1995), people's level of motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively the case.

Furthermore, participants in mentorships or internships perceived themselves to be resilient and in possession of high self-efficacy. Mentorship programs provide students opportunities to be paired up with an expert in a field or someone who shares a similar interest with a student. Reis et al. (2005) suggests that resilience is developed in response to interactions. These experiences provide students with exposure to individuals who may have been through trials and tribulations, courses that may be giving students issues, or other life-experiences. Individuals who demonstrate resiliency are hardy, invulnerable, and invincible (Wolin & Wolin, 1993). Results of the study indicate that students perceived themselves as being highly resilient individuals. Mean scores demonstrate their perceptions in the moderately high scoring range. Furthermore, these participants seem to embrace their abilities

and work to achieve at a level appropriate with their abilities, despite difficult obstacles (Reis, Colbert, & Hébert, 2005). When analyzing the data in extracurricular activities (i.e., sports, community service, academic competitions, art programs, special interest groups, and participation in a mentorship or internship programs), participants scored higher on resiliency than the other factors. According to McMillan and Reed (1992), students who are actively involved in events, at school or in other arenas seem to provide a refuge for resilient students and are rather resilient themselves.

Despite high mean scores on subscales, resiliency was only significant with students who took part in mentorship or internship programs and not other extracurricular activities. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that students from a study group (freshman males) perceived themselves statistically higher on resiliency than a pilot group (upper classmen). Furthermore, resiliency is cultivated at critical life junctures (Bonner et al., 2008). Moreover, when participating in mentorship programs individuals are afforded someone to converse and share issues or problems with during critical times, which can provide a cultivating experience from an individual who may have experienced or have some knowledge of a particular issue to provide feedback or a viable solution. Mentorship or internship programs provide students with access to those who have successfully overcome challenges or who have demonstrated resiliency during their youth and now have reaped the benefits of overcoming odds.

Having a mentor to communicate and collaborate with in regard to handling conflict or challenging tasks proves to be very valuable and can help develop a students' understanding of him or herself. But in particular, having a mentor to help set goals and accomplish them is important. According to Schunk (1991), "goal setting is hypothesized to be an important

cognitive process affecting motivation" (p. 213). Moreover, they [students] are likely to experience a strong sense of self-efficacy for attaining a goal or goals. Also, by being paired with a mentor, a student is able to take on issues with an expectation that a mentor can provide insight to the issue and help them successfully conjure up conflict resolution that will enable them to be more resilient than someone who does not have a mentor.

Study Group and Comparison Group Findings

The researcher compared two groups, a comparison group, a pilot group of upper-classmen and the study group, which consisted of African American freshmen males at a Historically Black University. The results from the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that the study group of African American freshmen males perceived themselves higher on self-efficacy, resiliency and leadership in comparison to the upper classmen. The results may be due to upper classmen being farther removed from their high school experience and in college. Furthermore, college students are exposed to a different level of rigor, confronted with different circumstances and problems, are on a different level of camaraderie with friends, and have a different level of maturity. Therefore, perceptions were based on present perceptions. An alternative explanation would be that there were some differences between the two groups of students on involvement in academics, extracurricular activities, and mentorships or internships since the researcher did not collect these data for the pilot group.

Conclusions

Findings from this study indicate that self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership are highly correlated factors that appear to be high for this group of African American male students. Participants demonstrated that they perceived themselves as having high self-efficacy, which

indicates that they felt as if they were capable of completing rigorous assignments, performing various tasks, and accomplishing many of the tasks set before them. Furthermore, participants also perceived themselves as being highly resilient individuals, which demonstrates their willingness or capability to overcome odds or handle adverse situations. Lastly, participants perceived themselves as high on leadership. The participants indicated that they felt as if they were capable leaders and that they were perceived as leaders in their own right and among peers and school officials. Freshmen males appeared to be stronger in the three constructs than older students at the same university.

The participants' high self-perceptions of self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership suggest that they are well-positioned to be successful in college. Correlational results indicate that there was some overlap among the three variables, given that all correlations were greater than .4, suggesting that the three are not totally separate constructs. Finally, participants in art programs and mentorship or internship programs rated themselves more highly on the variables of resilience and leadership than did students participating in extracurricular academic programs.

Implications for Practice

Key implications for practice in the areas of resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership development stem from this research study. First, results indicate that art programs were highly significant in students' perception on self-efficacy and leadership. Parents, teachers and administrators must remain cognizant of programs, within school and beyond school, that stimulate and/or foster outlets for the arts. For example, out-of-school programs are extremely beneficial to accommodate differences in economic status, talents, interests and race (Kitano, 2007).

A second implication focuses on mentorship and/or internship opportunities as a means to help the development of self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership. According to Jacobi (1991), "there is a critical need for more research about mentoring, especially as it applies to undergraduate success" (p. 526). The results of the study indicated that participants who were in mentorship or internship programs rated themselves significantly higher on self-efficacy and resiliency. These results allude to the need for providing African American male students opportunities to take part in real-world issues, real-world activities, and real-world situations. The role of mentorships and internships provide students with these types of opportunities to address cultural sensitive issues. Ford and Harris (1990) indicate that gifted and talented Black students experience more educational difficulties than students of the dominant culture, which strongly support the need for mentorship opportunities for African American male students. Schools can provide internship experiences for students in elementary, middle school, and high school and pair them with a mentor that will facilitate their understanding and inner workings of a possible field of interest and real-world experiences. Furthermore, it is critical that leadership development and potential of African American male students be developed as part of the secondary educational experience (Bonner et al., 2008).

A third implication for practice is that colleges and universities should consider providing mentors for freshmen students. Bonner (2001) found that one Historically Black College or University (HBCU) provided such assistance to both high-achieving students and average ability students during their tenure as students. Results indicated that the students had a higher self-perception of themselves than the students at the Traditionally White Institution (TWI). However, professors and school officials at colleges or universities and both HBCU's

and TWI's should consider developing mentorship opportunities that will support growth in African American males in these factors.

Furthermore, art experiences appear to be just as important as mentorship opportunities. Service learning opportunities can help generate students' understanding of real-world experiences through working with business, outreach programs, or other venues that provide services for people. According to Chee (2007), "service learning provides a theoretical perspective that simultaneously addresses affect and cognition, service and learning, and personal and interpersonal (including leadership) development" (p. 213). Moreover, service-learning opportunities in school can help develop students' problem-solving capabilities as well.

Lastly, the recognition of student achievements is vitally important. Parents, teachers, administrators, community organizations and other entities are not giving students of color enough credit for their accomplishments. By not recognizing student achievements, but paying more attention to the "wrong-doings" young adults may perceive the notion of being in trouble as a way to become highly recognized or being accomplished. Schools, parents, and various civic organizations must serve as catalysts to recognize the great accomplishments of high ability African American males in the community. These recognitions can serve to help foster and further develop their self-efficacy, resiliency, and willingness to lead.

Implications for Future Research

The researcher had expectations that the three factors would be highly correlated and led to success for African American males. A follow-up study of participants will provide a deeper look at these factors and further examine how students perceive themselves over time beyond their freshman year. Since African American freshmen males perceived themselves

higher on all three factors than sophomores, juniors and seniors at the same university, it would be interesting to see how these groups rates themselves at each stage of the college experience. Some changes in the scale may be needed to use college as the reference points rather than high school.

Future research with the Student Academic Success Scale *(SASS)* as the instrument of choice should also evaluate how African American males compare to African American females. A comparison of the two groups may yield interesting findings that would provide more insight on implications for practice in the K – 12 and university arenas.

Similarly, a comparison of African American males at a Traditionally White Institution (TWI) could give strong evidence on students' self-perceptions based on college choice. Students at TWI's may be exposed to different cultures and experiences than students at HBCU's. Furthermore, creating a second form of the scale to reflect on college experiences would aid in conducting such a study.

Lastly, a longitudinal study in terms of how perceptions change or stay the same over a period of time can extend the original participants' perceptions. Completing the *SASS* before graduation from college, five years beyond graduation, and at a later period, coupled with interviews could provide important insights about the stability of self perceptions on the variables of self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership over time.

In Conclusion

Clearly, it is important to value students' perceptions of themselves, for they are the ones who know themselves the best. Asking students to give an account of their unique experiences in high school and to rate themselves on self-efficacy, resiliency, and leadership, allowed the researcher to understand certain aspects of what enables African American males

to be successful. This study suggests to educators and parents that paying attention to the positive accomplishments of African American males needs to out-weigh the negativity surrounding them in their respective communities and the media. Therefore, celebrating the good grades, the victories on the field, and/or the development of special projects can help African American males develop a strong sense of self-efficacy, become more resilient, and demonstrate strong leadership skills.

References

Anglin, D.M., & Wade, J.C. (2007). Racial socialization, racial identity, and Black students' adjustment to college. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 13*(3), 207-215.

Bandura, A. (1986). Social *foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (1995). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. New York: Cambridge.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W.H. Freeman.

Bandura. A. (2001). *Guide for constructing self-efficacy scales.* Monograph.

Bandura. A. (2006). Adolescent development from an agentic perspective. In F. Pajares & T. Urdan (Ed.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents*. (pp. 1-43). Greenwich, Connecticut: Information Age Publishing.

Bass, B.M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York: Free Press.

Bennis, W., & Nanus, B. (1985). *Leaders: The strategies for taking charge*. New York: Harper & Row.

Bernal, E.M. (2002). Three ways to achieve a more equitable representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in GT programs. *Roeper Review, 24*, 82-89.

Berndt, T.J. & Keefe, K. (1995). Friends' influence on adolescent adjustment to school. *Child Development, 66(*5), 1312-1329.

Betz, N.E. & Hackett, G. (1983). The relationship of mathematics self-efficacy Expectations to the selection of science-based college majors. *Journal of vocational Behavior, 23*, 329-345.

Black, J.D. (1984). Leadership: A new model particularly applicable to gifted youth. Reston VA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education.

Bloom, B.S. (1982). The role of gifts and markers in the development of talent. *Exceptional Children, 48*(6), 510-521.

Bloom, B (Ed.). (1985). *Developing talent in young people.* New York: Ballantine.

Bolman, L.G. & Deal, T. E. (2003). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bong, M. (2001a). Between and within domain relations of academic motivation among middle and high school students: Self-efficacy, task-value, and achievement goals. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 93*(1), 23-34.

Bong, M. (2001b). Role of self-efficacy and task-value in predicting college students' course performance and future enrollment intentions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 26*, 553-570.

Bonner, F.A., II. (2001). Gifted African American male college students: A phenomenologicalStudy. A report for the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. http://www.uconn.gifted.edu/.; 2001-09-00.

Bonner, F.A., II, Jennings, M.E., Marbley, A.F., & Brown, L.A. (2008). Capitalizing on leadership capacity: Gifted African American males in high school. *Roeper Review, 30*, 93-103.

Borland, J.H. & Wright, L. (1994). Identifying young, potentially gifted economically disadvantaged students. *Gifted Child Quarterly 38(4)*, 164-171.

Borland, J.H., Schnur, R. & Wright, L. (2000, Winter). Economically disadvantaged

students in a school for the academically gifted: A postpositivist inquiry into individual and family adjustment. *Gifted Child Quarterly 44(1)*, 13-32.

Bridgeman, B. & Wendler, C. (2004). *Characteristics of minority students who excel on the SAT and in the classroom: Educational Testing Service (ETS) Policy Information Report.* Princeton, NJ: ETS.

Broh, B.A. (2002). Linking extracurricular programming to academic achievement: Who benefits and why? *Sociology of Education, 75,* 69-91.

Burns, J.M. (1978). *Leadership.* New York: Harper and Row.

Carson, B. (1990). *Gifted hands: The Ben Carson story.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.

Cates, W.M. (1985). *A practical guide to educational research.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Chee, A.L. (2007). Learning to serve and to lead: Empowering gifted youth to make a difference through service learning. In J.L. VanTassel-Baska (Ed.) *Serving gifted learners beyond the traditional classroom* (pp. 213-240). Waco, Texas: Prufrock Press

Chemers, M. M. (1997). *An integrative theory of leadership.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Christiano, D.J. & Robinson, S. (1982). Leadership and cognitive styles of college student leaders. *Journal of College Students Personnel, 23*, 520-524.

Clawson, J.G. (2006). *Level three leadership: Getting below the surface.* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences.* Hillside, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Cohen, L.M. (1990). Meeting the needs of gifted and talented minority language students. Eric Digest: NAGC.

Colangelo, N., & Davis, G.A. (2003). *Handbook of gifted education.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Colangelo, N., Assouline, S.G., & Gross, M.U. (2004). *A nation deceieved: How schools hold back America's brightest students, Volume 1.* Iowa City, Iowa: The University of Iowa.

Cosgrove, T. J. (1986). The effects of participation in a mentoring-transcript program on freshmen. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 27*, 119 – 124.

Creswell, J.W. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research.* New York: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., Rathunde, K., & Whalen, S. (1993). *Talented teenagers: The roots of success and failure.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Daniels, V.I. (1998). Minority students in gifted and special education programs: The case for educational equity. *Journal of Special Education, 32*(1), 41-43.

Dai, D.Y., & Feldhusen, J. F. (1996). Goal orientations of gifted students. *Gifted and Talented International, 11*, 84-88.

Diaz, E.I. (1998). Perceived factors influencing the academic underachievement of talented students of Puerto Rican descent. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 42*(2), 105-122.

Eccles, J.S., Midgley, C., Buchannan, C.M., Flanagan, C., Mac Iver, D., Reuman, D. (1993). Development of adolescence: The impact of stage/environment fit. *American Psychologist, 48*, 90-101.

Enrich, L.C., Hansford, B., & Tennent, L. (2004). Formal mentoring: Programs in education

and other professions: A review of the literature. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 40* (4), 518-540.

Erkut, S., & Mokros, J. R. (1984). Professors as models and mentors for college students. *American Educational Research Journal, 21*, 399 – 417.

Everitt, B.S. (1975). Multivariate analysis: The need for data and other problems. *British Journal of Psychiatry, 126*, 237-240.

Fabrigar, L.R., Wegener, D.T., MacCallum, R.C., & Strahan, E.J. (1999). Evaluating the use of exploratory factor analysis in psychological research. *Psychological Methods, 4*, 272-299.

Feldhusen, J.F. (1995). Talent development: The new direction in gifted education. *Roeper Review, 18*(2), 92.

Feldhusen, J. F., & Kennedy, D. M. (1988). Preparing gifted youth for leadership roles in a rapidly changing society. *Roeper Review, 10*(4), 226-230.

Fine, M. (1991). *Framing dropouts: Notes on the politics of an urban public high school*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Flowers, T.A., Milner, H.R., & Moore, J.L., III. (2003). Effects of locus of control on African American high school seniors' educational aspirations: Implications for preservice and inservice high school teachers and counselors. *The High School Journal, 87*, 39-50.

Ford, D.Y. (2007). Diamonds in the rough: Recognizing and meeting the needs of gifted children from low SES backgrounds. In J.L. Van Tassel-Baska & T. Stambaugh (Ed.) *Overlooked Gems: A National Perspective on Low-Income Promising Learners*, (pp. 37-41). Washington, D.C.: National Association for Gifted Children.

Ford, D.Y., & Harris, J.J. (1990). On discovering the hidden treasure of gifted

and talented Black children. *Roeper Review, 13(1), 27-33.*

Ford, D.Y. (1994). Nurturing resilience in gifted Black youth. *Roeper Review, 17,* 80-85.

Ford, D.Y. (1998). The underrepresentation of minority students in gifted education: Problems and promises in recruitment and retention. *Journal of Special Education, 32*(1), 4-14.

Ford, D.Y., & Trotman, M.F. (2001). Teachers of gifted students: Suggested multicultural characteristics and competencies. *Roeper Review, 23(4), 235-239.*

Ford, D.Y. (2004). A challenge for culturally diverse families of gifted children: Forced choices between achievement and affiliation. *Gifted Child Today, 27(3),* 26-35.

Ford, D.Y., Moore, J.L., & Milner, H.R. (2005). Beyond cultureblindness: A model of culture with implications for gifted education. *Roeper Review, 27(2),* 97-103.

Fordham, S & Ogbu, J. (1986). Black students' school success: Coping with the "burden of acting white". *The Urban Review, 18*(3), 176-206.

Frigon, N.L. & Jackson, H.K. (1996). *The leader: Developing the skills and personal qualities you need to lead effectively.* New York: Amacom.

Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gagne, F. (1993). Constructs and models pertaining to exceptional human abilities. In K.A. Heller, F.J. Monks, & A.H. Passow (Eds.) *International Handbook of Research and Development of Giftedness and Talent.* (pp. 69-87). Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Gagne, F. (1995). From giftedness to talent: A developmental model and its impact on the language of the field. *Roeper Review, 18*(2), 103-111.

Gall, M.D., Gall, J.P. & Borg, W.R. (2003). *Educational research: An introduction* (7th ed.). Boston: Allen and Bacon.

Gallagher, J.J. (2003). Issues and challenges in the education of gifted students. In N. Colangelo & G.A. Davis (Eds.) *Handbook of gifted education* (pp. 11-23). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Gardner, J.W. (1990). *On leadership.* New York: Free Press.

Garrison, K.B. (1992). *An investigation of the effect of the communicative style of leaders* on group cohesion. A dissertation from the University of Southern Mississippi.

Grantham, T.C., & Ford, D.Y. (1998). Principal instructional leadership can reverse the under-representation of black students in gifted education. *NASSP Bulletin, 82(595), 101-109.*

Green, S.B., & Salkind, N.J. (2005). *Using SPSS for windows and macintosh: Analyzing and understanding data.* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Gutman, L.M. (2006). How student and parent goal orientations and classroom goal Structures influence the math achievement of African Americans during the high school transition. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 31*, 44-63.

Heck, R.H. and Mahoe, R. (2006). Student transition to high school and persistence: Highlighting the influences of social divisions and school contingencies. *American Journal of Education 112*(3), 418-446.

Hebert, T.P. (1997). Jamison's story: Talent nurtured in troubled times. *Roeper Review, 19*(3), 142-148.

Herbert, T.P. and Beardsly, T.M. (2001). Jermaine: A critical case study of a gifted black child living in rural poverty. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 45, (2), 85-100.

Hebert, T.P. (2002). Educating gifted children from low socioeconomic backgrounds: Creating visions of a hopeful future. *Exceptionality 10(2),* 127-138.

Hodgkinson, H. (2007). Leaving too many children behind: A demographer's view on the neglect of america's youngest children. In J.L. Van Tassel-Baska & T. Stambaugh (Ed.) *Overlooked gems: A national perspective on low-income promising learners* (pp. 7-20). Washington, D.C.: National Association for Gifted Children.

Hollingworth, L S. (1939). What we know about the early selection and training of leaders. *Teachers College Record, 40*, 575-592.

Hsieh, P., Sullivan, J.R., & Guerra, N.S. (2007). A closer look at college students: Self-efficacy and goal orientation. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 18*(3), 454-476.

Hughes, R.L., & Bonner, F.A., II. (2007). Leaving Black males behind: Debunking the Myth of meritocratic education. *Journal of Race and Policy, 2*, 76-90.

Hughes, R.L., Ginnett, R.C., & Curphy, G.J. (2002). *Leadership: Enhancing the lessons of experience*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Jacobi, M. (1991). Mentoring and undergraduate academic success: A literature review. *Review of Educational Research, 61* (4), 505 – 532.

Johnsen, S.K., Feuerbacher, S., & Witte, M.W. (2007). Increasing the retention of gifted Students from low-income backgrounds in university programs for the gifted: The UYP project. In J.L. Van Tassel-Baska (Ed.). *Serving gifted learners beyond the traditional classroom* (pp. 55-79). Waco, Texas: Prufrock Press Inc.

Karnes, F., & Bean, S. M. (1990). *Developing leadership in gifted youth.* Council for Exceptional Children, Reston, VA.

Kennedy, E. (1995). Correlates of perceived popularity among peers: A study of race

and gender differences among middle school students. *Journal of Negro Education, 64*(2), 186-195.

Kitano, M.G. (2007). Poverty, diversity, and promise. In J.L. Van Tassel-Baska & T. Stambaugh (Ed.) *Overlooked Gems: A National Perspective on Low-Income Promising Learners*, (pp. 37-41). Washington, D.C.: National Association for Gifted Children.

Klausmeier, H.J. (1996). The role of the educational researcher in educational improvement. In C.P. Benbow & D. Lubinski (Eds.), *Intellectual talent: psychometric and social issues.* (pp. 99-116). Johns Hopkins University Press.

Komives, S.R., Lucas, N., & McMahon, T.R. (1998). *Exploring leadership: For college students who want to make a difference.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (1987). *The leadership challenge: How to get Extraordinary things done in organizations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (2002). *The leadership challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Leak, J. (2003). *A qualitative study of resilience among African American adolescent males in North Carolina.* A dissertation from the Graduate School of North Carolina State University.

Lee, C.D. (2003). Why we need to rethink race and ethnicity in educational research. *Education Researcher, 32*(5), 3-5.

Lemlech, J.K. (2006) (6th Ed.) *Curriculum and instructional methods for the elementary and middle school years.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Linnenbrink, E.A., & Pintrich, P.R. (2002). Motivation as an enabler for academic

success. *School Psychology Review, 31*, 313-327.

Lucas, N., & Anello, E. (1995). *Ethics and leadership.* Unpublished paper. Salzburg Leadership Seminar. Salzburg, Austria. November 11-18, 1995.

Luo, M., Huang, W., & Najjar, L. (2007). The relationship between perceptions of a Chinese high school's ethical climate and students' school performance. *Journal of Moral Education, 36*(1), 93-111.

MacMillan, D.L, & Reschly, D.J. (1998). Overrepresentation of minority students: The case for greater specificity or reconsideration of the variables examined. *Journal of Special Education, 32*(1), 15-24.

Masten, A.S. (1994). Resilience in individual development: Successful adaptation despite risk and adversity. In M.C. Wang & E.W. Gordon (Ed.), *Educational resilience in inner-city America: Challenges and prospects* (pp. 3-25). New Jersey: Lawrence Elrbaum Associates.

Masten, A.S., Best, K.M., & Garmezy, N. (1990). Resilience and development: Contributions from the study of children who overcome adversity. *Development and Psychopathology, 2*, 425-444.

McCord, J. (1994). Resilience as a dispositional quality: Some methodological points. In M.C. Wang & E.W. Gordon (Eds.) *Educational Resilience in Inner-City America: Challenges and Prospects.* (pp. 109-118). New Jersey: Lawrence Elrbaum Associates.

McMillan, J.H. & Reed, D.F. (1993). A qualitative study of resilient at-risk students. Paper presented at the 1993 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta.

McMillan, J.H. & Reed, D.F. (1994, January/February). At-risk students and resiliency: Factors contributing to academic success. *The Clearing House 67*(2), 137-140.

Mehan, H. (1992). Contextual factors surrounding Hispanic dropouts. Paper written for the Hispanic dropout project, National clearinghouse for English language acquisition, Washington, D.C., http://www.nclea.gwu.edu/pubs/hdp/1/.

Moore, J.L., Ford, D.Y., & Milner, H.R. (2005). Recruitment is not enough: Retaining African American students in gifted education. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 49(1),* 51-67.

Naglieri, J. A. & Ford, D. Y. (2003). Addressing underrepresentation of gifted minority children using the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT). *Gifted Child Quarterly, 47(2),* 155-160.

Nahavandi, A. (2006). *The art and science of leadership.* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Natriello, G, & Dornbusch, S.M. (1984). *Teacher evaluative standards and student Efforts.* New York: Longman.

Neihart, M. (2001). Risk and resilience in gifted children: a conceptual framework. In M. Neihart, S.M. Reis, N. Robinson, & S. Moon (Eds.), *The social and emotional development of gifted children: What do we know?* (pp. 114-119). Waco. TX: Prufrock Press.

Nieto, S. (2005). Public education in the twentieth century and beyond: High hopes, broken promises, and an uncertain future. *Harvard Educational Review, 75,* 43-64.

Northouse, P.G. (2004). *Leadership: Theory and practice.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Nunnally, J.C. (1978). *Psychometric theory.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Ogbu, J. (2004). Collective identity and the burden of "acting white" in Black history, community and education. *The Urban Review, 36*(1), 1-35.

Pajares, F. (1996). Self-efficacy beliefs in achievement settings. *Review of Educational Research, 66*, 543-578.

Pajares, F. & Miller, M. D. (1994). Role of self-efficacy and self-concept beliefs in mathematical problem solving: A path analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 86*(2), 193-203.

Pajares, F. & Miller, M.D. (1995). Mathematics self-efficacy and mathematics performances: The need for specificity of assessment. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 42*(2), 190-198.

Pajares, F., Britner, S.L., & Valiante, G. (2000). Relation between achievement goals and self-beliefs of middle school students in writing and science. *Contemporary Educational Psychology 25,* 406-422.

Pajares, F. (2003). Self-efficacy beliefs, motivation, and achievement in writing: A review of the literature. *Reading & Writing Quarterly, 19,* 139-158.

Pajares, F. & Urdan, T. (2006). *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents*. Greenwich, Connecticut: Information Age.

Patton, J.M. (1992). Assessment and identification of African American learners with gifts and talents. *Exceptional Children, 59*(2), 150-160.

Patton, J.M. (1998). The disproportionate representation of African Americans in special education: Looking behind the curtain for understanding and solutions. *Journal of Special Education, 32(*1), 25-31.

Peng, S.S., Lee, R.M., Wang, M.C., & Walberg, H.J. (1992). *Resilient students in urban Settings*. Paper presented at the 1992 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.

Pintrich, P.R. & De Groot, E.V. (1990). Motivational and self-regulated learning components of classroom academic performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 82*(1), 33-40.

Reis, S.M., Colbert, R.D., & Hebert, T.P. (2005, Winter). Understanding resilience in diverse, talented students in an urban high school. *Roeper Review 27(2)*, 110-120.

Reyes, O., Gillock, K.L., Kobus, K., & Sanchez, B. (2000). A longitudinal examination of the transition into senior high school for adolescents from urban, low-income status, and predominately minority backgrounds. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 28*, 519-544.

Rimm, S.B. (2003). Underachievement: A national epidemic. In N. Colangelo & G.A. Davis (Eds.) *Handbook of gifted education* (pp. 424-443). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Roach, A. A. (1999). Leadership giftedness: Models revisited. *Gifted Child Quarterly 43(1), 13-24.*

Robinson, A., Shore, B.M., & Enersen, D.L. (2007). *Best practices in gifted education: An evidence-based guide.* Waco, Texas: Prufrock Press.

Robinson, N.M., Lanzi, R.G., Weinberg, R.A., Ramey, S.L., & Ramey, C.T. (2002, Fall). Family factors associated with high academic competence in former head start children at third grade. *Gifted Child Quarterly 46(4)*, 278-290.

Schunk, D. H. (1991). Self-efficacy and academic motivation. *Educational Psychologist, 26*(3 & 4).

Schunk, D. H. & Meece, J.L. (2006). Self-efficacy development in adolescence. In F. Pajares & T. Urdan (Ed.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents*. (pp. 71-96). Greenwich, Connecticut: Information Age.

Seidman, E., Aber, J.L., Allen, L., & French, S.E. (1996). The impact of the transition to high school on the self system and perceived social contexts of poor urban youth. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 24*, 489-515.

Sellers, R. M., Chavous, T.M., & Cooke, D.Y. (1998). Racial ideology and racial Centrality as predictors of African American college students' academic performance. *Journal of Black Psychology, 24*, 8-27.

Shaunessy, E., Suldo, S., Hardesty, R.B., and Shatter, E.J. (2006). School functioning and psychological well-being of international baccalaureate and general education students: A preliminary examination. *Journal of Secondary Gifted Education, 17*(2), 76-89.

Shernoff, D.J., Csikzentmihalyi, M., Schneider, B., & Shernoff, E.S. (2003). Student engagement in high school classrooms from the perspective of flow theory. *School Psychology Quarterly, 18*, 158-176.

Shumow, L. (1997). Daily experiences and adjustment of gifted low-income urban children at home and school. *Roeper Review*, 20, (1) 35-38.

Silverman, L.K. (2000). *Counseling the gifted and talented.* Denver: Love.

Slaughter, D.T. & Epps, E.G. (1987). The home environment and academic achievement of Black American children and youth: An overview. *Journal of Negro Education, 86*(1), 3-20.

Slavin, R.E., (1989). Students of school failure: The problem and its dimensions.

In R.E. Slavin, N.L. Karweit, & N.A. Madden (Eds.), *Effective programs for students at risk* (pp. 3-19). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Steinberg, L., Dornbush, S.M., & Brown, B.B. (1992). Ethnic differences in adolescent achievement: An ecological perspective. *American Psychologist, 47*(6), 723-729.

Sternberg, R. J. (1991). Giftedness according to the triarchic theory of human intelligence. In N. Colangelo & G. A. Davis (Eds.), *Handbook of gifted education* (pp. 45-54). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Sternberg, R. J. (2003). WISCS: A model for leadership in organizations. *Academy of Management Learning and Education , 2*, 386-401.

Stormont, M., Stebbins, M.S., and Holliday, G. (2001). Characteristics and educational Support needs of underrepresented gifted adolescents. *Psychology in the Schools, 38*(5), 413-424.

Struck, J.M. (2002). *A study of talent development in a predominately low socioeconomic and/or African American population.* A dissertation from The College of William& Mary.

Tekleab, A.G., Sims, H.P., Yun, S., Tesluk, P.E., & Cox, J. (2008). Are we on the same page? Effects of self-awareness empowering and transformational leaders. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, 14*(3), 185-202.

Tichy, N.M., & Devanna, M.A. (1986). *The transformational leader.* New York: Wiley.

Tieso, C. (1999). Meeting the socio-emotional needs of talented teens. *Gifted Child Today, 22,* 38-43.

Ting-Toomey, S. (1999). *Communicating across cultures.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Tracey, T. J., & Sedlacek, W. E. (1985). The relationship of noncognitive variables to academic success: A longitudinal comparison by race. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 26*, 405 – 410.

Treffinger, D.J. (1995). School improvement, talent development, and creativity. *Roeper Review, 18(2)*, 93-97.

Van Tassel-Baska, J., Patton, & Prillaman, D. (1991). Gifted youth at-risk: A report of a national study. *Focus on Exceptional Children, 3*, 1-15.

Van Tassel-Baska, J. (1998). *Excellence in educating gifted and talented learners.* Love: Denver.

Van Tassel-Baska, J., Johnson, D., & Avery, L.D. (2002). Using performance tasks in the identification of economically disadvantaged and minority gifted learners: Findings from project STAR. *Gifted Child Quarterly 46(2)*, 110-123.

Van Tassel-Baska, J. (2003). *Curriculum and instructional planning and design for gifted learners.* Denver: Love.

Van Tassel-Baska, J & Little, C.A. (2003). *Content-based curriculum for high-ability learners.* Waco, Texas: Prufrock Press, Inc.

Van Tassel-Baska, J., Feng, A.X., Quek, C., & Struck, J. (2004). A study of educators' and students' perceptions of academic success for underrepresented populations identified for gifted programs. *Psychology Science 46(3)*, 363-378.

Van Tassel-Baska, J. (ed.) (2007). *Serving gifted learners beyond the traditional classroom: A guide to alternative programs and services.* Waco, Texas: Prufrock Press, Inc.

Wang, M.C. & Gordon, E.W. (1994). *Educational resilience in inner-city America: Challenges and prospects.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Waxman, H.C., Walker de Felix, J., Anderson, J.E., & Baptiste, Jr., H.P. (1992). *Students at risk in at-risk schools*. California: Corwin.

Werner, E.E. (1995, June). Resilience in development. *Current Directions in Psychological Science. 4*(3), 81-85.

Werner, E.E. and Smith, R.S. (1992). *Overcoming the odds: High risks children from birth to adulthood.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Winfield, L. F. (1994). *Developing resilience in urban youth.* Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

Wolin, S.J. & Wolin, S. (1993). The *resilient self: How survivors of troubled families rise above adversity*. New York: Villard Books

Woolfolk, A. (2008). Educational psychology: Active learning edition. Boston, MA: Pearson Allyn and Bacon

Yukl, G. (2006). *Leadership in organizations.* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Zimmerman, B.J. (2000). Self-efficacy: An essential motive to learn. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*, 82-91.

APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENT VALIDATION FORMAT

FOR EXPERT PANEL

Student Academic Success Scale – *SASS*

Instructions: Thank you for taking the time to evaluate my scale. Read the categories and the conceptual definition to gain an understanding of the three major constructs. Please assist me in reviewing the content of the statements by providing two ratings for each statement. The conceptual definitions of the categories should reflect the statements. Also, the rating instructions are listed below.

- Please indicate the category that each statement **BEST** fits by circling the appropriate numeral.

	Categories	Conceptual Definition
I	Resiliency	Successful adaptation despite risk and adversity *(Schunk, 1981; Schunk & Hanson, 1985; Schunk, Hanson & Cox, 1987; Ford, 1994; & Reis, Colbert, & Herbert, 2005)*
II	Self-Efficacy	Beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. *(Bandura, 1995 & 1997)*
III	Leadership	The ability to guide and direct those around you in a positive direction based on good moral standards. *(Fullan, 2001)*

Rating Tasks:

- Please indicate how ***relevant*** you think each item is to its construct as follows:

3 **Highly relevant**
2 **Somewhat relevant**
1 **Not at all relevant**

Sample Item:

No.	Item	I	II	III		1	2	3
S1	Being in a gifted program makes me feel special.	**I**	***II***	**III**		**1**	**2**	***3***

Once the instrument is completed, the responses will be evaluated using a Five-Point Likert Scale:

5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Undecided*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*

	Categories	Conceptual Definition		*Rating Relevance*
I	Resiliency	Successful adaptation despite risk and adversity *(Schunk, 1981; Schunk & Hanson, 1985; Schunk, Hanson & Cox, 1987; Ford, 1994; & Reis, Colbert, & Herbert, 2005)*	**3**	**Highly relevant**
II	Self-Efficacy	Beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. *(Bandura, 1995 & 1997)*	**2**	**Somewhat relevant**
III	Leadership	The ability to guide and direct those around you in a positive direction based on good moral standards. *(Fullan, 2001)*	**1**	**Not at all relevant**

No.	**Item**	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
1	When presented with a problem, I feel confident that I can solve the problem using my best judgment.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
2	I have not had success in completing difficult tasks.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
3	Many of my friends are successful in school.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
4	I see myself as a high achiever.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
5	Many of my peers perceive me to be a leader.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
6	Often times, I receive verbal affirmation of how well I am doing in school	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
7	When given the opportunity to take the lead, I usually do.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
8	I am a person who likes to follow.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
9	I am very resilient when confronted by a problem.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
10	When I am tired, it usually affects my performance.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
11	My success today is a tribute to my leadership qualities.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
12	Other people seek me to help solve problems.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
13	When I am in a new surrounding, I feel confident that I can fit in socially.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
14	Completing rigorous assignments and tasks boosts my confidence.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
15	My success today is a tribute to my leadership opportunities.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
16	Teachers and administrators view me as a leader.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
17	I do not consider myself as a person who avoids a rigorous job, task, or project.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**

	Categories	Conceptual Definition		*Rating Relevance*
I	Resiliency	Successful adaptation despite risk and adversity *(Schunk, 1981; Schunk & Hanson, 1985; Schunk, Hanson & Cox, 1987; Ford, 1994; & Reis, Colbert, & Herbert, 2005)*	**3**	**Highly relevant**
II	Self-Efficacy	Beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. *(Bandura, 1995 & 1997)*	**2**	**Somewhat relevant**
III	Leadership	The ability to guide and direct those around you in a positive direction based on good moral standards. *(Fullan, 2001)*	**1**	**Not at all relevant**

No.	**Item**							
18	Many of my peers are not successful.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
19	I am always accepted by my peers.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
20	I am someone that many individuals trust.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
21	The leadership skills that I possess are because of the opportunities in high school.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
22	I like to read about individuals who personify great leadership.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
23	My parents/guardian and teachers encourage me to try hard.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
24	I am not a person who allows fatigue to keep me from pursuing my goals.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
25	I look forward to taking on difficult tasks.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
26	When problems, school work, or social constraints become a burden, I am able to balance myself so that I can be successful.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
27	During high school, I had a mentor who instilled great leadership qualities in me.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
28	I do not think leadership is an innate quality, but rather a learned behavior	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
29	I have the ability to accomplish anything.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
30	I have family members who are successful despite an impoverished background.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
31	I can complete a task despite obstacles.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
32	Leaders are born.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
33	My experiences in school have helped develop me as a leader.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**

	Categories	Conceptual Definition		*Rating Relevance*
I	Resiliency	Successful adaptation despite risk and adversity *(Schunk, 1981; Schunk & Hanson, 1985; Schunk, Hanson & Cox, 1987; Ford, 1994; & Reis, Colbert, & Herbert, 2005)*	**3**	**Highly relevant**
II	Self-Efficacy	Beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. *(Bandura, 1995 & 1997)*	**2**	**Somewhat relevant**
III	Leadership	The ability to guide and direct those around you in a positive direction based on good moral standards. *(Fullan, 2001)*	**1**	**Not at all relevant**

No.	Item							
34	My parents/guardian provided me with leadership opportunities.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
35	I can see positive attributes in everyone.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
36	Typically, I do not receive positive affirmation for completing rigorous tasks.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
37	Although someone may be wrong, I usually offer my opinion in a positive manner.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
38	I like to exercise often.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
39	I can take negative criticism and improve myself.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
40	I think change is good.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
41	I am under control during stressful situations.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
42	If a task or project is too easy, I will not take part in it.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
43	Many times, I am not susceptible to others ideas and thoughts.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
44	I have the ability to bring out leadership qualities in other individuals.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
45	I really enjoy meeting peers who are doing positive things with their lives.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
46	I have witnessed violent crimes.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
47	I am able to cope with negativity that surrounds me.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
48	I am surrounded by unmotivated individuals.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
49	Others see me as an engaging person.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
50	I am able to communicate effectively with others.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**

	Categories	Conceptual Definition		*Rating Relevance*
I	Resiliency	Successful adaptation despite risk and adversity *(Schunk, 1981; Schunk & Hanson, 1985; Schunk, Hanson & Cox, 1987; Ford, 1994; & Reis, Colbert, & Herbert, 2005)*	**3**	**Highly relevant**
II	Self-Efficacy	Beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. *(Bandura, 1995 & 1997)*	**2**	**Somewhat relevant**
III	Leadership	The ability to guide and direct those around you in a positive direction based on good moral standards. *(Fullan, 2001)*	**1**	**Not at all relevant**

No.	**Item**							
51	Others value my talent.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
52	I do not get angry at simple mistakes.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
53	My own actions can and will make a positive difference in my life.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
54	My energy level facilitates positive outcomes.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
55	I am accountable for my actions.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
56	I can establish a bond with at least one competent and emotionally stable person who is attuned to my needs.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
57	My intelligence attracts others to me.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
58	I typically perform well with difficult tasks.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
59	I am typically in a good mood.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
60	I have a high morale.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
61	My intelligence allows me to solve problems.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
62	I do not like performing easy tasks.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
63	I have witnessed peers take on very difficult tasks and were very successful.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
64	As a resilient person, I am not one to easily give up on a task, job, or project.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**
65	I am not easily influenced by negative comments.	**I**	**II**	**III**		**1**	**2**	**3**

Thank you for your input about the survey items. Please take just another moment to respond to the items on the next page.*

Were the statements clear? If not, do you have a suggestion(s) to improve them?

Are there any other resiliency, self-efficacy, and/or leadership characteristics that you think should be included in this survey?

Knowing that the items were not in the final format, would you be inclined to evaluate the final version of this survey?

Yes _____

No _____

If no, can you tell me why not?

APPENDIX B

FINALIZED SCALE

Student Academic Success Scale – SASS (Thomas, 2008)

Directions: Please indicate your opinion by marking each item with the response that best reflects your opinion. Your response may vary from item to item and range from (1) "Never" to (5) "A Great Deal" as each represents a degree on the continuum. **Please respond to each item by considering your academic and extracurricular activities as a student in HIGH SCHOOL.**	Never	Very Little	Sometimes	Quite A Bit	A Great Deal
1. I have had success in completing difficult academic tasks.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. When school work becomes too difficult, I am able to bounce back so that I am successful.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. Other people come to me for help solving problems.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. I receive verbal affirmation of how well I am doing in school.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. I am able to cope with negativity around me.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. Teachers and administrators view me as a leader.	①	②	③	④	⑤
7. Completing rigorous assignments boosts my confidence.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8. I am not one to easily give up on a tough task or project.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9. I am someone that many individuals trust.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10. I typically perform well with difficult academic tasks.	①	②	③	④	⑤
11. I am not easily discouraged by negative comments.	①	②	③	④	⑤
12. My experiences in school have helped me develop as a leader.	①	②	③	④	⑤
13. My own actions can make a positive difference in my life.	①	②	③	④	⑤
14. My actions in school can make a positive difference in my academic success.	①	②	③	④	⑤
15. My academic environment provided me with leadership opportunities.	①	②	③	④	⑤
16. Being exposed to rigorous academics allows me to solve problems.	①	②	③	④	⑤
17. I can adapt to any rigorous academic environment.	①	②	③	④	⑤
18. I am able to bring out the leadership qualities in others.	①	②	③	④	⑤
19. My educational background allows me to solve problems.	①	②	③	④	⑤
20. I am under control during stressful situations.	①	②	③	④	⑤
21. I am able to communicate effectively with others.	①	②	③	④	⑤

2. What best describes your Advanced high school course of study? *(select all that apply)*
   - O Honors Program
   - O Advanced Placement (AP)
   - O International Baccalaureate (IB)
   - O Home-Schooled

3. What was the context of your school?
   - O Urban
   - O Suburban
   - O Rural

4. What extracurricular activities did you participate in as a high school student? *(select all that apply)*
   - O Sports
   - O Community Service
   - O Academic Competitions
   - O Art Program
   - O Special Interest (e.g., chess)

5. Did you participate in a mentorship or internship program during high school?
   - O Yes
   - O No

Please complete the contact information below in case of a follow-up study. Your confidentiality is highly considered.

_____
First & Last Name (print)

_____
Email address

_____
Phone

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2008-06-25 AND EXPIRES ON 2009-06-25.

APPENDIX C

FACTOR ANALYSIS OF SASS ON PILOT GROUP

Factor Analysis for SASS on Pilot Group (N=111)

Item	Factor Loadings	
	Component 1	Component 2
I have had success in completing difficult tasks	**.51**	.21
When school work becomes too difficult, I am able to bounce back so that I am successful	**.45**	.31
Other people come to me for help solving problems	**.49**	.32
I receive verbal affirmation of how well I am doing in school	**.57**	.29
Teachers and administrators view me as a leader	**.67**	.22
Completing rigorous assignments boosts my confidence	**.49**	.26
I typically perform well with difficult academic tasks	**.63**	.22
My experiences in school have helped me develop as a leader	**.68**	.25
My own actions can make a positive difference in my life	**.55**	.20
I am able to cope with negativity around me	.12	**.63**
I am not one to easily give up on a tough task or project	.32	**.65**
I am someone that many individuals trusts	.18	**.62**
I am not easily discouraged by negative comments	.30	**.64**
Eigenvalues	7.91	.1.69
% of variance	27.56	18.13

Note: Factor loadings over .40 appear in bold.

APPENDIX D

PERMISSION FROM HUMAN SUBJECTS

Date: Wed 25 Jun 08:43:33 EDT 2008
From: <compli@wm.edu>
Subject: Status of protocol EDIRC-PHSC-2008-06-10-5383-jlvant set to active
To: jlvant@wm.edu, krthom@wm.edu, edirc-l@wm.edu, phsc-l@wm.edu

This is to notify you on behalf of the Education Internal Review Committee (EDIRC) that protocol EDIRC-PHSC-2008-06-10-5383-jlvant titled An Exploratory Study of Factors that relate to Academic Success among High-Achieving African American Males has been exempted from formal review because it falls under the following category(ies) defined by DHHS Federal Regulations: 45CFR46.101.b.1, 45CFR46.101.b.2.

Work on this protocol may begin on 2008-06-25 and must be discontinued on 2009-06-25. Should there be any changes to this protocol, please submit these changes to the committee for determination of continuing exemption using the Protocol and Compliance Management channel on the Self Service tab within myWM (http://my.wm.edu/).

Please add the following statement to the footer of all consent forms, cover letters, etc.:

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2008-06-25 AND EXPIRES ON 2009-06-25.

You are required to notify Dr. Ward, chair of the EDIRC, at 757-221-2358 (EDIRC-L@wm.edu) and Dr. Deschenes, chair of the PHSC at 757-221-2778 (PHSC-L@wm.edu) if any issues arise during this study.

Good luck with your study.

APPENDIX E

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

The College of
WILLIAM & MARY

School of Education
P.O. Box 8795
Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795
757-221-2461, 757-221-2988 fax

July 2, 2008

Re: Research Participant

Dear Freshman Student:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study entitled, ***An Exploratory Study of Factors that Relate to Academic Success Among High-Achieving African American Males.*** Retaining African-American males in rigorous academic programs is a major concern in education. This study will attempt to evaluate three constructs – resiliency, self-efficacy, and leadership – as factors that relate to success among students in rigorous academic programs. Limited research in this area has prompted me to consider this topic for my dissertation.

All individuals must be 18 years old or older to participate in the study. Your participation is voluntary and there is no penalty for not participating or withdrawing from the study. Furthermore, as a participant, you can choose not to answer any question, and you can stop participating at any time. Enclosed you will find a copy of my instrument entitled, ***Student Academic Success Scale (SASS)***. The instructions on how to rate the instrument are provided on the instrument as well. Your confidentiality will be highly regarded and information collected will only be used for this study.

If you have any further questions or concerns, I may be contacted at krthom@wm.edu or (757) 813-1864. Thank you for your cooperation and opinions. Additionally, you may contact my supervising professors, Dr. Joyce Van Tassel-Baska, at jlvant@wm.edu or (757) 221-2362, Dr. Carol Tieso, at clties@wm.edu. or (757) 221- 2461 and/or Dr. Thomas J. Ward, chair of the EDIRC, at EDIRC-L@wm.edu or (757) 221-2358.

Sincerely,

Kianga R. Thomas
Graduate Student
The College of William & Mary
Williamsburg, Virginia 23187

Chartered 1693

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2008-06-25 AND EXPIRES ON 2009-06-25.

APPENDIX F

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF *SASS* ON STUDY GROUP

Means and Standard Deviations on SASS Items (N=104)

Item	*M*	*SD*
I have had success in completing difficult tasks	3.99	.830
When school work becomes too difficult, I am able to bounce back so that I am successful	3.95	.829
Other people come to me for help solving problems.	3.54	.965
I receive verbal affirmation of how well I am doing in school	3.63	.935
I am able to cope with negativity around me.	4.18	.963
Teachers and administrators view me as a leader	3.88	.998
Completing rigorous assignments boosts my confidence	4.11	.934
I am not one to easily give up on a tough task or project	4.18	.901
I am someone that many individuals trust.	4.51	.591
I typically perform well with difficult academic tasks.	3.72	.730
I am not easily discouraged by negative comments.	4.04	1.061
My experiences in school have helped me develop as a leader.	4.11	.975
My own actions can make a positive difference in my life.	4.56	.605
My actions in school can make a positive difference in my academic success.	4.41	.617
My academic environment provided me with leadership opportunities.	3.88	.938
Being exposed to rigorous academics allows me to solve problems.	3.83	.875
I can adapt to any rigorous academic environment.	3.85	.798

Means and Standard Deviations on SASS Items (N=104) Continued

Item	*M*	*SD*
I am able to bring out the leadership qualities in others.	3.88	.840
My educational background allows me to solve problems.	4.21	.746
I am under control during stressful situations.	4.19	.789
I am able to communicate effectively with others.	4.48	.847

VITA

Kianga Rhea Thomas

Birthdate:	July 7, 1972	
Birthplace:	Columbia, South Carolina	
Education:	2003-2008	The College of William & Mary Williamsburg, Virginia Doctor of Education
	1997-1999	Norfolk State University Norfolk, Virginia Masters of Arts
	1990-1995	Hampton University Hampton, Virginia Bachelors of Arts
Professional Experience:	2007-	Assistant Professor College of Education & Continuing Studies Hampton University Hampton, Virginia
	1996-2007	Elementary Teacher Newport News Public Schools Newport News, Virginia