How direct descendants of a school lockout achieved academic success: Resilience in the educational attainments of Prince Edward County's children

Randolph Williams
William & Mary - School of Education

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HOW DIRECT DESCENDANTS OF A SCHOOL LOCKOUT ACHIEVED ACADEMIC SUCCESS: RESILIENCE IN THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENTS OF PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY'S CHILDREN

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctorate of Philosophy

by
Randolph Williams, Jr.
April 2013
HOW DIRECT DESCENDANTS OF A SCHOOL LOCKOUT ACHIEVED ACADEMIC SUCCESS: RESILIENCE IN THE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENTS OF PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY'S CHILDREN

By

Randolph Williams, Jr.

Approved April 2013 by

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R. Kelly Crace, Ph. D.
DEDICATION

To the amazing African American Prince Edward people who paved a way to education for my generation and beyond.
Table of Contents

DEDICATION ................................................................................................................................. ii
Table of Contents ........................................................................................................................... iii
Acknowledgements ....................................................................................................................... vii
LIST OF TABLES ....................................................................................................................... viii
ABSTRACT .................................................................................................................................... ix

Chapter One ..................................................................................................................................... 2
Introduction .................................................................................................................................. 2
Against the Odds ................................................................. 4
Prince Edward County’s Centrality to Desegregation ......................... 6
Whites’ Strong Opposition to Desegregation ........................................ 10
Closings’ Aftermath ........................................................................ 12
Results of the School Closings ........................................................... 12
Applying Resilience Theory ........................................................... 15
Researcher’s Perspective ........................................................................... 17

Chapter Two .................................................................................................................................. 19
Literature Review .............................................................................................................. 19
The Family’s Role in Education ............................................................................... 20
Parents’ Education ................................................................. 21
Correlations .................................................................................. 22
First Generation Students ........................................................................... 22
Parental Involvement ........................................................................ 24
Family Socioeconomics ........................................................................ 28
Family Ethnicity .............................................................................. 31
Effects of Prince Edward County School Closings ........................................... 34
Early Findings of Closings’ Effects ....................................................................... 34
Long-Term Effects of the Closings ................................................................. 37
Resilience Research .............................................................................. 42
Resilience-Promoting Processes ............................................................... 43
Resilience From Within .......................................................................... 43
Positive Values .................................................................................. 44
Social Competence .............................................................................. 44
Internal Locus of Control ........................................................................ 44
Origin of Resilience on the Family Level ......................................................... 45
Community-Generated Resilience ..................................................................... 47
Connecting the Prince Edward Case to a Resilience Framework ................. 48
Family Resilience Theory .......................................................................... 50
Discussion and Conclusions ........................................................................ 56

Chapter Three ................................................................................................................................ 59
Methods ............................................................................................................................. 59
Research Paradigm ......................................................................................... 60
Subjectivist Orientation ............................................................................. 61
Commonalities Among Participants .............................................................. 63
Theoretical Perspective .............................................................................. 65
Walsh’s Framework Components .............................................................. 67
Conceptual Fit ....................................................................................... 68
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phenomenology</th>
<th>70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Participants</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Generation</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Documents</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Metaphor</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Data Analysis</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Data Analysis</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Strength</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Four</strong></td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Profiles</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layla</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Obstacles</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Benefits</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nella</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Obstacles</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Benefits</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ida B</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Obstacles</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Benefits</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luther</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Obstacles</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Benefits</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tex</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Obstacles</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Benefits</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Obstacles</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Benefits</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortitude</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Obstacles</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Benefits</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lassiter</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming Obstacles</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Benefits</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family’s Organizational Patterns</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Roles</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Social Networks</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Dispositions</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Beliefs &amp; Expectations</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting Education</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Spirituality</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Toward Prosperity</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Communication</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Socialization</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Personal Development &amp; Learning Opportunities</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Opportunities</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Growth</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse Experiences</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Six</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Did They Develop?</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions &amp; Influences of Parents’ Experiences</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants’ Commonalities &amp; Differences</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omissions in Walsh’s Framework</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Opportunities in Children’s Development</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Socialization on Children’s Development</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Research</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Email Invitation to Participate in Study</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: Consent Form</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C: Demographic Form</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D: Interview Guide</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E: Example of Themes, Groupings, &amp; Codes</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F: Example of Reflexive Journal Entries</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G: Researcher as Instrument Statement</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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vii
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Key Processes in Family Resilience (Walsh, 2003) ..................................................... 52

Table 2: Participants Demographics ............................................................................................. 97
HOW DIRECT DESCENDANTS OF A SCHOOL LOCKOUT
ACHIEVED ACADEMIC SUCCESS: RESILIENCE IN THE EDUCATIONAL
ATTAINMENTS OF PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY'S CHILDREN

ABSTRACT

From 1959 to 1964, approximately 1,700 Black children in Prince Edward County, Virginia were
denied schooling, due to the county leaders' decision to close schools—a defiant response to federal racial
desegregation mandates stemming from Brown v. Board of Education (1954, 1955). Yet from one of the
most extreme cases of injustice in the history of American public schools emerged a remarkable example
of resilience in education. Some descendants of the lockout persisted toward the completion of doctoral
degrees in spite of their parents' experiences. This study sought an in-depth understanding of how and
why these particular children developed academic resilience despite the adversity of having parents
denied a complete public school education.

This interpretivist phenomenological study drew upon the Systems Theory of Family Resilience
(Walsh, 1998) to understand the processes that developed the eight participants' resilience. The data
generated with these participants were analyzed to explain the nature of their resilience, and how it was
developed during their childhoods within the family.

The participants' families demonstrated resilience-building processes within four domains:
organizational patterns, beliefs and expectations, emotional welfare, and learning opportunities. The first
three domains matched elements of Walsh's resilience theory well. Processes within the learning
opportunities domain, however, were prominent in the participants' experiences, but latent in Walsh's
theory. Absent from the theory was the process of racial socialization, during which African American
parents prepare their children for encounters with racism. This process includes cultivating racial pride,
an aspect that was important to the participants' resilience development.

RANDOLPH WILLIAMS, JR.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY IN VIRGINIA
How Direct Descendants of a School Lockout Achieved Academic Success: Resilience in the Educational Attainments of Prince Edward County’s Children
Chapter One: Introduction

Approximately 1,700 African American children in Prince Edward County, VA were locked out of public school for five years when segregationists protested against integrated schools (Smith, 1996). Located approximately sixty miles southwest of Richmond, VA, Prince Edward County is part of the northernmost rural region of counties known as Southside Virginia (Irons, 2002). This school disruption was an emotionally charged outcome of unrest in the United States caused by conflicting societal beliefs about the integration of races at the beginning of the Civil Rights era. Making a decision that so adversely affected the country’s next generation of citizens demonstrates the level of turbulence that existed during this time.

The dominant sentiment in Southside Virginia during the 1950s that prevented Black and White children from attending the same schools evolved into strong opposition to desegregation late in the decade. This opposition was expressed when the local school board closed all schools serving Black students. This act of injustice had both immediate and long-term effects on Black children’s life outcomes, including lack of higher education, broken families, hampered professional careers, and psychological hardships (Green, Hofmann, Morse, Hayes, & Morgan, 1964; Hale-Smith, 1993; Turner, 2004). Yet while the people prevented from attending school in the area in which they lived were limited in their educational pursuits, some Black families’ children later graduated from college with multiple degrees. Among these descendants is a group of students who achieved great academic success in spite of their parents’ five-year period of no schooling.

These children, all with doctorates in their chosen fields, were somehow able to reach high levels of educational attainment. The means by which they did so are worth identifying because this understanding could be used to assist other students whose education is limited in
otherwise adverse ways. The origins of these children's resilience—a concept originating in counseling therapy that has also emerged in educational literature—invite exploration. Resilience is "a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity" (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000, p. 543). It was identified by psychologists (Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; Werner & Smith, 1982) who studied children in debilitating circumstances who had managed to overcome their situations.

Though raised in families in which parents were deprived of a formal education, the Prince Edward Second Generation—direct descendants of the Prince Edward residents locked out of public schooling and professionals who obtained doctoral degrees—represents a population that embodies the notion of resilience theory outlined by those psychologists. According to the definition cited above, we see that resilience is described as a process, implying the existence of factors that contribute to its formation. Further, in order for resilience to emerge, there must be some burden requiring a response that results in favorable outcomes. In the Prince Edward case, there were "debilitating circumstances" for educationally deprived parents that resulted, for some, in negative outcomes with parenting children (Turner, 2004). Yet, the fact that other children prevailed over these circumstances raises some questions.

1) How and why did these particular children demonstrate resilience in the presence of multiple types of adversity? What is the nature of their resilience?

2) How do Second Generation members perceive their parents' educational experiences? How, if at all, did that knowledge influence their resilience?

3) What were the common factors (if any) that contributed to the success of the Second Generation?
4) How, if at all, do the members of the Second Generation differ in their resilience development from each other?

I sought answers to these questions through an exploration of the academically successful Second Generation's perspectives of the adversities caused by the school lockout, as well as the resources that aided their success. Having acquaintance with multiple Prince Edward County descendants of the Second Generation’s peer group, I know of other cases of what appears to be resilience. For example, several descendants have achieved successes in the financial services field and obtained high socioeconomic status. While these individuals are of interest, I want to focus narrowly on those descendants who persisted toward the highest educational degree level, because these findings may contribute to an understanding of the conditions helpful for high-achieving students to excel in education despite adversities.

**Against the Odds**

Both historical and current statistics show that African Americans obtaining advanced levels of education are rare occurrences. Only 9% of all college students were African American in 1976, and this statistic increased to only 15% in 2010 (U.S. Department of Education, 2011a). Four-year degree attainment for African Americans is low as well. The six-year degree attainment rate for African Americans who started college at a four-year institution in 2004 is roughly 40% (U.S. Department of Education, 2011b). These low African American college enrollment and degree attainment numbers suggest that there are some adversities experienced by this population before reaching and during college. Further, only 3.8% of all doctorates in 1977 and 6.1% in 2007 were conferred to African Americans (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). The most recent data on 2011 earned doctoral degrees show that African Americans still account for only about 6.1% of all degrees awarded (National Science Foundation, 2012).
Considering race alone, there is a low likelihood of African Americans completing doctoral programs. The added factor of parents being denied a public school education is likely compounded by the adversity experienced, since parents’ education levels affect children’s eventual educational attainment (Davis-Kean, 2005; Eccles, 2005; Spera, Wentzel, & Matto, 2009). In one notable study of parents’ education and income influence on children’s academic achievement, for example, Davis-Kean (2005) found that African American parents’ years of schooling is a good predictor of their children’s academic performance. Parents with more education described well-structured homes and healthy parent-child relationships suited for promoting academic achievement, whereas families with less educated parents showed low scores in areas related to children’s achievement. Given Davis-Kean’s (2005) finding, it was even more unlikely that any of the Prince Edward Second Generation children would obtain doctorates, because their parents were refused schooling for a five-year period. Being both African American and children of incompletely educated parents combines to create sizable adversity for the Second Generation.

My primary purpose for doing this study was to understand the experiences, perceptions, and realizations of an academically successful sample of African American children of an educationally deprived group of students in Prince Edward County, VA. I reasoned that understanding what made these particular children so resilient academically might help us to better encourage academic and professional resilience in children whose parents have not had a complete K-12 education. Both historical and psychological information form the background and theoretical framework for this study. They include: the Prince Edward incident’s significance in changing federal laws, extreme opposition to those laws, the results of this
rebellion, and an exploration of resilience theory. These areas create the foundation for pursuing an understanding of the Second Generation’s ability to achieve in spite of adversity.

**Prince Edward County’s Centrality to Desegregation**

As one of the states south of the Mason-Dixon Line, Virginia first thrived on slavery. After the Emancipation and the end of the Civil War, it constructed a system of segregation by race (Anderson, 1982). This apartheid system was strengthened by the opinion in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) that allowed facilities to be separate by race as long as they were equal. However, the justices in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which appears on lists of the most significant U.S. Supreme Court cases in history, reversed the *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) decision. They ruled that providing separate facilities on the basis of race was inherently unequal, and therefore a denial of the equal protection of the laws afforded by the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (*Brown*, 1954). This landmark case combined five public school district lawsuits located in Topeka, KS, Wilmington, DE, Claredon, SC, Prince Edward, VA, and Washington, DC. Though each case was situated in the field of public education, the decision had much broader impact, because it made racial segregation in all public places illegal. This outcome makes the *Brown* case one of the most important in the history of the Supreme Court and in the development of the United States. Yet more than fifty years later, the issue of racial segregation in public schools is still unresolved, as demonstrated, for example, by the 2010-2011 redistricting conflict in Wake County, North Carolina (Hui, 2011). In this case, members of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and other citizens expressed concern that the new school zones were racially unconstitutional and unfair to non-White children. An article on the story appeared in a North Carolina newspaper on the day (May 17) that the *Brown* decision was rendered fifty-seven years ago.
The events that led to and followed the *Brown* decision in each of these five geographic areas were dramatic in their development. None are more startling than the story of Prince Edward County, VA. A racially segregated society was a way of life in the Southern states from after the Civil War through the 1950s (Gates, 1964; Wolters, 1984). The development of public education in the South resulted in two racially separated sets of schools (Anderson, 1982). In Prince Edward County, there were seven schools for roughly 1,400 Whites and fifteen schools for approximately 2,000 Blacks (Heaton, 2008; Peeples, 1963). While there were more schools for Black children, the quality of the facilities was strikingly better in the White schools (Peeples, 1963; Smith, 1996).

These disparities were marked, and resulted in the country’s first student-led walkout and strike in 1951 for better schools and supplies (Smith, 1996). Peeples (1963) identified some dramatic differences between the two sets of schools. First, the estimated total property value for the fifteen schools for Blacks was $329,000; for the seven White schools it was $1,200,000. Even though there were more than twice as many schools for Blacks than Whites, Black schools were worth less than a third of the White schools’ value. Second, only one of the Black schools was constructed with bricks and had indoor toilets and modern heating sources; the remaining fourteen schools were wood constructions with privies, and wood, coal, or kerosene stoves for heat. Conversely, all of the White schools were brick constructions with indoor flushable toilets, lavatories, and steam or hot water heat. Also, in the all-White Farmville High School, there was a gymnasium, a shower and dressing room, a cafeteria, an infirmary, and adequate science and industrial art shop facilities. In the nearby Black Robert R. Moton High School, none of these spaces or equipment existed (*Davis*, 1952).
The most noted response to these disparities occurred in the early 1950s. Robert R. Moton High School was built in 1939 to accommodate 180 students, but in 1950 there were 477 students enrolled there (Smith, 1996). On April 23, 1951, this overcrowded situation prompted sixteen-year-old Barbara Johns, a junior at Motion, to stage the previously mentioned walkout and strike. It lasted for two weeks (Smith, 1996). Johns contacted the Virginia chapter of the NAACP to assist the Black students of Prince Edward County in obtaining schools and supplies equal to what White children in the county received. Both schools were maintained by public tax money in a county in which there were slightly more Blacks than Whites (Davis, 1952). Therefore, in addition to being denied their right to have an adequate education, Prince Edward County Blacks, even those without school-aged children, felt further mistreated because their tax money was not allocated justly. These reasons led to the protest.

The NAACP's lawyers took on the student strike case, which was named *Davis et al. v. County School Board of Prince Edward County, VA, et al.* (1952), but they argued for school desegregation rather than for facilities equal to those of the White students. Racial desegregation in education had been ordered in higher education cases (e.g., *McLaurin v. Oklahoma Board of Regents of Higher Education*, 1950; *Missouri ex rel Gaines v. Canada*, 1938; *Sweatt v. Painter*, 1950), and legal precedence was now in place to achieve the same in K-12 education. In *Davis*, the U.S. District Court ruled that the separation of races does not cause harm to either race, and therefore decided in favor of the defendants. Though the *Davis* plaintiffs lost the desegregation argument, they did benefit from having the case presented to the Court. The judges ruled that the Black high school was inadequate, and ordered the County to build a new high school, which opened in 1953 (Smith, 1996). In the end, Barbara Johns and the other Black children achieved
their goal of obtaining a better school and supplies. The goal of desegregated schools in Prince Edward County, on the other hand, was not reached—at least not for the moment.

The *Davis* case’s contribution to public school desegregation would not be realized until later in *Brown* (1954) when it was bundled with four other school desegregation cases: *Briggs et al. v. Elliott et al.* (1951), *Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas et al.* (1951), *Bolling et al. v. Sharpe et al.* (1952), and *Gebhart et al. v. Belton et al.* (1952). Each of these five cases represented efforts in multiple states, hence broadening the issue of public school desegregation from a Southern concern to a national matter (The National Archives, n.d.). Together, the *Brown* attorneys used these five cases to overturn the “separate but equal” doctrine nationally. No longer was it legal to create two sets of facilities on the basis of race, because the U.S. Supreme Court justices ruled that this practice is inherently unequal (*Brown*, 1954).

The case was named after Oliver Brown in the Topeka, KS suit as a legal strategy to have a male as the lead plaintiff (Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research, 2004). The *Brown* plaintiffs were listed in alphabetical order, and at the top of the list was Darlene not Oliver Brown. But because Oliver was male, his name was chosen for the case (Hicks, 2010). The fact that the combined case was not named after *Davis* relates only to a legal strategy—leveraging the gender divide—and not to the importance of the Prince Edward suit.

Each case comprising *Brown* (1954) held unique interest, but of the five cases, *Davis* (1952) was the only one in which a child was named as a litigant, and the only one that arose from a student-led event. Also, the Prince Edward case, by far, comprised most of the *Brown* plaintiffs. Of the 215 *Brown* plaintiffs, 165 (77%) of those individuals were from Prince Edward County (Brown Foundation, n.d.). So in addition to the children’s noteworthy tenacity, there
was widespread adult support for better education within Prince Edward's Black community. These facts illustrate the Prince Edward parents and children's determination for obtaining a quality education, and this likely appealed to the justices' compassion. In terms of human interest alone, the Prince Edward case warranted further investigation.

Southern Whites' reactions to the high court's opinion are another compelling aspect of the Prince Edward County story. The opposition by residents of Prince Edward County made the county the location of a significant rebellion against desegregation that resulted in closed public schools for African American children.

**Whites' Strong Opposition to Desegregation**

The 1954 *Brown* decision was followed by *Brown v. Board of Education* (1955). Known as "*Brown II*," this federal mandate required school districts to implement desegregation "with all deliberate speed" (p. 301). Unfortunately, this phrase was vague and left room for varied interpretations. These national orders received mixed responses, including resistance from many Southern states. Though intended to expedite the process, *Brown II* was interpreted by some segregationists to mean that segregated public schools could be dismantled at a deliberately slow pace, and as determined by each school district (Arrington, 1981). In other words, the states opposing desegregation chose to interpret the phrase to mean that school systems could end segregated schools at a rate that would postpone integrating Black and White children. White segregationists in Virginia organized and created Massive Resistance Laws that barred state funding to racially desegregated public schools. These laws resulted in a brief closing of nine public Virginia schools from 1958 to 1959 (Gates, 1964).

By contrast, the White constituency in Prince Edward County responded to the *Brown* decisions with opposition that resulted in a five-year lockout of public schools for Black children.
from 1959 through 1964 (Smith, 1996). This resistance was the most rebellious anti-desegregation demonstration in the country (Green & Morgan, 1969), since there is no other documented segregation-based school closing that lasted longer. The idea of integrated schools caused grave concern for many White people in the county (Turner, 2004). In fact, rather than desegregate schools, the county’s Board of Supervisors decided to withhold County money to finance public education (Wolters, 1984). Instead, while schools were closed for Blacks and a few extremely poor Whites, the Board used state and local money to fund a Whites-only private school (Smith, 1996). This degree of resistance demonstrated Prince Edward County Whites’ prevailing feelings about desegregation at the time, and shows how little they valued educating Black children. These educationally-deprived Prince Edward students became known as the Crippled Generation, a phrase coined in 1962 by C.D. Moss during an NBC television show to communicate how the students’ lack of education placed them in a disadvantaged societal position (Smith, 1996).

Moss’ name for the group was later supported by research conducted on the affected children. Having an average intelligence quotient (I.Q.) score of 69.4 (Green et al., 1964), the Crippled Generation’s score falls in the range of “mentally defective” on the Stanford-Binet scale (Fischman, Proger, & Duffey, 1976). However, it should be noted that research from this period demonstrates that intelligence tests were culturally biased, suggesting that non-White and economically disadvantaged children were unfairly assessed (Greenleaf & Smith, 1978; Meeker & Meeker, 1973). In an effort to control for testing bias, Green et al. (1964) compared the Prince Edward children’s scores with the scores of neighboring county children. The researchers found that the Black children in the neighboring county had significantly higher scores than did the members of the Crippled Generation.
Closings' Aftermath

Unfavorable conditions for the members of the Crippled Generation also affected outcomes for their children (Turner, 2004). The school closings likely caused residual and negative effects for the Second Generation, because poorly educated parents are likely to experience multiple life stressors and sustain a cycle of low achievement for their children (Hauser-Cram, 2009). Resisting desegregated schools was done at the expense of Blacks' education—a price that many Whites were willing to pay in order to prevent their children from interacting with Black children. The extent of this resistance illustrates the hostile environment that Blacks experienced during that time in Prince Edward County. The opposition to integration resulted in psychological and cognitive conditions that debilitated Blacks' ability to be successful academically (Hale-Smith, 1993; Turner, 2004).

Efforts to keep the schools segregated and closed eventually caught the attention of national leaders. Both Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy commented publicly on the Prince Edward case during speeches, and both men made visits to the county (Mercy Seat Films, n.d.). Further, Virginia's and other Southern states' efforts to prevent integration sparked a national student protest that birthed the Civil Rights Movement (The National Archives, n.d.). This national attention, combined with legal measures taken, resulted in the schools being reopened under a desegregated system in 1964 (Smith, 1996).

Results of the School Closings

Widespread attention to this situation included researchers' interest, which led to scholarly studies on the effects of the closings. In 1963, the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare sponsored a large-scale study to examine the effects of the closings (Green et al., 1964). There were consistent findings reported that the disruptions caused by the
closings created adverse effects for African Americans. As expected from a 5-year lapse in schooling, “children’s academic achievement was severely retarded” (Green et al., 1964, p. 257). In addition to contributing to Black children’s low scholastic scores, the school’s closing hampered career advancement, limited engagement with diverse social groups, and decreased the likelihood of higher education aspirations (Green et al., 1964; Hale-Smith, 1993; Turner, 2004).

Green et al. (1964) is the most often-cited study of the effects of no schooling on Black Prince Edward County children. It concluded that this population was unlikely to be successful academically or to rear children who are successful, based on their parents’ bleak perceptions of education. Other studies (e.g., Hale-Smith, 1993; Turner, 2004) that investigated the long-term effects of no schooling concluded that the closings had adverse effects well into the affected children’s adulthood. Many of the adults became parents and sometimes grappled—either because of their inability to help or resentment from their experiences—with whether to promote education to their children. Both Hale-Smith (1993) and Turner’s (2004) results support Green’s et al. (1964) prediction about the affected Black students’ unlikely success as adults.

A number of researchers (e.g., Brookover, 1993; Green et al., 1964; Green & Morgan, 1969; Hale-Smith, 1993; Madison, 1999; Mermelstein & Shulman, 1967; Turner, 2004) have examined the school closings’ effects on the Crippled Generation, but no studies have explored how the children of the educationally deprived were affected. Specifically, no research has been conducted on the Second Generation. To date, no research provides an explanation of how members in this group obtained the highest degrees in their fields in spite of their parents’ educational experience. This study on the Second Generation adds to the literature related to this unprecedented event.
There is, however, research that provides a different perspective on the school closings' effects on Black Prince Edward residents locked out of school. Heaton (2008) concluded that contrary to conventional logic, the five-year school disruption did not have substantial adverse effects on potentially related outcomes like income, incarceration, and mortality. Heaton used data generated in Prince Edward and surrounding counties obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, the National Corrections Reporting Program, and the National Center for Health Statistics to compare the aforementioned outcomes.

With regard to income, there was some indication that Prince Edward’s residents fared worse in material gains than residents of surrounding counties. Heaton (2008) attributed this outcome partly to the understanding that the general educational level for Blacks in this era had little effect on economic gain. Comparison of incarceration data between counties suggests that Prince Edward prisoners were better educated and were fewer in number than those from other Virginia counties. Heaton stated, “It is important to note that there is no theoretical reason to expect individuals from affected [disrupted schooling] cohorts to have lower education conditional on being incarcerated” (p. 175). In other words, less education did not seem to result from being incarcerated. However, research that supports a relationship between education and mortality does exist (Heaton, 2008). In his research, Heaton found that the locked-out Prince Edward residents, especially men and older citizens, had higher mortality rates than residents in the neighboring counties. Ultimately, he concluded that a disrupted education had modest negative consequences at most for Prince Edward’s Blacks.

Along with these findings, Heaton (2008) stated that, though beyond the scope of his study, the students’ beliefs and aspirations may embody the greatest adverse effects of the school closings. So, even though this researcher found no significant disadvantages to citizens as a
result of the closings, he did allude to psychological damage that the disruption likely created.

Under the assumption that the closings hampered educational aspirations for the Crippled Generation, Heaton supports the conclusions of the above-referenced researchers, who found that there were negative long-term effects for Blacks locked out of school.

Taken together, these studies indicate that the Crippled Generation’s negative experiences/feelings and minimal life achievements result, at least in part, from their educational deprivation. Denying these children an education for five years also likely hindered their abilities as parents to create academically stimulating environments for their children. In spite of the Crippled Generation’s terrible circumstances, however, a small subset of their children somehow developed the skills and motivation to propel them toward terminal degrees. The explanation of their success may be attributed to resilience.

Applying Resilience Theory

The construct of resilience—“the ability to withstand and rebound from disruptive life challenges” (Walsh, 2003, p. 1)—emerged when researchers studied children who thrived despite adverse childhoods (Van Breda, 2002). The school closings in Prince Edward County created adversity for Blacks, but some descendants were able to overcome these burdens. In resilience terms, the children faced what resilience researchers refer to as risk factors: “environmental stressors or conditions that increase the likelihood that a child will experience poor overall adjustment or negative outcomes” (Braverman, 2001, p. 1). The racist environment, their parents’ lack of education, few financial resources, and being African American are considered risk factors (Davis-Kean, 2005; Eccles, 2005; Spera, Wentzel, & Matto, 2009; U.S. Department of Education, 2008; Zekeri & Habtemariam, 2006) for the Second Generation. Researchers have also identified protective factors, or “characteristics of the child or
environment that ameliorate or reduce the potential negative effects of the risk factors” (Braverman, 2001, p. 2). For example, high intelligence, financial stability, and mentorship are considered protective factors. The interplay of risk and protective factors determines the amount of resilience a person can demonstrate.

While the Second Generation’s risk factors are comparatively easy to identify, additional investigation is needed to determine the protective factors that mitigated those risks. Some of these children have obtained terminal degrees, which suggest the presence of resources that allowed them to overcome at least some of their challenges. Based on the results of previous studies (e.g., Abar, Carter, & Winsler, 2009; Carson, 2009; Wilson-Sadberry, Winfield, & Royster, 1991) with other at-risk populations, interactions of protective factors such as intelligence, motivation, and spirituality may have contributed to the resilience-building process for the Second Generation. Research can help to identify the methods, attitudes, and resources that the Second Generation used in reaching their success, and resilience theory can help to explain how and why these children succeeded.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to elucidate the factors that assisted the educational achievements of a group of people who earned terminal degrees in spite of their parents’ disrupted public school education. Identifying these factors may assist educators in developing academic and other support programs for other children who experience educationally deprived home environments. The study’s findings may also help to guide practitioners in developing a higher education system with accommodations for other students from family situations that diminish the likelihood of success in college. At a minimum, the results of this study provide an explanation of some of the Second Generation’s perceptions of the factors leading to their success, and provide insights on why and how this subgroup was able
to achieve educational success against the odds. In this way, the study’s results may contribute to both educational practice and historical knowledge.

**Researcher’s Perspective**

I am interested in this topic for several reasons that characterize my background and my professional career. Being raised in poverty, I have had experiences that would not typically nurture academic success. I have lived in a home with no indoor plumbing, slept in coats to keep warm, seen much violence as a child, and watched my alcoholic father abuse my mother. My family background is not filled with a legacy of college-goers and professional people, but rather with mostly high school graduates working any jobs available to survive. In spite of these conditions, I aspired to attend college and become a higher education professional, and as such, I am a person who defied my circumstances and serves as a role model for others. I became the first person in my family to graduate from college, and the first African American to earn a degree in physics from my 234-year-old alma mater. Currently, I am fulfilling requirements for the completion of a Doctorate of Philosophy in Educational Leadership, Policy and Planning. The elation I feel for achieving academic success is overwhelming, but it was not until recently in my academic journey that I began to identify my protective factors: a relationship with God, intrinsic motivation, mentorship, and brotherhood with like-minded males. These are the protective factors known to me now, but I hope to be able to identify others through my study of the highly educated Second Generation members in Prince Edward County.

This topic also interests me because of my experience volunteering on the Robert R. Moton Museum’s Board of Directors from 2001 to 2007. During this experience, I became fascinated with the people directly and indirectly associated with the Prince Edward school closings. In my work as a board member, I had the opportunity to meet former students of the
closed schools and their family members. Within that group were people whom I befriended and to whom I felt connected because of their persistence in the quest for a better life. Hearing the Second Generation members share their perspectives during a panel discussion, I became even more curious about how they were able to achieve academic success in spite of their parents’ compromised circumstances.

In my professional career as a college administrator, I have always held an interest in underprivileged or at-risk students. Economically disadvantaged, transfer, first-generation, marginalized, and non-traditional age students are all populations whom I have assisted in their pursuit of higher education. While I see a little of me and my experiences in these students, I am further inspired by their will to complete degree requirements when there are so many obstacles in their lives that could prevent this success. Their persistence motivates me to assist them in reaching their goals. This research helped me to develop a better understanding of how students can cultivate such resilience. It also provided me with insights about how I have been able to overcome my own life challenges.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

During a March 18, 1963 address at Kentucky's Centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation, U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy stated

We may observe, with as much sadness as irony that outside of Africa, south of the Sahara where education is still a difficult challenge, the only places on earth known not to provide free public education are Communist China, North Vietnam, Sarawak, Singapore, British Honduras—and Prince Edward County, Virginia. (p. 3)

The cause for the sadness and irony to which Kennedy refers was White Prince Edward County officials' denial of public education for over 1,700 Black children as a deliberate and belligerent response to federal mandates to desegregate schools on the basis of race. White decision-makers were opposed to the idea of White children attending the same schools as Black children (Smith, 1996). The school lockout for Blacks lasted for five years from 1959 to 1964, while White children attended a newly erected private school partly funded by state tuition grants and county tax credits. Consequently, many of the Black children went without formal education, while others left the county to live with relatives in locations where they were not prevented from attending school (Hale-Smith, 1993). The county officials' resistance to desegregation orders forced Black families into making difficult decisions about whether to send their children away to be educated at the expense of an intact family.

Another irony related to the closings developed later, as some of the grown children of those prevented from attending school obtained doctoral degrees (Hicks & Pitre, 2010) in spite of their parents' obstructed education. Though many of the locked-out children harbored negative feelings toward education (Hale-Smith, 1993), a subset of the children’s direct descendants were somehow able to reach high academic levels. This group of people from the
Second Generation is the focus of my study, which aimed to reveal their attributed reasons for their high academic attainments despite their parents’ five-year experience of being denied an education. As a way of understanding what contributed to their success, resilience was explored in this study to determine contributing factors to higher education goal attainment because the sample Second Generation members emerged from “one of the most extreme manifestations” (Heaton, 2008, p. 154) of desegregation resistance to reach academic and professional success.

Understanding what contributed to these particular children's resilience might help us to know how to foster academic and professional resilience in children today whose parents had limited access to education. Constructing this knowledge was assisted by a review of relevant literature that explores four critical areas: the family’s role in children’s education, effects of the Prince Edward County school closings, resilience research—specifically resilience-promoting processes, and a family resilience model. This review of the literature ended with a synthesis and discussion that demonstrates how I see my study's results contributing to the existing knowledge base. I began reviewing the institution of family, in which early child development begins before attending school.

**The Family's Role in Education**

Researchers have studied many variables related to families’ effects on children’s education. Studies of parents’ education (D'Allegro & Kerns, 2011; Eccles, 2005; Lucia & Baumann, 2009), parental involvement (Hartlep & Ellis, 2010; Rowan-Kenyon, Bell, & Perna, 2008), family socioeconomics (Acemoglu & Pischke, 2000; Duncan & Magnuson, 2005; Frances & Morning, 1993), and family ethnicity (Barnett, 2004; Brown, Tanner-Smith, & Lesane-Brown, 2009) have driven researchers to conclusions about how children develop as students under the influence of their families. Though these examples represent a subset of the studies that
contribute to understanding the family’s role in children’s education overall, these particular
dimensions address most directly the issues that may have affected the Second Generation’s
scholastic development, given the nature of the disruption in their parents’ schooling. By fully
examining these dimensions, many of which overlap, we can gain a better understanding of
which aspects tend to hamper and which aspects tend to aid the Second Generation’s academic
success. Parents’ education, however, was the primary area of focus, given the Second
Generation’s parents unique experiences with a forced lapse in their education.

Parents’ Education

Data show correlations between college enrollment and parents’ educational attainments.
In a 10-year longitudinal study on college access and persistence, for example, Choy (2002)
found that within the 1992 high school graduates enrolled in college by 1994, 93% of the
enrollees’ parents completed college; 75% of the parents had some college experience, and 59%
of the parents of college enrollees had a high school or lesser education. A similar trend exists
within the data for high school graduates seven years later. Of the 1999 high school graduates
who enrolled in college, 82% of those students’ parents held a bachelor or higher degree; 54%
had parents who completed high school but not college, and only 36% of those new college
entrants had parents with no high school diploma (“Parents Affect Children’s Education,” 2003).
These data support the conclusion that parents’ educational backgrounds tend to predict their
children’s educational levels. The reports are consistent with findings from other studies on
parents’ education and children’s academic outcomes. In chapter one, I noted one study (Davis-
Kean, 2005) in particular that found that African American parents’ years of education
presuppose their children’s academic performance. The finding in this study, as well as similar
research on parents’ and children’s educations, needs more exploration in order to understand the unlikely context of the Second Generation for obtaining advanced degrees.

**Correlations.** Davis-Kean’s (2005) participants consisted of 868 8-to-12-year-old children, approximately half of whom were African American and half European American. Parents’ educational levels indirectly—meaning “parents’ achievement beliefs and stimulating home behaviors” (pp. 300-301)—related to the academic achievement for both races. From this finding, Davis-Kean suggested that the amount of parents’ schooling influences the structure of a home environment that can be conducive to children’s academic achievement and can influence parents’ scholarly interactions with their children. In addition to the more academically stimulating environment that Davis-Kean suggested, Eccles (2005) explained why parents’ educational attainments tend to correlate with those of their children. She argued that parents’ schooling instills skills, values, and knowledge that mirror those of the educational system, influencing the learning environment in the home. Further, through expressions like parental warmth—which forms and supports a positive social environment that praises children (Davis-Kean)—and practices like developing early language and reading skills, children develop positive self-concepts for academic success (Eccles). These outcomes help to lay the foundation for higher education attainment, since students—especially African American males—are likely to attend college if their mothers attended college (Lucia & Baumann, 2009).

What about students who attended college, but whose parents who did not? These students represent a related and important aspect of the experience of the Second Generation.

**First Generation Students.** A first generation student is a college student whose parents have not completed the requirements of a university degree program (Hodges, 1999). In a study done at Pennsylvania State University’s Berks College (PSUBC) campus, D’Allegro and Kerns
(2011) used new student data from 2000 to 2006 to gain a better understanding of how parents' education influences student success. In each of the examined categories of mathematics placement scores, English placement scores, first semester credits attempted/earned, first-semester grade point average, and first-year retention, first generation students scored lower than non-first generation students. This finding supports previous research in which non-first generation students outperformed first generation students on these variables and other indicators of academic success (D'Allegro & Kerns). This study at PSUBC has significance because it assessed differences between first and non-first generation students based on determined success indicators. However, because the data were collected at a small and less selective campus in terms of admissions standards, findings from studies with more inclusive, hence representative, participants should be reviewed.

Studies with larger and broader samples (e.g., Hahs-Vaughn, 2004; Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998) also show that first generation students are not as successful academically as non-first generation students. Using data from the 1989-90 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Nunez and Cuccaro-Alamin (1998) obtained a representative sample of first-time enrolled U.S. college students from a variety of 2- and 4-year institutions. This particular sample is important to note because it contains participants from an age group similar to the Second Generation. The first generation students studied were less likely to be White and non-Hispanic, and more likely to be female and have lower family incomes than non-first generation students. Also, first generation students were more likely to attend 2-year institutions and private for-profit schools, enroll part-time, and delay their entry into postsecondary institutions when compared with non-first generation students. First generation students were less likely than their non-first generation counterparts to obtain degrees (Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin). These
descriptors are important to consider when comparing these data to that of the participants from
the Second Generation drawn for this study, whose characteristics are not consistent with the
literature on students who excel academically.

Also using data from the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Hahs-
Vaughan (2004) compared pre-collegiate traits and collegiate experiences between first
generation and non-first generation students to determine effects on educational outcomes. Pre-
collegiate traits had a greater influence on non-first generation students’ educational outcomes
than collegiate experiences. By contrast, first generation students’ successful outcomes were
influenced more by collegiate experiences than pre-collegiate traits. Hahs-Vaughan attributed
this difference to the absence of those behaviors (i.e., instilling those educationally sound skills,
values, and knowledge) that Eccles (2005) found amongst parents with education beyond the
high school level. The cultivation of the pre-collegiate traits noted in non-first generation
students were strengthened once the first generation students arrived at college and engaged in a
more academically nurturing setting than what was in their homes. Hahs-Vaughan’s findings
imply that parents with more education tend to engage with their children in ways that better
prepare them for college success. This link is consistent with other research results (e.g., Davis-
Kean, 2005; Eccles, 2005) that note correlations between the nature of parents’ interactions and
children’s academic success.

Parental Involvement

Research on the concept of parental involvement began with children in K-12 education,
but it also has meaning for older students in postsecondary institutions (Wartman & Savage,
2008). The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary
Education Act of 1965, which defines parental involvement as “the participation of parents in
regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities" (U.S. Department of Education, 2004, p. 3). Despite its origins, parental involvement has begun to be examined in higher education contexts. In the context of colleges and universities, Wartman and Savage (2008) defined this concept as the positive practice of parents’ showing interest in the lives of their students in college, gaining more information about college, knowing when and how to appropriately provide encouragement and guidance to their student connecting with the institution, and potentially retaining that institutional connection beyond the college years. (p. 5)

Higher education’s use of parental involvement is closely related to how researchers (e.g., Eccles, 2005) view the role of parental involvement for K-12 education.

In their extensive report on parents’ roles in their children’s collegiate educations, Wartman and Savage (2008) explored the historical origins and current status of parental involvement in student success by focusing on the relationships among students, parents, and institutions. They identified five main factors that have positively and negatively affected parental involvement: generational shifts, cost of college, use of technology, changes in parenting, and demographics. Collectively, these factors contribute to the most critical aspect of parental involvement: the family experience. Stated simply, college-educated parents provide support in ways meaningful to students’ success (Wartman & Savage, 2008). Since parents play major roles in the practical knowledge of college passed on to their children, how do other factors like secondary schools, higher education, and government affect parents’ involvement with their children’s educations? Research on how parental involvement is cultivated can provide an answer to this question.
Rowan-Kenyon, Bell, and Perna (2008) conducted a study with a sample of students from three distinct types of high schools—those with below-average student achievement and socioeconomic status (low-resource schools), others with average student achievement and socioeconomic status (middle-resource schools), and those with above-average student achievement and socioeconomic status (high-resource schools). The researchers used a conceptual model that assumes the most important predictors of college enrollment based upon the results of previous research: academic preparation and achievement, financial resources, knowledge about college, and family support. In addition to these predictors, students’ decisions about college can be understood by accounting for multiple layers of context: students and their families, K-12 schools, higher education institutions, and the broader societal, economic, and policy contexts (Rowan-Kenyon et al., 2008). The sample consisted of students from each of the three achievement and socioeconomic levels within the same school districts to control for regional differences, and from five different states with various economic, political, demographic, and educational characteristics. Using multiple data generation and collection methods, including interviews with students and parents, the researchers gained greater understanding of the relationships among parental involvement, school context, and college enrollment.

In Rowan-Kenyon et al.’s (2008) study, three themes emerged from data analysis: (a) parents shape college opportunity for their children, but involvement varies based on socioeconomic status; (b) parental involvement is shaped by, and also shapes, the school context for college opportunity; and (c) parental involvement is also shaped by the higher education context and the social, economic, and policy context. (p. 571)
In other words, although all parents expressed encouragement for their children’s college enrollment, non-college educated parents from low-resource schools provided the lowest levels of support and resources for their children. Second, although schools encouraged parental involvement across all levels, parents, mostly from high-resource schools, also influenced the school context for college opportunities by advocating on their children’s behalf, for example. Third, Rowan et al. (2008) found that higher education institutions influence parental involvement through mailed college literature, geographical proximity, the attractiveness of two-year schools, and the accessibility to state flagship schools. These factors stimulated conversation between parents and students across the three groups, but parents at high-resource schools demonstrated the most knowledge about getting their children enrolled in postsecondary schools. Finally, state financial aid programs influenced parental involvement, but not across all levels. Participating parents from only two states were fully aware of state merit-aid programs. Few parents in other states had knowledge of merit- or need-based programs. High-resource school parents were consistently more aware of prepaid college programs and criteria for obtaining state aid. In contrast, for many parents with no more than a high school diploma, lack of information and knowledge reflected little involvement with their children’s decisions about college enrollment.

Rowan-Kenyon et al. (2008) suggested the need for greater focus on stakeholder partnerships that empower parents’ involvement in their children’s college enrollment. Collaborations among parents, schools, higher education, and states can cultivate more informed parents who are more inclined to be involved with college planning and preparation. Hence, these researchers concluded, the low levels of low-resource parents’ involvement are more attributable to schools, higher education, and state policies than to the parents themselves, who
are simply limited by their lack of knowledge. This study’s results suggested that parental involvement both shapes and is shaped by parents’ relationships with K-12 schools, higher education, and state programs related to merit-aid scholarships.

The Second Generation’s parents were similar to the non-educated, low-resource school parents in Rowan-Kenyon et al.’s (2008) study with regard to their knowledge of higher education hence involvement with their children education. The Second Generation’s parents’ financial positions also mirrored characteristics of the parents in this study. Socioeconomic status was found to be a factor that consistently determined the level of parental involvement with their children’s education. This finding points to a need for understanding how a family’s low socioeconomic status affects a student’s college education, specifically for this study.

**Family Socioeconomics**

In its successful effort to increase access to higher education for people from low income backgrounds, the United States created need-based financial aid programs in 1972 to increase college attendance amongst this population (Frances & Morning, 1993). However, in comparison to middle and upper class families, children from low income families have enrolled in college at a lower rate, in part because families at the bottom of the income distribution were poorer in the 1990s than in the 1970s (Acemoglu & Pischke, 2000, p. 1). Tasks like providing adequate food, clothing, healthcare, and shelter are so time-consuming and resource-depleting that parents’ involvement with children in scholarly activities is diminished (Wartman & Savage, 2008). This lifestyle seems to be more conducive to a less rigid postsecondary schedule, like what tends to be offered at many community colleges. In fact, students from low-income families are more likely to enroll in 2-year schools than 4-year schools, which implies a significant difference in preparation for an academically rigorous program between poorer and
richer students (Acemoglu & Pischke, 2000; Frances & Morning, 1993; Haveman & Smeeding, 2006).

Astin and Oseguera (2004) conducted a study to gain a better understanding of how close American higher education is to an equitable system: "one where students from different socioeconomic classes have equal access to the best educational opportunities, which in this instance means the most selective colleges and universities" (p. 328). Access to selective schools is important not necessarily because these schools offer the best education, but because they are equipped with more resources than other institutions, and they attract more recruiting employers and graduate/professional schools. Using freshman survey data of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program collected from 1971 to 2000, Astin and Oseguera found that high-income students' enrollment at selective schools increased in percentage over time, while low-income students' enrollment percentage remained steady. These trends suggest inequity in access to selective schools between low- and high-income students. Also, students with highly educated parents (both parents with a college degree) had a 500% better chance than first generation students of gaining access to selective schools. In fact, the data showed that first generation students represent more than a third of all freshmen in the least selective schools. The researchers concluded that significant socioeconomic inequities have increasingly stratified American higher education over the thirty-year period examined.

Haveman and Smeeding (2006) reported similar disparities in overall college attendance between low- and high-income students. One difference between children of low- and high-income families is the presence of three traits: ability, motivation, and preparedness (Haveman & Smeeding, 2006, p. 129). High-income students tend to have these traits, which tend to be less salient in low-income students. These researchers stated that ability and motivation are linked to
genetics as well as the environment created by families of all income levels. Preparedness, however, is in large part a result of the training provided in primary and secondary schools for children of all socioeconomic levels. While acknowledging the complexities of determining ability and motivation levels, Haveman and Smeeding (2006) also stated that secondary schools are insufficiently preparing low-income students for success in college. Part of this problem is rooted in an overwhelming emphasis on access that has not been matched with adequate academic preparation in high school. The prevalence of high-poverty public schools without the resources to prepare students in critical areas like reading and math, combined with colleges' reticence to extend their academic enrichment services to secondary schools creates a significant threat to students' collegiate success (Tremaine, 2010). The lack of collaboration in resources, curricula, and advising between secondary and postsecondary schools results in poor collegiate enrollment among low-income students.

Although the odds of attending college for low-income, first generation students are low, there are students with these characteristics who do enroll. These students enter college with less academic preparation, are mostly from ethnic and racial minority groups, are usually older, have fewer financial means, and have more non-scholastic obligations like family responsibilities—all factors that lower students' persistence toward a degree (Engle & Tinto, 2008). In fact, Engle and Tinto found that low income, first generation students drop out after the first public school college year at a rate three times greater than high-income, non-first generation students; and this rate increased to five times as likely for first generation students at private schools. Further, the percentage (43%) of low income, first generation students more than doubled the percentage (20%) of high income, non-first generation students in a comparison of college exits without a degree in a six-year period. Engle and Tinto (2008) also used data from the U.S. Department of
Education's Baccalaureate and Beyond study to track graduate degree attainment for the two
groups. Of the 1993 bachelor's degree recipients, high income, non-first generation students
obtained 71% more graduate degrees than the low income first generation students. Lack of
information, support, and money are some of the same barriers to baccalaureate and graduate
degree completion cited for low income, first generation students (Engle & Tinto, 2008).

According to these findings, Prince Edward County's Second Generation had a relatively
small chance of obtaining their graduate degrees. But they somehow persisted, overcoming even
their racial and ethnic minority status, which puts them at risk for not completing a baccalaureate
degree within six years (Engle & Tinto, 2008).

Family Ethnicity

According to Museus and Ravello (2010), higher education attainment among racial and
ethnic minority students—"undergraduates who self-identify with the socially constructed Asian
American, Black, Latina/o, and Native American racial categories" (p. 47)—remains one of
education's primary challenges. Yet, there is limited literature on race's role in college students'
academic performance, in spite of the emphasis of collectivism and interdependence within
Asian, African, and Latino cultures (Wartman & Savage, 2008). Fortunately, there are a few
studies (e.g., Barnett, 2004; Hinderlie & Kenny, 2002; Mattanah, Brand, & Hancock, 2004) that
have examined how families' races correlate with college students' success.

In a qualitative study of 50 Black (mixture of African American and West Indian)
undergraduate students at a large, academically selective, urban university, Barnett (2004)
examined the roles of Black families in the lives of their collegiate students on a predominately
White campus. In the randomly selected sample, 42 of the 50 students' parents had some
education beyond the high school level and the median family income was $57,770. These
traits—parents with more than a high school education and financially solvent families—are consistent with other sample characteristics that are correlated with college student success. Barnett, like Wartman and Savage (2008), found that 76% of the Black students in her study reported family as very significant to their success, commenting that the family’s influence has been insufficiently studied to date. She further reported that students indicated family encouragement, support, and advice as important. Early and ongoing parental interaction with children in the context of Black culture was evident in the students’ collegiate success.

Similarly, Hinderlie and Kenny (2002) sought the factors that assisted Black students’ adjustment at predominantly White and academically competitive higher education institutions. The researchers found that parental attachment with Black students was significant to academic and personal adjustment. Students reported that parents provided the support needed (and not supplied by the universities) through student-parent interactions. In another study of 404 undergraduate students in which 11.6% were African American, Mattanah, Brand, and Hancock (2004) found that close-knit and interdependent relationships between African American parents and students were “highly valued” by the students who adjusted well to college. This sense of attachment between African American students and their parents has aided the success of students (Barnett, 2004; Hinderlie & Kenny, 2002) and calls for more investigation, given African Americans’ emphasis on multiple immediate and assumed family members contributing to the success of individuals (Mattanah et al., 2004).

In researching the family’s role in Black children’s academic success, Brown, Tanner-Smith, and Lesane-Brown’s (2009) focused on ethnic/race socialization—the transmission of values related to the meaning of ethnicity and race, including structural inequities like under-
funded schools—from parents and other close relatives to children of color. Ethnic/race socialization is consistent with ethnic/race identity theory, which presupposes that the sooner Black youth come to understand their connection to other Blacks, their in-group's subordinate (relative to Whites) position in U.S. society, and the necessity of working twice as hard to go half as far, the better prepared they are for academic success and success more broadly defined. (Brown et al., 2009, p. 386)

In other words, ethnic/race socialization empowers Black children with an understanding of how they are generally perceived in the United States, where they will face inevitable obstacles due to their race. This knowledge reduces problematic behaviors, stimulates cognition, and enhances problem-solving skills, all through affirming generalizations about self and relationship of self to Whites. As a result of this racially equalizing process, ethnic/race socialization conditions Black children to be successful in a society where unfair treatment on the basis of race occurs.

Likewise, Barnett (2004) found that Black students attributed their success to their preparation, provided by parents, for dealing with racial conflicts. Families developed their children’s coping behaviors for functioning well “in a racist environment that deprecates African American values, culture, and people” (p. 54). Ultimately, the ethnic/race identity leads to a sense of family attachment that mitigates the effects of societal inequities and increases Black children, adolescents, and young adults’ engagement, achievement, and persistence in education (Brown, et al., 2009).

Ethnic/race socialization and racial identity’s roles in mitigating adversity will be discussed later in this chapter. They are mentioned here in the context of other college student success characteristics like the presence of educated and involved parents with financial stability.
Research supports how these factors are present in the lives of students who do well. However, while the traits of well-educated and financially stable parents do not describe what the Second Generation experienced, racial socialization and identification are characteristics whose presence is yet to be determined in the lives of the Second Generation. Their parents’ backgrounds hampered at least some of these success-prone factors, and the following section will provide an overview of the circumstances that make the Crippled Generation unlikely parents to rear children who excelled in education.

**Effects of Prince Edward County School Closings**

Days before the fiftieth anniversary of the *Brown* decision, four children of the Crippled Generation with doctoral degrees gathered at the Robert R. Moton Museum, the former high school for Blacks in Prince Edward County, to share their personal testimonies related to the school closings in a panel discussion (Watson, Tillerson, Williams, & Hicks, 2004). Though the panelists were accomplished scholars, the history of their success includes their parents’ experiences and the outcomes of the school closings. Hence, this review continued by analyzing research that examined the effects of the closings on the Crippled Generation, exploring how different processes contribute to African American collegians’ success, and synthesizing resilience research that may be applicable to understanding how members of the Second Generation reached their high levels of educational attainment.

**Early Findings of the Closings’ Effects**

After the public schools reopened in Prince Edward County in 1964, researchers began to study the effects of the closings on children. One of the major objectives for Green et al. (1964), for example, was to understand the cognitive and psychological impact of no schooling on Prince Edward children aged 5 to 22. The researchers used scores on standardized test instruments
(Metropolitan Readiness, Stanford Achievement, Iowa Silent Reading, Self-Concept, Time-Telling Test, Stanford-Binet, and California Test of Mental Maturity) administered to the Prince Edward County children and children in a neighboring county. The three subgroups for analysis were Education—children who received an education during the closing, No Education—children who were without schooling, and Other County—school-educated children from a neighboring county. The scores among the three groups were compared to identify differences on the achievement and psychological scales. The parents of the Education and No Education children were also interviewed to study their activities and attitudes.

Green et al. (1964) found that education deprivation had a significant effect on the academic skills of the No Education group. Similarly, this group had lower educational and occupational aspirations than the other groups. In fact, the No Education group regarded school as less important to social mobility than the Other County group. In nearly all cognitive and psychological assessments, there were substantial differences among the three groups. Other County children performed at the highest levels, followed by Education and then No Education children. The assessment of self-concept was the only area of negligible differences among members of the three groups. Even though the No Education group’s average intelligence score fell in the “mentally defective” range, their self-concept scores were not much different from those of the other groups. Perhaps this assessment of self-concept was either conducted too early to detect any long-term effects of the closing, or self-concept was uniformly lower among all students whose scores were compared. Or even perhaps self-concept was correlated to race or some other variable as opposed to education.

The researchers’ central question throughout the study was “What role does formal education play in our society?” (Green et al., 1964, p. 6). They included participating children’s
parents to understand their social status and habits that may affect their children's education. The study's findings showed that the parents of the No Education group participated in fewer social activities, were less likely to subscribe to newspapers/magazines, and had lower occupational and educational aspirations than the Education group. The researchers concluded that formal schooling plays a significant role in orienting children toward higher education. This conclusion is of particular importance to this review because it is consistent with research (e.g., D'Allegro & Kerns, 2011; Eccles, 2005) reviewed earlier in this chapter about parents' educational levels' effects on their children's academic outcomes. These findings do not support favorable outcomes for future generations of Prince Edward County children.

The Green et al. (1964) findings helped to understand the role of formal education in grade level reading and math curricula, but the scope and timing of the study did not allow for an investigation of how the school disruption affected future generations of the No Education group, or study longitudinal impacts on the children affected by the school closings. Green et al. made recommendations for future studies on other variables like creativity, vocational choice, and the roles of the schools in developing educational plans appropriate for locked-out students.

Another early study (Mermelstein & Shulman, 1967) on the closings' effects found significant differences between Prince Edward County and other children in verbal task performance, but not in nonverbal tasks. Researchers compared the attaining conservation concepts between two groups: 6- and 9-year old Prince Edward children and same-age children from a northern city. The Prince Edward group experienced an interrupted education, while the northern city group had sustained schooling. The findings revealed that the northern city group outperformed the Prince Edward group on the verbal tasks. The researchers concluded that the lack of formal education for five years, which includes language development, adversely affected
the Prince Edward children. This finding is another reason that supports scholarly interest in learning what enabled the Second Generation to achieve academically.

**Long-Term Effects of the Closings**

More recent research shows the long-term effects of the school closings on the Crippled Generation. Hale-Smith (1993) compared Black Prince Edward County students who were schooled outside of Virginia (*in-school group*) and those who remained in the county and received no schooling (*out-of-school group*) during the closing. Both groups were examined as adults to understand their perceptions of and participation in educational opportunities. Data collected from self-report questionnaires and interviews were used to make comparisons between the two groups.

The findings revealed that the out-of-school group attained lower educational levels, worked in lower-ranked occupations, and fell into lower-income ranges than the in-school group. The results also indicated a statistically significant difference in perceptions of opportunities for success and participation in formal educational activities between the two groups. Out-of-school members were less positive about personal opportunities for success and less involved with formal educational activities. These findings suggest that the out-of-school Blacks were less likely than in-school Blacks to create a positive learning environment and educational opportunities for their children. Nearly 30 years after the closings, Hale-Smith's (1993) findings show that the Crippled Generation as adults maintained their low aspirations for education. Members of the Second Generation, though, seemed to break this trend when they obtained the highest level of degree in their fields. What factors propelled their success? Studies conducted on African American collegiate success have identified the presence of certain factors like family (e.g., D’Allegro & Kerns, 2011; Hartlep & Ellis, 2010; Tanner-Smith, & Lesane-Brown, 2009),
internal motivation (e.g., Garibaldi, 1991; Herndon & Hirt, 2009; Schoon, Parsons, & Sacker; 2004), and spirituality (e.g., Abar, Carter, & Winsler, 2009; Barnett, 2004; Mull, 2007). Some of these factors may be woven in the lives of the Second Generation.

Both groups in Hale-Smith's (1993) study were active voters. This finding may reflect parents' attitudes and behaviors that eventually helped to change the Second Generation's educational aspirations. Hale-Smith posited that former Prince Edward students who were locked out of school wanted to take measures to ensure that their children would have full access to a public education, even though members of the out-of-school Blacks in the study's sample did not participate directly in formal educational activities. The researcher suggested that this collective action of protection and care demonstrated "resilience and dedication to education of the African American community" (Hale-Smith, 1993, p. 186).

Hale-Smith's (1993) research further contributes to understanding the long-term effects of the school closings. Her study, however, was not designed to communicate the participants' voices. This omission results in a failure to convey a thick description—"statements that re-create a situation and as much of its context as possible, accompanied by the meanings and intentions inherent in that situation" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p. 451)—of the legacy of the school closings. For example, one of Hale-Smith's themes in her study of the Crippled Generation was the importance of the locked-out children's relationships with family and friends. She was able to report the value of relationships but not in a way that communicates this finding in participants' voices. However in some related research about the Prince Edward students, Turner (2004) also identified similar relationships as a theme, but quoted a participant to describe how the school closings affected students' relationships with each other:
[The closings] stole my childhood of any hope of having anything close to a normal one. It denied me of the relationships that kids all over America enjoyed with other kids, teachers, principals.... They took something from me that could never be replaced by anything but disgust and at times hate. (p. 1686)

This quote expresses the degree of value that relationships had for the student in a vivid way.

Using qualitative data to form thick descriptions of study phenomena can be an effective way to understand the Second Generation’s perspectives. Turner’s (2004) effective use of qualitative data to understand long-term effects of the closings on the Cripple Generation supports why this current study used similar methods to understand long term effects extended to some of the members’ children.

Though discovered using different types of data, Hale-Smith (1993) and Turner’s (2004) identification of the relationships theme has relevance in terms of how Prince Edward County students valued family in the context of closed schools. A student who was able to continue his education outside of Prince Edward was quoted in Turner, saying: "I was able to stay in school, but I had to leave my friends and family. I had to leave behind my plans, the football team, graduating from Motion.... We were kids, but we had connections" (p. 1686). It seems that the school closings had an impact on the students’ sense of emotional connectedness with family and other community members. This finding about the importance of relationships is consistent with the emphasis on collectivism and interdependence that is present within the African American culture (Wartman & Savage, 2008), and is important in understanding how the absence of family further adversely affected the members of the Crippled Generation who were forced to attend school away from home.
In addition to effects upon relationships, Turner (2004) identified long-term emotional and physical effects of the school closings. Turner wrote an article to communicate the perceptions of "community activists, county residents, teachers, students, school administrators, local political leaders, and outside participants in the Prince Edward saga" (p. 1667) obtained through interviews conducted in her dissertation and unpublished interview material from various sources.

Psychologically, children deprived of an education while the schools were closed felt intellectually inferior to their classmates when they returned (Turner, 2004). Children were placed in the grades that they occupied at the time of the five-year disruption, but they were significantly older than their classmates, who also seemed more advanced educationally. Green et al. (1964) found the Crippled Generation's self-concepts to be similar to that of both the other children without a disrupted education, and the children from a neighboring county. These researchers assessed the Crippled Generation prior to the re-opening of the schools and the children's return to public school education.

Turner (2004), however, found that some children later developed negative self-perceptions, describing themselves as "miserable," "very bitter," and even wondering if something was wrong with them. There were also some physiological problems like malnutrition, vision disorders, and severe tooth decay that went unnoticed by teachers and nurses who would have screened for these ailments if the students had been in school. Absenteeism also made Black teenagers ineligible for welfare benefits because Virginia required regular school attendance to qualify, and the state made no exceptions for the Prince Edward case (Turner, 2004). While these studies' outcomes show some of the long-term emotional and
physical effects of the school closings on the “Crippled Generation,” it remains unknown how these outcomes also affected their children.

Though Turner (2004) studied the students who were locked out, her findings showed how the Second Generation could have been affected by their parents’ experiences. She reported:

Still grappling with their own complicated feelings about school, many victims of the closings may have negatively influenced their children’s views on school. One member of the closings generation explained that ‘bitterness and anger have been imbedded in them intentionally or unintentionally by the parent.’ (p. 1685)

Aside from transferring negative views of school, parents probably also affected their children by not being able to reinforce classroom-based learning by assisting their children with homework. For example, one parent in Turner’s study reported lacking knowledge of basic subjects, hence resenting not being able to assist her children’s learning at home.

Turner (2004) also reported that some children interpreted their parents’ situations as evidence that education was not needed to be successful. Specifically, one parent shared how his sons repeatedly stated that their father had done well in life without a formal education, so they could “drop out [of school]” (p. 1685) and do well too. Considering the Crippled Generation’s circumstances and the school closings’ adverse effects on parenting around issues of schooling, it is not a surprise that an understanding of how the Second Generation members obtained their education would be of interest to education researchers. In studying the adversities experienced by the Crippled Generation, Hale-Smith (1993) acknowledged that some members of this group demonstrated resilience in education. Her conclusion provides direction for future researchers who seek to understand the Second Generation’s path to success.
Resilience Research

Recall that resilience was proposed by psychologists (Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; Werner & Smith, 1982) who studied people who developed into successful adults in spite of experiencing significant hardships as children. Research on this theoretical construct began by attempting to identify a personal characteristic or gene that enabled children to overcome adversity and become successful (Coleman & Ganong, 2002). Difficult situations create risk factors—"environmental stressors or conditions that increase the likelihood that a child will experience poor overall adjustment or negative outcomes" (Braverman, 2001, p. 1). As the work in this area evolved, researchers agreed that there is no "resilient gene," and accepted that the effects of risk factors are mitigated by protective factors—"characteristics of the child or environment that ameliorate or reduce the potential negative effects of the risk factors" (Braverman, 2001, p. 2).

With regard to protection, Rutter (1987) posited that "factor" is inaccurate, stating that a particular "factor" could be helpful in one person's situation and harmful to someone else. For example, family as a factor for some individuals can increase risk because of mental health issues whereas this factor can be an asset for other individuals who gain support their families. The protection lies in the process or mechanism by which the risk is ameliorated, rather than in the factor itself. This suggests that there is some interaction that mitigates risk and bolsters adaptation. Hence Rutter concluded that "protective processes" is a more accurate phrase than "protective factors" with reference to developing resilience. These risk factors and protective processes have become a focus of resilience research.
Resilience-Promoting Processes

Upon closer comparison of studies (e.g., Abar, Carter, & Winsler, 2009; D’Allegro & Kerns, 2011; Garibaldi, 1991) that identify relevant processes contributing to African American collegiate success, another similarity among the results emerges. Several of the researchers (Garibaldi, 1991; Herndon & Hirt, 2004; Walker & Dixon, 2002; Wilson-Sadberry, 1991) described these findings as resilience-promoting processes that enable African American college students to persist toward an undergraduate degree. Resilience is “a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity” (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000, p. 543). Researchers who studied African American college students have found processes (e.g., family, motivation, and spirituality) that aid college students’ abilities to overcome hardships and challenges in their academic pursuits.

These resilience-promoting processes emerge at three levels: individual, family, and community (Garmezy, 1985; Hill, 1998; Werner & Smith, 1982), and studies on African American children have provided support for identifying the importance of these processes. An understanding of resilience development at these levels informs us more about the nature of resilience for the Second Generation members.

Resilience From Within

In his extensive review of resilience theory, Van Breda (2001) stated, “The capacity of an individual to cope during difficulty is central to their resilience” (p. 6). A logical question to ask, then, is “What are the components that comprise the capacity to cope?” There may be a wide range of components, given diverse perspectives among individuals, but research on African Americans has identified some similar features of resilience for individuals. The presence of
positive social skills, social competence, and internal locus of control were found to be intrinsic traits of resilient children (Hill, 1998).

**Positive Values.** Hill (1998) found that African American children tend to have values like respect for family, high regard for the elderly, concern for others’ welfare, strong religious orientations, strong work ethics, a sense of personal responsibility, and commitment to academics. Together, these values help to condition African American children for dealing with adversity by broadening their perspectives to include diverse thinking and making them emotionally capable of coping with hardship. Other researchers (e.g., Van Breda, 2001; Werner & Smith, 1982) found similar results in their research on children who were deemed resilient.

**Social Competence.** High self-esteem or positive self-concept correlates with social competence, which is the ability to interact successfully in various social settings and situations (Hill, 1998). Hale-Benson (1986) stated that compliments, praise, successful experiences, and displays of Black children’s work build their confidence with interacting with other children and in developing academic skills. Further, children’s positive self-concept enables them to practice good manners, sustain positive personal relationships, and reconcile differences in healthy ways. These abilities enable children to be more receptive to others and vice versa. How prevalent were these abilities among the Second Generation? Of greater importance to this study, how were these abilities developed, if they were present?

**Internal Locus of Control.** Van Breda (2001) defined internal locus of control as an individual’s sense of control on events’ outcomes based on the individual’s freedom to choose among available alternatives. Further, he found that in addition to the orientation toward academics and capacity to manage healthy social relationships, having an internal locus of control was relevant in individual-level resilience research. For African Americans, having an
appropriate internal locus of control has particular relevance when addressing issues of racism (Hill, 1998). Holder and Vaux (1998) studied African American professionals in predominantly White work settings and found that maintaining an internal locus of control buffered the race-related stressors for the participants. African Americans are more satisfied (Holder & Vaux, 1998) and demonstrate more resilience (Hill, 1998) when they perceive control over their destiny. The Second Generation members were children from a racially segregated society. But how did they perceive control over their circumstances? This consideration leads to an exploration of how the Second Generation members perceived their parents’ lockout in Prince Edward County and how that event shaped their sense of determining educational outcomes.

These features of resilience that focus upon individuals have shortcomings, however. Little attention was paid to the environment in which the children studied were raised (Van Breda, 2001). While intrinsic traits may play a valid role in developing resilience, their potency can be increased through interactions within the families and communities in which children are immersed. Consequently, the focus should expand to include these institutions.

**Origins of Resilience on the Family Level**

The internal locus of control trait leads to an examination of the environment that Van Breda (2001) referenced as important in gaining a better understanding of resilience development. For most children, the family environment is the prominent one that shapes perceptions. A closer examination of African American families and resilience highlights some research results (Brown, 2008; Carter-Black, 2001; Miller & Macintosh, 1999) that support the development of resilience through family interactions, referred to earlier as ethnic/race socialization. Again, this concept is defined as the transmission of ethnicity and race-related values, including inequities, from families to children of color (Brown, et al., 2009). Miller and
Macintosh (1999) found that racial socialization and racial identity for Blacks serve as buffers to stressors, promoting resilience, which, in turn, contributes to good academic performance. Stressors were identified as negative conditions, like racism, that create hostile environments for adolescents (Miller & Macintosh, 1999). Carter-Black (2001) identified child-rearing practices (e.g., family activities, religious discipleship, and promotion of education) that African American parents employ to build their children’s resilience while socializing them racially.

Newman and Blackburn (2002) stated that parents’ attitudes and behavior are the most powerful resilience-promoting contributors to their children’s resilience. As it pertains to African Americans, parents’ practice of training children to embrace the fundamental African value of high respect for parents enhances resilience (Hill, 1998). With this high level of respect comes the ability to teach control and discipline, which aid resilience development. Hill (1998) also posited that families with resilient children have parents who are flexible in their roles, communicate well with spouses and children, and foster bonding among all family members. Flexibility in parental roles has been researched within African American families. Studies on the socialization that occurs in African American families headed by women have consistently revealed better academic outcomes for their children than the socialization that occurs in comparable White families led by women. Hill used this research to show how African American women’s flexibility in fulfilling both mother and father roles has produced better results in developing children with higher educational aspirations than European American women by comparison.

Families’ racial socialization (Carter-Black, 2001; Miller & Macintosh, 1999) has been supported in cultivating resilience in African American children. Within the research on racial socialization is the development of spiritual strength. Spiritual orientation was a common theme...
among studies (e.g., Abar, Carter, & Winsler, 2009; Barnett, 2004; Mull, 2007) on resilience-building processes for African Americans. This finding introduces the connection of resilience development between the immediate family and the church family, for example. So in addition to studying racial socialization within the family, Brown (2008) also studied the role of external social support—extended family, the community, African American churches, and non-relatives who aid in raising the children—in developing resilience. She found that racial socialization and the perception of social support accounted for the greatest variance in resilience scores.

Considering the high number of Prince Edward residents listed in the Brown case, we can assume that there was much community support that may imply a source of strength for the Second Generation.

Community-Generated Resilience

Research on resilience theory has evolved to include protective processes generated at the community level (Van Breda, 2001). It seems that both immediate and external families constitute the social support that develops people's resilience. However, Van Breda goes on to state that the findings on resilience at the community level are inconclusive and this research needs to be further developed. Hill (1987), on the other hand, stated that community for African Americans is a significant source of social support that aids resilience. He goes a step further in addressing community support for African Americans by identifying the informal groups—networks of friends, neighbors, and extended family and formal groups—such as churches, education centers, community agencies, and business organizations through which community support is garnered.

Of these groups, churches have been the center of support for African Americans historically. Through providing child- and eldercare, tutoring, counseling, and spiritual
guidance, churches in the African American community are major contributors to stability and resilience. Tyms (1987), in fact, argued that Black churches transcend all other sources of support. He also stated that churches serve as allies for African Americans by nurturing engagement with insights, understandings, skills, and methods that promote educational attainment.

In addition to social support, these groups provide African American families with economic support in times of adversity. Particularly in low-income communities, these groups mitigate hardships by providing food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and affordable living options (Hill, 1987). Contrary to Van Breda’s (2001) tentative conclusions about resilience development though the community, Hill’s (1987) review concluded that the community is central to African Americans’ resilience development. The difference may be explained by the fact that the sources consulted in Van Breda’s broad review of literature were heavily representative of European American culture. A more narrowly focused review of racial minority cultures shows that African Americans emphasize collectivism and interdependence in their communities (Wartman & Savage, 2008). Hence, it makes sense that community is a source of resilience for this population. Further, because this distinction may be accounted for by researchers’ relatively insular perspective, other aspects of resilience development may warrant consideration. Exploring a group of the Second Generation can elucidate how one group of African American gained, if at all, resilience through community agents.

**Connecting the Prince Edward Case to a Resilience Framework**

Protective processes have been the focus of research conducted in the Prince Edward case as well. Madison’s study (1999) attempted to identify protective process that contributed to the long-term positive outcomes experienced by some of the children locked out of school. She
administered a questionnaire to 89 former Moton High School students ranging in age from 50 to 59, and obtained qualitative data through interviews of five participants who responded to the survey. Madison sought to understand the resilience that manifested as high educational and occupational attainment and high life satisfaction for some of those students whose public school education was disrupted. Another aim of her study was to determine the degree to which pre-closing abilities and school attendance served as risk factors in addition to the risk introduced by the actual school closings themselves.

Madison (1999) relied mostly on participants’ recollections from more than 35 years earlier. Though less accurate than other ways of generating data, this retrospective reporting strategy allowed the researcher to capture the participants’ “ultimate meanings” (p. 16)—that is, information that contains both factual and constructed details that convey interpretations. Madison’s findings indicated that the closings, significantly more so than racist pre-closing conditions, had a serious impact on long-term educational attainment. The closings also had a negative effect on participants’ involvement in their children’s education, and a negative impact upon area African American students’ lives in general. Her study participants were able to overcome these negative effects with the presence of: family and extra-familiar support, time spent with teachers/mentors, high optimism, spirituality, an understanding of racism and discrimination, and a conviction to do well.

While these findings are consistent with that of other researchers (Green, et al., 1964; Hale-Smith, 1993; Turner, 2004), Madison’s (1999) study is important to note because it applies resilience research to the Prince Edward case in particular, and provides precedence for further exploration of the two topics: resilience research and the Prince Edward County school closings. Her study also sets the stage for further research that seeks to understand the resilience-
developing processes that were able to overcome not only pre-closing inhibiting conditions, but also the considerable negative effects of the closings. She recommended future research using open-ended interviews to gain a better understanding of the processes of resilience in the Prince Edward children. Another way to understand how some Prince Edward children overcame their negative experiences is to explore the Second Generation’s accounts of the role their parents played in their success.

**Family Resilience Theory**

Madison’s (1999) study identified both internal and external processes of resilience. Similarly, other studies (Garmezy, 1991; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990; McCubbin, & Thompson, McCubbin, 1996; Rutter, 1987; Werner, 1993) focused on individual and family resilience traits as salient protective processes in overcoming adverse conditions like poverty, crises, illnesses, and other debilitating life circumstances. These studies show that family functions bolster the ability for children to overcome life challenges. Two leading theoretical models that provide frameworks for strengthening family resilience are the Resiliency Model of Family Adjustment and Adaptation (McCubbin et al., 1996) and the Systems Theory of Family Resilience (Walsh, 1998). The Resiliency Model of Family Adjustment and Adaptation (McCubbin et al., 1996) emphasizes families’ abilities to adapt or adjust to a crisis while appropriately appraising the situation. Though this prevention-orientation model has been applied to the study of ethnically diverse families, it is limited in identifying specific processes that contribute to resilience (Simon, Murphy, & Smith, 2005). The model identifies resilience factors, but as Rutter (1987) argued (and as was stated earlier in this chapter), protection from risk lies in processes (e.g., family flexibility, family communication, and spiritual development), because factors alone do not promote resilience.
Walsh (1998) developed the Systems Theory of Family Resilience—a resilience development model that outlines the protective processes generated within the family context. Her basic premise is that “stressful crises and challenges influence the whole family, and in turn, key family processes mediate the recovery and resilience of vulnerable members as well as the family unit” (Walsh, 2002, pp. 130-131). The framework consists of three domains: Belief Systems, Organizational Patterns, and Communication Processes. Each domain is comprised of three processes that can empower families to overcome adversity by producing key outcomes. Table 1 (Walsh, 2003, p. 17) demonstrates a conceptual map to understand the relationship among the domains, processes, and intended outcomes. This comprehensive approach, used originally in clinical therapy settings, includes nine processes whose salience varies over time as families experience life challenges. Thus, the processes demonstrate the dynamic system of developing resilient individuals through family functions. The need for ongoing development of resilience is consistent with Rutter’s (1987) assertion that as life’s circumstances change, the processes that develop resilience have to change as well.

The three processes in Walsh’s (1998) Belief Systems domain that can foster resilience include making meaning of adversity, having a positive outlook, and developing transcendent/spiritual beliefs. Families contribute to members’ abilities to view adversity as a shared challenge, to contextualize it, and to build coherence in making the adversity comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful. This appraisal of the situation helps make sense of the adversity by identifying causal or explanatory attributions, thus strengthening the family’s coping skills. In other words, having a good understanding of the issue creates a frame of reference for addressing the adversity.
Table 1

Key Processes in Family Resilience (Walsh, 2003)

Belief Systems
1. Make Meaning of Adversity
   - View resilience as relationally based vs. "rugged individual"
   - Normalize, contextualize adversity and distress
   - Sense of coherence, crisis as meaningful, comprehensible, manageable challenge
   - Casual/explanatory attributions: How could this happen? What can be done?

2. Positive Outlook
   - Hope, optimistic bias; confidence in overcoming odds
   - Courage and en-courage-ment; affirm strengths and focus on potential
   - Active initiative and perseverance (Can-do-spirit)
   - Master the possible; accept what can’t be changed

3. Transcendence and Spirituality
   - Larger values, purpose
   - Spirituality: faith, congregational support, healing rituals
   - Inspiration: envision new possibilities; creative expression; social action
   - Transformation: learning, change, and growth from adversity

Organizational Patterns
4. Flexibility
   - Open to change: rebound, reorganize, adapt to fit new challenges
   - Stability through disruption: continuity, dependability, follow-through
   - Strong authoritative leadership: nurturance, protection, guidance
     - Varied family forms: cooperative parenting/caregiving teams
     - Couple/Co-parent relationship: equal partners

5. Connectedness
   - Mutual support, collaboration, and commitment
   - Respect individual needs, differences, and boundaries
   - Seek reconnection, reconciliation of wounded relationships

6. Social and Economic Resources
   - Mobilize kin, social, and community networks; seek models and mentors
   - Build financial security; balance work/family strains

Communication Processes
7. Clarity
   - Clear, consistent messages (words and actions)
   - Clarify ambiguous information; truth-seeking/truth-speaking

8. Open Emotional Expression
   - Share range of feelings (joy and pain, hopes and fears)
   - Mutual empathy; tolerance for differences
   - Take responsibility for own feelings, behavior; avoid blaming
   - Pleasurable interactions; humor

9. Collaborative Problem Solving
   - Creative brainstorming; resourcefulness; seize opportunities
   - Shared decision-making; conflict resolution: negotiation, fairness, reciprocity
   - Focus on goals; take concrete steps; build on success’ learn from failure
   - Proactive stance: prevent problems; avert crises; prepare for future challenges

After contextualizing the problem, optimism strengthens one’s ability to recovery from a crisis. A positive outlook builds courage and perseverance, leading to a "can-do" mentality, which is partly developed by the third process of the Belief System domain. Walsh (1998) identified maintaining spirituality and transcendence as a process that has empirical support for strengthening family members. Transcendence means "extending or expanding the limits of our ordinary consciousness or experience in ways that connect us with a symbolic or phenomenal reality beyond the ordinary" (Hartmen & Zimberoff, 2010, pp. 6-7). Walsh included this process after reviewing literature that discussed how spiritual practices like prayer, meditation, and rituals have been connected to overcoming health issues, poverty, and racism. Many of these faith-based and cultural practices rely upon the structure and organization of the family.

The Organizational Patterns domain consists of flexibility, connectedness, and social and economic resources (Walsh, 1998). Again, because resilience must be continuously developed, families must adjust to challenges as they arise. A debilitating situation may cause family members to reorganize patterns and roles in a manner that most optimally responds to a particular situation. Connectedness refers to the level of family cohesion, mutual support, and collaboration demonstrated in the face of trouble. To maximize this process, there must be a network of relatives and other influential people available to facilitate the support, as well as financial security that can ameliorate the effects of financially related risk factors. Here is where social and economic resources can play significant roles by having family members, coaches, teachers, role models, and mentors share experiences/solutions, respond to concerns, and mobilize efforts. In many cases, financial support is the solution that can diminish the effects of poverty, unemployment, or lack of healthcare. These processes promote resilience in ways similar to the benefits of teamwork in problem-solving.
Clarity, emotional expression, and collaborative problem-solving are the processes that comprise the Communication domain (Walsh, 1998). Clarity is needed to support the previously discussed meaning-making process. Knowing fully and clearly the details of an adversity can assist in understanding the context of a situation by dismantling ambiguity and responding in healthy ways to hearsay. Open emotional expression conveys a climate of trust, empathy, and tolerance for difference of opinions, thereby allowing for family members to communicate more freely. An atmosphere of open exchanges of opinions and feelings nurtures creative brainstorming, which is useful in identifying healthy solutions or responses to crisis. Walsh (1998) refers to this process as collaborative problem-solving, related to the Organizational Patterns domain because family members have to coordinate individual differences in order to prevail in the face of challenges.

“A family resilience framework can serve as a valuable conceptual map in orienting a wide range of human services” (Walsh, 2006, p. 24). In one area, Walsh’s (1998) theory provides a framework for practitioners who work with families in stressed situations in the social services field. In a study on community social workers’ service to poor families, researchers (Mullin & Arce, 2008) examined how well Walsh’s processes could be applied to this area of social work. Specifically, they aimed to learn “what makes urban families living in poverty resilient” (p. 425). In addition to Walsh’s framework popularity among social workers, it was also selected because of its breadth of specific ways that resilience can be developed and because these means are described as processes (rather than factors) that identify adaptable actions and behaviors. From small focus group discussions of 16 social workers, the researchers found strong connections between Walsh’s model and social workers’ perceptions of what made families resilient. Those findings were the ways in which family members, including external
kin, organized themselves in order to seek and provide support; the spiritual beliefs and positive outlook that families held; and the degree to which family members felt mobilized, based on their beliefs and support systems, to take action in the midst of their struggles. Several aspects of Walsh’s model were reflected in the social works’ data, and with the omission of making meaning of adversity, all of Walsh’s processes were heavily rooted in the belief systems and organizational patterns domains. The researchers concluded that Walsh’s model has applicability to families seeking to become resilient.

Walsh’s (1998) theory has been examined for application in educational settings as well. Amatea, Smith-Adcock, and Villares (2006) presented an overview of how the Systems Theory of Family Resilience framework can guide school counselors’ effectiveness with children of stressed families. Their review of this literature identified consistent findings that show high-achieving students performing well because families interact with their children in ways that prepares them for success. Consequently, there are four family domains that contribute to children’s academic success: beliefs and expectations, emotional connectedness, organizational style, and the quality of family learning opportunities (Amatea et al., 2006). The researchers found that the presence of these processes diminishes the adverse effects of children having low income parents. These processes increase parents’ engagement with learning activities in the home, encourage their attendance at school functions, and promote parents’ communication of warmth. In sum, Amatea et al. (2006) concluded that a family resilience approach within each of the four domains can enhance the parental involvement that is needed in producing high-achieving students.

The findings in these studies provide support for exploring the family interactions and behaviors that aided the Second Generation’s resilience through the Systems Theory of Family
Resilience. This theory and the concept of families' racial socialization share similar aspects, such as the roles of meaning-making, spirituality, and social resources. As such, there are grounds for using Walsh's (1998) theory to understand the participants' developed resilience. The Second Generation's geographic origins are in a rural area, which in itself is correlated with risk for underachievement (Ellis, 2010); the members were likely subjected to racism, given its ubiquity; and moreover, their parents' education was disrupted as a result of the greatest demonstration against racially integrated schools (Gates, 1964).

**Discussion and Conclusions**

Though raised by parents who experienced an unusual denial of rights to a public school education, members of the Second Generation accomplished significant success in their formal education. Succeeding despite the consensus of research findings on traits of successful collegians, the Second Generation somehow persisted to obtain doctorates without most of the characteristics that would predict such achievement. Explanations for their persistence are not obvious after reviewing the educational barriers their parents experienced. Hence there is a need to look more closely at first-hand accounts of the Second Generation's upbringing to help determine what aided their success.

Parents' education is one of the family dimensions that research has shown to have an effect on children's educational outcomes. The other family aspects considered in this review are parent involvement, family income, and family ethnicity/race. The literature in each of these areas collectively identifies an interesting and unexplored opportunity for studying the Second Generation members whose characteristics are not aligned with other successful African American collegians. The specific area of parents' education seems to be the underlying factor that has the greatest impact on children's education. Driven by their experiential knowledge of
higher education and ability to communicate support for educational pursuits, college-educated parents tend to interact with their children in ways that develop a progression toward enrollment in postsecondary schools (Wartman & Savage, 2008). The research shows how the Second Generation's case seems to be quite different from most findings.

There is a strong correlation between parents' education and children's education (Choy, 2002; Davis-Kean, 2005). More educated parents tend to have well educated children. The Second Generation's parents experienced a 5-year interruption in their K-12 schooling that stunted educational pursuits for many of them. The sample for this study, however, surpassed its parents' education level and continued on to complete multiple university degrees. Educated parents instill in children certain attributes that fit well in the educational system because the parents are familiar with the system (Eccles, 2005). But what, if anything, did the Second Generation parents instill in their children that yielded their educational outcomes? First generation college students are not likely to enroll as full time students and obtain degrees at four-year institutions (Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998), but the ones in the Second Generation did that and more.

Lack of education is probably not the only obstacle experienced by the parents of the Second Generation. Hale-Smith (1993) and Turner (2004) found that Crippled Generation members had negative feelings toward education and psychological issues that affected their performance as parents and the overall quality of their lives. The experience of being denied a public K-12 education for racist reasons can add to the adversity of not completing one's education. The turmoil of a Jim Crow society had its effect on some Blacks who did not speak about or promote education in their families. The Crippled Generation felt shamed and embarrassed not to have any formal education, which affected later life outcomes.
It is possible, however, that the Second Generation’s parents’ feelings about the school closings did not have a significantly detrimental effect on their ability to rear children in settings that promoted education. In fact, at least one locked-out student saw the closings as a positive influence, because they forced him to leave the county, seeking an environment that provided educational opportunities that were not present in Prince Edward County (Turner, 2004) even before the closings. This is an example of how some locked-out students and their families could develop a different perspective on the closings than those already reported in research findings. It is reasonable to inquire about other thinking, beliefs, and resources that may have mitigated the deleterious effects of the adversity described above for the Second Generation’s parents.

Family resilience theory emphasizes the roles that family characteristics, behavior patterns, and capabilities play in cushioning the impact of stressful life events and in assisting the family’s recovery from crises (McCubbin, Thompson, & McCubbin, 1996). As introduced above, Walsh (1998) developed a family resilience theory that delineates the processes associated with this construct. Though originally set in the counseling field, the theory can be applied to other areas, including the study of education (Walsh, 1998). Its components match well with research findings about processes present among successful collegians and about ethnic/racial socialization, both of which promote resilience. This Systems Theory of Family Resilience served as a framework for identifying the family factors and practices that contributed to developing the Second Generation sample’s resilience in education. This theory was helpful in understanding another outcome of an unprecedented event in American history and will contribute to the research literature on people who overcame obstacles to obtain higher education.
Chapter Three: Methods

The focus of this study was on processes that contributed to the academic success of a group of children whose parents experienced a five-year interruption in their schooling. These children, who are now adults, have completed terminal degree programs, and have thus demonstrated their abilities to overcome the adversity created by their parents’ disrupted educations. This Second Generation’s educational level is an outcome that emerges in sharp contrast to results from the previously discussed literature about the academic achievements of people whose parents were inadequately educated. This study sought to understand what contributed to this unusually successful outcome.

In earlier chapters, I discussed Hale-Smith (1993), who explored the long-term effects of the school closings with a causal-comparative study designed to discern the differences (as adults) between students who remained in Prince Edward County, VA during the closings and students who left the county during that period. Hale-Smith generated data primarily using a self-administered questionnaire and some interviews to understand the effects of the school closings on the participants. Her purpose was to identify the differences between the two groups of adults in occupation types, income levels, and educational attainments. She found that the group that remained in the county had lower-level outcomes in all three areas when compared with those of the students who left the county during the time that the schools were closed. The purpose of her study was to compare, rather than to understand the reasons for, these differences.

Unlike Hale-Smith (1993), I aimed to gain a deep understanding of my participants’ experiences as children of parents who were denied public schooling for five years. My desire to understand people’s experiences instead of comparing them implied a certain research approach that is appropriate for this study. Specifically, my goal of understanding a unique group of
people was rooted in the belief that there are multiple truths that are held subjectively, but that probably share some similarities. Glesne (2006) refers to this type of research as “qualitative,” which allows researchers to understand and interpret participants’ constructions and interpretations of their experiences. My investigation identified and depicted the Second Generation members’ multiple and subjective realities, requiring me as a researcher to become intimately engaged with each participant through an emerging design that was dictated, in part, by the participants’ responses. This intense engagement positioned me to then seek logical commonalities of beliefs, perceptions, and/or experiences that can be generalized amongst the participants. Interest in the topic, familiarity with the participants, and personal experiences warranted acknowledging and monitoring my thoughts, values and biases in this study.

Such a qualitative mode of inquiry requires a defensible and consistent research design, with logical connections among key elements: paradigm, perspective, strategy, sample, data generation/collection, and data analysis. Through describing these components in detail and addressing issues of trustworthiness and authenticity, I proposed a robust design appropriate for a study with this focus. I begin by identifying the paradigm, or assumptions about reality (Rossman & Rallis, 2003), that guided and framed my investigation of the topic.

**Research Paradigm**

“A paradigm is a worldview—a way of thinking about and making sense of the complexities of the real world” (Patton, 2002, p. 69). Willis (2007) states that discussing paradigms in terms of “quantitative” and “qualitative” is insufficient, because such terms overlook the essence of beliefs and assumptions by focusing primarily on data type. He further depicts a paradigm as a layered philosophy of science consisting of ontological (nature of reality) and epistemological (what researchers can know about reality) assumptions. Conscious and
acknowledged ontological and epistemological assumptions will undergird and direct the data
generation and analysis methods that I used in this study. Most interpretivist researchers
focusing on humans’ constructions of perceptions acknowledge multiple realities as valid, with
no one perception considered to be more accurate than another; yet the collective realities must
be viewed as a whole (Glesne, 2006) to obtain an understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Subjectivist Orientation

One criterion for selecting a study’s paradigm is the researcher’s training and experience
(Creswell, 1994). An individual trained in technical and scientific areas would typically choose
an objectivist paradigm. I spent my four undergraduate years studying mostly physics and
mathematics. Consequently, I developed a worldview consisting of laws and proofs that could
be explained and clearly justified, regardless of circumstances. In constructing lab reports, I was
trained to write so that the experiment could be replicated at any time and under any conditions.
Unfortunately, I brought this same universal mindset with me into the classroom as a high school
teacher, and my assumptions would soon change. My effectiveness as a first-year teacher was
hindered because I applied objectivist pedagogy to teaching math and physics. Even though my
classes had as many as 25 students per section, I taught using the same approach with 25
different sets of learning styles, experiences, skills, and values.

As I assessed my performance as a teacher, I realized that if I had a better understanding
of the students as individuals, my effectiveness would increase. For example, knowing that a
student was a visual learner prompted me to write explicit step-by-step equations, draw clear
diagrams, and use visual models whenever possible. This type of understanding assisted me in
educating my students. Similarly, as a therapeutic counselor, I was most effective with clients
when I had a clear understanding of them and how they were affected by their emotional
struggles. My ability to communicate that understanding to the clients built rapport, so that we were able to identify helpful coping skills in addressing their problems. These experiences shifted my thinking overall from objective to subjective. I ceased interacting with students and clients in psychologically unconnected ways with a predetermined set of thoughts. I began to realize the value of building relationships with people by recognizing their uniqueness in accomplishing goals.

This focus upon understanding people in my professional roles has become part of my daily interaction with all people. As a researcher, I feel the need to focus on participants’ individual experiences, beliefs, and thoughts, and then process those pieces of information in the contexts of the individuals’ worlds. The intended result for the study is an in-depth understanding of the participants’ perceptions about their childhood processes that enabled them to excel academically. Understanding these multiple realities rather than seeking universal laws is an objective of my research framework (Willis, 2007). A goal of my study, however, extends beyond understanding these multiple realities to understanding commonalities of experience among the Second Generation members. The ontological assumption that these commonalities exist allowed me to describe a set of resilience-building protective processes that are unique to the participants in this study, assistive in understanding salient success factors among the group’s members, and helpful to other researchers who seek to understand this topic with similar populations.

My subjective orientation to understanding the social world helps me to identify my research paradigm, which includes related social science theory, the associated theoretical framework, and the application of the framework (Willis, 2007). My study’s chosen theory, the framework within the theory, and its praxis must fit together in order to have a well-defined
research paradigm. An interpretivist paradigm, which allows me to examine the world as it exists through people’s experiences of it (Rossman & Rallis, 2003), is most appropriate for investigating the Second Generation’s perceptions and experiences. Within an interpretivist paradigm, these grown children’s language and experiences are understood to have meanings that they have constructed socially with the people in their lives (Edlefsen & Olson, 2001). Willis (2007) refers to this interpretivist concept as antifoundationalism, within which human reality is conditioned by experiences, culture, and context, rather than by a static foundation that determines what is or is not true. This process of defining one’s concept of reality is consistent with my interest in understanding what made members of the Second Generation capable of accomplishing high levels of education. The Second Generation’s home settings and interactions with extended families revealed answers about how they were able to develop in a manner that resulted in high scholarly attainment.

Commonalities Among Participants

I was further curious to understand the meanings or knowledge that resulted from this social construction because it seemed apparent that the children developed resilience to overcome the probable legacy of their parents’ educational deprivation. I took a subjectivist stance on the Second Generation’s construction of resilience, based on their recalled interactions with parents and other significant individuals who may surface in the study. I sought to understand the phenomenon—“a process, event, person, or other item of interest to the researcher” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p. 447)—of resilience developed by the Second Generation members through their lived experiences—“reflexive or self-given awareness[es]” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 35)—during childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood. Van Manen (1990) explains lived experiences by quoting Dilthey, saying:
A lived experience does not confront me as something perceived or represented; it is not given to me, but the reality of lived experience is there-for-me because I have reflexive awareness of it, because I possess it immediately as belonging to me in some sense. Only in thought does it become objective. (p. 35)

Working within an interpretivist paradigm creates the opportunity to explore a phenomenon through multiple perspectives and lived experiences, which is characteristic of qualitative research (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Elucidating these multiple perspectives or subjective realities (Willis, 2007) allowed me to understand how the Second Generation’s experiences and settings influenced their behavior. The result of this understanding created the opportunity to identify shared protective processes among this group of people who overcame their adversity.

This paradigm helped to understand the resilience phenomenon among the academically successful children of educationally hindered people. The interpretivist paradigm “maintains that human beings construct their perceptions of the world” (Glesne, 2006, p. 7), and exploring some of the Second Generation’s perceptions of their upbringing assisted me in understanding the resilience processes that enabled them to obtain terminal degrees in spite of their families’ situations. Through a theoretical framework to be discussed later, I sought to identify the internal and external processes that contributed to this group’s levels of educational attainment across participants, in addition to understanding each unique set of lived experiences. The resilience phenomenon manifested among participants through similar characteristic processes that allowed them to overcome sizable academic odds.

My understanding of the commonalities among the participants’ lived experiences is a characteristic of the interpretivist paradigm and is valuable to my study. The goal of interpretivism is not to make findings directly applicable to other populations, but rather to create
contextual knowledge that yields an understanding of a particular situation (Willis, 2007, p. 99). Though the findings from my study of the Second Generation cannot be directly applied to other groups, they can provide an in-depth understanding of the participants' contexts and experiences that enabled them to achieve. In describing those individual contexts, common protective processes may emerge that are applicable to the entire group, elucidating salient resilience-building components. This understanding could help to shape the methods of another study on the topic of resilience development for people from adverse home settings.

Researchers working within an interpretivist paradigm interpret their participants' social interactions (Glesne, 2006, p. 27). As such, I analyzed the data to reach conclusions about processes that assisted this group of high-achieving African American students mostly from homes where parents had a high school level or less education. The findings of this interpretivist study can be added to the existing literature about students from debilitating family circumstances who are able to attain academic success. A specific theoretical perspective framed how I sought to identify these enabling processes.

**Theoretical Perspective**

This study's focus of inquiry is the development of resilience within a group of people with high scholarly attainments in spite of having parents who were denied an important segment of their education. Research (e.g., Eccles, 2005) has shown that parents with more education have children who enjoy greater academic success than children of lesser-educated parents. Eccles states that more highly educated people develop better parenting skills that include early language development, higher academic expectations, and ample exposure to community educational opportunities. Contrary to research findings such as these, one group within the Second Generation achieved strong academic success despite their parents' educational
challenges. This group’s achievement while overcoming adversity is an example of what is defined as resilience. Understanding the participants’ recollections and interpretations of their experiences may assist with identifying those resources and processes that helped to develop their resilience.

In her study entitled, *And They Still Rise: Factors Related to Resilience in African American Students Affected by the Prince Edward County School Closing*, Madison (1999) used what she referred to as a “resilience research paradigm” (p. 5) to frame her study. This approach actually functioned more as a resilience theoretical framework, even though Madison did not identify a particular resilience theory to establish her research perspective. Instead, it seems that because she found so much “conceptual confusion” (p. 6) in the resilience research, she framed her study with a generally accepted set of protective factors: individual strengths, caretaker relationships, and extra-familiar support (Madison, 1999).

Viewing her study using resilience theory concepts, Madison (1999) examined the Prince Edward County school closings to identify factors that promoted resilience in the African Americans directly affected by the closings. She found that female gender, high optimism, spirituality, coping skills, and less experience with discrimination were factors related to resilience in this population. She also found that counter-intuitive factors such as lower socio-economic status, lower teacher expectations, and less maternal acceptance enhanced the former students’ resilience. Though the participants in Madison’s study were members of the Crippled Generation who had been directly affected by the school closings, her findings were situated within resilience theory, and hence support resilience as an appropriate theoretical perspective to use to examine factors that contributed to the academic success of members of the Second Generation. Further, some of the protective factors that Madison identified—family, optimism,
understanding of adversity, and spirituality—overlap with parts of Walsh’s (1998) resilience theoretical framework.

**Walsh’s Framework Components**

Walsh’s (1998) theory is comprised of nine processes within three domains—belief systems, organizational patterns, and communication processes—that foster resilience by minimizing the effects of the crises or challenges. When the processes within the domains are achieved, the family is strengthened. In the belief system domain, family members look at challenges in healthy ways. To Walsh, this domain includes making meaning of adversity, having a positive outlook, and maintaining transcendence or spiritual support. It should be noted that this belief domain requires reliance on the participants’ social constructions, which is the assumed nature of reality in interpretivism (Willis, 2007). Because beliefs are powerful forces at the core of family functioning, they “define our reality” (Walsh, 1998, p. 45) within families. Exploring the processes that help to form the belief domain may be central to understanding how the Second Generation developed resilience in this interpretivist study, which again relies on the realities the participants created from their worldviews constructed by their social settings, experience, and perceptions.

The organizational patterns domain describes the family working together as a unit in the presence of adversity. It includes flexibility, connectedness, and social and economic resources. Organizational patterns define relationships, regulate behavior, and are reinforced by a family’s belief systems (Walsh, 1998). Adversity for one member can affect the entire family (Walsh, 2002). In the context of this framework, “family” is not limit to the nuclear family within one household. Instead, it encompasses biologically-related and other people who create a network of partnerships when adversity arises (Walsh, 1998). Understanding through the Second
Generation’s experiences how families coordinated themselves, compensated for some members’ vulnerabilities, and maximized others’ individual strengths could elucidate some of the factors that contributed to the children’s academic resilience.

The communication processes domain of Walsh’s resilience systems perspective relies upon talking, listening, and solving problems. Resilience-producing behaviors within the domain include clarity of expression, open expression of emotions, and collaborative problem solving. Communication is broadly defined “as the exchange of information, both socioemotional and practical/instrumental problem solving” (Walsh, 1998, p. 106). Examining the extent and quality of this exchange in the lives of the Second Generation can help us to understand more about how the children developed resilience. Because good communication is vital to healthy family functioning, this domain was helpful in understanding how the Second Generation perceived the nature of the communication in their families.

These three domains—beliefs, organization, and communication—create a framework that guided my approach to understanding the experiences of the Second Generation members with terminal degrees. I was curious to learn which and how many resilience-based processes emerged from the participants’ responses, which are the most and least salient, why these factors matter (or do not), and if there were other significant resources for the Second Generation that were not identified in Walsh’s framework.

Conceptual Fit

After further investigation, I concluded that Walsh’s (1998) theory is appropriate for this study. First, Madison’s (1999) research on a closely related topic yielded findings that led me to theoretical literature on resilience theory that guided my exploration of the Second Generation’s academic success. Second and more importantly, Walsh’s theory fits well with this study
because of its focus on the family as a primary source of resilience-building. This aspect is important because it is consistent with both the interpretivist paradigm’s assumption of relativism explained earlier, and aforementioned research results about the strong influence of parents’ schooling experiences upon their children’s educational attainments. Realities for the members of the Second Generation during their childhoods may have been constructed by the participants’ immersion in family contexts. The family was positioned to provide a culture and contribute to experiences that conditioned the development of the Second Generation. So in addition to being used in related research, resilience theory is consistent with the tenets of the socially constructed relativism that is characteristic of the interpretivist paradigm (Willis, 2007).

Walsh’s research-based framework was “developed as a conceptual map to guide clinical intervention and prevention efforts with vulnerable families” (2002, p. 130). A primary premise of this perspective is that adversity impacts the family as a whole, and certain family characteristics mitigate the effects of adversity by enhancing the family’s resilience. Family resilience theory has been applied to several types of family challenge: relocation to new territory, experience of a divorce, homosexuality, job loss, living with debilitating health, and recovery from war-related trauma (Walsh, 2002). Since this theory has demonstrated its effectiveness in clinical practice, a family resilience framework can be used by practicing professionals in response to family problems that can affect education. The framework’s effectiveness in therapy made it promising for exploring the perceptions of the Second Generation because the theory highlights those processes that make people hardier after past traumatic events that can affect successive generations (Walsh, 1998). A family resilience perspective can be applied to a broad range of family issues (Walsh, 2002), and an analysis of the framework may further explain its usefulness.
The resilience framework is rooted in a strengths-based orientation, rather than a deficit model, meaning that people develop resilience through the presence of internal and external supportive factors, rather than resilience being a personality trait that is not evident in everyone (Walsh, 1998). Everyone has the capacity to build resilience with the presence of the mitigating or protective processes that support the construct, and there is no inborn “resilience trait.” The concept of biological hardiness is associated with individual resilience theories (Van Breda, 2001), but Walsh’s (1998) framework is rooted in a belief of “relational hardiness,” which is developed through “a mutual interaction of individual, family, and environmental processes” (p. 24). Her premise is supported by the results of a landmark study.

Werner and Smith (1982) and later Werner (1993) conducted a 40-year longitudinal study, the sample for which consisted of nearly 700 children with significant risk factors, such as perinatal stress, chronic poverty, and parental psychopathology present in their families’ experience. One-third of the children were later described to be competent and caring adults; all of these participants had at least one supportive and loving person in their lives. These researchers began the process of identifying strength-based resources in children deemed as resilient. Walsh’s (1998) framework evolves from their work and identifies those internal and external resources that strengthen people in overcoming adversity. This systems perspective directed my understanding of the resources that may have assisted the Second Generation’s academic success.

**Phenomenology**

With this study, I aimed to capture the perceptions of Second Generation members, and then interpret them in a manner that resulted in an understanding of their resilience. To do so, I grounded this study in an appropriate strategy of inquiry to explore the study’s focus (Gall, Gall,
Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state, “A strategy of inquiry comprises a bundle of skills, assumptions, and practices that the researcher employs as he or she moves from paradigm to the empirical world” (p. 25). So a strategy of inquiry provides a set of directives that brings the researcher closer to answering research questions by applying a specific set of data generating and analyzing methods. Phenomenology is an appropriate strategy for inquiry that facilitated an understanding of the empirical world as defined by the Second Generation members.

According to Patton (2002), the central question in phenomenological inquiry is “What is the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of this phenomenon for this person or group of people?” (p. 132). I wanted to understand how and why these particular members of the Second Generation received terminal degrees, despite the fact that their parents had experienced a fractured education. Phenomenological studies also answer the questions: “What do the stories people construct about their lives mean? [and] How does the articulation of their stories empower them?” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 94). I wanted to learn how the Second Generation members developed their resilience from their accounts of living with parents who were locked out of school.

Having roots in the interpretivist paradigm, phenomenology is an appropriate approach for understanding the experiences (Patton, 2002) of this study’s participants. Rossman and Rallis (2003) state that phenomenology “focuses on the essence of the lived experience” (p. 97) of a small group of people. Though I will discuss the study’s participants later, the number of participants for this study was small because there are not many Second Generation members who have received terminal academic degrees; some members of this group estimate that less than 1% of the Crippled Generation’s children have reached this level of education. I understood
the participants through my "extensive and prolonged engagement with [the] individuals" (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 97). These in-depth engagements generated data from multiple perspectives that identified themes and meanings among members of the group. This information led to an across-case analysis of the specific factors that enhanced the Second Generation members’ resilience.

Two aspects of a phenomenological strategy to consider are the importance of investigating both experiences and interpretations of those experiences, and the value of using appropriate techniques for that investigation (Patton, 2002). The former consideration requires phenomenologists to capture experiences of the phenomenon while also understanding participants’ interpretations of those experiences. The participants in this study reported childhood experiences that they saw as meaningful to understanding their resilience development. They also shared interpretations of those experiences that shape the reflections that they expressed to me. As a researcher, I focused on the interplay of experiences and interpretations to understand how these Second Generation members made sense of their worlds as children, and how those views contributed to their educational attainments.

For me to understand the Second Generation’s experiences completely, I would have had to have them myself. Since that was not possible, I employed techniques that helped me to understand the participants’ reported experiences as deeply as possible. Similarly to artists or craftspeople who learn and master techniques to express their art, qualitative researchers uniquely use techniques to discover and interpret the realities of their participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I intentionally selected sampling, data generation, and data analysis techniques that positioned me, as a researcher, to understand deeply the phenomenon of the Second Generation’s lived experiences of developing resilience. Further, the techniques described
within each of the subsequent sections were mutually dependent upon each other in creating a robust and cohesive set of research methods.

**Selection of Participants**

In this study, I focused on understanding the resilience processes of descendants within the Second Generation who have obtained terminal degrees such as Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.), Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Doctorate of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), and Doctorate of Medicine (M.D.). The study’s participants represented the only population whose parents were in a U.S. school system that closed for five years. As a doctoral candidate, I understand the amount of time, commitment, and perseverance required to reach this level of education, and the contrast in educational attainment between the Crippled Generation and this particular group of their children is intriguing.

Due to the study’s limited focus, I used two purposeful sampling models for selecting participants. This type of sampling selects “information-rich cases strategically and purposefully” (Patton, 2002, p. 243). It is a sampling method often used by qualitative researchers who select informants or material that will best answer their research questions (Creswell, 1994). In order to understand how and why the selected Second Generation members developed their resilience, I created a sample of such informants using two models of purposeful sampling: criterion and snowball sampling. With criterion sampling, researchers choose cases that meet some criterion or satisfy particular standards (Gall et al., 2007; Patton, 2002). In this study, the sample consisted of children of the Crippled Generation who have completed a terminal degree. The second type of sampling is snowball sampling, which means that identified participants recommend other people who are information-rich or appropriate for participation in the study (Patton, 2002, p. 243). The Second Generation members with whom I am familiar
knew other people who fit the criteria for the study’s sample, especially since they may have long-lasting relationships with them. I had knowledge of some participants, and the others were identified through snowball sampling. Eight people responded positively to an email message (see Appendix A) inviting them to participate in the study.

The sample size allowed me to conduct in-depth explorations of each individual’s experiences and interpretations within a reasonable amount of time needed to complete a robust study with a reasonably manageable number of participants. Patton (2002) stated that qualitative methods produce a wealth of detailed data about a small group of people and cases. Understanding this group’s experiences and their meanings is important to this study, and focusing on a small number of participants promoted in-depth understanding (Rossman & Rallis, 2003) of their perspectives and recollections. Though small, this sample was information-rich, due to the criteria for selection.

Sample members completed two forms as they began their participation in the study. The purpose of the informed consent form (see Appendix B) was to educate participants about the study and their rights while participating. The demographic form (see Appendix C) was used to collect descriptive information about the participants’ lives, including education, childhood family composition, career, and parents’ schooling. This background information was helpful to me in establishing rapport with the participants. Purposeful sampling such as what has been described here increased the probability of generating information-rich data (Patton, 2002). Further, this type of sampling is consistent with the data generation techniques that were used in this qualitative study.
Data Generation

Glesne (2006) stated, "Qualitative research methods are used to understand some social phenomena from the perspectives of those involved, to contextualize issues in their particular socio-cultural-political milieu" (p. 4). This assertion describes the core of what I intended to learn—how and why my participants persisted toward their final levels of education, despite their immersion in circumstances that would seem to work against such accomplishment. Additionally, an emphasis on understanding a human situation and contextualizing issues using the experiences of the participants guides the selection of data generation techniques for the study. These techniques included interviewing, which generated the bulk of my data, document analysis, and analyzing conceptual metaphors. By employing multiple data generation techniques, I triangulated my data, thus increased my chances of understanding the Second Generation’s life constructions and the stories that accompany the constructions (Fontana & Frey, 2005).

Interviews

Data generation methods like interviews require "in-depth, exploratory, and prolonged engagement" (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 94). For this reason, I employed interviewing techniques designed to obtain a deep understanding of the participants' perceptions. As Patton (2002) stated, proximity to participants’ experiences places the researcher in a position to become fully engaged in participants’ perspectives, which are assumed to be “meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit” (p. 341). Interviews can potentially provide much information, but the quality of interviews is determined primarily by the nature of the interviewer’s interactions. I relied on my experiences working as a counselor, employing skills such as asking probing questions, active listening, conveying empathy, and summarizing
comments to help ensure that I accurately as possible captured the participants’ perceptions. My ongoing work as an investigator in student conduct cases and as an employer were also helpful in generating high-quality information from participants. These experiences and skills, matched with my genuine desire to learn more about the Second Generation, created a simulated immersion that engaged me vicariously in the participants’ experiences and helped me to understand their perspectives upon these experiences.

My previous work that incorporated interviewing differs from what I conducted as a researcher, however. In this case, I sought to understand a phenomenon, rather than present probing questions that are intended to result in solutions to problems. Though some of my interviewing skills assisted my work in this study, I used an interviewing technique that serves the purpose of research-based understanding. The selection of that interviewing technique was dictated by my previously discussed strategy: phenomenology. Phenomenological interviewing is “a collaborative process of evoking colorful descriptions of the phenomenon and empathetic understanding of the multiple ways in which the [person] makes sense of the lived experience” (Ryba, 2007, pp. 60-61). The interviews in this study elicited descriptive data that had two primary purposes: (1) as a means for developing a richer and deeper understanding of the Second Generation’s resilience development through their experiences with their families and (2) as a conversational way to interpret the meanings of those experiences (Van Manen, 1990).

Some forms of phenomenological interviewing call for a succession of interviews that address the following areas: life history, details of experiences, and reflection on the meanings of those experiences (Seidman, 1998, as cited in Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Van Manen (1990) suggests a similar, but more flexible approach to understanding those meanings through questions rooted in the fundamental need for an interview. In this study, my need stemmed from
a desire to learn about the individual experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of the
participants, and the collective themes of the group. Hence, I began the interviews with a set of
questions (see Appendix D) that stimulated members of the Second Generation to share
experiences, perceptions, and memories related to developing resilience within their families.

Phenomenological data can be generated through accounts of personal experiences or
“personal life stories”—anecdotes, stories, experiences, incidents, etc. (Van Manen, 1990, p. 67).
For each question asked about a specific aspect of the experience, I followed up with questions
that help the participant to more fully explore that aspect. This interview technique allowed me
to generate data leading toward a more thorough understanding of the participants’ experiences
through personal life stories. This approach to interviewing is also consistent with the aim of
phenomenology: to transform the lived experience into text that expresses the essence of the
lived experience (Van Manen, 1990, p. 36).

Phenomenological interviewing also required me to “bracket,” or separate and set aside,
my experiences as a researcher, learner, and professional, keeping them separate in my mind
from the individual experiences of the participants in the study so that I could build a clear
understanding of the phenomenon’s nature and essence (Creswell, 1994; Patton, 2002;
Schwandt, 1997). Bracketing served as a valuable way to acknowledge my notions and separate
them from the participants’ experiences, values, beliefs, and perceptions as much as possible. I
kept a journal, to be discussed in greater detail later, of these reactions and sensations to aid my
bracketing. For this study, bracketing further allowed me “to study the essential structures of the
world” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 175) for the Second Generation participants.

Each interview was audio recorded and conducted in a manner that focused upon the
participants, with me functioning as the facilitator. I conducted three interviews with six of the
eight participants. For the remaining two, I was able to obtain full responses to my questions in two interviews. I established the interviewer-interviewee relationship by reminding participants of their right to decline answering any question at any point in the study, accepting their responses as stated, asking only clarifying questions in response, and allowing them to respond to questions at their desired rates and without pressure. All 22 interviews were conducted face-to-face, in comfortable locations conducive to audio recording.

During and immediately after each interview, I wrote field notes, which are written records of my observations and perceptions (Rossman & Rallis, 2003), particularly about the participants’ expressions during their recollections. These perceptions were helpful in understanding the meanings of these recalled experiences. Shortly after each interview, I used the audio files to create verbatim written accounts of what participants stated and how they gestured during the interview (Schwandt, 1997). Seeing and hearing the data was useful later in the study during the data analysis phase, which is discussed in the following section.

These field notes also facilitated the practice of member checking, the process of “having research participants review statements in the report for accuracy and completeness” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p. 475). I occasionally paused throughout the interviews to summarize participants’ statements in an effort to ensure accuracy. After each interview concluded, I provided the interviewee with an emailed summary of his/her responses and solicited from the participants any changes to the summary that would better reflect their experiences, perceptions, and interpretations. Finally, I provided each participant with all of the information that I planned to include in my results report about him/her, and asked again for corrections. This review allowed the participants to correct and clarify any information that I drafted. These attempts to capture accurate information were critical in ensuring the presence of the participants’ voices and
identifying the essence of the phenomenon in the report of results. Having to make only a few corrections that were recommended in participants’ reviews of my drafts, I felt confident that my interview interpretations were congruent with the participants’ statements and meanings.

**Written Documents**

Interviewing served as the primary data source for the study, but I also asked participants to provide a written document that they created prior to the interview process. Written documents are potentially useful for enriching contextual dimensions of interviews by “supporting, expanding, and challenging your portrayal and perceptions” (Glesne, 2006, p.68), and I used this data generation method in two ways.

Prior to the first interview, Second Generation members emailed me their written responses to the following prompt: “How do you explain your educational attainments, considering that your parents were locked out of public school in Prince Edward County, VA?” Their elicited text provided a data set created outside of the interview setting, and only indirectly influenced by me as a researcher prior to our first discussion. Participants’ responses also provided data that are written in the participants’ language (Creswell, 1994), which was also helpful to me in making meaning from their experiences. Further, these responses were extremely helpful in providing information that contributed to the development of follow-up interview questions. Using this method was consistent with the interpretivist paradigm’s purpose of understanding a particular phenomenon from participants’ perspectives (Willis, 2007).

**Conceptual Metaphor**

Similarly, during the first interview, I asked the participants to identify, describe, and explain a conceptual metaphor that best symbolizes their trajectory from childhood toward obtaining a terminal degree. Used in the counseling field, conceptual metaphors allow “people
to make sense of abstract concepts and events through concrete experiences” (Wickman & Campbell, 2003, pp. 15-16). For example, a participant could have described her academic history as a roller coaster ride filled with highs and lows, sudden changes, excitement, fear, and a sense that she will be okay in the end. Requesting conceptual metaphors and their explanations provided an alternate method for understanding the participants’ recalled experiences. Their descriptions of the metaphors they select was recorded and analyzed as described below, adding to my understanding of how and why members of the Second Generation reached high academic levels despite their families’ challenges. The participants carefully considered the various ways that they could describe their experiences before sharing a metaphor with me. The data generated using this technique provided opportunities for further immersion in the participants’ experiences and perceptions, and served as a method to help corroborate inferences that I make—a process known as triangulation (Schwandt, 1997).

Triangulation is a process for testing consistency among different kinds of data and their interpretations (Patton, 2002, p. 248). I used interviews, written documents, and conceptual metaphors to generate data. These uses allowed for methodological triangulation, which encompasses different types of data generation (Patton, 2002). The corroboration of data meanings generated from multiple methods can help to justify a conclusion (Willis, 2007) or study result. Also, my interactions with various participants demonstrated triangulation through multiple data sources (Rossman & Rallis, 2003; Schwandt, 1997). Though presented as it relates to data generation, triangulation also had relevance for research quality, as discussed later. Data generated using different methods and sources advanced the research by allowing me to gain a better understanding of the participants’ experiences and perceptions, leading to more accurate interpretations.
Data Analysis

Qualitative inquiry is essentially emergent learning (Rossman & Rallis, 2003); in other words, each phase of a study produces new understandings that can guide research. Because I was most interested in resilience development through the perspectives of my participants, their responses guided my research. Working with the data generated from participants’ interviews, written statements, and explanations of conceptual metaphors led me to interpretations and understandings of the phenomenon through the lens of resilience. This process in qualitative research is broadly defined as “the activity of making sense of, interpreting, or theorizing the data” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 4), and is referred to as data analysis. Sense-making emerged from analyzing data from within the Second Generation’s reports to reach conclusions about their resilience development. This approach is characteristic of inductive analysis, where results are linked robustly to data (Patton, 1990). Inductive analysis is a procedure that requires researchers to search closely through the data, making inferences about themes and patterns based upon what the data themselves suggest (Gall et al., 2007). Data analysis using an inductive approach provided an understanding of what contributed to the Second Generation’s resilience through their perspectives. In this way, the learning begins with the generated data that are later interpreted.

General Data Analysis

Analysis in broad terms begins when a researcher develops research questions, then selects a conceptual framework and research strategy, because these phases foreshadow analysis (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Ziebland and McPherson (2006) assert that data analysis should begin during the data generation phase, and ultimately, this interpretive act should result in expressing the meanings of the generated data to the reader (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Rossman
and Rallis (2003) suggest that analyzing and interpreting qualitative data consist of three phases: immersion—knowing the data; analysis—organizing data into chunks; and interpretation—bringing meaning to the chunks (p. 270). Hence, further exploration of these general phases assisted in identifying a more specific data analysis technique.

Qualitative studies require familiarity (immersion) with the data (Willis, 2007). The act of repeatedly reading and listening to interview transcriptions enables a researcher to become intimately familiar with the data (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). As explained above, I transcribed interviews shortly after each session with my participants, who had four opportunities to verify the data I generated. Once my few interpretations of the data were confirmed and/or corrected by the participants, I studied the written and auditory data that further “provoke insights and stimulates analytical thinking” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 281).

Comprehensive knowledge of the data introduces the next phase of analysis, which requires “sorting, categorizing, grouping, and regrouping the data into piles or chunks that are meaningful” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 271). Given the participants’ pursuit of advanced education from such problematic beginnings, the Second Generation members offered data that span across multiple distinct areas. Each area needed to be organized in a manner that best explains the phenomenon of their resilience development. Methodically arranging these chunks (analysis) helped me answer the research questions and allowed me to make meaning of the chunks (interpretation). Making meaning of the data resulted in my greater understanding of the participants’ perceptions. Patton (2002) defines this concept of interpretation as “attaching significance to what was found, making sense of findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and otherwise imposing order on an unruly but surely patterned world” (p. 480). Being able to make
interpretations means that I was not only able to describe the experiences and perceptions of the Second Generation, but I was also able to determine how and why these participants were able to succeed in spite of their families' experiences of adversity.

The data generated by my interactions with the Second Generation sample members were abundant and complex, which was expected since I requested that participants recall experiences from the far past about a sensitive topic. Identifying and using the most appropriate data analysis methods that incorporate immersion, analysis, and interpretation was important to forming a complete and nuanced understanding of a phenomenon. I employed thematic analysis to reach the interpretations and meanings of the data generated in this study.

**Thematic Data Analysis**

Van Manen (1990) refers to thematic analysis as “the process of recovering the theme or themes (‘structures of experience’) that are embodied and dramatized in the evolving meanings and imagery of the work” (p.78). Determining the “structures of experience” for the Second Generation participants was a step toward understanding the phenomenon being explored in this study. In this context, structures imply components of a larger concept that collectively comprise an explanation of the phenomenon. Braun and Clarke (2006) developed a clear set of guidelines for using thematic analysis—a foundational method used in nonpositivistic research “for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (p.79).

In thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke (2006) state, “a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (p. 82) or used collected data. Themes will not emerge unless the researcher plays an active role in identifying, selecting, and reporting them to the readers. In my study, I did not seek a certain level of frequency for evidence of an
identified theme. As I reflected upon the sample’s experiences and became more immersed in
the data, I used my judgment to determine what is considered a theme by keeping my research
questions in mind as I did so. Each theme emerged from analysis of data generated in response
to my research focus of how the Second Generation developed resilience.

Latent themes are ultimately what I sought during the final stages of data analysis in this
study. This level of analysis goes beyond explicit descriptions, required much interpretive work,
and most importantly, sought “to theorize the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions,
that enable the individual accounts that are provided” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85). In my
study, identifying latent themes was important because I sought to not only understand the
participants’ journeys to advanced academic degrees; I also wanted to understand the processes
that influenced or cultivated the development of the journey. This latter investigation suggests
the depth at which I sought to understand the participants’ experiences. The latent themes or
latent “structures of experience” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 78) helped position me to understand the
perceptions and experiences that influenced the participants’ resilience development.

While thematic analysis is not wedded to any theory and has the flexibility to be used
with any framework, Braun and Clarke (2006) developed, as an outline, six guidelines that I used
to structure the data analysis in the proposed study: (1) “familiarizing yourself with your data”
(p. 87), (2) “generating initial codes” (p. 88), (3) “searching for themes” (p. 89), (4) “reviewing
themes” (p. 91), (5) “defining and naming themes” (p. 92), and (6) “producing the report” (p.
93). First, I transcribed all of the interviews with the use of Dragon Naturally Speaking software
and its suggestion of “parroting”—a process of repeating every word and sound uttered during an
interview. With this technique, I repeated into a microphone each statement made by the
participants and me during the interview. The spoken words were then transcribed and presented
on a computer monitor. This exercise of hearing, speaking, and seeing participants’ statements helped me become immersed in the data. Additionally, through the immersion activities of re-reading and re-listening to transcripts, I gained a deeper understanding of the data. Finally, I also further familiarized myself with the data by member checking, as described earlier. This practice of requesting that participants’ correct interview summaries was helpful because it clarified what they mean to say and eliminated misinterpretation, thereby enhancing my in-depth knowledge and understanding of the data. These practices promoted the creation of research memos and notes, leading to the initial coding stage.

During the second phase of data analysis, I generated initial codes after gaining familiarity with the data. Codes identify the basic elements of data that strike the researcher’s interest (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and in my study, features of the data that relate to how and why the Second Generation participants succeeded under the circumstances were of interest to me. Because I sought latent themes, I employed line-by-line coding to create categories and themes through a micro-analysis of the data (McSherry, Cash, & Ross, 2004). To accomplish line-by-line coding, I purchased the rights to use Dedoose, an online software platform that allows qualitative researchers to analyze data in highly efficient ways. The features of the program allowed me to upload interview transcriptions and written document statements, and then code the documents line-by-line. These codes could be arranged within groups that led to theme identifications.

Again, latent themes imply deep meanings beyond what is obvious (Braun & Clarke, 2006), so line-by-line coding was specific enough (i.e., close to the data) to identify the components that comprise the themes. In this approach, the researcher examines every sentence or sentence cluster and asks, “What does this sentence or sentence cluster reveal about the
phenomenon or experience being described?" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 93). While reviewing the data set, I coded for several potential themes that may emerge later, include relevant peripheral data with data extracts—individual coded chunks of data—to preserve the contexts in which it was found, and code a particular piece of data repeatedly if it describes multiple themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This scaffold approach to data analysis positioned me to identify relationships among the data segments and codes leading to theme identification.

After all the data have been coded, searching for themes was the next phase of thematic analysis. In phase three, I focused on sorting the different codes and grouping related data extracts to form themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). My data analysis progressed from identifying codes to grouping the codes into broader categories leading to theme identifications. The goal of this phase was to determine how the different codes can combine to form themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The assigning and grouping of codes to sort for potential themes moved further away from the raw data with each step. However, at the same time, I moved closer to making interpretations that conveyed an in-depth, nuanced understanding of the participants’ experiences. In the next phase of thematic analysis, I considered the data set in relation to the identified themes that can tell the overall story of the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The potential themes identified in phase three were relevant in phase four, which focused upon reviewing and refining themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In other words, I examined the initial themes that emerged from the Second Generation’s data in an attempt to demonstrate that these themes were actually supported by the data set. First, I returned to the data extracts for each potential theme and sought logical patterns that demonstrated that the data extract supported the theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process was done to ensure that each piece of data fit within the thematic category assigned. Once I was satisfied with my matches between coded
information and themes I assigned, I further examined the themes in relation to the entire data set. In reviewing the entire data set again, I was able to code unused data from earlier coding stages that may have importance (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At this point in the process, my understanding was better developed considering the more elaborate level of analysis beyond initial coding. An understanding of main themes and sub-themes (see Appendix F for an example of theme, groupings, and codes) told the overall story of the data at the conclusion of this step, the desired result of phase four according to Braun and Clarke (2006).

Once I obtained a clear idea of the themes driven by support in the data for each and all, I extended the analysis by defining and refining the themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that this step "means identifying the 'essence' of what each theme is about (as well as the themes overall) and determining what aspect of the data each theme captures" (p. 92). I was particularly interested in the essence of resilience development for the Second Generation. Essence in this context refers to what makes a thing what it is (Van Manen, 1990). I presented each theme in a way that contributes uniquely to answering my overall research questions.

This phase concluded with clearly defined, stand-alone themes that allowed me to write a report in phase six. This final analysis tells the full story of the data in what I hope is an engaging and scholarly manner, with sufficient evidence presented that supports each of the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In my report of study findings in chapters four and five, I summarized the data using vivid examples that illustrate the study's results, which were derived through the data generation and data analysis methods described above.

**Research Strength**

Beyond arriving at interpretations, justifying the processes used to reach them strengthened the quality of this inquiry's results; and trustworthiness and authenticity are two
sets of criteria used to evaluate quality and rigor (Manning, 1997, p. 94). Schwandt (1997) defined trustworthiness "as that quality of an investigation (and its findings) that makes it noteworthy to audiences" (p. 164). By ensuring the trustworthiness of my study's findings, I attempted to add more value to the study and its conclusions. To assess trustworthiness, Lincoln and Guba (1986) devised a set of four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. I explained each of these concepts below, relating them to my study.

Complementing trustworthiness, authenticity is a set of actions that promotes "balance of perspectives, learning by the researcher and respondents, shared knowledge, and social action" (Manning, 1997, p. 94). The five criteria of authenticity are fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity, and tactical authenticity (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Like the criteria for trustworthiness, I explained how authenticity was addressed in the context of my study below. These criteria were met using practices that were designed to strengthen the rigor and meaningfulness of my study’s results. Some of these practices have already been defined and explained in this document.

**Trustworthiness**

Lincoln and Guba (1986) identified four criteria for trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is the degree to which a researcher provides assurances that respondents' perceptions fit with the inquirer's representation of a study’s findings (Schwandt, 1997). I ensured credibility through the practice of prolonged engagement, member checking, and triangulation.

Prolonged engagement consists of "lengthy and intensive contact with the phenomena (or respondents) in the field to assess possible sources of distortion and especially to identify saliencies in the situation" (Lincoln & Guba, 1986, p. 18). I conducted repeated interviews to
ensure my accuracy in understanding their recollections and perceptions on a complex topic from years ago. During this process, I also practiced member checking, which provides respondent feedback on the inquirer’s findings (Schwandt, 1997). The benefits of member checking include an examination of self in the context of the study and attention to and consideration of cultural, political, social, linguistic, and ideological origins of research roles (i.e., participant, researcher) (Patton, 2002). As described earlier, member checking occurred on three occasions: (1) during the interview, (2) after each interview, and (3) finally, prior to the study’s publication. This technique was helpful in assuring that I accurately reconstructed what the participants reported. The practice of using multiple participants’ reports and multiple data generation methods was referred to as triangulation; the corroboration of data from multiple methods can justify a conclusion (Willis, 2007). Together these practices address the credibility criterion.

Transferability focuses on the degree to which the findings of one study can be applied to other contexts (Schwandt, 1997). The reader, rather than the researcher, specifies the “transferability of findings” (Hoepfl, 1997, p. 59); the researcher is responsible for providing ample information about the case (Schwandt, 1997). Even though my primary goal was to understand the meaningful experiences of the sample of Second Generation members and their resilience development, as explained in chapter one, I was also interested in identifying processes that can be used by educators who serve students from similarly deprived backgrounds. A common practice that addresses transferability is creating study results communicated with thick description—“narrative developed about the context so that judgments about the degree of fit or similarity may be made by others who may wish to apply all or part of the findings elsewhere” (Lincoln & Guba, 1986, p. 19). In conjunction with a purposefully formed sample (described earlier in this chapter), thick descriptions addressed my responsibility
as a researcher to provide enough information about Second Generation’s experiences and perceptions so that readers can determine the level of similarity between my study’s results and other, similar studies’ findings.

Another responsibility is to ensure that my research is “logical, traceable, and documented” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 164)—all traits of dependability. In post-positivistic studies, researchers often use standardized tests to ensure reliability, the parallel to dependability (Gall et al., 2007). In qualitative studies, researchers use reflexive journaling and audit trails instead (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Reflexive journaling is the researcher’s record of “methodological decisions and the reasons for them, the logistics of the study, and reflection upon what is happening in terms of one's own values and interests” (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006, para. 10). In another definition, reflexive journaling is described as an ongoing self-questioning and self-understanding process that logs “what I know and how I know it” (Patton, 2002, p. 64). Glesne (2006) adds that this process requires the researcher to consider his/her research process, reflections, questions, expectations, and participants for the entire study. For the purpose of dependability, recordkeeping of decisions in a reflexive journal (see Appendix F for example) demonstrated a logical system for conducting my study.

Also addressing dependability is the creation of an audit trail. An audit trail is an organized collection of materials that explains, describes, notes, and shapes the research process for the study, and consequently manages recordkeeping and encourages reflexivity (Schwandt, 1997). Schwandt (1997) also states that the audit trail provides the early shape of the study. Further, this collection of materials generated during the study allowed for a “competent external, disinterested auditor” (Lincoln & Guba, 1986, p. 19) to discern the presence of dependable procedures (Schwandt, 1997). Since my study was conducted as part of a
dissertation for a doctoral program and overseen by a committee of experienced researchers, I feel their roles can serve as external auditors to some extent. Their experienced oversight helped ensure dependability.

The final criterion for trustworthiness is confirmability, which is parallel to objectivity in conventional post-positivistic criteria (Schwandt, 1997). Qualitative research is value-laden (Hoepfl, 1997), so it may be inconceivable as to how to meet this criterion. Confirmability demonstrates that generated data reflect the perceptions and experiences of participants, rather than the expectations and beliefs of the researcher. Through reflexive journaling, this criterion can be met by identifying my assumptions in writing, which should not be pressed upon the respondents. This ongoing practice helped to create a conscious division between my thoughts and the participants’ responses.

Another helpful technique for determining this aspect of trustworthiness was writing the Researcher as Instrument statement (Appendix G), which allowed me to acknowledge my experiences, beliefs, biases, and values as they relate to the study (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Both reflexive journaling and the Researcher as Instrument statement are tools that urged me to bracket my assumptions to mitigate the chances of me including my thoughts with the data provided by the study’s participants. Finally, member checking further ensured that the data and their interpretations were not fabricated accounts based on my perceptions and expectations, but were rooted in the actual responses of the participants.

The aforementioned practices were used to address the criteria for trustworthiness, but many of them also have uses in another set of quality criteria: authenticity. An examination of how addressing trustworthiness and authenticity together was useful in gauging the quality of my study’s results and my treatment of the study’s participants.
Authenticity

Of the five criteria that are used to demonstrate the authenticity of a study, fairness is the one that researchers have the most control in demonstrating (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Fairness is “the extent to which the respondents’ different constructions and their underlying values are solicited and represented in a balanced, even-handed way by the inquirer” (Schwandt, 1997, p.7). Ensuring that the voice of every participant is heard cultivated fairness. Manning (1997) states that researchers should also strive to portray participants’ voices accurately. She identified techniques that assisted with establishing fairness. Some of these techniques overlap with those used to enhance trustworthiness. Specifically, I used reflexive journaling, informed consent, member checking, and prolonged engagement to ensure fairness. First, reflexive journaling engages the researcher in a process of becoming aware of one’s partiality in assumptions, beliefs, and values relative to the study (Manning, 1997). This awareness helped ensure fairness by assisting my process of bracketing personal matter that may influence the study. Related to my attempts to bracket my suppositions, the Researcher as Instrument statement (Appendix G) helped me in recognizing my own thoughts, beliefs, and experiences by stating these ways of knowing. The exercise of writing this statement helped to separate my voice from my participants’ voices.

Next, member checking helped to ensure accurate representations of participants’ comments and also informed the sample members of what I have written about them in exchange for the time and access to their lives they have given me (Schwandt, 1997). Another edifying technique contributing to fairness is informed consent, which requires me to make participants aware of the study’s nature and their rights within the research. (See Appendix B for the study’s consent form.) As participants, sample members knew the full purpose of the research, their
roles in the study, and their rights, which includes discontinuing participation at any point without penalty.

The remaining four authenticity criteria are ontological, educative, catalytic, and tactical authenticities (Schwandt, 1997). Ontological authenticity focuses on respondents' growth through the experience of participating in the study (Manning, 1997). Through interviews described as “dialogical conversations between researcher and respondent” (Manning, 1997, p. 105), I engaged with participants in an inviting atmosphere in which the participants felt comfortable speaking candidly about their experiences. On most occasions, the interviews were conducted in the homes or offices of the participants. This goal of comfort required that I was attentive to the individual participants and reacted appropriately to develop their trust in sharing their experiences and perceptions. My focused attention on each individual participant allowed me to assess the topic areas that seemed to conjure deep thought for the participants. In a manner that was comfortable for the participant, I probed those areas further to elicit greater and deeper reflection. My achieved goal for the data was to portray the unique voice of each participant by cultivating a setting that bred “reflexive and coherent” (Manning, 1997, p. 99) findings. In the process, most participants reported that they learned something about themselves through the interviews.

Educative authenticity is similar to ontological authenticity, but rather than the respondent learning about self, he/she gains a deeper understanding of others participating in the study (Manning, 1997). Participants were presented with a final copy of the study's findings, through which they will have the opportunity to understand how others in the study experienced the same phenomenon. Also, by reading and thinking about these results, participants were positioned, although with no certainty, to discern how similar or different their experiences and
perceptions were to that of the other participants. Reading study results can therefore enhance the likelihood of both ontological and educative authenticity criteria being met.

Catalytic authenticity “refers to the extent to which action is stimulated and facilitated by the inquiry process” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 7). In other words, catalytic authenticity is about making the decision and being motivated to act. Relatively little has been published about the Prince Edward County desegregation story, and consequently, many people affected by the closings have not been informed of their potential for contributing to meaningful research. By engaging in dialogical conversations known as interviews, I demonstrated the usefulness of the research for personal and professional purposes. Since access to the study’s findings can make participants more inclined to use the results (Manning, 1997), I ensured that each participant received a copy of the findings. Since other educators and researchers may have use for the results, I also offered a copy of the study to the library of the Robert R. Moton Museum, the former high school for Blacks in Prince Edward County that is currently a national Civil Rights in Education Museum. Notwithstanding these efforts, I cannot ensure catalytic authenticity with all participants. However, some participants reported that they sought more information from relatives about the Prince Edward topic.

Similarly, tactical authenticity—the extent to which members of the study’s sample are “empowered to act” (Schwandt, 1997, p. 7) and actually take action as a result of participation—cannot be guaranteed, but I shared my thoughts of how participants could act after participating in this study when I reported its results. There were examples of this criterion—presented in chapter four—as demonstrated by participants’ reports of action taken to educate others about this topic. Some participants are professors in post-secondary institutions, where they are likely to encounter students with some risk factors that can be mitigated by resilience processes. While
there is no guarantee that the participants will have the opportunity to do so, it is a reasonable assumption that they may choose to cultivate resilience in their own students, based upon their learning from participation in this study.

By addressing the criteria of trustworthiness and authenticity, I aimed to add value to the study’s methods and findings through the techniques described above. Collectively, these practices fit well with a research design aimed at reaching answers of the best quality to research questions.

Conclusion

The participants in this study obtained terminal degrees in spite of their parents being locked out of their education during a five-year closing of schools in Prince Edward County, VA. I sought to understand the factors that contributed to their resilience in reaching such a high educational level. The components of the study described in this chapter demonstrate logical and consistent connections among research paradigm, perspective/theoretical framework, strategy, and methods. The execution of the design produced understanding for me, the participants, and possibly for educators seeking to improve their services to at-risk African American college students from adverse family backgrounds who read the results of the proposed study.

Though serving only as background information in this study of resilience, the historical aspects of the study’s results may be of interest to historians, also. The Prince Edward school closings are connected to an important U.S. Supreme Court case, but there has been little attention given to the individual stories of reactions to the events in that Virginia county. This research design produced findings shared in the following chapters that not only interpreted the Second Generation members’ experiences in terms of resilience, but will also likely garner greater interest in this unusual event in American history.
Chapter Four: Participant Profiles

Although this study's results are phenomenological in nature, the individual experiences and achievements of its eight participants formulate, illustrate, and contextualize those results in important ways. For this reason, before across-participant results are presented, individual narratives describing the Second Generation's experiences and perceptions are shared here in Chapter Four.

The following eight profiles are syntheses of information shared during interviews with participants, each beginning with a narrative written in first-person by me, but carefully member checked and corrected by the participants. Following each narrative, I discuss participants' perceptions regarding five subtopics: awareness of the school closings; understanding the closings' magnitude; the closings' negative effects; families' strategies for overcoming obstacles presented by the closings; their understanding of the significance of the Prince Edward case; and their reflections upon participating in a study focused upon the legacy of the five-year lockout. Table 2 contains demographic information about the participants to help readers to become familiar with these unique and accomplished individuals.
Table 2
Participants Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Highest Degree Obtained</th>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Field/Discipline</th>
<th>Career/Profession</th>
<th>College Attendance</th>
<th>Affected Parent(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Layla</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Doctorate of Education</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Educational Leadership</td>
<td>Education Administrator</td>
<td>PWI</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nella</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Doctorate of Philosophy</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>Exercise Science</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>HBCU</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ida B</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Doctorate of Philosophy</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>PWI</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luther</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Doctorate of Pharmacy</td>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>Pharmacist</td>
<td>HBCU</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tex</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>PWI</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha</td>
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<td>Educational Leadership/</td>
<td>Associate Professor/</td>
<td>HBCU</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortitude</td>
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<td>Doctorate of Philosophy</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>Educational Policy</td>
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<td>Father</td>
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<td>Doctorate of Medicine</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>HBCU</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Name indicates the pseudonym that the participant selected. PWI is an abbreviation for Predominantly White Institution. HBCU is the abbreviation for Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

The participants’ profiles are presented in a logical order based on the points of emphasis they made in relation to their educational successes. We begin with Layla, who consistently credited her parents for the success she has attained.

**Layla**

Layla is a senior educational administrator for the Department of Corrections at a site that is about 1 ½ hours away from her home, which is less than a mile from her parents’ home.

Layla’s strong affinity for her parents has been important in her life, and she has chosen jobs that
permit her to be geographically close to her parents. In response to a question that sought an explanation for her success, she stated

I'd say my parents. I would because the strong foundation. Everything I think when it comes to children and who they become, it’s foundational. I mean if you build a strong foundation for your children, they think they can fly. They think they can do anything. They think they can conquer the world, and that's how I came up.

Layla retained her maiden name to honor her parents and acknowledges the influence they had on her life. The nature of Layla’s connection to her parents is explained in the following narrative.

I grew up in Prince Edward County in a loving home with my parents and my younger brother. We were a close-knit upper-middle class family and were sometimes ridiculed for being financially better-off than other Blacks in our community. My parents were very hardworking people, and their efforts were paid with financial success that helped our family. So I was not bothered by any negative comments about our status. In fact, I am always comforted when I think about the amazing foundation that my parents provided. Their hard work ethic and efforts to maintain a structured home made a positive impression on me. I had a wonderful upbringing filled with normal childhood experiences, but that’s not to be confused with an ‘easy childhood’ in the sense that I didn’t have any responsibilities. My dad had a farm and a garden, and required my brother and me to perform daily chores like feeding animals, maintaining crops, and gathering wood for our wood heater. Inside the house, my mother ensured that we took care of chores like laundry, dusting, and general house upkeep. Though this lifestyle required a lot of us as children, I am grateful for the structure and discipline that my parents instilled in me. I
learned to accomplish tasks in good order, on time, and in good quality. These characteristics have helped define my way of life, and I aim to have the same kind of effect on my kids as my parents had on me. It’s no surprise to me that when my parents moved to their current home, my family and I found a home close by in the same neighborhood.

This strong connection to my parents has always been there, and was reinforced in our church. My parents raised us as devout Christians who attended and participated in church regularly, which added to a lifestyle of structure. I was involved in many aspects of the church, serving on the Usher Board, as the choir director, as a Sunday school teacher, and on the executive management team. At the age of thirteen, I was the church’s secretary, having a fiduciary responsibility for the church’s budget. At the time, I didn’t understand why the pastor had selected me for such an important role. I didn’t ask any questions and just did the job that was needed. Later, I learned that the pastor had seen my ability to handle great responsibility, then chose me for the secretary position.

It was in the church where my musical talents began to emerge. I sang in the choir and directed it, too. I would also travel to other churches to sing for various occasions. As my experience increased, I entered statewide singing competitions and had much success, in large part because of my parents’ support. In school, I was a part of the talented & gifted program for music, and a group of five other girls and I formed a singing group. We traveled around the county performing, and even ministered to prisoners through our a cappella singing. I enjoyed this group because of the singing, but I also enjoyed these girls because they were the only other Blacks in the predominantly White talented & gifted program, into which I was placed, based upon my test scores after middle school.
I was mostly an “A student” during my K-12 years in the Prince Edward school system, and focused my attention on academics. My parents were firm in their belief that my job was to do well in school and not draw any negative attention to myself. The long distance from the school to our home coupled with my parents’ work schedules made it difficult for me to be committed to a lot of extracurricular activities. I was, however, a member of the 4-H Club, and saw how participation in that activity ignited some of my leadership skills. The majority of my free time was dedicated to the church, where the value of education was reinforced.

My senior year in high school was spent as an exchange student, studying music and Spanish overseas. I was fortunate to win a scholarship competition that paid the expenses for me to live in Spain. This study abroad experience provided valuable personal development for me. My parents rarely allowed me to spend the night at a relative’s home, and now I was thousands of miles away from my parents, living with strangers whose primary language was not English. In the beginning, there were several lonely moments, and though I constantly wrote to my parents, I never gave them any indication of how stressful it was for me to be immersed in that setting so far away from them. I felt that I had to persevere because I didn’t want them to spend money to bring me back before the program ended. Eventually, I became stronger in my Spanish skills, more independent, and capable of getting around the city. After overcoming that adversity, I began to enjoy my experience abroad. Since my senior year in high school, I have gone abroad several times, but my comfort with being away from my parents began with that foreign exchange student program.

That study-abroad experience was also helpful to my academics because it helped me identify Spanish as a program of study in college. Interestingly, I didn’t have any desire to attend college until my dad told me that I was going. I chose Belcher College in Prince Edward
County because my dad wanted my brother and me to go there because Blacks were not allowed to attend Belcher during his childhood. Consistent with their everlasting presence in my life, there were times when I would return to my residence hall room and find my parents hanging out there. I also found support through the communities of Blacks in the NAACP, the BASIC Gospel Choir, and Black Greek-lettered organizations, as well as with a few key Black professors. In fact, I think that I got too immersed in the social aspects of college life, and my academics suffered a little. My parents intervened to get me back on the right track. I moved from on- to off-campus living and returned home with my parents, who once again helped me by re-establishing structure in my life.

Their efforts worked because I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish Education with a minor in International Business. I began a career in education as a Spanish teacher, and eventually taught in Prince Edward County, because similar to his desire for me to attend Belcher, my father insisted that I teach in Prince Edward, where he was once denied an education. Later, I obtained a Master of Science degree in Educational Leadership and Supervision, and then a Doctorate of Education degree in Educational Leadership, both from Torrian Hill University. These degrees have given me the credentials to move into administration, and I am currently a regional principal for the Virginia Department of Corrections. I am proud of my accomplishments and grateful for my parents who did not allow the school closings to have an adverse effect on me. In fact, we rarely even discussed the closings.
**Awareness.** Layla was not exposed to many parental conversations about the closings. She stated, “They did not say a whole lot about it at all. And I've thought about it even beyond your study. My parents didn't say a lot.” Occasionally, the topic would arise, but Layla would also hear references to the closings at church, where many members were affected. Though she attended the schools in Prince Edward, the topic was never mentioned in any of her classes. The little exposure to the topic that she did experience came from her parents and the church. What stood out the most about the closings to Layla was the lack of anger that her parents expressed about the event. Layla noted how her father treated everyone, including Whites in favor of the closings, with dignity and respect—a result of his Christian values of “loving thy neighbor.” Rather than being angry, he focused his energy on being successful, which included positioning his children for good lives. Even though Layla had a childhood understanding of how the closings affected her father, she did not understand the broad meaning of the closings to the community until later in life.

**Understanding.** Layla’s father emerged from the school closings as a rags-to-riches success story. Through timber and satellite dish businesses and property investments, he became a successful entrepreneur. However, he was an exception within the Black community in Prince Edward County. Layla understood the significant damage that resulted from the lockout for most Blacks in the area. She stated

Those who had relatives in different counties or in different states, they were educated and they did well. But for those who didn't, you can tell by the poverty level. If you are to do some interviews, you'll see right now generations after this. There is still the poverty level is there. Still, there is lack of education there. So the fallout was great.
She went on to say, “As I've gotten older and hear people talk about it, I'm understanding it more. It's just that poverty line, that generational thing that you can still see where it's affecting them even today.” In other words, Layla credits the school closings of over 50 years ago to the current poverty situation in the county. By making this connection, she understands the magnitude of the closings by acknowledging how their long-lasting outcome sustains poverty. Layla feels that further research on this topic should be conducted to capture the narratives of those affected directly by the lockout before they are unable to pass on their rich and personal stories. Without these personal accounts, it is difficult to sense how the school closings made people feel. She feels that more descriptive reflections from affected people need to be gathered and presented in order to gain a full understanding of the Prince Edward story.

Effects. Layla understands that the closings created significant adversity for people in terms of prosperity through education. She stated

If you’re already poor and the only access that your children have to education is that one public school, then if that's taken away from you, then your children have nothing, absolutely nothing. I can only imagine how broken those parents were. I just can't imagine.

Even the fortunate few children who were able to continue their educations in other places experienced the adversity of being separated from families. Imagining what one of those parents must have felt, Layla said, “I have to send my child, all trusting that you're going to do the right thing by my child.” The anxiety caused by the separation was a burden that the parents and children had to endure. Being closely attached to her parents, Layla could not bear the thought of leaving home as a little child because of her strong feelings for an intact family.
**Overcoming Obstacles.** Layla’s father’s education was partially sustained through a church where he and some other students were taught a limited curriculum for the five-year period when no formal education was available. When Prince Edward schools re-opened, he entered the eighth grade and eventually graduated high school before entering the military. Layla’s father also took some classes at a community college during his journey to becoming a successful businessman. Layla admires her father for all his accomplishments, and she also feels a great sense of pride for being amongst a small number of Prince Edward descendants who have succeeded in formal education at the highest degree levels. She expressed having an awestruck and overwhelming feeling once she realized that she is in that small group.

Layla’s father felt that having his child attend college in Prince Edward County would make a bold statement to the local community, because this college denied admittance to Blacks during his childhood. Layla quoted her father’s directive: “You are going to Belcher. ... They didn't want Black students in that school and so you all are going.”

**Significance.** Layla was not knowledgeable enough about the other Brown cases to compare the severity of what happened in other geographic areas to the lockout in Prince Edward County. In spite of not having that knowledge, she believed that the study participants’ achievements are significant, and need to be discussed further. She stated

> I think for Prince Edward County that needs to be made known. No, not because I'm in the study but just for folks to see that even though this [denial of education] took place, look at the offspring of these people who were caught up in the closing of the schools.

As if she were speaking to current youth, Layla said, “Your situation is nothing like [the members of the Crippled Generation’s] was, so really there's no excuse now. You can get an education. You can do well.” Layla feels that the accomplishments of these few African
Americans in the study should be publicized widely, not for individual recognition, but rather for inspiration to other generations of students of color.

**Participation Benefits.** When I shared the small number of people who fit this study’s sample criteria, Layla expressed astonishment when she considered the rare nature of her academic success. She responded, “Look, I'm just like...this wow factor is going on when you put it like that. It's pretty awesome. Yeah, it really is pretty awesome.” This realization is an example of ontological authenticity—participants’ growth and learning about self as a result of participating in the study (Manning, 1997), as first explained in Chapter Three. Fairness, another authenticity criterion, was demonstrated through three levels of member checking interpretations of data that Layla co-constructed with me during study interviews, and by ensuring that Layla’s voice was heard in the study’s results. These examples of authenticity add to the strength of the study’s presented results.

**Nella**

Nella, like Layla, credited her success to her parents, who were highly involved in her life. Though Nella does not live in close proximity to her parents like Layla, she maintains frequent gatherings or visits with her mother and father in spite of being over four hours away from them. The following quote explains Nella’s success:

The main reason I was able to obtain my higher education was because my parents encouraged me to strive for the best. They repeatedly told me about their education experiences, which guided my values for education. My parents are my role models. The observations of my parents working hard in all aspects of life persuade me every day to continue striving for success. The sacrifices that my parents have made provide me with
the strength to conquer all endeavors. My parents inspire me to overcome all obstacles and battle all challenges that life may bring.

In Nella’s life, no event was too small for her parents to attend. She commented that their everlasting presence provided a “support system” for her to succeed. Below is Nella’s profile, which allows one to gain a better understanding of her through her voice.

I grew up in a middle-class Prince Edward County, VA family with my mother, father, older sister and younger brother. I am a “daddy’s girl,” but I’m also very close to my mother. This relationship with both of my parents in the home was and remains important to my development. I should also note that my parents and grandma, too, were actively involved with civic organizations, and so I learned a lot from observing their involvements in the community and with their friends, who were mostly educators. These associations developed a desire in me to always seek knowledge.

My parents were high school educators even though my mother was locked out of school for a while, and they were committed to creating conditions for learning in all aspects of my life. As a child, I was a Girl Scout, dancer, and a swimmer. These co-curricular activities aided my educational development. The church, however, had the most comprehensive role in my growth. Not only did I learn about God, who is the source of my spirituality, but I also learned some practical skills like oral communication through church speeches, reading comprehension through studying the Bible, and social development through engagement with choir and other church members. I even learned more about Black history in church beyond what was taught in school. Also, I lived on a farm that exposed me to several livestock and related issues, all of which intrigued me to learn more. In fact, early in life I wanted to be a veterinarian, but as a
child, I didn’t like the inevitable occasions when animals died. So I knew I had to identify another career goal.

I completed my K-12 education in the Prince Edward public school system. Though I don’t remember being labeled as gifted, I do recall being in academically-challenging classes with advanced students. I was actually dually enrolled at a local community college where I took college credit courses. I remember being one of only a few Blacks in enrichment programs and being questioned why I was there as if I wasn’t qualified. Fortunately, I overcame this kind of discrimination with positive affirmations from my mother and father. They communicated in words and in deeds how Black is beautiful and I have the right to be treated fairly regardless of my skin color. I’m grateful for their efforts to empower me by instilling racial pride that helped to develop me into a confident person capable of dealing with discrimination in healthy and effective ways.

I am also fond of some treasured characteristics of my family that were mostly absent in my peers’ families. For example, the concept of marriage is important in our family, and some of my childhood friends’ parents weren’t together. I gained so much value from having both my mother and father in the home that I cannot begin to imagine life any differently. Family in general, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, was another important aspect of my childhood. We still gather regularly and maintain close contact with each other.

Another treasured part of my childhood that was drastically different from my friends’ experiences was the ability to travel. We would visit different educational and recreational attractions within and outside the state. Throughout these trips my parents would incorporate learning activities, like visits to a museum, a zoo, or natural structures; we even regularly went to Disney World. My friends didn’t have these kinds of opportunities to visit other places and gain
a lot of exposure outside of Prince Edward. This exposure broadened my perspective and influenced my decision on which college to attend.

In high school, I felt I was always being prepared to attend college. My parents took my siblings and me along with them to their college homecoming events that exposed me to some college culture, and I also had an older sister and cousins in college whom I would visit. So my family had a big influence on my decision to attend college. Consequently, after a high school visit to Just University, one of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), I decided to go there because I saw the opportunities that my parents gained by attending an HBCU and I felt that I could develop better in a predominantly Black setting than in a predominantly White one. I was right based on my great undergraduate experience. My biggest adjustment at Just University was getting acclimated to the vastly larger scope in size and diversity of the major Mid-Atlantic city in comparison to Farmville, VA, all without the constant daily presence of my family.

Academically, though, I didn’t struggle with any adjustments. My high school prepared me for college. I attended a pre-freshman program to help with the transition, but most importantly, I was focused on success, so nothing was going to get in the way of that goal. Disappointing my parents was not an option for me. I entered Just University with intentions of being a heart surgeon. Then my interest shifted to athletic training in my freshman year after some volunteer experiences as a student athletic trainer for the sports programs. In the summers of my sophomore and junior years, I participated in some medical programs that helped me begin to focus on exercise science as a field for me. Then I found myself mentoring younger students and becoming more interested in research, so with the encouragement of my faculty, I decided to pursue a career in teaching. I obtained my bachelor’s degree in biology with a minor in
chemistry. I remained at Just to complete my master’s degree in physical education with an emphasis in exercise physiology. Finally, I obtained my doctorate of philosophy degree in exercise science at the University of Sauer. Currently, I am a college instructor at a midsize public university in the southeastern part of the United States.

I am grateful for my family’s role in my success. My entire family contributed to my educational development, but my parents’ involvement with me as child and as a young adult was the most important component of my success. As education practitioners, I think that they may have had more authoritative knowledge about the value of education and a greater understanding of the pathways to obtaining it in comparison to my friends’ parents. They have always been present at events and supportive of me in all my endeavors, so much that I can’t imagine my identity if they had not been the way that they were as parents.

Awareness. Nella recalled learning of the Prince Edward incident in the home by age six from her parents, who wanted to begin teaching her about the event early and to allow her to form her own opinions. This introduction was continued in school in the fourth grade. Interestingly, Nella was the only participant who remembers being taught about the closings in the school, and she is among five of the participants whose K-12 education was in Prince Edward. Because Nella heard of the closings at home, at school, in the community, and in church, she felt that the topic was constantly a part of her life. She stated, “I wouldn’t say that the conversation was there every day, but it [the closing] was in our lives every day. There were always things going on in the county.” Even though Nella is several years removed from her
childhood, she felt that the closings still had relevance to her because of her family in the county. She went on to state, “I mean it's still constantly in my life now.”

Understanding. Despite being aware of the closings as a young child, Nella did not fully understand the event’s effect until her undergraduate experience at Just University. Being in a predominantly Black educational setting where social justice issues and Black history are rooted in the culture, Nella realized how significant it was to close a school system for five years. She stated, “At Just, we did a lot of empowerment and things like protesting and really trying to make a point to understand your history and where you've been.” Through social action and class discussions, Nella became reflective on the meaning of what had occurred to her mother and other people during the period. Consequently, she became even more motivated to achieve.

Interestingly, Layla expressed an ongoing understanding of the closing as she currently sees the socioeconomic effects of the closings on Prince Edward’s people. Nella, however, gained an understanding after studying and participating in empowerment efforts. Nella’s undergraduate advocacy, along with her peer discussions, facilitated an understanding of what happened in her community. In comparison, Layla communicated that she gained an understanding through her observations from being immersed in Prince Edward County whereas Nella gained an understanding from the outside looking into the community through the her heightened social justice advocacy lens.

Effects. Nella was motivated because she saw how debilitating life can be for people denied an education. She captured this effect by stating

I think the majority of individuals that were affected stayed in Prince Edward County or at least in close proximity. I think they had limited opportunities, just from the
individuals that I know of. I think they had limited opportunities. So I would say they [the closings] had more of a negative effect.

Her mother and others were fortunate to continue her K-12 education through other resources, but Nella identified how this opportunity came at a cost. She stated

She [Nella’s mother] had to leave her home, so she had to leave her parents and her brother for a year when you normally would be at home at least your last high school year, your senior year in high school. So I think that's another thing. You leave your family. So I think that's one of the major sacrifices.

Her mother was able to continue her education, but like Layla noted early, Nella identified leaving your family as a difficult experience because of the close nature of her family.

**Overcoming Obstacles.** Nella acknowledged being away from home as a sacrifice, but her mother obtained a good alternative considering the circumstances. Her mother was allowed to attend a two-year college where she not only obtained her high school diploma, but also an associate’s degree. This degree aided her entry into a four-year college where she subsequently got an undergraduate degree. So despite the school closings for her senior year, she was able to get her diploma and degree in the same amount of time as someone without a disrupted education. Nella stated, “I think the opportunity was definitely great for her but at the same time there was a sacrifice too because she left her family, especially in those times.”

Nella was inspired by her mother’s perseverance, and she was also overwhelmed with astonishment during a revelation that occurred in an interview. Having never considered her accomplishments in the context of the closings and the relatively small number of descendants with her academic credentials, Nella became emotional with the thought of how rare her accomplishments were for someone from Prince Edward. She stated
Um...gosh... That's very emotional. Umm...gosh. Gosh, it's very humbling. I don't
know. It's amazing...if you put it in that context. As a person, I never thought about the
significance, but when you put it in that context, oh my gosh, it's such an extraordinary
piece of information. Wow!

Like Layla, Nella had not considered the rare nature of earning a terminal degree. They both
responded in awe at the thought.

**Significance.** Nella was unaware of the other *Brown* cases hence unable to make a
comparison of them. She did find value for herself and the community in studying the Prince
Edward case. She stated, “I think nowadays, people forget about the past, especially younger
people. So I think it's important that we still continue to inform individuals of the past and where
we have come from.” Nella felt that it is important to conduct research and share findings in the
field of education and in school systems to be included in curricula.

**Participation Benefits.** Nella communicated a personal benefit from being a part of the
study, which is evidence of ontological authenticity. She said, “As a participant of this research,
it's been very relevant to my life just to think about it again, to understand what my mother went
through.” For Nella, greater knowledge of the Prince Edward case would add more substance to
her mother's legacy to be shared with children of her family's future generations, which is an
example of catalytic authenticity—degree to which participants are stimulated by the inquiry
process (Manning, 1997). Stimulated to have more conversations with her mother, Nella stated
that she has learned new details of her mother’s experience, another example of catalytic
authenticity. In fact, by exploring her mother’s schooling further, Nella learned that her mother
attended a college for one semester before attending the college where she obtained her degree.
Finally, fairness was demonstrated with Nella, who was agreeable with all levels of member
checking. After hearing a summary of the first interview, Nella even requested a copy for her personal records because of its accurate depiction of her. Three of the five authenticity criteria were demonstrated, which allows me to conclude that there was a balance of learning between Nella as a respondent and me as a researcher.

Ida B

Nella’s parents were knowledgeable about college and had a good understanding of the process for getting to that level of education. Ida B’s father had a graduate-level education and actually taught at a college during her childhood. So he had similar knowledge as Nella’s parents, and he was able to identify the resources that would prepare his daughter for success. Both of her parents were involved with Ida B, but it is the strong conviction in the Christian faith that she identified as the reason for her success. She stated

Somebody must have been praying. You know what I mean? Somebody really must have been praying. “Watch out for her. Show her favor.” But I swear. I think it’s prayers of generations before. "Give my children a life that's going to be better than mine… I think it's just grace, grace, favor. Somebody prayed, really. Somebody prayed.”

Both Layla and Nella professed their spirituality, too, as a major source of their success, but Ida B is the first to express her spirituality as the answer to how she achieved.

I am the oldest child among my parents’ four children and the only daughter. We were a middle class family that lived in Prince Edward, VA for most of my childhood. My mother was locked out of elementary school for a year, traveled to Baltimore to attend schools there for one year, and then moved to Cumberland County with the rest of her family in order to receive an
education. When Prince Edward County Public Schools re-opened, my mother enrolled and later graduated from R. R. Moton High. My dad did not grow up in Prince Edward County. He earned his Master of Arts degree when I was quite young, and he was savvy about building educational capital that would lead to success. My mother, too, eventually earned the credentials that enabled her to become a school teacher and has earned credits towards a Master of Arts degree in education.

My parents, especially my father, stressed education in our home. He was proud of the fact that I was reading before age four. They used to label items in the house to teach us words as part of our process of learning to read. Daddy sought any viable opportunity to place me in settings that would further cultivate scholastic abilities leading to greater chances of success in life. Excellence in education was constantly reinforced, and my parents placed my brothers and me in several activities that would make us well-rounded and keep us stimulated in academics. I was enrolled in dance to learn ballet and French, and I began piano lessons at age three. By thirteen, I was regularly playing the piano during worship, funeral, and other services. Swimming lessons, Sunday school in church, and Vacation Bible School were also personal development activities for me. It seemed like everything we did was designed for learning, including our vacations, which were really trips to some state attraction or historic site. Even during the summers when school was out, we had to read books, write stories, and draw pictures to stay grounded in the practice of obtaining education.

Also, the lesson of my position as a Black person in American society was non-academic but a very important one for my development that my parents wanted me to gain. Momma and Daddy always urged me to not settle for average in completing assignments because our society is structured with Blacks in an inferior position solely because of race. Therefore, I have to
perform at a superior level in order to advance in life. But never in our home did I feel inferior. They would expose us to movies about famous Blacks, empower us with Black history, and have us read Black classics like *Native Son* and *Jubilee*. Their personal experiences, as well with Civil Rights issues, were a part of my socialization as a minority in society. I didn’t know it at the time of my childhood, but their efforts to teach me about Black history would later manifest into a career for me.

I began kindergarten in the Prince Edward County School System, and then I attended first through third grade at Campus School at Belcher College. Campus School was a pilot program with a small group of students designed to train aspiring teachers. I do not know the credentials required for admittance to the Campus School, but I believe that administrators’ desire to diversify was central to my participation in this project. For three years, I was one of two Blacks students at the school. After the third grade, I returned to Prince Edward Elementary School, but stayed there for only a year before attending schools for two years in Tuskegee, AL, where my father was a faculty member at Tuskegee University.

In the sixth grade, we returned to Prince Edward and I was admitted to the academically gifted program after my dad’s fight to get me enrolled. I’ll admit that I probably seemed defiant at that age because I didn’t have finesse when I would challenge authority figures on comments that differed from my beliefs. Nonetheless, I demonstrated the intellectual capacity to perform on the same level or above other accepted students. My dad would not settle for me being omitted from the advanced program where students were exposed to more educational opportunities and trips. So I got in the program, but the stigma of teachers having to deal with me and/or my parents preceded me throughout my time there. Fortunately, by the tenth grade, I
realized that I had to negotiate better with authorities because while I always knew that I was
going to college, I didn’t get really interested until my sophomore year.

My dad enrolled me in several summer enrichment programs related to writing and
English at Belcher College. In the tenth grade, he enrolled me in a summer writing program at
Coleman University, and I fell in love with that college. So throughout high school, I had
intentions of attending Coleman and majoring in English. My parents couldn’t afford Coleman’s
private tuition, but Stockton University offered me a financial aid package that I could not turn
down. After my graduation from Prince Edward High School, I entered Stockton seeking a dual
degree in English and Political Science because I also had some interest in becoming a lawyer,
but I ultimately decided on just English. In my sophomore year, two influential professors really
ignited my interest in literature. One of those professors was a White lady whose surprised
reaction to my ignorance of a notable Civil Rights activist unintentionally embarrassed me.
From that point, I began to seek Black history on my own to avoid a similar embarrassing
situation. I also saw the role that Black history had in understanding some of the Black literature
that we were studying. This revelation added to my ultimate interest of pursuing history for my
doctorate and career focus.

The enrollment size at Stockton was an adjustment issue for me because there were over
24,000 students enrolled there. Fortunately, smaller communities like the Black Student
Alliance and the student chapter of NAACP on campus, along with my Black roommate, made
the adjustments manageable. I played the piano at a local church in the community, so that
outlet provided another sense of belonging. Any remaining social issues were eliminated by my
sisterhood in Tri Sorority, which I pledged in my sophomore year. I obtained a bachelor’s
degree in English, but not without having become certified to teach as directed by my father. He
insisted that I graduate with some professional credentials that would improve my chances of getting a job after graduation. At the time, I did not want to teach, but I listened to my father. Before teaching, though, I was invited to enroll in a counseling master’s degree program at Stockton. So, I got that counseling degree and worked as a high school counselor for two years. During that time, thoughts of African American studies got stronger and stronger. I eventually enrolled in Truth University’s history program and earned a doctorate.

My pursuit of education coincided with my desire to have a flexible lifestyle that would allow me to have a family where I could spend the most time possible with my children. Along this journey, I developed an interest in African American history, probably because of my parents’ efforts, my knowledge of the Prince Edward case, and the connection of Black history to Black literature. So it seemed logical to me that I should pursue a career as an educator with the combined desires of having a less rigid schedule and engaging in a topic that I enjoyed discussing.

While I realize that I am among a relatively small number of people with my credentials from Prince Edward County, I do not think that my accomplishments stand out in the grand scheme of people who have obtained doctorates. There are doctoral level people who emerged from far greater adversity than what I experienced. So I struggle feeling anymore special about my education because I just did what I needed to do to reach my goals. I really believe that I achieved in life through prayers of family and friends and God’s gift of great parents who set my path for success. My parents, especially my mother, instilled in me a level of tenacity that made me achieve any goals that I set to accomplish. They worked well as a team of involved parents. My dad was the vocal one who advocated for and obtained educational opportunities, and my
mother ensured that I optimized those opportunities by overseeing my efforts to produce quality results.

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**Awareness.** Similar to Layla, Ida B felt that she heard limited references to the closings from her mother prior to age eleven. However, she distinctly remembers becoming interested in the topic in the seventh grade when she completed an essay involving an interview with an elderly educator who lived through the closings. Sparked by the thirtieth anniversary of the closings, her interest emerged again in her senior year of high school. She recalled, "I remember writing again for the newspaper, for the school newspaper something about, some type of editorial about the school closings. I don't really know what I said, but I remember doing something there and starting to understand." Ida B was never exposed to any information about the closings during her K-12 education, so her interest was initiated by what she heard from her parents and church members. Her understanding of the closings' magnitude, though, did not develop until later.

**Understanding.** Ida B's full realization of the closings' meaning for Prince Edward's people did not occur until she was in graduate school. At that point she began to study the field of education and learned the importance that educators placed on early childhood development. This emphasis resonated with her when she considered that Prince Edward children, who were in lower grades, missed a five years of critical development. Ida B's thought fits well with Layla's father's experience because even though he was in the third grade at the time of the closing, he was provided some form of education taught through the church which lessened any delay in development when he returned to school in 1964.
Another observation is that Ida B gained more understanding of the closings after her immersion in an education program. Her understanding of the severity of the closings developed similar to Nella, whose understanding emerged from her knowledge of social justice issues gained in college. At both of their points of understanding, Ida B and Nella were really interested in Black empowerment. Ida B recalled going through a series of emotions from feeling that Whites were abusive with their power to feeling disappointed that Blacks allowed the closings to occur. She ultimately concluded with a broader understanding later in her career. She stated

So it was a bit of that [impulsive emotion] with me, but that has totally evolved because my research topic is trying to look for the activism and resistance even in that oppressive situation, and that's just because I've read more. I've studied more and I understand that it's never cut and dry. It's never this simple. So you got to peel back the layers and figure out different interpretations, different points of view.

Likely through becoming a savvier investigator of the Prince Edward case, she developed a comprehensive understanding that includes multiple perspectives.

**Effects.** In addition to the potential for delayed or under developed cognition, Ida B commented on other effects seen among the Crippled Generation. Similar to Layla and Nella, Ida B identified the emotional toil caused by the closings “that can do a number on your self-esteem.” More specifically related to Layla and Nella, Ida B acknowledged the separation of those children who went away to continue their educations and the “negatives associated with being torn away from your family, living with total strangers.” Ida B discussed a perspective on these negative effects that may not be congruent with the NAACP’s belief that two years of no schooling is better than five years of racially-segregated schools. Because she now understands
the high value of education, Ida B feels that Blacks in Prince Edward should have accepted the option to have an all-Black school that would have allowed children to be educated. Referring to the closings as an experiment that Prince Edward Blacks suffered, Ida B felt that without considering the losses to those individuals, the whole story of desegregation in education is incomplete.

**Overcoming Obstacles.** Even after acknowledging that there are few African American women with a PhD in history, Ida B did not think that her degree attainment made her special in the context of the Prince Edward case. She stated:

> I don't know what impact the school closings had [on her degree attainment]. I really don't see a connection there. ... I don't get it, and I went through the whole, 'You got a PhD.' But okay, there are people that were born enslaved that got PhDs.

Ida B felt that she got the degree because it was a means to a career on a topic that she loved and a career that provided a lifestyle that appealed to her. She felt that hard work is required to achieve your goals, so “Is it really that big of a deal?” Ida B’s reaction to the thought of her accomplishment was not like Layla and Nella, who actually responded with tears at the thought. Ida B did express pride about her mother obtaining a bachelor’s degree, becoming a school teacher, and being only a few classes away from obtaining her master’s degree.

**Significance.** Though she did not think that her individual accomplishment stood out, Ida B felt that the Prince Edward case was a more factually substantive case than the other *Brown* cases. As a historian, she was very familiar with the other four cases, unlike Layla and Nella. In fact, Ida B, in addition to Alpha and Fortitude, to be presented later, were the only participants familiar with the other cases. Ida B thought that the Prince Edward case was the most important one because it represented the most *Brown* plaintiffs; it was initiated by a
student-led walkout and protest; it was in the state where Massive Resistance began; and it was the only case named after a child. For these reasons, Ida B felt that the Prince Edward case was the most profound. She also felt that more research is needed on the topic, and went on to state:

I think that it is very important to really understand how multifaceted not only the *Brown* decision was but the larger narrative of Civil Rights history is. The only way you can do that is by adding new narratives to the larger story. Right? That's why I think it is important to talk about Prince Edward County.

Further, Ida B stated that more study of Prince Edward is needed to identify those agents of change who did not have a national affiliation but were integral in the activism for Civil Rights. Like Layla, Ida B felt that the personal narratives of individuals need to be told to add another dimension of understanding to *Brown* and the Prince Edward story.

**Participation Benefits.** Through confirming my interpretations, Ida B took time to research 1980s income data to determine if in fact she was part of a middle class family as she had originally reported. Her research of economic class structures and knowledge of family income led her to conclude that she was a member of the middle class. Ida B’s research represents an example of ontological authenticity because she gained clarity about herself. Also, almost immediately after the second interview, Ida B emailed me and stated, “The interview really has my mind going,” meaning that she was really stimulated to try to “understand how the PhD was that big of a deal.” Up until the point that Ida B fully considered her accomplishment, she felt modestly sure that her degree attainment was no significant achievement warranting special recognition in the larger discussion of Blacks in education. But through an extensive exploration with me during the second interview, Ida B firmly maintained her position on the initial claim about her accomplishment. My questioning and discussion with her provoked the
personal growth, another example of ontological authenticity. Through these examples, we see that authenticity was demonstrated with Ida B.

**Luther**

Luther was another participant who attributed his success to his faith, which provided him direction and strength in his life. He was reared in the church during his childhood, and engagement with his spirituality continued into college as demonstrated by his treatment of people and participation in a Bible study group. His faith explains a lot of his success, but a full yet succinct explanation follows:

I would say my health. My faith in God, Man. I don't know where I would be without that faith in God, without things that I learned in the church. ... I always want to be a part of something positive. The other thing is I would say my mother. Without my mom, I probably would not have made it this far because there were times where I needed things: books, money, food. Mom was there, and cared. Like that parental involvement, like you said. ... So, health, faith in God, parents.

Like other participants, Luther is grateful for his parents’ role in his life, so this involvement for participants continued to emerge. Luther mentioned his good health, but he did not mention it at any other point throughout the interviews. However, consistently he referenced his faith in God.

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I am the son of a man who excelled in life in spite of being locked out of school. I was raised in a middle-class family with my mother, father, and older sister. Even though my parents weren’t college-educated and didn’t have a lot of money, they were always present in all aspects
of my life. Their high involvement in my life was something that I didn’t appreciate as a child, but now as I reflect on it, I’m grateful for them always being there to support and spend time with me.

I completed my elementary and part of my junior high schooling in Lincoln, an urban area of a major northeastern city, and then my family moved one state south, where I attended middle and high schools. Always having been interested in math and science, I enjoyed school and sought to perform well, partly motivated by my father’s high expectation but also by an internal will to achieve. I was normally enrolled in advanced or honors classes. This immersion placed me in close proximity to many smart students who had high aspirations of attending prestigious universities and becoming prominent professionals, like doctors, attorneys, and business leaders. My parents’ decision to move our family from Lincoln with high crime rates to the neighborhood in the next state with middle and upper-middle class families and a college-prep school system was a strategic move to increase my chances of being successful. Though I was initially a little intimidated by this new environment, I adjusted to this culture and adopted a college-prep mindset and habits like the vast majority of my peers.

This change in neighborhoods also placed me in a mostly White setting where there were some misunderstandings about race. I experienced ill treatment in school as a result of being Black. I remember how a White teacher in high school gave White students more favorable attention than the Black students, and who spoke out against Affirmative Action without seeming to understand the development of this practice. Another White teacher told my mother that I think too highly of myself. That comment and its context translated to me that as a Black male, I should not be proud of myself or that I should not expect too much, all of which counters what my mother instilled in me—pride. These experiences also contributed to my decision to attend a
Black college. I wanted to be around Blacks who gave me fair attention and who knew me as a person rather than a number, like some of my friends’ experiences at predominantly White schools.

Fortunately, one of my best friends had a father who took us on college tours to visit and learn about a variety of schools. My friend’s parents were a lawyer and a gynecologist. My association with this friend had a positive effect on me because it exposed me to a culture of upper-middle class and to the culture of college. I also had another friend whose mother was a speech therapist who worked in the school system and an enrichment program that helped prepare kids for college. This exposure and preparation through my friends’ parents cultivated my interest in college. So in my senior year, I began researching information on colleges on my own because I had no one in my family to teach me about these processes. That’s where my association with my friends played a role big role in my development.

Church also played a major role in my development as demonstrated by the opportunities to become a better public speaker, to learn more about Black History, and by the encouragement that motivated me and gave me a sense of value. Also, I had college educated pastors who were able to keep my interest by connecting current events to the messages in the Bible. My church attendance heightened my consciousness about societal issues. Further, through church, I gained Christian values, like having faith in God, treating people with fairness and respect and the value of family, friends, and sacrifices through the many examples in the Bible. This Christian knowledge defines how I build relationships with people whom I encounter throughout my life.

Athletics was another area that contributed to my development, both physically and emotionally. The training and performance in basketball and track helped keep me healthy, but I also learned how to handle adversity, how to be a team player, how to be disciplined, how to
manage my time, and how to interact with a wide range of people. Similarly, I developed my socialization skills through my involvement with the Boys & Girls Club. In addition to these activities, I maintained an afterschool job ever since I was fifteen until going to college.

I enrolled in Coleman University’s pre-pharmacy program. I chose pharmacy after learning more about the potential earnings in this field. So I decided on an academic program based on the utility of the degree. I had to overcome some adjustment issues that got me into poor academic standing my first semester. Consequently, I was required to enroll in an academic enrichment class that was very helpful because I gained a better understanding of what is required in college, and the availability of the class showed me that the university cared about my success.

Unlike my high school experience of not feeling valued, at Coleman I was well connected and felt like a member of the community. I was involved in a number of activities, like the drama club, community service, fashion shows, and the pre-pharmacy club. I also attended lectures and seminars presented by special guests of the university. My involvement in these activities gave me a sense of purpose. I had one very distinguished sociology professor who did an amazing job at going beyond teaching the subject and showing us how to apply the material to real-life situations. There were professors at Coleman who made the material more meaningful than just information. Their caring and method sharing of information empowered me and other students. As a result, I chose to complete my undergraduate and doctoral degrees at Coleman.

I love my Black college education where I was constantly affirmed as a Black man capable of succeeding. I think about my beloved Coleman experience and all the opportunities it provided me. I would have been dejected if the university closed and stripped those
opportunities away from me. I imagine that those students in Prince Edward felt devastated by the closings. I know it had a tremendous negative impact on my dad because he talks about it with noticeable pain in his voice. This whole story is intriguing, and I plan to learn more about the entire case. In fact, I've talked more with my dad and my cousin who has done research on this topic. I would be interested in learning about other participants in this study because I want to compare our upbringings, influences, perspectives on the school closings, motivation for education, and educational journeys.

It's frightening to know that people stood by and allowed this tragedy to occur. Yet, it is an honor for me to be so closely connected to this landmark event in the sense that my dad overcame this situation that is related to the Brown vs. Board of Education case. I am actually motivated to learn more about the whole situation. Again, I'm particularly interested in other participants' components for their accomplishments in comparison to mine, which boils down to good health, faith in God, and good parental involvement. With these assets, I ultimately obtained my Doctorate of Pharmacy degree and reached my career goal of becoming a pharmacist.

Awareness. Luther recalled very little about his introduction to the school closings from his parents, and because he was not in Prince Edward, the chances of him hearing about the event were slim. What he remembered was the "tremendous negative impact" it had on his father. Rarely were there any discussions at all about his father's experience. As he got older, he would occasionally overhear conversations related to the closings, but as a child no one
shared stories, perspectives, or information. The pain he sensed from his father, however, was communicated whenever there was a rare mentioning.

**Understanding.** During his senior year of high school is when Luther started to realize how closed schools had an effect beyond 1964. As he was preparing for college, he realized that he had only one family member, a cousin, who had attended college. He asked, “Why is it like this? Why aren't more of my family members college educated?” Luther learned from his father that the pursuit of education was suppressed by the closings. His father’s answer ignited a series of other questions:

Where were the people that were speaking out against this and trying to fight this and trying to stop it before it happened? Then, even after it happened, to reverse that decision? Where were those people? What happened? How are they able to shut the school down for five years?

Not getting any clear answers, Luther realized that the closings and the turbulence of that period were powerful. He described the closings as “scary.” Unlike the previous participants, Luther understood the magnitude of the closings after he realized that no one could give him an answer that could justify the event. To him, the closings were so complex that the event could not be explained, which he inferred as a major event.

**Effects.** Luther equated the closings to depriving a person of oxygen leading to devastating outcomes. He stated, “I see with my own eyes there are people that because of that closing, they lost interest in finishing school, finishing high school, and they didn't. As a result, they weren't able to really excel.” Consequently, Luther identified how the closings further relegated people in a financial sense. He made a comment similar to Layla’s when he stated, “You already have an environment where the socioeconomic status is probably a little bit below
average. So you introduce something like a closing, you already got people that may be discouraged.” Participants clearly connected education to financial gain in life.

**Overcoming Obstacles.** Luther was glad to be a part of the study, and he felt compelled to do his own research to learn more in hopes of answering other questions. He stated, “I would just want to know why there are not more children from the parents that were affected by the school closings that sought out programs, higher education, doctorates. I want to know why.” Luther was honored to be one of the few Prince Edward descendants to have a terminal degree, but he was more focused on learning the reasons for there being such a small number.

**Significance.** Luther’s lack of knowledge of the other four cases did not allow him to compare them to rate their significance. However, with his knowledge of Prince Edward, he felt that the circumstances within the case were significant. Personally, Luther saw the degree of effect the closings had on his father, who with a dejected tone told Luther, “They closed the school, and we couldn’t go to school.” As an adult and having learned more about the closings, Luther understood why his father was not pleased when Luther earned a grade below a 90. His father felt that there was no reason for Luther not excelling in school with all the opportunities that were available. Luther continued to identify why the Prince Edward five-year lockout was significant for all the people who were denied. He stated, “I look at the brain, and it's like a muscle. You're not reading, nothing coming in there on the education tip. It’s like it gets weak. Your mind starts getting weak. You start...those skills start getting weak.” In this way, Luther saw the lockout as a major event.

**Participation Benefits.** Luther was captivated with several aspects of the school closings generated as discussion in interview and prompted to initiate his own research about the
closings—evidence of catalytic authenticity. He spoke with family members to learn more and stated:

I've already talked to my dad about it, and I talked to my cousin about it. She has done some research on this topic and [I] definitely have a lot of questions for her and try to obtain any literature information that she may have in regard [to the closings] because I think it's important to retell the story. Educate others to what happened because a lot of people don't know.

Luther later shared with me that he informed some friends of his participation in the study, which allowed him to educate others about the Prince Edward case. His action to inform others about this tragedy is an example of tactical authenticity—being empowered through participation in the study to take action (Manning, 1997). Luther felt that this piece of history needs to be told so that current and future generations can learn from it and prevent other injustices from occurring.

Also similar to Nella, Luther responded to my interpretations by stating, “That’s pretty good. … That was good, man.” This response exemplifies fairness in the study and adds value to the research along with the examples of catalytic and tactical authenticities.

Tex

Like Luther’s father, Tex’s parents and other family members stressed the importance of education. His parents, too, communicated the hardship they experienced with education and felt that “with the amenities and facilities that were” available for him, there were no reasons why Tex could not obtain more education than they did. The following is how Tex explained his success:

The importance of education was instilled in me at an early age by my parents and other family members. My parents knew that education was something that a person needed in
order to have future job opportunities in life, as well as to have a broader outlook on life. This position that my parents and family expressed to me at an early age turned into self-determination of seeking additional education and experiences. The more one learns, the more one wants to continue to learn.

As it relates to his parents' value on education, Tex commented, "It seemed like they were really high on the bar with their education," and this message was consistently communicated to him.

I currently hold an endowed chair as an associate professor of a medical field at a top Research 1 higher education public institution. I have received several research, teaching, and scholarship awards for my work in the field. One of my accomplishments includes becoming one of roughly only 16 African American males with a Doctorate of Philosophy in my field of study. Beyond being among a small number of people with this credential, this fact is even more notable in the context of my parents, who were both locked out of their K-12 educations. I realize that what I have accomplished began with their role in my development towards success.

I was the only child of my middle-class parents. They both worked hard to make a better life for me. My mother was able to continue her education with relatives for a year before returning to Prince Edward to finish her high school degree; my dad later obtained his general education diploma. Because of their experiences with being locked out, I think that they stressed the value of gaining all the education that I could through various opportunities. They enrolled me in yearlong reading programs at a library and summer enrichment classes at a local college, allowing me to stay academically stimulated when school was not in session. I also entered the gifted program in the seventh grade, and that program was a track for advanced education.
Beginning in the tenth grade, I started Governor's School, which was mostly a mathematics, science, and technology program that brought together top students from five counties. Being constantly immersed in this group of high-achieving students motivated me to learn more—just what my parents wanted for me. They would always tell me to have a thirst for knowledge, constantly reminding me to learn out of genuine interest rather than because someone tells me to learn. Consequently, I was conditioned to gain as much information as possible.

Part of my information gathering process was facilitated by my mother's job as a librarian at the local library. I would go there after school 1-3 times a week for about three hours per visit to complete my homework or to look up something that sparked my interest. On some Saturdays, I volunteered at the library re-shelving books and helping patrons in various ways, which both helped me learn. Also, my immersion in the library among other people who were seeking information helped condition me to want to learn. Just seeing people genuinely interested in reading influenced to me to read more.

Another immersion experience that was valuable to my development was my bi-annual summer trips up North with family who all felt that I needed to see other parts of the world. There, I was exposed to various people who were well-educated and had professional jobs. Seeing how these people spoke and acted with a sense of purpose for progressing in life was helpful in understanding the many possibilities for me, unlike what I saw in Prince Edward where there were few high status examples to model after. Up North, there wasn't so much emphasis placed on race because people were open-minded. In Prince Edward, there was still tension between Whites and Blacks.

These opportunities to learn always took precedence over other activities. My parents and extended family members stressed that education comes first, and then I could engage in
extracurricular activities. So I was a member of the track and football teams in high school. When their work schedules would allow, they attended my athletic events to support and encourage me. They also attended school meetings related to the Parent-Teacher Organization. Having both parents actively involved in my life was helpful because I was able to go to them for answers without overwhelming one with too many questions. So they made it easy for open communication. I was fortunate to have a two-parent home because I saw how some of my friends struggled in a single-parent home.

My parents highly valued religion, too. One non-negotiable aspect of my life was my involvement in church. We went to church every Sunday, attended Bible study throughout the week, and participated in special events like community service through the church. The church developed my spirituality and Christian beliefs to live in a just manner. Several times in my life, specifically during my educational journey, I have relied on my faith in God to help me persevere through a challenge. My church affiliation also provided me with direct access to models and leaders in the community.

Together, these childhood experiences laid the foundation for my educational success and provided me with the opportunity to choose from some of the top universities in the country in pursuing my undergraduate degree in a pre-medicine discipline. I made my college selection after considering financial aid packages and schools' rankings. I ultimately decided to attend a local, nearly all-White college after my parents commented on the symbolic nature of me attending a predominantly White college in Prince Edward where public schools were closed for Blacks. Such an enrollment could have a powerful effect on the local community's perception on a descendant of the locked-out Black children.
For me, there has been no one source that has helped me to achieve. I have been blessed to have great parents and family members along with the association of teachers, mentors, and community members who were genuinely interested in helping me get educated. Through optimizing opportunities, I have been able to advance in education, earning five degrees. My discussions in these interviews have developed some good thoughts of how amazing it has been for my parents to overcome the adversity of being locked out of school and achieve in education, business, and in their personal lives. Their story is phenomenal.

Awareness. Tex first learned of the school closings when he was in the eighth grade. He would overhear adult conversations that his parents were having with his aunts and uncles. Those conversations caught his attention and his interest in the closings made him want to know more. So he asked his parents questions about the closings, and they were never reluctant to answer his questions, ultimately with the hopes that nothing like that ever happen to their son. Even though Tex’s father got his GED rather than a high school diploma, he still spoke freely about the closings in order to help Tex understand the situation but also to reinforce the importance of education. So like Luther’s situation, Tex’s parents stressed education as a result of their experience. Unlike Luther’s case, however, and more like Nella’s parents, Tex’s parents talked about the closings with him without any inhibitions. Both Nella and Tex’s parents felt that it was important for their children to be informed. There was also a notable difference between Nella and Tex. Nella stated that she discussed the closings in formal classroom settings throughout her K-12 education; Tex did not recall ever being a part of those discussions. Ironically, Nella and
Tex were in the same graduating class and in some of the same gifted classes at Prince Edward. Over time, though, Tex learned more about the closings.

**Understanding.** In his sophomore year in college, Tex learned the full extent of the closings on people in Prince Edward County. During a summer, he conducted an independent study at Veritas College with a history professor. Because of the personal connection through his parents’ experiences, Tex chose this topic in the hopes of learning more about what happened and why. He stated, “When I started looking at this, I was like, wow, this really did impact a lot of people.” At the conclusion of that study is when Tex really understood the magnitude of the closing. He stated, “That’s when it really hit home. Oh yeah, this was truly a major incident of how African Americans in that area really suffered from [a lack of] education.” He actually presented his study to a large crowd of people at a national conference, and it was copyrighted by the Library of Congress. Through research, Ida B and Tex gained a deep understanding of the closings, and their enlightenment has been shared with others. Ida B has written scholarly articles and book chapters related to the closings, and in addition to his study, Tex has served on forums addressing the topic.

**Effects.** Tex described the Prince Edward situation as being close to a “perfect storm” for a life of despair. The combination of being poor, Black, and uneducated in the racist South had the potential of creating several hardships for Black Prince Edward residents. Tex felt that the closings had emotional effects on the Black children because it was difficult for them to understand and accept that they were being denied schooling because of their skin color while White children continued school. As Ida B stated, closing the schools can hurt children’s self-esteem. Tex also acknowledged that during the period, extensive education may not have been needed in order to prosper. However, times have evolved to require more than a basic education
for lucrative jobs. From Tex’s perspective, most people were not able to recover from the school interruption because of either broken dreams or lack of education.

**Overcoming Obstacles.** Only a few people were able to withstand the obstacle, and Tex’s parents were among that small group. He stated, “My parents were lucky enough and blessed enough to have some additional resources [including] other places to be able to obtain more education.” Having support beyond Prince Edward was rare for people, but that was not the case for Tex’s parents, at least for his mother. Their ability to overcome the closings is an example of why the Prince Edward case was not a “perfect storm.” Tex also viewed his life accomplishments as unlikely outcomes considering what occurred in Prince Edward. He could not identify another person from the county who had obtained a terminal degree, and the majority of his childhood friends remained in the county working unskilled or low-paying jobs. These factors made him conclude that he was rare.

Tex shared another similarity with Layla. Tex also attended a college in Prince Edward after giving thought to his parents’ feelings. He stated

> My parents….you know coming from that particular area of Prince Edward, they knew that Veritas in the past had been mostly all White males, and they thought that if I went to Veritas, I would be able to make more of an impact as far as in a statement within the actual local community, saying that a Black male has entered into Veritas, and breaking some of those racial lines....

The parents of Layla and Tex felt that enrollment in those local colleges that once denied admission to Blacks could have a powerful effect on the local community’s perception of descendants of the locked-out Black children.
Significance. Because of his deeply instilled belief in education, Tex felt that the five-year lockout was a significant adversity for people of that time. He stated:

Individuals who were slated to attend school during those years missed out on a valuable education period in their lives. I believe that education is one of the keystones in the development of children to assist in the success in one's life, and being absent of that opportunity affected them for their future.

He felt that the lockout limited both formal and informal education for people. He stated, "It may have limited these individuals from having broader experiences than others who had no interruption in their education experienced." Tex referred to the value of exposure in expanding one’s thinking and beliefs. By experiencing other cities and cultures, a person can be more capable of effectively interacting with a wide range of people and dealing with various situations. To remain in Prince Edward limited not only cognitive, but also social development. Nella treasured her many trips outside of Prince Edward, which exposed her to many forms of diversity. Tex and Nella shared a similar sentiment about experiencing places outside of Prince Edward.

Participation Benefits. There was a personal gain for Tex as a result of his participation in the study. He shared how he had never considered how his family composition of a two-parent, middle-class home was such a major factor in his positive K-12 experience. When Tex was asked to describe his peers' family circumstances, he gained a greater appreciation for his family because he speculated that part of the reason that some peers did not perform well was because they lacked the presence of two parents and adequate financial means. This realization is an example of ontological authenticity.
Alpha

Nella and Tex found value in being able to visit other parts of the country and interact with different people. Though not on the same scale, Ida B's father fought to get his daughter in the gifted program because those participants took trips to different places, and Ida B was happy for opportunity. None of the participants, however, felt stronger about the value of exposure than Alpha. With little hesitation, he identified exposure as the reason for his success:

I would say maybe moving away and being exposed to others. It doesn't have to necessarily be African-American males, but being exposed to others from other communities and other different states. Like for instance when I moved from Prince Edward to the Poconos. Even though you didn't have a lot African-American males there, you were still exposed to other cultures that did certain things from where they came from. So moving away and being exposed to all kinds of different religions and cultures was the number one thing.

Alpha claimed that the key to not only his success, but also the success of all the participants, was exposure. Throughout the interviews, he shared examples of how experiencing life outside of Prince Edward aided in his development.

I am from Prince Edward County, VA, where I attended public schools. Having obtained two doctorates, authored books, and risen to the level of tenured professor, I have maximized opportunities that were not available for both of my parents, who were denied education in the same school system I attended. At the base of these opportunities is exposure. In other words, I had the opportunity to get out of rural Southside Virginia and learn about other cultures and ways
of life. For me, experiencing diversity in its broadest sense expanded possibilities and showed me what could be accomplished. I feel strongly that my decision to move twelve hours away from Prince Edward after completing my master's degree was one of the key reasons for my success. My mother, on the other hand, saw my potential much sooner than I did.

The first signs of scholarly success came about when my mother detected some of my strong skills in math. She enrolled me in the advanced courses track in the eighth grade because she wanted me to be prepared for college, even though academics were not my primary focus. My primary reason for doing well academically throughout high school was to maintain my eligibility for playing sports. I knew that if my grades were not acceptable to my mother, then she would pull me out of the sports. I also liked the social aspects of high school. As a matter of fact, I regularly had perfect attendance because I didn’t want to miss the interactions with my friends. So sports and social interaction motivated me to do well in high school. The academics were just a means to the stuff I really liked. I didn’t become interested in attending college until I had aspirations of playing college basketball. Those dreams didn’t materialize, but I decided to attend college anyway with some of my friends from Prince Edward.

Even as an undergraduate at Torrian Hill University, I was more interested in the social life than academics, which is why I graduated with only a B- average. I always did well enough to maintain good academic standing, but I could have performed better if I had made academics a priority. I entered Torrian Hill University with the intention of being a math major, but one of my professors urged me to change my major to business administration after his assessment of my math abilities; contrary to my mother’s thoughts, he didn’t think that I had strong math skills. I obtained my Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Torrian Hill University. At that point, it became really clear to me that I had to decide on a career and the
pathway toward it because I was married and had family responsibilities. I liked the university setting that exposed me to people who spoke freely about their thoughts and feelings, so I thought I would continue on with my master’s degree as I identified a career. Torrian Hill University conditionally admitted me into the graduate counseling program until I demonstrated that I was capable of succeeding, because my undergraduate grade point average was below 3.0. During this time is when I became genuinely interested in learning.

In my master’s program, a young African American professor inspired me to become a college professor because I thought he was cool. He mentored me and helped me identify higher education as a career interest. I was also motivated to gain more education and degrees so that I could be more marketable, which would lead to me being able to provide financial support for my family. So I moved up north to pursue a doctorate shortly after completing my master’s degree. I earned my first doctorate in educational leadership from a Mid-Atlantic university and taught in a university setting at two different institutions: one in the Mid-Atlantic region of the country and one in the South, where I am currently a tenured associate professor.

I decided to pursue these advanced and terminal degrees because of my desire to work in a university setting, having a career in higher education. In the process of obtaining these degrees, I developed a desire to become a content expert in the field through teaching, research, and publishing. Recently, I completed a doctorate of counseling degree at a nearby Research 1 university. The inspiration to pursue the second doctorate came from Barack Obama’s 2008 election as President of the United States. I asked myself, “What else can I do for the community?” Since I’ve always had an affinity for counseling, I thought I would return for a doctorate in that area and eventually become a licensed counselor, hence a change agent in assisting Black males with the issues that plagued them.
With regard to the school closings in Prince Edward County, both of my parents were affected by this damaging event. My mother was in the 8th grade and my father was in the 11th grade at the time of the closings. My mother left the state to live with relatives in Maryland for a few years and then returned to Prince Edward to finish her high school diploma when the schools opened. My father never completed his diploma. Since he wasn’t in school, he made the best of the situation by working and helping to provide for the family.

I was compelled to write a book related to aspects of the Prince Edward story, and it has been well-received in the research as well as in the Prince Edward community. In fact, the book was part of the curriculum in the Prince Edward school system so that children, unlike me, can learn early about this unprecedented event in a scholarly manner rather than gaining limited perspectives from just one or a few people.

Awareness. Ironically, Alpha never heard or read anything about the closings. His parents never talked to him as a child about their experiences. He stated, “I never read literature about it [the closing] while I was in elementary, middle, or high school. I can't recall one conversation with my parents that talked about [the closings].” He did not learn about the Prince Edward case until his master’s degree program. While reading a law book about the five cases that made *Brown*, Alpha saw the Prince Edward case listed as one of those five cases. He recalled, “I see DC, Topeka, Kansas, Delaware, South Carolina, and Prince Edward County, Virginia. I said, ‘What?! I went to this school right here. This is one of the cases.’ That’s when I started looking into it. I said, ‘What? Prince Edward County?’” Alpha became fascinated and wanted to learn and talk more about the closings, but he could not express how he felt about this
revelation. Nonetheless, he wanted to learn more about what happened, and the topic grew in importance to him. Like Tex, Alpha became interested about this event partly because his parents were mistreated by being denied an education.

**Understanding.** Alpha became increasingly interested in the closings throughout his master's and doctoral degree programs, which is when he gained a full understanding of the closings. At that point, he noticed how current youth do not seem to take advantage of all the opportunities they have to obtain education, whereas many people went through major struggles to get just a basic secondary education. Alpha’s observation was related to the beliefs of Tex and Luther’s parents, who felt that they should be successful with all the access and opportunities that were available. Alpha’s understanding prompted him to act with even more vigor toward obtaining education because as a doctoral student he was married with family responsibilities. He was also motivated to learn and grow so that he could give back to the community.

**Effects.** Alpha felt that the closings damaged his parents’ lives, especially for his father because he did not finish high school and further ended any aspirations for attending college. About Prince Edward Blacks, Alpha stated, “I think that the school closings made them a little bit depressed during that particular time. I felt that, this is me speaking, if the state did that, then what else can they do?” He even conceded that a college education probably was not required for success in the fifties and sixties. Tex echoed a similar stance. However, Alpha went on to state that

The major effect would probably be trickled down to our generation because if individuals in that county that did not finish school, did not see education important. So they would not preach education to their kids. Then eventually their kids would not see the use of going to college.
This belief was similar to Layla, who credited much of the county’s current poverty situation to the school closings, even generations later.

**Overcoming Obstacles.** Being one of only a few descendants with a terminal degree was a humbling thought for Alpha, a thought that led to another interesting realization. Several of the participants have unique characteristics, but Alpha stood out amongst the group because he was the only one with two doctorates, which in the context of his parents’ experience is rare. He felt that the damaging event to his parents stimulated his decision to obtain as much education as possible. Alpha agreed that not knowing about the closings during his childhood was probably a good thing for him based on his current life outcomes. However, with the drive for education that was cultivated after his knowledge of the closings, one could argue that academics would have been a priority for Alpha during his K-16 education.

**Significance.** Of all the *Brown* cases, the Prince Edward case was the most extreme demonstration of desegregation opposition because of its trickle-down effect on future generations caused by the five-year lockout. Never in the history of the country has there been a greater demonstration because of the residual effect. Alpha stated

All other cases had some small other issues about the bus and equipment and all that stuff. Prince Edward had all of that plus...what’s traumatic is stopping the education of small kids for five years. I think that’s the difference between the other cases.

Another reason that Alpha identified the Prince Edward case as the most profound is that Virginia leaders of that time poorly responded to what was occurring in Prince Edward. Those leaders allowed children to go five years without any education. Consequently as an offer of reparations, Alpha acknowledged Virginia’s leaders’ recent offer to provide college tuition grants for members of the Crippled Generation.
Participation Benefits. Alpha was interested in the other participants, particularly information about their spouses. He wanted to know if any of the other participants’ spouses were also from Prince Edward County or had parents affected by the school closings since his wife is from Prince Edward. After learning that none of the other participants’ spouses were from the county, he felt that he was unique amongst the other participants. This fact was relevant to Alpha because he felt that his wife’s knowledge of the desolate situation in Prince Edward made her even more supportive of them leaving the area for opportunities. Because they were a couple prior to college, Alpha commented that her support was important to his academic development. He learned something about the other participants, but their spousal information is not considered as the deep understanding related to the phenomenon that Manning (1997) identified for educative authenticity. He did, however, convey this aspect in response to a question about what else helped him to achieve in education. After some reflection, he identified his wife as a resource, so in this manner he demonstrated ontological authenticity.

Fortitude

Along with Alpha, Fortitude was the only other participant to mention Virginia’s attempt to mend the school deprivation from the past, but she expanded on the effort. She stated:

What the government should have done if they followed research, they would know that not completing a high school degree or not going to college can be generational. So if they truly were trying to give back, they need to pay it forward.

In other words, provide scholarships to the descendants of the closings’ victims rather than the victims who at their ages were not likely to pursue a college degree. Without those funds, the vicious cycle of no higher educational opportunity would continue for many descendants unlike
Fortitude was able to avoid that cycle and obtain multiple degrees. She explained her success as follows:

I would have to say a combination. I don't think I can really identify one source. I think. Well, first, I'll answer that question probably in slightly a different way. For me, studying education policy, particularly with the lens with equity issues, I definitely have to say my parents had a lot to do with that. ... I feel like they felt like, and I think that they did lay a lot of the groundwork for me to succeed. ... Just instilling in me the sense of racial pride about being Black, and they had to. ... I had to get taught what being Black meant and how beautiful Black is. The other part I would attribute my success to is Cooper [University]—them exposing me to graduate school and the whole notion of earning a doctorate.

Similar to the other participants, Fortitude’s parents were foundational to her success. Her parents’ emphasis on racial socialization, though, seemed to be more prominent even when considering Ida B, whose parents were intentional in conditioning her for society.

I was born in Benson, an urban area of a large northeastern city. My middle-class family consisted of my mother, father, older sister and me. We were a very close-knit family. In fact, throughout my family, you will see a tradition of marriage and staying together, no divorcing. My parents, especially my mother, instilled the sense of racial pride about being Black and made me knowledgeable of achievements in Black history. I was often considered a nerd in my family, but that didn’t bother me. At times I did feel some healthy pressure to excel because I did not want my academic performance to support some Whites’ misconceptions that Blacks can’t
succeed academically. Overall, I had a good childhood with loving and supportive parents. During the summers, my sister and I would visit my grandparents and other family members in Prince Edward County, VA. The country was fun because we could be more carefree than in Metro City, where we were limited by greater chances of danger from crimes. I'm fond of these summer visits because I got to know my cousins.

Even though I was born in Benson, I was raised in Lincoln, where I began the first grade in a really good school that stimulated my intellectual curiosity at an early age. This move was important also because I went from an all-Black neighborhood to a very diverse one with an equally diverse school. One negative aspect of moving to the diverse community rather than living in the all-Black neighborhood was my family's participation in church. In Benson, the Black neighborhood, we attended church regularly, but when we moved to Lincoln, there were no Black Baptist churches in the neighborhood of Lincoln Village where we lived. We tried to attend other churches, but the experience, defined by the singing, the racial make-up, and the delivery of the messages, was not what we were accustomed to or seeking in our worship. Consequently, our church attendance suffered in spite of us being Christian and God-fearing people. So, spirituality did not play a major role in my development.

In Lincoln, my third grade test performance placed me in the advanced track, where I was in a mostly White environment and I was the only Black student among my peers. Early in my new school, I experienced overt racism, which resulted in me defending myself to the point of fighting White female students because I had to establish myself as a strong person who was not going to be mistreated, especially not because of my race. After it quickly became clear to the White girls that I was not weak, I actually became friends with them. Interestingly, after a painful elementary school experience with one of my Costa Rican friends, I realized that other
non-White groups were racist against Blacks. Once I arrived to junior high school, I began closely associating myself with my Black peers. This desire to be with Blacks continued into high school, when I chose to attend a nearly all-Black high school, and then a historically Black college. My experiences with racism in elementary school started my path to choose mostly Black educational settings.

Track and field was a big part of my social life in high school. In fact, it consumed so much of my time that I worked at a department store around my track schedule, which meant that I worked only during the summers and on Sundays during the school year. While I enjoyed the training and competition, I also gained from the interaction with teammates, coaches, and other competitors. Track was also important because it was associated with school, and I was always interested in school. The connection between track and school was further strengthened because I had to do well in school in order to remain on the track team. So, track contributed to my motivation to do well academically, and I also developed leadership skills that resulted in me being the track team captain my senior year.

After high school, I attended an HBCU in the South where I was well-prepared for success. This preparation was a result mostly of the Metro City Public School System, considering that there was not much out-of-school academic enrichment in my life. But my parents were always supportive of me and encouraged me to finish college, so that presence contributed to my motivation to be successful in K-12 and college.

My social adjustments in college were relatively minor. I came to the South with my Metro City state of mind that consisted of being focused on my own affairs and not engaging with people whom I didn’t know. Students perceived this way of being as aloof, which was quite the contrary because in college, I wanted a different experience than in high school. In
other words, I wanted a broader social life beyond what track offered. So I didn’t pursue the opportunity to run track in college because I didn’t want an activity that would limit my level of social engagement. I had a core group of friends, and we enjoyed typical college parties, something I didn’t do in high school. I also maintained participation and leadership roles in organizations, mostly education-related ones.

My attendance at that particular HBCU was one of the best decisions I’ve ever made. I decided on a career in education after a series of experiences in high school, but the one as a teaching assistant prior to college sealed my interest that led to me graduating with a great experience and with a degree in elementary education. I really appreciated having the experience of Black professors, who encouraged me to attend conferences and participate in summer programs. Those professors are the ones who ignited my interest in pursuing graduate degrees. So after teaching school for three years, I decided to attend a Midwestern university to obtain my master’s degree and then my doctorate of philosophy degree in educational policy.

When I was in high school, I learned of the school closings from my mother even though my father was the one who experienced the closings; my mother was from North Carolina. Even though I was astonished by what happened to my father, I didn’t ask him about the schools. My father has a great sense of humor, and I recalled him sharing funny childhood stories of mischief but nothing about the closings until I got to graduate school. That is when the Prince Edward situation really became interesting to me, and I read on my own to learn more. Also at that point, I began to ask my father questions about what happened but soon realized that he did not know much of the details, only what happened to him and a few other close family members. So through my research I learned a greater scope and magnitude of the closings, especially the five year period for about 1700 African American families. That realization gave me a strong sense
of pride for the success that my father had accomplished in spite of this dreadful event that created unlikely conditions for success. This knowledge also contributed to my already established drive to be successful because I was not going to allow his experience to be in vain. My father is a hero, and I am proud of his life outcomes. He is my inspiration.

Today's youth lack these direct stories of struggle and challenge—real challenge, like being denied an education. They are not aware of or do not have an appreciation of our ancestors' struggles to reach success and to create pathways for others to follow. Many of our ancestors acquired successful lives and overcame significant obstacles in the process. With my awareness of these accomplishments, I feel that there is no reason for me not to succeed with all the access and resources available for me. I'd be curious to know other participants' thoughts on the many aspects of the closings. I'd like to know their educational journeys, their childhood household conversations related to the lockout, and more information about their siblings' educations, as well as their first cousins' educations.

Awareness. Luther and Fortitude, who are biologically related, learned about the closings in high school. Even though Fortitude had regular summer visits to Prince Edward, she never heard anything about how her father and uncles were locked out of school. Fortitude vividly remembered the setting and her reaction when she learned it:

It wasn't until I was in high school that I was actually told about the school closings and it was from my mother. I remember it being at a kitchen table doing homework or something and that's when she started telling me. She told me because I asked her a question about something. I don't remember what it was. But that's how she started telling
me, and I couldn't believe all that had happened to my father and he had never spoken about it.

Although startled by the news, Fortitude stated that there was no in-depth discussion about the incident until later when her interest grew and she began asking questions.

**Understanding.** Her interest led her to learn more about the closings through reading about it and eventually asking her father. Fortitude stated

I learned a lot because I had started reading a lot. Then I wanted to see what his [her father’s] stories were in comparison to what I had read. Keep in mind, the level of detail did not come until grad school college, not undergrad college. When I was in grad school, I just started leisurely reading things not for paper, not for the scope of the study that I was proposing, but just because I wanted to find out more. I started finding out that he didn't know a lot of things that had happened during that time because all he knew is what happened to him and maybe some other close family members.

Ida B and Fortitude gained a substantial understanding of the closing around the same point of their educational journey. Fortitude found it interesting that her father did not know that there were efforts to get students in schools in other places, similar to how Nella’s mother got to the college to continue her education. Fortitude’s father thought that everyone either worked in the community or left the county to find work. Fortitude attributed this lack of knowledge of the alternative schooling opportunities to the social class divide even within the Black community.

**Effects.** Other participants acknowledged the psychological effect on the locked-out students’ self-esteem, but Fortitude commented on an effect in terms of current race relations in that county. Fortitude stated
Even just the psychological effects that it [the closings] had on people and their perspective about White people, just sometimes hearing people from that part of Virginia, hearing Black folks from that part of Virginia, talk about White people, it's usually an us-them conversation. That's part of how they grew up, and that has remained a part of their dialogue and narrative.

Because her father did not complete high school, Fortitude also acknowledged the burden that her father carried for several years because he lied on job applications about having a high school diploma. With certainty she stated:

My father's experiences were horrid. It was just something that he always felt like it was this secret that he could not share with anyone outside of the family because it jeopardized the livelihood of our whole household. So that was heavy.

This recognition demonstrates the mental toil that occurred even for an affected student who was able to secure good paying jobs. Also, like other participants, Fortitude could not imagine the anguish of parents who sent their children away from home to obtain their educations.

Overcoming Obstacles. Fortitude, like Ida B, did not view her accomplishments with the same level of enthusiasm as the other participants because she did not consider herself exceptional. Fortitude felt that with her level of success came a responsibility to educate people about what happened in Prince Edward. Fortitude felt that the Prince Edward story needed to be communicated to more people because of its rich historical value.

Significance. Fortitude was one of the three participants with knowledge of the five Brown cases, and she was able to support her claim that the Prince Edward case was the most significant. She stated
One thing that I would say is the Prince Edward County case was student led. That's one thing that I think that gives us somewhat of Civil Rights notoriety. It began with the student protests. It escalated, and it really came from young people. Secondly, no other case had this level of massive resistance to the Supreme Court ruling than Prince Edward County. So that's why I think that case particularly sticks out.

These arguments were similar to Alpha, a book author on the topic, and Ida B, a historian whose research is related to Prince Edward. Fortitude's interest is education policy with a focus on issues around equity. With these interests, it is understandable that these three participants identified nearly identical arguments supporting Prince Edward's significance.

**Participation Benefits.** On a personal level, Fortitude expressed interest in learning about the other participants. She specifically asked about the number of males in the study and the areas of doctorates represented. An example of personal growth through the study was her ability to identify a metaphor to describe her educational journey. This task required Fortitude to express her experience in a symbolic fashion. Fortitude also commented that from her participation in the study and as an educator knowledgeable of the Prince Edward case, she had "added responsibility" to ensure that future educators and policy makers are informed about the school closings. This response demonstrates an example of how Fortitude was empowered to act—tactical authenticity.

**Lassiter**

Ida B, Alpha, and Fortitude seemed to be the most knowledgeable of the Prince Edward closings and the legal case considering the amount of research they have conducted on the topic. At the other end of the continuum of knowledge was Lassiter, who was interested in learning more about the history of Prince Edward. His lack of knowledge of the closings, however,
should not diminish one's thought of his fit for the study. Lassiter also had an impressive journey toward fulfilling his career goal of becoming a doctor, and his success began with his parents. In response to what explains his educational success, Lassiter stated

I would say a big part of it was my father's work ethic. I really do feel like just how hard he worked, just always makes me feel like I can work a little bit harder. Even now, he'll be 70 in December. He's been retired. He's still mowing lawns. He won't sit down. I think about that. I'm just like, "If he's almost 70, and he's still getting up and going, I got to put in the extra effort. I got to continue to work hard." I think my mother...she wasn't very pushy or demanding. I mean, I know what her expectations of me were, but she was very good at not crossing the line of pushing. ... There were some key people like I talked about earlier who were role models for me other than my parents who also helped as well. That's probably about it, probably just a combination of some role models in the community and in my family. And again, I don't know where my self-drive, tunnel vision came from. I guess part of it came from my family, but I was strange. ... I just grew up knowing what I wanted to do and just be like, "I got to do it."

Lassiter concluded that he thinks the school closings affected him indirectly in the sense that the event caused his father to work hard, and that ethic was impressed upon him.

I am originally from the northeastern part of the country, where I lived with my middle-class family consisting of my mother, father, two older sisters, and a younger brother. I feel that I had a normal life. Growing up, my family was not overly affectionate, but we loved each other. All my siblings and I have developed into successful individuals with good careers and strong
families; and I believe these outcomes are a result of my father's positive influence on his children. Both of my parents were hard workers in our family. Even after my mother’s disability and up until her untimely death, she still maintained a rigorous work habit. Seeing her efforts along with observing my dad’s ethic made me a hard worker, too. In fact, their efforts shaped all of their children into the hard-working and successful individuals we are today.

Sundays were special to us as a family because we always ate together after attending church. I really enjoyed those dinners after church where I attended Sunday school and served as a junior deacon. Even though the nearest Baptist church with an African American congregation was 45 minutes away from our home, church was important to me in my development. Early in life, though, church was not an enjoyable experience for me. Because of our distance from its location, I think some members unintentionally ostracized us, more like out of sight, out of mind. Later in my development, I gained a greater appreciation for my church family, who provided support in challenging times, demonstrated leadership qualities, and modeled the value of structure in one’s life. I also gained a better understanding of my religious faith and all the Christian principles that I hope to pass on to my children.

I attended the local K-12 public schools in my rural community and enrolled in some college-prep and Advanced Placement courses in high school. My mother had high expectations of me with regard to education. She was a registered nurse and pleased to see my self-initiated interest in medicine. Yet she never urged me to pursue a career in the medical field. I was just always attracted to her nursing and anatomy journals as a five year-old child, and this interest led to my unwavering plan to become a medical doctor. She didn’t have any academic concerns for me. She was more concerned with my racial socialization because of our mostly White community.
Consequently, my mom got me into Upward Bound, an enrichment program that was mostly Black. She would say, "You need to start being around some different people and make some different friends." I also did some reading on African American history to help fill the void of my public school education. Of course in high school, teachers would give just cursory level attention to Black History, but nothing in-depth. My parents' reminders to me of my worth, my readings of Black History, and my observations of African American church leaders helped instill pride in me, and I think that was helpful whenever I experienced discrimination.

Upward Bound helped keep me sharp over the summers, but again my mom used it mostly to develop my socialization with Blacks. While in Upward Bound, I became fond of the director, who was an influential guy in the community and to me, specifically. Because he knew my parents well, he always seemed to look out for me and made sure that I had some unique opportunities. Being a Cub Scout and Boy Scout was another important opportunity for me as a child because I learned several useful life skills.

In high school, I was in a college-prep track that included a lot of Advanced Placement courses that helped prepare me for college. I graduated from high school in the top 15 of my class, but I didn't perform well on the SAT. The scores from this test, along with my out-of-state status, affected my ability to be accepted at my top choice college—University of Boule. After being placed on a waiting list for University of Boule, I enrolled at Love University, a Historically Black College & University where I got a partial scholarship.

Even with my participation in Upward Bound, cultural shock was a big college adjustment for me. For the first time in my life, I was in the majority as an African American considering that I grew up in a predominantly White community. So, I had to get familiar with my new cultural immersion. Also, I didn't have any close family near me, and most important
was I didn’t have my mother who passed away the semester before I started college. As time went on, I learned of some family in the city where I attended college. I also had some acquaintances from the Upward Bound Program along with me at Love University.

I recall a really interesting professor who helped me by expanding my hard work ethic to include a smart work ethic. He always urged his students to be curious, and he really attracted minorities to the science discipline. I should also mention that I was really focused on doing well academically and didn’t engage in many social activities. Over the summers throughout my undergraduate years, I would participate in research courses or programs that would better prepare me and strengthen my applications for medical schools. These experiences, combined with the accomplishment of being class valedictorian, placed me closer to my goal of becoming a physician. After Love University, I attended the Jessie School of Medicine at Langley University followed by a residency at Credo University. Currently, I am living my lifetime goal of working as a Pediatric Hospitalist in a community hospital. This achievement is the result of a long, difficult journey that required a lot of focus and a hard work ethic, a trait that my father modeled and I adopted.

My dad was and still is a very hard-working man. He took full responsibility in his role as a husband and father by taking care of his family’s needs. He worked two jobs, and we never seemed to struggle financially. Because my dad was so resourceful and skillful, he handled his business and got things done. His character inspired me to work hard also. It wasn’t until my participation in this study that I realized my connection to a landmark case like *Brown v. Board of Education*. It’s actually quite moving to think that I have such close proximity to a piece of history that has so much meaning to African Americans and this country. My reflection on this topic has made me even more proud of my dad for overcoming obstacles and choosing to live a
life that has positively affected his children, who are all doing well. Through this research process, my interest in the topic has increased, and I will likely do my own research to learn more about the school closings.

Awareness. While in college, Lassiter learned about the school closings after his sister informed him of a special television presentation about Prince Edward. He did not watch the television show, but his sister explained that their father and several other people were locked out of schools. Up to that point, Lassiter thought that his dad simply dropped out of high school. After doing a little more research on Prince Edward, in astonishment Lassiter responded, “I had no idea. He [Lassiter’s father] never talked about it.” Because there was no discussion of the closings from his father and because he lived in a community several miles away from Prince Edward, Lassiter, like Luther and Fortitude, was unaware of the event during his childhood.

Understanding. Lassiter was driven to become a doctor since he was five years old, so he remained narrowly focused on tasks and issues that were a part of that goal. His father’s childhood experience caught his attention momentarily until he reached medical school. Lassiter stated

I was never a big reader. I read medical texts in school and stuff, but I never did just my own fun reading. So I started trying to pick a little bit more about African American history, and just something a little bit more interesting. I started looking into it [Prince Edward school closings]. I was like this is really a big deal because I knew it affected my dad, but then I was like, “It affected so many other kids in there.”
Lassiter felt sympathy for those affected children, and he felt anger toward the people and system that allowed so many children to be mistreated in a potentially life-damaging way. This reaction was common among the participants, and most of them indicated that they became even more motivated to excel in education with their understanding of the closings. Lassiter, however, was already highly driven to succeed, and stated that his understanding did not motivate him in terms of obtaining his education.

**Effects.** Participants unanimously felt that the closings had an adverse psychological effect on the locked-out children. About his father, Lassiter stated, “He told me one day that he didn't know what he wanted to do, but he did want to go to college. He did have aspirations.” Lassiter felt that denying children access to education negatively affected their self-esteem. He stated, “You're taking away what I think is your God-given right for education. You just took that away.”

**Overcoming Obstacles.** After his initial emotions of sadness and anger, Lassiter felt a sense of pride because his dad overcame a “big obstacle” in reaching success as defined by a healthy marriage with children who either obtained college degrees or served in the military, but all with healthy families of their own. Lassiter’s father stated, “I couldn't be happier.” Even without a high school diploma, Lassiter’s father managed to acquire good-paying jobs, and he ultimately owned his own successful business. In fact, six of the participants’ parents owned businesses; the other two became school teachers.

After seeing his connection to the landmark *Brown* case through his Prince Edward heritage, along with his educational accomplishments, Lassiter stated

I mean, it’s pretty amazing. I mean because that's such a [sigh] big part of history. I just never thought of it like that. Or I never thought there was any connection between me
and that [Brown] decision, in the way that you put it. You think about it. It's a little overwhelming. It means a lot.

Lassiter was even more proud of his father, who “did what he had to do” to make a better life for his family.

**Significance.** In addition to acknowledging the adversity the closings created for several children, Lassiter acknowledged the significance of the event by placing himself in the situation. He stated

I don't know what I would've done back then if I had a singular goal to be a physician and regardless of how race relations were, I was going to do it. People did it back then. I don't know what I would've done if I couldn't go to school, if I was forced to work. ... Who knows what I would've done? I probably would've been devastated by it. So that's a big roadblock. "You can't go to medical school." Why not? What am I supposed to do with myself? For me, this is my singular goal. I probably would have been stressed out to the high heavens just thinking about my personality.

Because Lassiter was so driven to reach his goal, he could not imagine the pain a child during the time of the closings felt if that child was denied the opportunity to reach his or her goal as well.

Lassiter also unknowingly provided an example related to a suggestion that Fortitude offered. Fortitude felt that the government was not genuine in their efforts to mend the effects of closed schools by offering scholarships to the Crippled Generation. She maintained that the affected children would not be interested in returning to school as midlife adults. Supporting her claim, Lassiter stated

My father told me a few years ago they, apparently the County or the school system, had offered to pay his education, like have them come back and finish or something like that.
He declined. He was in his sixties. He was like, “I've lived my life.” So he declined to do it.

One can use this supported example to further demonstrate that the Virginia case was the most significant because several years after the closings, Virginia leaders continued to respond poorly.

**Participation Benefits.** During the second interview, Lassiter stated that he planned to ask his father some questions about the school closings later that day. As a result of the interviews, Lassiter was prompted to gain some insight about the closings from his father, who was reluctant to speak in-depth about his experience. Catalytic authenticity is represented in this example because Lassiter was stimulated to seek more information as a result of his participation in the study. The study discussions made Lassiter reflective in a healthy way about his journey to his medical degree in the context of being the son of a locked-out parent. Further, like all the other participants, Lassiter developed interest in the other participants to learn about their experiences in the home, community, and school leading to their degrees.

**Summary**

These eight profiles provide valuable information to assist our understanding of the findings to be presented in the following chapter. Through these profiles, we are also introduced to some of the Second Generation members’ similarities and differences that set the context for fully examining the participants’ experiences and perceptions through Walsh’s (1998) family resilience framework.
Chapter Five: Results

In Chapter Four, participant profiles were sequenced according to similarities in experiences and perceptions that the participants voiced. Although their comments were organized into distinct subtopics, all indicated one strong influence: the role of family in the participants’ lives. Nella captured this theme best when she stated, “Developmentally, family is probably the most significant part of my life.”

The concept of “family” alone is too broad to form an understanding of how the Second Generation succeeded educationally and professionally, however, because “no family form or style is inherently healthy or dysfunctional” (Walsh, 2006, p. 104). Therefore, it is important to explore the interactions that occurred within the families that helped to develop the children’s resilience.

In their research about resilience development in high-achieving students, Amatea et al. (2006) sought to answer the question, “What do families do to prepare children to be academically successful?” Their review of relevant literature led them to conclude that family members’ interactions with children are far greater predictors of success than other variables such as family income, parental education, or family structure. This conclusion of family members’ interactions effects on children’s outcomes mirrors key notions in Walsh’s (1998) framework, which presents key family resilience building processes.

Amatea et al. (2006) identified processes within four domains of familial relationships that inform my study. They are

(1) family's beliefs and expectations

(2) family's emotional connectedness

(3) family's organizational style
(4) and quality of family learning opportunities.

These interconnected domains work together to enhance students’ performance in school. The processes are briefly characterized as follows. (1) The family’s beliefs and expectations domain consists of a strong sense of purpose, a positive outlook, and a high level of personal efficacy. (2) Family’s emotional connectedness relates to the emotional warmth and sense of belonging, open emotional sharing, clear communication, and collaborative problem-solving. (3) The family’s organizational style is defined by strong leadership and clear expectations, firm but friendly parenting style, and strong social network. Finally, the quality of family learning opportunities consists of the development of family routines that support achievement and explicit skill instruction.

Some of the processes overlap domains and therefore demonstrate the synergistic nature of the domains. All of these processes, however, work together in developing high-achieving students. Further, this information provides direction for identifying and understanding the family processes described by the Second Generation sample members. From my data analysis, I named and defined a similar set of processes that coalesce around concepts of family: family organizational patterns, family beliefs and expectations, family emotional welfare, and family personal development and learning opportunities. While the domains work well together as a set, they each emerged with differing value to individual participants. These domains are presented below in order of most to least value to the members of the Second Generation according to their responses to interview questions.

Family’s Organizational Patterns

One domain of Walsh’s (1998) model is organizational patterns, and it consists of developing a flexible structure, creating connectedness or cohesion among family members, and
mobilizing extended kin and social networks. The participants provided data that support each of these processes.

According to the conceptual framework, having structure within the home is an organizational process that facilitates resilience (Walsh, 1998, 2006). The participants' parents created a structured environment for their children. Without being too rigid, parents were firm, maintained their authoritarian roles, and provided caring discipline to develop healthy structure for children. In response to the level of structure her parents of imposed on her, Layla stated, "The structure? I needed that because even though I lost some of it along the way, it's a foundational thing." Layla perceived this application of order to be helpful in her development. Ida B provided an example of her father's authoritative role when he required her to obtain a teacher certification prior to graduating from college. She stated, "I never wanted to teach, not in public school, anyway. I never really wanted to, but you know, that's what he [her father] told me I was going to do. That's what I did.” Ida B later explained that she was grateful for her father's directive because that certification was useful in her career path. All parents employed the structure in a nurturing manner, which resulted in participants' reports of having a positive upbringing within their homes.

All of the participants considered their families to be cohesive and supportive. Alpha stated, “It was a very supportive, protective family. Nothing out of the norm, tight-knit; it was six of us. It was a tight-knit family.” This type of environment created “a context of security, trust, and nurturance to support individual development” (Walsh, 2006, p. 94). Parents were clearly highly involved in the participants' lives, partly to ensure structure but also to provide support, guidance, and protection. Luther used to think that his parents were too involved in his
life, but as he got older he saw the value in having his parents constantly present in all aspects of his childhood development.

Participants also communicated that their families' financial resources were stable and actually placed them in at least the middle-class. Tex stated, "It's not like we were rich or anything, but we weren't desperate poor. My parents had jobs that provided for our family." Alpha stated, "We didn't struggle for meals. My dad was there. He had a nice little job. He supported the family. My mom had a nice job. She worked in the school system. So we didn't struggle financially." Other participants communicated similar comments, and all of their parents were able to finance college expenses that were not covered by grants and scholarships. A large societal issue is families' ability to adapt and flourish during times of economic stress, which lessens the likelihood that families will be able to provide mutual support among members (Walsh, 2006). Because of the high value participants' parents placed on education, they leveraged all of their assets to generate the most income possible. This financial ability allowed parents to secure learning opportunities for their children and allowed children to focus on academics without the pressure of having to work even though some of them had an afterschool that assisted with developing life skills.

There were occasions, however, when the parents could not provide their children with the resources they needed. Walsh (2006) stated, "When they [families] can't solve problems on their own, they are more likely to turn to extended family, friends, neighbors, community services, and and/or therapy or counseling" (p. 100). Almost all of the participants were first generation college students without knowledge of the steps for getting to college. Their parents were not able to assist directly, but they were able to situate the participants in settings where they could learn from people with that knowledge. Luther talked about how his dad befriended
some other parents who were well versed in going to college. His dad’s association with those fathers helped to produce an understanding of some aspects. Tex recalled that all the parents of his peers in the gifted classes had professional jobs, and through those networks he was able to obtain some insight about college. Benefits also came from social networks like churches, community agencies, and civic organizations. “Formal and informal kin networks in African Americans and many ethnic and immigrant families are lifelines for resilience” (Walsh, 2006, p. 100). The participants shared information that would support Walsh’s claim.

Of the processes that emerged from data analysis, family’s organizational patterns appear first because of the high relevance of parents for the entire Second Generation, who expressed great admiration for their mothers and fathers. The parents set the structure and tone for the participants’ upbringing, secured the income to take care of the family, and placed the participants in company with people who would have a positive impact on their lives. Based on Walsh’s (1998, 2006) framework, I define family’s organizational patterns as the family’s production and arrangement of internal and external resources that bolsters children’s ability to succeed. Similar to Amatea et al. (2006), I have identified processes within the data that characterize this domain, and they are parenting roles, extended social network, and family disposition.

Parenting Roles. Several points of data support the significance of parents’ role in the participants’ lives. The level and quality of parents’ engagement and provision for their children cultivated success. Most notably is the concept of parental involvement in various ways. Some parents were not educated well enough to help participants with school work. Though some parents could not assist with the academic material, they were extremely encouraging and interested in the participant’s academic pursuits. For example, Alpha commented how his
mother did not provide academic support, but during his college years, she encouraged him whenever he faced a struggle, and she also learned about processes that better positioned him for course registration and housing selection opportunities. Parents also advised participants of processes, advocated for them, and attended parent-teacher conferences and other events.

Nella’s comments captured the essence of parental involvement for the participants. She stated:

My parents always being there. Being at the school constantly. Attending every play, every science fair. We treat every event like a very significant event. So always being there. That's probably the most significant factor. Always being there, always have that support system. I can't remember a time when my mother or father missed something significant in my life. It could've been a little thing like, just any, any little [event]. I can't remember a time.

The concept of parental involvement emerged from the interviews with all participants. They supported the participants’ aspirations.

Parenting roles also consisted of providing financial resources for the expenses participants incurred throughout their education. All participants considered their families to be middle class citizens during their upbringing. One participant stated that her family was upper middle socioeconomic class. They all, however, were able to finance the expenses for summer camps, dance and piano lessons, and college. When Luther insisted on getting a part-time job in college, his dad responded, “No, what would make me proud and what you could do to pay me back is just finish. Just get your degree.” The participants’ parents sometimes worked more than one job to provide a life of comfort for their children. Both mothers and fathers worked and coordinated resources to ensure that the family’s needs were met with enough surplus money to enjoy life comfortably but not extravagantly.
The financial stability in the families likely contributed to the participants reports that they all had a positive upbringing. While lack of money can cause stress in the family, Tex commented, “We weren't really hurting for money....” The financial status for the families was good and lessened the chances of the participants sensing any frustration from parents. Contributing to a healthy upbringing was having both parents in the home. Alpha stated, “I felt that I was blessed coming up to have the dad and the mom in the home.” Tex also found value in having a two-parent home acknowledging that his friends in the accelerated programs had both parents in the home. Conversely, he noticed how some of his troubled peers were from single-parent homes. In all, the participants reported having a good playful childhood filled with close immediate and some extended family interactions. All these aspects were provided by the roles that parents played, but the parents realized also that they could employ the external family resources in their children’s development.

Extended Social Networks. Parents were able to put their children in contact with people who had access to resources. This social capital played a role in the lives of many participants but none more prominently than Luther. Beginning with middle school, Luther’s parents moved the family to a better neighborhood with an excellent school system. In fact, he attended a college-prep high school immersed among some really bright students who motivated him to excel. He stated, “When you're in Rome, do as the Romans. So I started adopting, their (high school classmates’) habits and mindsets.” The family’s move was into an affluent neighborhood comprised of professional people. Luther benefitted from this association with the kids of these professionals. For example, as it relates to his friend’s father who talked to them about the importance of education as they visited colleges, Luther stated, “Having a friend like that and having parents like that and seeing how they live and how their life is had an impact on
me." Even after getting into college, Luther’s father played a role in how he developed networks. Luther stated

He had good advice in terms of college survival. He told me to surround myself with positive people. … When I started pharmacy school, I found people who dad had described and was talking about, and those people played a tremendous role in me matriculating through the program.

For these reasons, Luther’s experiences with parents role in creating social capital for children best exemplifies this concept, but there were clear instances with other participants as well.

Fortitude also identified how her peers helped her by modeling the process for getting into college. When explaining how she learned about the college admissions process, Fortitude stated, “Really just from my friends, more so, not from my parents or even from my older sister. She didn't go to college. I would think just from my friends, not necessarily in the home.”

Similar to Luther, Fortitude’s parents moved into a better school system than what her older sister experienced. One of Lassiter’s references to social capital was through a family friend who was the director of a governmental program that supported youth in their preparation for college. While Lassiter was already academically well prepared for college, he gained social opportunities through the family friend who was also considered a mentor.

Tex reported similar experiences with friends from his gifted classes, but he also acknowledged how he learned more about college from his cousins who were in or had completed college. So in addition to the benefits gained from non-family members, participants also got help through extended family members. Ida B, also, had a cousin in college who talked to her about college life. During his undergraduate years, one of Lassiter’s cousins lived in the city where he attended college and invited Lassiter to his home for dinners, which helped with
the adjustments of being away from up north. Nella’s godmother was a teacher in a neighboring county, and that role created access for Nella to attend more events.

The final component of the extended social network was friendship. While Layla treasured the support of her friends from the church choir, Alpha enjoyed the bond that developed amongst he and his friends who were all welcomed in each other’s homes. Nella was socially adept but had only a small group of close friends, one of which was a best friend. Together, they attended church and visited each other homes. In all these cases, the participants’ parents facilitated the friendship development process through enabling their children to interact with their friends in ways that contributed to social development.

**Family Dispositions.** The participants’ families also created certain dynamics that served a role in their development. One of those practices was the application of pressure to succeed in education. Being constantly reminded of their opportunity to advance in education, participants recalled having to succeed based on parents’ comments. Ida B quoted her mother stating:

> You're the oldest. You got to be an example for your brothers. ... You got to graduate.
> Your brothers are going to be so proud of you. ... You got a lot of people looking at you.
> So you got to do it.

Other family members, too, like Tex’s aunts, uncles, and grandparents, who all held him accountable for making good grades, communicated the need for him to succeed in education. The participants viewed this pressure positively, though. Fortitude stated:

> It was a positive because it was a challenge, and it wasn't pressure to the extent that I felt like I can’t do this. It was affirming to have someone believe that I can do this and pushed me to get it done.
To perform with this level of pressure required a certain amount of discipline and structure, which is another aspect that the parents provided for the Second Generation. Through attending to responsibilities in the garden or farm, completing chores within the house, or working without interruptions to finish homework, participants had a regimented schedule in their daily lives. This level of order became a part of the participants’ lives. Layla stated that she needed structure because it helped her remained focused on success and was therefore foundational to her existence. Here we see an example of how one of the four major themes can overlap with another. Specifically, the family disposition of the family organizational patterns and church’s role, to be discussed later, of the family’s beliefs and expectations section both have contributed to participants’ sense of structure.

Family Beliefs & Expectations

Central to resilience is belief systems, which play a powerful role in how families view and respond to problems (Walsh, 2006). The belief systems processes consist of making meaning of adversity, having a positive outlook, and having a sense of transcendence and spirituality. An adversity in this study is having parents whose education was disrupted by the 1959 Prince Edward County school closings. This experience surely affected the parents’ beliefs, which were relevant to how the participants developed their understanding or meaning making process of the adversity.

Tex, Ida, and Nella learned of the school closings from their parents early in life, but only Nella recalled being explicitly informed of the event as a young child. Nella’s parents wanted her to know about the school closings at an early age. By providing her with only factual information on the event, they wanted her to form an unbiased opinion that would prepare her for interacting with diverse schoolmates. Giving Nella an explanation of how the closings occurred
is how parents helped her make meaning of the event. Explanatory attributions of adversity can contribute to resilience development by helping one understand the adversity (Walsh, 1998).

Tex and Ida B learned about it when they were in middle school, and the other participants were unaware of their parents’ experience until the latter part of high school or later. Tex stated that his parents used their hardship stories to stress the importance of education. This effort relates to making meaning of adversity because Tex’s parents contextualized the closings to help teach him the value of education. This process was not relevant for the remaining participants because their parents did not discuss the school closings with their children at an early age.

However another adversity for the Second Generation was the racial discrimination that served as a threat to achieving goals. In preparing her daughter for racism, Ida B’s mother normalized the school closings as a result of the racial turbulence during that period. She quoted her mother by stating

This is what happened. I was surprised it happened. But I don't put it past White folks. They had the power to do it. They never really cared too much about us anyway. They got what they wanted. That's what they've been doing. So I'm not going to be too surprised about it, but I'm going to move on in spite of.

Ida B’s mother responded to the school closings as a normal act by Whites during that period and treated the closings as a part of life in which tone must overcome the inevitable obstacles that will arise. In turn, this lesson of contextualizing adversity had application for Ida B in her meaning-making process. Together, these examples demonstrate the parents’ effort to help their children understand and prepare for the adversity they would experience. Though majority of the participants were unaware of the closings prior to their decisions to attend college, they all were well aware of their parents’ emphasis on the value of education. This emphasis grew out of
the parents' experience with the closings and led to their belief in promoting education to their children.

When the participants learned the magnitude of their parents' experiences, they felt even more empowered to excel in education than before their knowledge. Their awareness further stimulated a positive outlook on education. This new outlook contained the concept of hope, "a future-oriented belief" (Walsh, 2006, p. 65) that one can overcome impoverished circumstances.

In response to how she felt after gaining greater understanding of the closings, Nella stated:

Like Black Power, like empowerment, a reason to continue on. ... I guess that gives you more empowerment. It gives you more strength to continue on because you know what my mother went through versus I don't have to do any of that.

This knowledge fueled Nella's perseverance and cultivated the positive outlook that is a process of the belief systems. Alpha responded by acknowledging the many examples of children not taking advantage of opportunities to get an education. He, however, became motivated and treated his schooling with a much more focused approach than before he gained this understanding. Even though they were already driven to succeed, participants developed a "can-do" attitude, rather than a deflated spirit, once they learned of the closings. None of the participants reported that their parents wallowed in sorrow about their disrupted education, in spite of the pain it caused. Layla speculated that her father was able to effectively interact with all people, including those who played a role in closing the schools, because of his spirituality—an important component of belief systems.

Having a sense of transcendence and spirituality is the need for connecting with an entity that is greater than oneself, one's family, or one's problems (Walsh, 2006). For the participants, that greater purpose was the spirituality through their religion—a source of resilience for African
Americans (Walsh, 2006). All but one of the participants was reared within the church, and that participant—Fortitude—stated that she and her family revered God. The other participants professed their Christian beliefs and faith in God vehemently as the source of their strength. This embracing of their spiritual faith nurtured an ability to endure hardships. Tex stated:

It (spirituality) was more or less knowing that you believed in God and had faith in God in order to get through any particular obstacle that may be in your path. Knowing that just because you have education or you have lots of money doesn't mean that... anything could fall apart at any time of day, but if you have faith in God, then He will provide for you no matter what, no matter what the situation may be.

Participants also stated that their spirituality formed values that helped them to treat people with respect, be faithful, and adhere to principles of sacrifice.

Walsh’s (1998) belief systems domain contains several processes that aid the development of resilience. All of the participants offered examples of multiple processes that made them more capable of overcoming obstacles. Furthermore, these participants’ family beliefs influenced how parents, children, extended family members, and external family interacted and arranged themselves.

Belief systems in the context of the study findings determined families’ expectations and “form a set of basic premises that trigger emotional responses, inform decisions, and guide action” (Walsh, 2006, p. 50). In this manner, the Second Generation’s family beliefs and expectations characterized the interactions between families and children. The families’ primary beliefs were rooted in promoting education, developing spirituality, and working toward prosperity. Parents and other family members’ clear expectations were revealed during the
participants' interview responses, and provide further information for understanding how they achieved in education.

**Promoting Education.** Early in their lives, the participants were conditioned by their parents to seek knowledge. Ida B said, “I don't think we did anything that didn’t have a hint of education to it.” Similarly, Nella stated, “I think my parents turned everything into a teachable moment.” She adopted her parents’ efforts to be inquisitive because she went on to state, “Even today, everything is probably a teachable moment. . . . I think life is a teachable moment every day. I think every day you learn something.” Tex also commented on the value of taking the initiative to learn. His parents and family constantly told him to learn out of a genuine interest in learning rather than because someone tells you to get information in order to do well on a test. In response to their teachings, Tex stated, “I think that was quite valuable for me. Even now I still do the same thing where I'll just—when I have the time—read something that interests me and then move on.” Participants took the initiative to learn as much information as possible on various topics, and they indicated that their interests were cultivated early. Fortitude stated

I think that I was put in an environment at a time that stimulated me at a very early age.

If you don't do that early and catch the motivation—it made me become a lover of learning—then I don't think I would've had the success later on. But because it was instilled early on, I chose more academic oriented things to fill my pastime.

As a result of this stimulation, Fortitude was always eager for school to begin after a break. This early curiosity had lasting effects on how the participants approached not just schooling, but also life in general. Tex stated, “It was something that was driven into me.”

As would be expected, these families wanted this desire for learning to translate into good performances in school because they valued education. Layla stated, “I've never been in
the presence of anyone that I knew as far as family and friends that didn't support education. That said you shouldn't go to college; you need go to work. That was not the conversation.” Further, they knew that acquiring education increases your chances for a better life.

Commenting on her parents, Fortitude stated, “I think they understand the value of an education because I think they experienced it first-hand with not having an education—how it was a struggle to be able to provide without having an education, higher level of education.” These parents “just wanted something better for their kids,” as Ida B stated, and did not want them to struggle in life. Expressing what all of the participants reported, Layla echoed Fortitude’s comments and acknowledged how her parents understood the value of an education and how it would propel her to success in life. Again, parents were certain that their children had to be educated beyond high school, and that knowledge formed the expectation that the participants would attend college and graduate with a degree. Luther’s comment reflected reports from all of the Second Generation sample members. He stated, “Their (his parents’) expectation was that I was going to get a degree.” Further, not only did the participants complete degree programs; 6 of the 8 participants were passionate about education and selected a career in this field.

**Developing Spirituality.** Layla introduced the role of church into the discussion of how education was incorporated in her lifestyle. She stated, “One thing in our church, our pastors have always preached education.” So this family value was reinforced by the church, and considering that a majority of Layla’s time was spent in church, we see how ingrained this concept was to her development. The church aided nearly all the participants in major ways. Earlier in this chapter, I noted the overlapping processes between organizational patterns and beliefs and expectations in creating structure. Again, the church supported the value of structure. Lassiter, Tex, and Layla credited the church with adding structure to their lives. As it relates to
structure, Layla stated, “What our parents taught us in the house was reinforced there in the church.” Providing structure to life was just one of the many meaningful ways that church contributed to the participants’ development.

Attending church was ritualistic for participants. They attended some form of church service each Sunday, followed by a Sunday dinner. In responding to a question about family traditions, Ida B said, “Traditions were Sunday morning, you’re getting up, going to Sunday school, going to church, coming home, [and] you’re going to eat.” Lassiter gave a nearly identical response. In addition to weekly services, most participants attended Vacation Bible School in the summer to keep them stimulated through activities involving reading and writing—fundamental skills in education. These experiences also gave participants opportunities to learn speeches and participate in Black history programs that compensated for what was not taught in school. Luther reflected on his experiences in church by saying, “Church, I've always had the opportunity to speak, to work on public speaking, articulating, attending programming like Black history programs.”

As mentioned earlier, Layla’s pastors were constant reminders of the need to obtain much education; in addition, the church also supported participants financially. Layla received scholarship money from church for college. Ida B was rewarded with money for doing well in school. She recalled the importance of achieving the honor roll not just for the monetary reward, but more for the sense of pride that she gave the church members when she achieved scholastically. In turn, church members were the source of external family support and encouragement for participants. Luther stated

I think church was just a good platform for me to just get information poured into me and opportunities to build my confidence and to feel like constantly being encouraged and
complimented and motivated made me feel like somebody, made me feel intelligent, like
I could be somebody in life.

These symbiotic relationships between church members and participants developed over time, and the participants’ involvement in the church grew, as evidenced by serving in roles as choir member, usher, junior deacon, pianist, and secretary during the course of their childhoods. Lassiter recalled how the church played a significant role for him during the difficult period of his mother’s death that preceded the beginning of his college education. Church members sent him gift baskets at the time that fulfilled practical needs, but more importantly communicated warmth and emotional support.

Lassiter’s reflection begins the discussion of how church involvement led to greater meaning in life for participants. Church “laid the groundwork, I think. It started to plant seeds. It let me hear and see things that, you know, you will only get to know personally when you have the experiences,” said Ida B. She was referring to applying her spirituality in the context of her life. The church served as the participants’ main source of learning about God’s teachings, which led to their spiritual development. God’s word became foundational for the participants in directing how they behave, treat people, and apply God’s lessons to life in general. Luther stated, “I would say Christianity, coming up Baptist they try to teach you Golden Rule: ‘Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.’ Be faithful. Be respectful.” With regard to his life, he stated, “My faith in God, Man. I don’t know where I would be without that faith in God, without things that I learned in the church.” This sentiment was shared by other participants who expressed their gratitude to God for all that they have experienced. In spite of being Christian and part of a God-fearing family, however, Fortitude was the participant that did not credit her development to God or spirituality. She attributed this absence was the result of her family’s
move from a Black community to a diverse one that did not have a Black church in her neighborhood.

**Working Toward Prosperity.** Nella, Luther, and Ida B gave God the credit and praise for providing them with good fortune. Through God’s “grace” and “favor,” people prayed for the study participants, as children, to have better lives than what the adults experienced. By having a sound spiritual life and a good understanding of the value of education, the Second Generation’s parents expected the children to prosper beyond any successes the parents attained. Ida B captured this sentiment by stating what her mother constantly explained to her.

> You just have to do more. You have to do more. You have to do better than we did.
> Your children have to do better than you did. That's the only way you come up. “To whom much is given, much is required.” That's just how we lived....

Living with these constant reminders about succeeding, the participants developed personal drives for doing well before they understood the magnitude of the school closings. At age five, Lassiter developed this “tunnel vision” to become a medical doctor, and he attributed this drive to reach goals partly to his family. Luther’s family influence armed him with a “can-do” mindset. He stated, “I'm going to be somebody. I'm going to do something.”

The participants were motivated at an early age to obtain education, so the determination to succeed was already there. Learning of the school closings only affirmed their plans to succeed in school and college. Fortitude stated

> I felt like after I heard that [Prince Edward school closings] story and knew that my father had went through, I was like there is noooon stopping me now. There is no way that I'm going to let what he went through be in vain. That's really the force that continued me to go on with that.
Nella maintained that the closings were a “motivational tool” for her that could manifest in her everyday life when she has to overcome some adversity.

At different points in their educational journeys, the participants were stimulated to work toward their goals through an appreciation of the struggle that their parents and parents' generation experienced. The Second Generation expressed much admiration for their parents' struggles related to being locked out of school. Beyond the admiration, the participants found inspiration in their parents' unlikely stories of success from such extreme adversity. “If they can go through that and come through it, then I don’t really have too many obstacles that are in front of me where I can't make it happen as well,” stated Fortitude. The parents' candid stories of hardships empowered participants to achieve. Alpha, for example, saw the closings as negative for his parents' generation, but they ultimately fueled his and other participants' desire to be successful in education. A common sentiment for all the participants was that parents endured a horrible experience in order to set a better foundation for their children’s success.

This recognition of parents’ resilience, supported by the daily examples they provided in the home, led to the participants developing a hard work ethic. Similar to other parents, Lassiter’s father, worked long and hard hours. As to what he attributes his success, Lassiter began by stating, “I would say a big part of it was my father's work ethic. I really do feel like...just how hard he worked, just always makes me feel like I can work a little bit harder.” Later in the interview he reflected on how his dad’s exemplary work ethic helped him get through the rigor of college and medical school. He stated, “Gosh, man if he's working this hard, I can work hard too.” In addition, modeling this work ethic, parents also verbalized the importance of this concept. Luther stated, “It was just instilled in me that you got to work hard, got to work 10 times harder. Watch what you do. Watch what you say.” Hard work in this
context not only related to one’s ethic, but it also related to Luther’s need to work hard as a minority in a racially unjust society, which introduces a new type of family process in the family emotional welfare domain.

**Family Emotional Welfare**

Finally, Walsh (1998) identified communication processes as the third domain for her family resilience model, and it contains the processes of communicating with clarity, openly expressing emotions, and collaborative problem solving. This domain relates to the quantity and quality of communication among family members during times of crises. However, in the words of multiple participants, they “had a normal life” hence experienced minimal adversity. As stated earlier, most parents avoided discussing the school closings. So the participants were unaware of that devastating event until late teens or later in life. The reasons for the avoidance varied among the pain that it conjured, protection of children’s emotional state, and a desire to move forward in life without dwelling on the past. Not discussing the closings was one strategy that parents and families used to protect the participants from damage to their self-esteem. Nonetheless, clear communication was a prevailing practice among the parents in raising their children to be emotionally strong. Related to the open communication was the process of racial socialization that proved to be relevant for majority of the participants. These two processes served as safeguards for developing the participants’ resilience.

**Open Communication.** Again in these families, there were clear authoritative parents whose words were adhered to without much response from the children; recall how Ida B’s father directed her to obtain the teacher certification. Children generally did as instructed and trusted their parents’ orders. When the children had questions, though, they were not reluctant to approach their parents. Tex stated, “I knew I could always go to my mom or my dad just to ask
questions. Or if I had issues with certain things, I could always go to them to hash things out.” This comfort of approaching parents stems from the emotional warmth parents created in the homes where the value of family nurtured individuals’ strength in dealing with adversities. Families communicated traditions to participants, and these traditions were influential to the participants. Several participants commented on the value of marriage in their family. Fortitude stated, “You get married, and you have a family, and your family is strengthened by a marriage. That’s what I would say for me would be something that was traditional to us.” Other participants mentioned the tradition of having Sunday dinner as a family. For example, Lassiter recalled how he used to decline invitations from friends to participate in events. He stated, “Oh Sunday, I can't do this on Sunday because I have dinner with my family.” Communicating these traditions was powerful because the participants felt strengthened by these connections to practices that demonstrated group unity hence the value of family.

Families also verbalized praises for the successes that participants acquired. They felt that these compliments gave them a sense of pride and encourage them to achieve more. Lassiter shared, “I loved to impress my parents and get good grades. I loved the little bit of attention that I got.” The reaction that Lassiter received from his parents motivated him to continue on his path of academic excellence. Parents expressed compliments in non-academic activities too. Alpha’s mother worked in the same school he attended, and after one of his basketball games, she would reinforce his efforts by showing her pride for his performances. The participants and their families were very cohesive groups, so to receive open expressions of praise meant a lot to the participants’ emotional well-being, especially whenever there were times of challenge.

There were instances where participants encountered racism that would require effective communication with parents in order to thrive. Because of the racially unjust society, Tex stated,
"My parents and other family members told me that I would need to work harder than other people of different races in order to be successful." This comment is an example of what Walsh (2006) meant when she stated, “It’s essential to acknowledge the reality of an adverse situation and encourage family members to turn to one another for meaning making, support, and reorganization of their lives” (p. 113). Though parents made their children aware of their status in society, parents also countered those perceptions with affirming language to instill pride. Fortitude stated:

And that whole instilling of racial pride was to make sure that I was confident of who I was and that I was Black and that I could do it (be successful) even though I wasn't in a Black environment or if I was in an environment where there was discrimination, for instance.

This process of open communication is another example of how Walsh’s processes overlap. This communication aided the meaning making process of the belief systems domain and demonstrates, again, the synergy among processes.

Parents were compelled to express emotional warmth to their children through developing a high regard for family and to protect them against threats to their self-esteem through affirming communications. So family emotional welfare relates to how well families rallied around members both during times of achievements and of heartaches. These interactions had the capacity to engender high self-esteem for participants while warding off any negative experiences. Thus far throughout the results, we have seen the high relevance of family members to the participants. Parents had an everlasting presence in all parts of the participants’ lives, conveying support and encouragement throughout their development. The remaining
aspect of family emotional welfare is the safeguards that the families employed to shield the participants from unfair treatment while empowering them with self-image enhancing lessons.

**Racial Socialization.** Luther’s parents instilled in him the need to work hard in relation to his White counterparts because the racial inequalities required Blacks to take extra measures to counter racism. Similarly, Ida B shared an exchange with her mother as Ida B was beginning to understand her position of being Black in society.

“Look Ida B, you cannot go and do what these White people do. You think you can.”

Well I did it, and it was just as good as such and such. “Yours is going to have to be better. Do you understand that? Yours is going to have to be better.” But why?

“Because that’s the way it is.”

In this dialogue, Ida B’s mother is trying to convey to her daughter that she will have to produce exceptional work and not settle for average because submitting par-level work is not good enough for a Black person who wants to excel in life. Subsequently, Luther, Nella, Lassiter, Ida B, and Fortitude shared experiences of dealing with racism or discrimination.

Luther explained that though his high school had an excellent reputation for college preparation, the few Blacks in his classes were often not taken as serious students but always punished more harshly than his White peers. Nella recalled experiences of being not acknowledged and having to answer why she was enrolled in enrichment programs where she was the only Black among Whites. She felt that these experiences were a result of her race. Lassiter’s K-12 education was in a predominantly White school system, and he commented on kids’ ignorance related to race when they would ask absurd ethnic questions. He stated, “You know you think about it now, and you just laugh and giggle like that’s the dumbest thing. But you know back then, it hurt a little bit.” In Ida B’s case, she felt strongly that race was the reason
why she was denied acceptance into the Gifted and Talented Program after having met all the requirements for admission. One other Black student was admitted to the program, but unlike Ida B, this other Black student had a lot of White friends; hence, he was accepted, according to Ida B.

The previous examples of racism were based mostly on the participants’ perceptions of the experiences. Fortitude, however, knew how it felt to be called a nigger as an elementary school child. But what most acutely struck her was a painful third grade experience with blatant racism that changed her entire perspective on Blacks’ position in relation to Whites and other non-Whites. Her best friend, a Costa Rican girl, got in trouble with her parents’ after Fortitude visited the best friend’s house. She distinctly recalled the moment. “So she tells me that she got in trouble because she wasn't allowed to have Black friends, and that hurt my feelings to the core because that was who I considered my best friend.” That incident ignited a series of several other friends openly revealing how negatively their families viewed Blacks in general, but Fortitude stated, “even though I knew they weren’t specifically talking about me, it felt like they were talking about me because I'm Black.” This experience also expanded her concept of which race of people discriminates. She stated

What floored me the most, until that moment in third grade, I always thought that it was White people who didn't like Black people. But until my Vietnamese, Costa Rican, Colombian all these Puerto Rican, until those friends started talking about their parents’ feelings about Black people. ... So it became an education for us to know that this is not just Whites discrimination or perception towards Blacks. These other ethnic groups took on this whole notion of “Whiteness” as it related to where the bottom of the totem pole really is and letting us know that. So that part was damning to me where I thought it was
a White-Black thing, but we got into this very diverse neighborhood. I was like, “Oh, so it’s like they (other minority groups) are Whites, too?” So that was real damning but also confusing during that time of development of me understanding how society works.

This excerpt demonstrates how even as an eight year old child, Fortitude had an encounter with racism that could have damaged her concept of being Black and her self-esteem. Fortunately, though, her parents as well as other participants’ parents interacted with their children in ways that mitigated the effects of the racism.

Parents’ processes of racial socialization were important in countering the racism participants experienced and yet another way that parents helped participants make meaning of their adversity—a process from the beliefs and expectations domain. First, parents made sure their children understood that though it is not fair, society perceives Blacks as the least valued race. However, they were to be treated equal regardless of race. On the topic of her value in society, Ida B stated, “never in that house did you feel inferior because of your Blackness, but you were told and taught that other people would see that way. It’s just like everybody that would tell you, “It’s not what they call you. It’s what you answer to.”” Second, parents instilled a sense of Black pride in their children to defend against the racism they would encounter. Through reading Black novels, learning Black history with flash cards, watching Black movies/documentaries, and listening to Black music, parents made their children feel good about themselves. In response to the experience with her best friend, Fortitude stated

That whole instilling of racial pride was to make sure that I was confident of who I was and that I was Black and that I could do it even though I wasn’t in a Black environment or if I was in an environment where there was discrimination, for instance.
Nella, Ida B, and Luther shared similar affirmations from parents. Once during a parent-teacher conference, a White teacher told Luther’s mother that Luther thinks too highly of himself. His mother replied, “Well, what is he supposed to think about himself? I raised him to go out and feel good and think good about himself.” For Nella and Fortitude, they dealt with racism by immersing themselves in a Black educational setting hence their attendance at an HBCU. Not only did they minimize their chances of encountering racism, but they also gained value from being a part of a college family that was truly interested in their welfare. These efforts of racial socialization proved to be meaningful to the participants’ development.

**Family Personal Development & Learning Opportunities**

Absent from Walsh’s (1998) framework but relevant to the participants was family personal development and learning opportunities, which relates to how families made arrangements for the participants to engage in experiences that supplemented their personal and academic development. This domain overlaps with the organizational patterns domains in terms of the parenting roles that were significant for the participants. In developing children academically, parents did not rely solely on the school system or their teachings in the home. They enrolled the participants in a variety of academic enrichment programs. Parents also supported their children’s social development by facilitating efforts for the Second Generation to participate in non-academic but meaningful structured activities, yet there were also some informal experiences that contributed to participants’ development. I have characterized these aspects as academic opportunities, personal growth, and diverse experiences.

**Academic Opportunities.** As stated earlier, Nella viewed every day as an opportunity to learn, and the experiences on her family’s farm taught her about caring for livestock, cultivating plentiful crops, and factors influencing pricing at the livestock market. Layla, too, learned about
the “circle of life” through completing her farm chores as a child. Beyond sharing the experience of growing up on a farm, both Nella and Layla were active participants in 4-H, which was consistent with the type of educational experiences they were getting on the farms. The participation in 4-H and the farm experiences informed each other such that 4-H information was applied to the experiences, and the experiences made the learning more the 4-H concepts more appealing.

This mutual relationship was also present in another form. Belcher College, one of the local colleges in Prince Edward, had relevance for four of the five participants who attended school in the county. Belcher hosted reading programs for Tex and Alpha, writing camps for Ida B, and science camp for Nella. All of these participants benefitted in school partly because of their participation in these camps. The participants who did not attend school in Prince Edward also engaged in some degree of co-curricular activities. Luther was involved in an SAT prep course. Lassiter participated in a college preparation program, and Fortitude attended an afterschool program that focused on reading. Also, several of the participants considered opportunities in the church as academic enrichment because they taught reading and writing skills, participated in Black history, and learned poems. All of these experiences helped the participants perform better in school and likely contributed to their academic status of being placed in the advanced track of education in their K-12 schools.

To maintain this status, parents ensured that children were still academically engaged throughout the summer. Ida B stated, “Summer vacation was like school in our house.” Even when they went on vacation, Ida B’s parents incorporated an educational component like visits to historic sites. It was during her participation in a summer English camp at Coleman University
when Ida B decided to pursue English in college. Tex also got to participate in some summer science classes at Belcher that expanded his understanding of the subject. He stated

I went to these college classes for summer classes, then it was more in depth as far as the subject such as environmental sciences, portions of physics, and so forth. I think some of those summer courses really help me within my other core classes when I went to school during the school year at Prince Edward County.

Alpha also attended Belcher for a summer enrichment program in math, and Lassiter attended a program to keep “sharp” during the summer break.

**Personal Growth.** Activities not directly associated with academics were also part of the participants’ narratives. The Second Generation was engaged in extracurricular activities like dance, choir, sports, and the Boys & Girls Club. Luther developed from his participation in sports as described below.

Well from sports, it really taught me character...how to win, how to lose...how to deal with losing. I think my experience with sports was great and really making me a strong person and how to accept defeat and move through it and how to work as a team with teammates. It really helped me a lot and at the same time, it kept me in shape because I played basketball.

Fortitude gained personal value in sports and stated:

I believe it was the beginnings of me having an outlet to display my leadership traits. I became captain of the track team when I was a senior, but I believe a lot of those experiences really helped me develop into a leader.

In fact, all the participants, except Ida B benefitted personally from being on an athletic team. In many ways, the sports program reinforced the concepts of being supportive of those people
closest to a person, working hard, and maintaining structure. Parents nurtured these same concepts in the home, and sports provided another arena to see these concepts manifest.

These early involvements with a variety of activities in K-12 also set the groundwork for healthy engagement with activities on the college level. Even though Luther and Alpha had aspirations of playing college basketball, those dreams did not materialize. In fact, Tex was the only person to continue organized sports in college as he played varsity football during his freshman year. Because of a combination of the need for greater athletic talent for playing on that level and a desire to focus other aspects of college, participants did not play on any college teams. This absence of athletics, however, created opportunities to get involved with a number of activities that aided participants’ personal development. Ethnic interest groups, pre-professional and theater clubs, and Greek-letter civic/social organizations were among the formal associations that participants had in college. Nella, who had an academic scholarship in college, stated “you learn so much through your social experiences.” At Just, she grew through her involvement with mentoring younger students, volunteering in the community, serving as an athletic trainer, and joining her sorority that gave her “thousands more friends, thousands more sisters,” a few of which are still considered her best friends.

Diverse Experiences. Nella attributed her ability to maximize the social opportunities in college to the exposure outside of Prince Edward she experienced during her time in K-12. She stated

We were exposed to a lot as a child growing up. If you want to say educational wise. If you look at going on trips. So visiting families not only meant visiting family but if it happens to be a place where there was a zoo or there were some kind of museum, then we went to the museum. We went to the zoo. So there were also teachable moments.
Nella had family members all throughout the southeastern part of the United States, and she would visit with them frequently. Through these visits, she was exposed to various sites, cities, and cultures. Not only did she travel to learn about different areas but her family also hosted an exchange student from Martinique during Nella’s early teenage years. Having the exchange student was an “awesome” educational experience for Nella. This exposure aided her development. She stated, “I think part of learning is exposure, so I think you need to be exposed to different environments, being open [minded].”

Alpha was even more adamant than Nella about the value of exposure to other cultures. He felt that the key to success for people in Prince Edward is to get out of the county for exposure. While he feels that it is okay to return to Prince Edward, learning about other cultures, religions, cities, and ways of life is needed for Prince Edward citizens and other small rural county natives in order to prosper to greater success. From his perspective, this exposure introduces one to opportunities. His move to a major U.S. city was an “eye-opener” and “the best thing that could have happened to” him being from a small town. He shared several examples related to religions, restaurants, public transportation, city ordinances, and people that expanded his worldview and helped him identify the possibilities in life. He made a direct connection between exposure and obtaining doctoral degrees. He stated, “So probably the most important thing to me was to get away and be exposed to others, which allowed me to pursue the doctoral degree because I know it opened doors.”

Tex’s family also told him, “you should get out and at least visit other places to get some exposure to what other people are doing besides what people in Prince Edward are doing.” That is why he thinks that his parents sent him to stay with relatives in Metro City every other summer. There, he “saw people in the streets walking in suits, and it seems like they had a
purpose in doing things and going to jobs.” He further stated, “It opened my whole viewpoint. I was like, ‘Yeah, there is something much bigger than what’s there in Farmville [main city in Prince Edward County] where the majority of jobs were more manual labor.” In college, Tex studied abroad for a month in Mexico where he got “a pretty neat experience” learning about some Latin American cultures.

Layla spent her senior year of high school studying Spanish and music in Spain. As one who rarely spent a night without her parents nearby, Layla matured a lot being far away from family and immersed in a foreign country where she did not arrive proficient in Spanish. She stated that initially the experience was stressful dealing with the language barriers, homesickness, foreign city, and a different school system. She, however, responded well to the adversity and ultimately described her time in Spain as “a fantastic experience.” She stated:

I needed that [study abroad experience in Spain]. I needed that because when I came back from that I had matured beyond belief. I was ready to go to college. Had I not had that experience, I don’t know if I would’ve been quite as ready for college.

That experience aided Layla’s personal development, and she saw the educational value in visiting other cultures. Since her first trip to Spain, she has returned with a group of students, plus visited several other foreign countries.

**Summary**

In closely examining these four domains of family processes, we see their synergistic nature within the family resilience framework. Together these processes represent levels of interaction among immediate and external family members that contributed to participants’ academic success. Consequently, this analysis reveals an understanding of how the Second Generation achieved in spite of family adversity. Though interconnected, the processes for
success were grouped in four domains: organizational patterns, beliefs and expectations, emotional welfare, and learning opportunities. Three of the four domains of the Second Generation are rooted in the domains of Walsh’s (1998) framework. Specifically, the essences of Walsh’s belief systems, organizational patterns, and communication processes are the foundations for beliefs and expectations, organizational patterns, and emotional welfare, respectively.

The domain descriptions show how the processes function within the families to strengthen the participants. In the organizational patterns domain, parents established their roles as leaders who were capable of arranging family members and resources that responded to their children’s needs. These resources included time with children, income for quality lifestyles, and relationships with extended family and friends. The beliefs and expectations domain established the values and points of views for the behaviors that the participants would portray. Families instilled academic and Christian values in their children so that they would develop in ways that supported spirituality and education. The emotional welfare domain contributed to resilience building by effectively communicating with participants while providing warmth in the process. Parents created an atmosphere of open communication for participants who gain clarity and solutions in parents’ responses. Finally, the development and opportunities domain emerged because families made concerted efforts to engage the participants in events and activities that would further develop them personally and in education.

This analysis provides a full exploration of Walsh’s (1998) model in the context of the sample Second Generation members’ experiences in their families. The framework’s arrangement of interrelated domains and processes presents the elements in a logically structured manner. Both researchers and practitioners can effectively organize data or identify processes
that meet their respective objectives. Also, the framework's structure is designed in a way that
allows researchers and practitioners to identify any missing elements that are relevant to their
work research or practice. In this study, the findings allowed me to identify important processes
for the participants' development that were not straightforward in Walsh's model. Chapter Six
will expand this discussion.
Chapter Six: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors (processes) that contributed to the academic development and success of the members of the Second Generation who participated in this research. Those processes were sought through the use of Walsh’s (1998) family resilience framework. The analysis in Chapter Five discussed the Second Generation members’ family processes found within four domains: organizational patterns, beliefs and expectations, emotional welfare, and learning opportunities. Chapter Five also presented information about the alignment of Walsh’s identified processes and the participants’ family interactions that led to success. Many of the processes matched well while some were salient for the participants and latent in the model. A review of the answers to the study’s research questions will lead to a discussion of those relevant processes for the participants.

Research Questions

In fulfilling the purpose of this study, I sought the answers to questions that emerged during the development of my focus statement. The answers to four research questions helped to develop my understanding of the Second Generation sample members.

How Did They Develop?

The first question was “How and why did these particular children demonstrate resilience in the presence of multiple types of adversity? What is the nature of their resilience?” The role of family is the clear answer to how and why these children developed resilience in reaching their educational levels. Specifically, the participants’ family processes are what cultivated their ability to flourish amongst the challenges that they experienced. The common adversities that the participants experienced were being perceived as racially inferior in American society and having parents who were denied some of their K-12 schooling. Nearly all of the participants
recalled how they experienced racism, and they all commented on the anguish their parents experienced as a result of being locked out of school. Through a set of synergistic processes, the parents were able to shield their children from despair and bolster their ability to thrive.

Perceptions & Influences of Parents’ Experiences

The second question was "How do Second Generation members perceive their parents’ educational experiences? How, if at all, did that knowledge influence their resilience?" Using adjectives that the participants offered, their parents' lockout experiences can be described as "horrid," "life-damaging," "limiting," "depressing," "horrible," "terrible," and "devastating." Because their parents were able to overcome these negative circumstances, some Second Generation members felt a great sense of pride for their parents’ accomplishments. These parents were able to rebound from the unprecedented event in Prince Edward County to have healthy marriages, raise children who obtained college degrees, and acquire jobs that created a comfortable quality of life for their families. One participant even considered her father to be a millionaire. However, she also stated, "I can't imagine the stress, the anxiety, the fear, the inner turmoil, and the struggles" that her father and other affected children experienced during the time of the lockout and well into adulthood. Fortitude’s father, for example, without a high school diploma, became a self-taught computer programmer and ultimately retired from a position with the federal government. Describing her father, she stated:

He always worried about someone finding out that he lied on his job application about having a high school diploma because he would lose his job. He carried that worry all the way up until his retirement, which was only about five years ago.

So in the words of Luther, the school closings “had a really tremendous negative impact” on the study participants’ parents.
But how, if at all, did the parents’ experiences influence their children’s resilience development? Because the participants learned about the full effects of the school closings late in their educational journeys, there was little direct influence from the closings on the participants’ decisions to obtain their degrees. Nella and Alpha reported some empowerment from their full understanding of the closings, but each had already chosen a career requiring a doctorate when they learned of the closings’ magnitude. Of the eight participants, Lassiter realized the extent of the closings’ effect the latest in the process of obtaining a doctorate. He was in medical school and felt compelled to learn more about African American history when he read in-depth about Prince Edward County. It is important to note that Lassiter and the other participants had already committed to earning their doctoral degrees by the time they were fully informed of how severe the effects of the lockout were for their parents’ generation.

Participants’ Commonalities & Differences

Questions three and four relate to a comparison of the family-based processes that developed members of the Second Generation. Question three stated, “What were the common factors (if any) that contributed to the success of the Second Generation?” In reviewing the profiles, I note that participants consistently identified parental involvement as a success-contributing process. In providing a conceptual metaphor that explains her success, for example, Nella identified a globe because a perfect circle on a globe can be made only when one travels from and returns to the same point. In her life, Nella’s parents represent that point because her identity begins with their influence, and like a globe, Nella has become well-rounded personally, academically, and socially.

This level of parental involvement was high for other participants, too. The ways in which Ida’s B parents were involved in her life provide a good example of teamwork. Her father
would seek enrichment opportunities for her, and her mother would ensure that Ida B leveraged them to the full extent possible. Tex's mother was a librarian, and her job not only contributed to the family income; it also provided Tex with easy access to the library as a learning resource. Layla commented how her parents' foundation of support made her believe that she could "conquer the world."

Another common theme among the participants' responses was the relevance of the Baptist church, which created opportunities for public speaking, leadership roles, vocal and musical enhancement, academic enrichment, and social development. Ida B expressed how "the church gave you opportunities to speak, to learn poems, to just learn proper protocol." Church also facilitated the participants' spiritual growth. Nella stated, "God is the center of my life." Layla referenced being "filled with the Holy Ghost." "That is the book of significance of my life" is how Luther referred to the Bible. Tex asserted that, "If you have faith in God, then He will provide for you no matter what the situation may be." Alpha commented on the importance of religion providing cohesion and structure in the family. Lassiter also commented on how his childhood experiences in church later manifested into his "understanding [of] faith and religion and what it's like to be a Christian and things like that." He found value in applying those principles to his daily life and felt compelled to raise his child with the same spiritual beliefs. Similarly, Ida B stated that her childhood spirituality "laid the groundwork…. It started to plant seeds. It let me hear and see things that, you will only get to know personally when you have the experiences." So the more immediate benefits of attending church as children and adolescents seemed to focus on gaining skills that developed the participants academically, whereas the spiritual development occurred later in life.
Question four sought differences among the participants. It states, "How, if at all, do the members of the Second Generation differ in their resilience development from each other?"

Because each member of the Second Generation's resilience was so heavily rooted in the family, there was not much variability in their resilience development. Parents and the church were ubiquitous forces in the participants' lives. Yet, even though the participants experienced similar resilience development processes as children and were high-achieving high school students, a distinction along the lines of academic performance emerged in college. Only Tex, Nella, Fortitude, and Lassiter seemed to continue at that level of performance during the undergraduate years. These four participants graduated from college with relatively high grade point averages. In fact, Lassiter was valedictorian of his class. The remaining four participants—Alpha, Ida B, Layla, and Luther—did not report high scholarly performances. Actually, Ida B, Layla, and Luther benefitted from some academic success interventions during their undergraduate experiences.

The methods used in this study were effective in answering the stated research questions. Notably, Walsh's (1998) model served as a helpful framework for understanding many aspects of how members of the Second Generation reached success. The well-defined family domains and processes highlight how members can interact with each other in ways that build resilience. Yet this clearly conceptualized framework also omits some key aspects that were relevant to the participants' development. Those omissions will be discussed in the next section.

**Omissions in Walsh's Framework**

In this study, participants provided meaningful examples of how Walsh's (1998) family resilience processes were embodied within their childhood experiences. Their perceptions and experiences show clear support for most of the processes in Walsh's model. Additionally, many
of their responses also highlight the value of learning opportunities and racial socialization, which are not obvious elements of Walsh's model. These aspects are somewhat concealed in selected processes in the framework, but they emerged prominently as resources in the participants' experiences. Because families' promotion of learning opportunities and racial socialization efforts were important to the participants' educational development and eventual success, more exploration of these processes may help to improve Walsh's model. An explanation of why the participants found learning opportunities and racial socialization relevant to their success may be discovered by reviewing research on how these concepts affect children's development. Further, this understanding will reveal how Walsh's framework can be improved in its application to developing academic resilience in African American children.

Learning Opportunities in Children's Development

The participants' families were intentional in creating experiences that developed them spiritually, personally, and academically. The families' actions were the results of the beliefs and expectations that they held about the value of education. These belief systems were then instilled in the participants and reinforced through attending camps, studying abroad, visiting other parts of the country, and participating in enrichment programs, for example. In this way, Walsh's (1998) model does address learning opportunities, but not as directly as the theme emerged among participating members of the Second Generation, who spoke at great lengths about the various ways that their parents provided opportunities to grow. Like other processes in Walsh's model, these opportunities served as means to strengthen the children. The families strongly believed that the more education the participants gained, the more likely they would be able to overcome adversity in life. As stated earlier, belief systems are at the core of families
who demonstrate resilience (Walsh, 1998, 2006), and participants spoke frequently about the high value that their parents placed on education.

Further, researchers (e.g., Amatea et al., 2006; Bower, Powers, & Graham, 2010; Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993; Marjoribanks, 1996) found that families’ emphasis on learning opportunities strengthen children in education. Kellaghan et al., posited

The home environment is a most powerful factor in determining the school learning of students—their level of school achievement, their interest in school learning, and the number of years of schooling they will receive. … Thus, parents and the home environment hold a major key to the learning of children. (pp. 144-145)

Some members of the Second Generation engaged in learning activities within and outside the home. Learning about livestock care and related marketing practices, reading parents’ professional journals, participating in flash card exercises, being exposed to business meeting protocols at church, attending enrichment programs, and exploring areas outside of Prince Edward County were examples of learning opportunities that participants felt were relevant to their development in multiple ways. First, these activities reinforced and many times supplemented their education at school. Second, through some of these experiences, participants were able to identify their passions, which helped to shape future careers. Third, these activities also contributed to participants’ social development through their engagement with other children. Finally, these learning opportunities cultivated self-esteem and developed self-confidence in participants’ abilities. Walsh’s (1998) model focuses on family strengths but unfortunately does not explicitly cite learning opportunities in the ways that other researchers (e.g., Amatea et al., 2006; Bower, Powers, & Graham, 2010; Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993; Marjoribanks, 1996), who focused on children’s development do.
For example, Marjoribanks (1996) conducted a review of the literature on family learning environments and student outcomes. At the conclusion of his review, he stated that “family learning environments would be enriched by adopting a model of families that include elements” (p. 387) that measure how families provide opportunities for development. Marjoribanks suggested that investigators adopt a framework that is defined, in part, by allocation of opportunities measures, because doing so “will enhance our understanding of the relationships between family learning environments and students’ school outcomes” (p. 390).

Again, this practice of creating learning opportunities is embedded in Walsh’s (1998) belief system (i.e., that beliefs guide actions) but is not openly expressed. Walsh (2006) stated that families’ beliefs are linked to the social world, culture, spirituality, and the multigenerational past (p. 49). In the case of the sample’s parents, their beliefs derived from their day-to-day experiences, an understanding of their African American heritage, and the knowledge of their experience with the school closings. Together, these connections formed a belief system that values education. This fundamental value was the catalyst that stimulated the parents’ efforts to create the learning opportunities for their children. In this way, we see how learning opportunities are indirectly expressed by Walsh’s model.

Marjoribanks (1996) also stated that learning environments would be enhanced by assessing how families particularly within ethnic, racial, and social status groups integrate with the larger society. In addition to considering the allocation of opportunity measures, Marjoribanks also suggested that investigators adopt a framework that contains socialization measures to improve what is known about the relationship between learning environments and student outcomes. Interestingly, socialization—racial socialization specifically—is another element of Walsh’s (1998) model that is present within the framework but is not explicitly
expressed among the processes. In the experiences of the Second Generation sample, however, participants’ parents and other family members clearly demonstrated efforts to socialize their children within the context of being African American.

**Racial Socialization and Children’s Development**

As children’s first teachers, parents “are expected to socialize their children to be competent adult members of a given sociocultural niche, and ethnic minority parents must also teach their children to cope with discrimination and disparaging stereotypes” (Wakefield & Hudley, 2007, p. 152). This process of racial socialization consists of African American parents’ efforts to prepare their children for a generally negative societal perception of Blacks through the transmission of positive, affirming values related to the meaning of ethnicity and race (Brown, et al., 2009; Thornton, 1998). In an in-depth study of child-rearing practices that promote resilience in two middle-class African American families, for example, Carter-Black (2001) found that racial socialization was one of the most critical lessons African American parents must teach their children. Miller (1999) stated that racial socialization produces racial identity—“the sense of belonging that an adolescent feels toward a racial or ethnic group as well as the significance and qualitative meaning that the adolescent assigns to that group” (Wakefield & Hudley, 2007, p. 148). Ultimately, racial socialization lessens or even eliminates the effects of stressors, which, in turn, results in positive outcomes (Miller & Macintosh, 1999).

Racial socialization, one of Blacks’ “forms of power” (Thornton, 1998, p. 63) for combatting oppressive societal systems, is a survival tool because it enables children to overcome encounters that are potentially psychologically and emotionally damaging. Walsh’s (1998) model also addresses emotional well-being in all three domains. First, in belief systems domain, Walsh posited that having a sense of coherence—“a global orientation to life as
comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful” (p. 59)—can contribute significantly to an individual’s mental and emotional state. Second in organizational patterns domain is element of connectedness—“the emotional and structural bonding among family members” (p. 94). Walsh stated that this concept is essential in developing resilience because this cohesion produces support, comfort, and safety in difficult situations. Within the communication processes domain is the concept of open emotional expression, characterized by transmitting a wide range of emotions in a climate of trust and empathy in response to negative interactions.

In addition to providing an example of the synergistic nature of Walsh’s (1998) processes, the inclusion of belief systems, organization patterns, and communication processes in the model support the value of emotional welfare in the resilience-building process. These elements of the family resilience model are similar to racial socialization because they both aim to mitigate the effects of potential harm to one’s emotional well-being whenever adverse situations arise. The difference is that sense of coherence, connectedness, and open emotional expression are general concepts applied broadly. Racial socialization captures aspects of these three concepts but is narrowly applicable to African American parents’ healthy development of children in a racist society.

Other resilience-focused researchers (e.g., Evans, Banerjee, Meyer, Aldana, Foust, & Rowley, 2012; McCubbin, Thompson, Thompson, & Futrell, 1998; Miller, 1999) found racial socialization to be an important process in developing African American children’s resilience. Most notably, in Resiliency in African-American Families, “a unique two-volume collection devoted to issues facing racial and ethnic minority families” (McCubbin, Thompson, Thompson, & Futrell, 1998, p. xiv), the editors compiled a series of scholarly articles that explored resilience development within the African American family. The articles in the book explore several
behavioral patterns that African American families employ in stressful circumstances such as military families in foreign environments, single-parent families, adolescent pregnancies, and infertility among parents, as examples. Consistently, researchers identified the unique strategies that African Americans used to build resilience during situations that could potentially put them at-risk for despair. Although these authors were able to identify strategies relevant for African Americans' resilience development, there was no identification of a complete framework that delineates processes clearly in the ways that Walsh (1998) did hence the selection of her model as the conceptual framework for this study.

A focus of one particular study (Thornton, 1998) was the identification of racial socialization strategies that parents exhibit to prepare their children for life as a Black person in America. The first of four strategies was more of a level of racial socialization rather than a strategy. It consisted of parents—mostly male, young, single, and poorly educated—who made no efforts to communicate racial socialization messages. These parents tended to believe that children would learn about racial issues on their own if they are important to their lives. Since there was no attempt to socialize children, this 'strategy' appears more like a nonexistent level of effort to prepare children for integration in society. The remaining strategies present ways in which Black parents aim to accomplish this integration.

The second identified strategy for parents was called the "mainstream experience" (Thornton, 1998, p. 58). Parents using this strategy tend to affiliate with other Blacks, be better educated, and have White friends, but identify with the American culture with no special connection to Whites. Though these parents feel a connection to Blacks, their messages of racial socialization transcend issues of race and focus on life skills and values such as hard work, respect, and ambition.
The third strategy of racial socialization—"focusing on minority and cultural experiences" (Thornton, 1998, p. 59)—consisted of parents preparing their children for an oppressive society with racial restrictions and unfair practices. Consequently, parents using this strategy focused on instilling psychological coping values like self-respect and pride. With no clear gender or marital status identifiers, these parents tended to hold a natural aversion for Whites, were not well-educated, and lived in urban regions.

The final strategy is to prepare children's encounters with racism by emphasizing Black culture. Through highlighting the rich history and traditions of Blacks in America, parents aim to strengthen children's self-esteem by teaching them about the positive aspects of their heritage (Thornton, 1998).

Which strategies were used by this study sample's parents? Participants reported that their parents and families consistently communicated the need for Blacks to work harder than other races and produce exceptional results in order to have a chance of obtaining prosperity. Parents ensured that participants understood that this level of conduct is required to advance in the racially oppressive American society. Parents intentionally taught participants that they would be perceived as members of the lowest social class, but also communicated adamantly that they were not to feel inferior. Achieved partly through parents' efforts to emphasize Black culture, history, traditions, and accomplishments to their children, participants self and racial pride developed. These reflections match mostly with Thornton's (1998) "minority and cultural experiences" strategy and some of the "Black culture" strategy (p. 59). He stated

These ["minority and cultural experiences"] parents acknowledged the presence of racial restrictions (e.g., "Blacks don't have the opportunities that Whites"), emphasized a general recognition of one's race (e.g., "accept your color"), or provided information that
would help to develop appropriate psychological coping styles and perspectives regarding minority status. To prepare their children for this world, these parents believe they must instill in them self-respect and pride and teach them how to survive and cope with prejudice. They also must also stress the importance of a good education and inform them that fair play, while important, will not be reciprocated by Whites. (p. 60)

Thornton’s comments describe how the participants’ parents prepared their children for immersion in society. The participants also learned about Black history in church, attended HBCU football games, read books by Black authors, and watched movies/TV shows related to Black culture. In this way, parents practiced racial socialization similar to what Thornton describes as the “Black culture” strategy.

Narrowing the focus of racial socialization from life in general to education, other researchers (e.g., Friend, Hunter, & Fletcher, 2010; Neblett, Chavous, Nguyen, & Sellers, 2009) have studied the effects of racial socialization on academic performance, which was relevant to some members of the Second Generation. Friend et al. (2010) examined the relationships between parental racial socialization and academic achievement for a sample of fifth graders and their mothers. In this study, parental racial socialization consisted of two aspects: preparation for bias and pride development. These aspects were measured with a parental racial socialization scale. Academic achievement was determined by grade point average (GPA) calculated by using students’ report cards. For the male participants only, the researchers found a positive relationship between the frequency of preparation for bias messages and GPA. In other words, African American males performed better academically having heard messages at home that prepared them for a racially biased society. Friend et al. (2010) suggested that academic intervention programs include “an explicit emphasis on preparation for bias as a strategy for
helping African American boys to cope with race-based barriers that may negatively impact their academic achievement" (p. 52). Using another racial socialization assessment tool and GPAs, Neblett et al. (2009) reported similar findings for a group of middle and high school African American boys. These findings align with the experiences of Tex, Luther, and Lassiter, who performed well academically in high school and who recalled families’ efforts to prepare them for racial injustices.

This study sought an understanding of how members of the Second Generation excelled in education despite their parents being a part of a generation denied public schooling—a significant adversity that diminished the educational attainment for many descendants. Walsh’s (1998) family resilience framework assisted in identifying family processes that enabled the participants to overcome the adversity. The framework, however, could be strengthened in its application to the members of the Second Generation by emphasizing two concepts: learning opportunities and racial socialization. Both concepts were important to the participants, and researchers (e.g., Friend, 2010; Kellaghan et al., 1993; Marjoribanks, 1996; Neblett, 2009) have found that learning opportunities and racial socialization enhance overall student development. More specifically, some of the researchers found that these concepts can improve academic achievement among African American students. In fact, there seems to be extensive research (e.g., Carter-Black, 2001; Friend, 2010; Miller & Macintosh, 1999; Thornton, 1998) that supports the importance of racial socialization for academic achievement among African Americans. These findings inform Walsh’s (1998) model by suggesting the need to bring forth the learning opportunities and racial socialization processes more prominently than they are expressed in family resilience theories at present. These two concepts can help to build greater understanding of processes for strengthening African Americans’ educational accomplishments.
Future Research

Even though Walsh's (1998) model provides a helpful framework for understanding resilience development through families' interactions, including learning opportunities processes and emphasizing racial socialization would strengthen the application of this model to the Second Generation participants in this study. Ultimately, though, Walsh’s framework enabled me to understand the Second Generation’s success, which addresses one of the three reasons for pursuing this study. As discussed in Chapter One, I chose this topic for three reasons. First, I wanted to bring more attention to the unprecedented, yet little known, Prince Edward County story, and publishing research on the topic is an effective method of telling that story. Second, I wanted to understand how Second Generation members achieved in education in spite of their parents’ educational experiences. I obtained that understanding through a review and discussion of the study’s findings. Through those findings, we can understand how this particular group was able to achieve high levels of education in spite of adversity.

However, the Second Generation represents a group quite limited in number, which leads to my third reason for selecting this topic. As an African American male, I wanted to understand how I was able to reach my own levels of educational success in spite of my personal adversities. The Second Generation’s family processes were different from mine in significant ways. Unlike the members of this study’s sample, I was raised in a working class single-parent family with no scholastic parental involvement and I was rarely involved in church. There are other academically and professionally successful people—specifically African American males—from adverse backgrounds and without protective family processes exhibited by the Second Generation’s families. What explains their success? Answers to this question may lead me to
the reasons for my own educational success. For now, this inquiry points to a recommendation for future studies.

In December of 2012, the National Science Foundation released the most recent data from its Survey of Earned Doctorates. The annual average percentage of African American males earning a doctorate between 2001 and 2011 is only 2.37%, and at 2.17%, 2011 marks the lowest percentage during that period (NSF, 2012). This low representation of African American male doctoral recipients calls for examination to understand better why the number for this population is not higher. While there are studies (e.g., Chambers, 2010; Ingram, 2007; Matthews, 2012; Sibulkin & Butler, 2011) that sought to identify the resources that assist male African American doctoral students' and recipients' success, there are no studies that investigate this population in the ways that the Second Generation participants' experiences and perceptions were explored in this research. There may be value in identifying the family processes among African American men who successfully obtained doctoral degrees. The findings to research with this focus may ultimately help to increase the number of African American males in this category.

Even the participants in this study expressed interest in learning about the family interactions (and by implication, the family processes) of other sample members. This interest among the participants introduces a recommendation to extend the current study by conducting one or more focus group interviews on this topic. Conducting a focus group of the participants could be helpful in understanding even more about how the participants achieved. Since data saturation occurred in individual interviews, these group interviews would present an opportunity for further comparison among and discussion about points that participants made throughout the study. The participants' discussions and interactions with each other could be helpful to
continued inquiry because their responses and reactions to others’ perceptions and experiences could reveal deeper and/or broader understandings. Rossman and Rallis (2003) stated, “People often need to listen to others’ opinions and understandings to clarify their own” (p. 193). Having greater clarity generated in this particular way could result in more authenticity, adding research strength to the study.

There were occasions during the present study when participants were not able to answer questions related to their upbringing. Consequently, they suggested that I speak with their parents to get a better understanding of particular aspects of their childhoods. These suggestions lead to another recommendation for future research with the parents of the Second Generation sample members. Because of the parents’ success at raising children who obtained multiple levels of degrees, it would be logical to conduct research with parents as the focus of study regarding their children’s educational accomplishments. Understanding the parents’ perceptions of education-rearing family interactions would allow for a comparison with the Second Generation sample members’ perceptions. In one interview, Ida B actually called her father during the interview to ask him a question because she, too, wanted an answer to one of my questions. In another case, Nella stated to me, “This is not my research and again yet at the same time, I would think that it would be great for you to actually talk to my mom too.” Though the participants were able to provide me with helpful information in understanding their experiences, they also felt that their parents could respond with greater authority in explaining what they did to position their children for success. Family resilience research supports focusing on the family, and not just the children. Studying parents rather than children to assist understanding of resilience development moves closer to the central focus of family resilience research—the family unit (McCubbin, Futrell, Thompson, & Thompson, 1998).
The final recommendation for future research relates to a shift from understanding participants’ perceptions to identifying causes. Appropriately situated in the interpretivist paradigm, this study met its primary goal of understanding the processes that enabled the participants to achieve academically. In discovering these processes, two common characteristics of the participants’ families emerged. The factors (not processes) of middle socioeconomic class status and two-parent homes were present for all participants. My research interest focused on the processes, implying dynamic interactions between parents and participants. Yet, middle class status and two-parent homes are aspects that deserve further exploration in terms of their relationships to children’s academic success. The presence of these factors alone does not elucidate how, if at all, they affect resilience in children’s development, but there may be relevant cause and effect information coalesced with these factors that can explain how children are strengthened to make academic success more probable. Therefore, I recommend that further research on the effects of socioeconomic classes and parent structure be conducted to determine their role(s) in children’s development in education.

Conclusion

Though the participants’ family processes matched well with the processes within Walsh’s (1998) resilience model, ironically, none of the participants indicated that they were resilient in terms of overcoming adversity in their childhood. In fact, these participants had rather comfortable, and in some cases privileged, upbringings that did not warrant the need for developing resilience beyond what typical children experienced. However, the robust connections between the family processes and the participants’ educational outcomes demonstrate value in employing these educationally enriching practices, even in the absence of significant adversity.
The Second Generation participants in this study represent a group of individuals whose accomplishments are impressive, even among people with terminal degrees. Within the sample is an African American woman who is the chair of an academic department at one of the country's most prestigious universities, an African American man who has authored textbooks for K-12 school systems and earned two doctoral degrees, an African American male Pediatric Hospitalist at a major community hospital, and a person who is one of only sixteen African American males in the world with a Ph.D. in his healthcare services field. These accomplishments are even more remarkable when one considers that these individuals had parents who experienced arguably one of the greatest oppositions to obtaining an education in U.S. history. Their journeys demonstrate how children can excel in education in spite of adverse situations.

This study brings forth the processes and conditions that nurtured some members of the Second Generation's success. Their stories form a strong argument for why parents, students, and practitioners should consider ways to incorporate resilience-building processes in the education of African Americans. These Second Generation members obtained degrees that have enabled them to contribute to society in impressive ways through their professional roles. Their stories demonstrate how properly applied family processes can further develop African American students toward their potentials, resulting in benefits to society at large.
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Appendix A

Email Invitation to Participate in Study

Dear [Participant],

I am a doctoral candidate at The College of William & Mary. As partial requirement for the completion of a doctoral degree program in Higher Education Administration, I am conducting a study entitled "How Direct Descendants of a School Lockout Achieved Academic Success: Resilience in the Educational Attainments of Prince Edward County’s Children." I want to understand the experiences, perceptions, and realizations of an academically successful sample of African American children with educationally deprived parents, and I am requesting you as a participant in this study.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to elucidate the processes that assisted the educational achievements of a group of people who earned terminal degrees in spite of their parents’ disrupted public school educations. Data will be derived from interviews, written documents, and conceptual metaphors. The study’s findings will hopefully help to guide practitioners in developing a higher education system with better accommodations for students from educationally deprived or economically disadvantaged family situations that diminish their likelihood of success in college.

A blind copy format has been used to send this email message so that you will not be identified as a potential participant to anyone other than me. Please indicate your preference to participate in this study by replying to me in the Subject header (Yes or No):

Yes – I would like to participate in this research study. Included in this response or in an attachment to this email is the following information:

- preferred contact information that includes name and telephone number;
- demographic information;
- copy of my curriculum vitae and/or résumé;
- agreement to provide signed consent to participate in the study and permission to be contacted to arrange the first face-to-face interview.

No – I would prefer not to participate in the research study at this time. (If this is your response, I respectfully accept your decision to decline participation in the study and offer my appreciation for considering my request. Thank you!—Randy)

Please contact me if additional information is needed or if you have other questions about your pending participation in this research study.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Randy Williams

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 2012-03-16 AND EXPIRES ON 2013-03-16.
Appendix B

Consent Form

How Direct Descendants of a School Lockout Achieved Academic Success: Resilience in the Educational Attainments of Prince Edward County’s Children

I, _______________________________________________________, agree to participate in a phenomenological study involving children of people who were denied access to public school in Prince Edward County, Virginia. The purpose of this study is to understand how individuals with parents whose public school education was disrupted by a five-year closing obtained extensive amounts of education. The focus of the study is participants who have earned the highest educational degree in their field or discipline. The researcher will focus on telling participants’ lived experiences and interpreted perceptions from childhood through adolescence to young adulthood. The researcher is conducting this study as part of a dissertation for a doctoral program requirement at the College of William and Mary.

As a participant, I understand that my involvement in this study is purposeful because 6-10 participants will be selected with the intention of exploring a wide variety of experiences and perceptions about their family experiences during childhood and adolescence. I understand I will be asked questions regarding my childhood and adolescence in relation to how my parents’ experience of the school closing affected my resilience development, and that the honesty and accuracy of my responses are crucial for this study. I also understand that I am not required to answer every question that is asked.

I understand that I will be expected to participate in up to 3 interviews (1 initial interview and 2 follow-up interviews), each lasting no longer than 90 minutes, relating to my family’s experiences regarding my parents being denied access to a public school education during a five-year period. I will provide a written response to a prompt submitted to me in an email prior to the initial interview. Also, I will share or imagine at least one artifact that symbolizes my journey toward obtaining a terminal degree to be used as data for this study, and will explain my choice during one of the three interviews. I agree to read and review summaries of the information that is generated during the interviews to check and correct them for accuracy.

I have been informed that any information obtained in this study will be recorded with a pseudonym of my choosing that will allow only the researcher to determine my identity. At the conclusion of this study, the key linking me with the pseudonym will be destroyed. I also acknowledge that discussions with the researcher will be audiotaped to ensure the accuracy of the data analyzed. At the conclusion of the study, the recordings will be erased and will no longer be available for use. All efforts will be made to conceal my identity in the study’s report of results and to keep my personal information confidential. All artifacts submitted will be returned to me or destroyed if that is not possible.

Due to the nature of the focus for this study, I understand that there may be some minimal
psychological discomfort involved with participating in this research, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in this study at any time by notifying the researcher by e-mail or telephone. If I have any questions that arise in connection with my participation in this study, I should contact Dr. Judi Harris, dissertation chair at 757-221-2334 or judi.harris@wm.edu. I understand that I may report any problems or dissatisfaction to Dr. Tom Ward, chair of the School of Education Internal Review Committee at 757-221-2358 or tjward@wm.edu or Dr. Lee Kirkpatrick, chair of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee at the College of William and Mary at 757-221-3997 or lakirk@wm.edu.

My signature below signifies that I am at least 18 years of age, that I have received a copy of this consent form and that I consent to participating in the ways described above.

Date Participant

Date Investigator

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 2012-03-16 AND EXPIRES ON 2013-03-16.
Appendix C

Demographic Information

Pseudonym: _____________________ Highest Degree Obtained: _____________________

Gender: Male  Female  Field/Discipline: _____________________

Current Age: Career/Profession: _____________________

1. How many of each family member was in your home during your upbringing?
   ______ Mother
   ______ Father
   ______ Sister
   ______ Brother
   ______ Other (please specify): _________________________________________

2. In what grade(s) were your parents at the time of the closing in 1959?
   ______ Mother  ______ Father

3. Did your parents complete high school in Prince Edward County? If so, in what year(s)?
   ______ Mother  ______ Father

4. What type of college did you attend?
   ______ Historically Black College/University  ______ Predominantly White Institution
   Name: ____________________________  Name: ____________________________
   ______ Other: ____________________________
   Name: ____________________________
Appendix D

Interview Guide

1. Please share with me your educational journey from elementary schooling to the completion of your most recent degree.
   a. Were you placed in gifted, advanced, or college-bound academic tracks during your K-12 education? If so, please describe them briefly.
   b. Describe any involvement with home or school academic enrichment activities or programs in which you participated in addition to the typical educational program.
   c. When did you develop aspirations for attending college, and what cultivated this desire?
   d. What, if any, adjustment issues did you encounter upon your enrollment in college?
   e. Which resources did you use to address challenges (if any) that you experienced in college?

2. Please tell me what you recall as a child, adolescent, and young adult about your parents’ views on the school closings.

3. Describe to me the moment(s) you realized the magnitude of the school closing on people in Prince Edward County. What, specifically, did you realize?

4. What educational goals did you set for yourself?

5. What educational expectations did your parents and other significant people have for you?

6. How did those individuals support you in reaching the goals?

7. How would you describe your childhood interaction with your family?

8. Do you recall any of your family’s dynamics that you treasured that were absent in your friends’ family? If so, what were they?

9. Were there any family or community activities that strengthened your connection with people? If so, please describe them and how they strengthened interpersonal connections.

10. To what or to whom do you attribute your educational success?

11. What factors contributed to your persistence toward completing the highest degree in your field/discipline? Which are the most salient?

12. What additional information would you like for me to capture and consider in understanding experiences, perceptions, and interpretations related to being a highly accomplished scholar in spite of your parents’ situation?
## Appendix E

### Examples of Themes, Groupings, & Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Groupings</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>1-Group Unity</td>
<td>Value of Family</td>
<td>having a high regard for the concept of family and for close-knit ancestry members who are helpful to one in various ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>1-Group Unity</td>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>a feeling of immense pleasure for one's or another's accomplishments or experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>1-Group Unity</td>
<td>Positive Reinforcement</td>
<td>being motivated by gaining accolades, praise, gifts, or rewards for performing well in education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>1-Group Unity</td>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>a sense of feeling welcomed and connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>1-Group Unity</td>
<td>Fortune</td>
<td>sensation of being blessed with an opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>1-Group Unity</td>
<td>Sunday Dinner</td>
<td>having weekly dinners as a family each Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>2-Safeguards</td>
<td>Racial Socialization</td>
<td>Black parents’ clarification of children’s minority status in society that include affirming efforts and communication to validate their worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>2-Safeguards</td>
<td>Open Communication</td>
<td>openly providing information whether or not it was sought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>2-Safeguards</td>
<td>Protective</td>
<td>parents' and family members' efforts to ensure the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of their children/relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>2-Safeguards</td>
<td>Legitimacy</td>
<td>being accepted to carry out a certain role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>2-Safeguards</td>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>having the ability to seclude oneself as desired without the presence of unwanted others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Welfare</td>
<td>2-Safeguards</td>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>being treated fairly regardless of any identifiers such as race and socioeconomic status</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F

Sample Reflexive Journal Entries

Thursday, December 20, 2012
I coded my first interviews today using a developing list of codes and descriptions in an Excel spreadsheet and conducting line-by-line coding in of the interview in Word document. I was surprised at the length of time it took to complete one interview. I realize that this is the first one and may require more time simply for getting used to the process and simultaneously defining codes. Aside from these pieces, I found that the toggling between Word and Excel screens slowed the process and disrupted thinking about the codes and making interpretations. In other words this process was a distraction. After the first few interviews were completed, I recalled Dr. Harris’ promotion of Dedoose, an online data analysis software program. I visited the site to gain more information. I read through the user guide and watch the training videos, which together increased my interest in the product. So I created an account and upload some interviews and codes. After the one-time cumbersome task of uploading all 77 codes and descriptions, I began to code an interview. I was amazed at the ease of use, no more toggling between screens. What’s most beneficial though is my ability to focus on the codes, codes usage, and other aspect that move me further along in the analysis process.

Wednesday, January 16, 2013
This morning, I was reviewing my list of codes and initial themes as I begin to make interpretations. I feel comfortable with the open codes in the sense that they’re named and defined in accurate way that is consistent with the context of the excerpts. These themes are tentative because I don’t feel that they are properly grouped and/or named. I referred to the article used in my proposal about thematic analysis. There, I re-read the entire section covering the six guidelines to thematic analysis, giving particular attention to the coding and naming themes parts. I ultimately tried to create a thematic map as suggested to help visualize the themes. This exercise did not yield much improvement to my feelings about the themes. I will draft an email to Dr. Harris sharing my codes and themes and expressing my status with the themes.

After drafting the email, I began reviewing the codes once again, becoming more immersed in the data. In this review, I focused on my over 1700 codes attached to excerpts. In doing this, I made some more meaningful observations. At least, I think they are meaningful. As I reviewed all excerpts and codes, I kept a running log of these observations. First, I noticed that there was only 1 code of Motivation assigned to Tex and none to Wendy. I think that with Tex, this code is better represented with the Learning Initiative code. He was the source of roughly a third of all the Learning Initiative codes. I have not yet accounted for why there were no Motivation codes associated with Wendy, who was motivated. Next, I noted that I did not explore any direct experiences of racism or discrimination with Tex or Eagle. I think this is a result of these two being early in the interview process. I will email them a question related to this prompt since it emerged with the other participants. Related to this inquiry will be one about Racial Socialization. Finally, I noticed how it was common for me to identify the excerpt and author just by seeing the combination of codes assigned. This occurrence tells me that my familiarity with the data is really good.
Thursday, January 17, 2013
To no surprise, Dr. Harris responded to my email from yesterday. She assessed that my hang-up stems mostly from what I already identified with my feelings about the themes. But of course she gave further insight as well. She stated that my themes may not be responding directly to what I am trying to uncover. She advised that I go back to my proposal to retrieve the study’s focus. After re-acclimating myself with the focus, I used it to consider if the groups of open codes suggest anything about the focus. This suggestion reminds me of my conversation with Shylan over a month ago. She shared that one method she used to arrange and name her codes and themes was to go back to her research questions, which she posted and “tested” codes against. I think what Dr. Harris suggested and what Shylan did will be helpful to me. Dr. Harris also suggested that I identify the key assertions of my theoretical framework as related to the focus and then use those assertions to frame themes in a way that answers my research question. These suggestions are what I needed, I think, and they make sense to me.
Appendix G

Researcher as Instrument Statement

At 119 Louis Street, Emporia, VA, I grew up in a roughly 700 sq. ft. home with my parents and brother until the age of 8. Our rented home was located in the Washington Park Neighborhood of Greensville County, VA. Greensville County is in rural Southside Virginia, where one might imagine that crime is low and that there is a strong sense of community. The reality is that the crime that occurred in Washington Park was a major contribution to this community leading the state in crime per capita for several years. As a young child, I witnessed some of those crimes, which included several assaults, alcohol and drug abuse, and I even saw a man who was shot. All of this activity occurred less than a half block from me on Louis Street where the neighborhood store was located. Almost every weekend included some action at the store. Fights, arguments, burglaries, and other types of disruptive behavior were observed at the store. Whenever "Mother's Day" (first of the month when women received their welfare checks) occurred on a Friday, there was surely going to be some incident drawing the police department’s attention, which sadly became entertainment for neighborhood children.

My parents tried to protect my brother and me from all of what we saw and heard, but there was too much crime going on to shield us from the culture of Washington Park. They too had their struggles as a couple and eventually divorced when I was nine years old. After the divorce, my mother, brother, and I moved into a single-wide trailer with my grandparents, aunts, and uncles. Together, there were ten people living in the little trailer that was located on a dirt road about a mile from any developed thoroughfare. We were really secluded back in the woods, and it was significantly quieter than Washington Park. At my maternal grandparents’ place, we were generally accepted and loved by everyone in the home. Space was small, but the love was infinite. In hindsight, it was peaceful in the “country” in my grandparents’ home, but as a child, I was accustomed to the action. So, whenever possible, my brother and I would spend the weekends and summer with my paternal grandparents and cousins, who lived in Washington Park.

Though my father was absent in my life as a role model, his father, my paternal grandfather, taught me many lessons that have contributed to my development. One of the greatest lessons that I learned from him was the value of hard work. On those weekend and summer visits, he would put us to work doing various jobs like tilling a garden, tending to livestock, mowing the lawns, washing vehicles, and any odd jobs that he could assign us. There was never any compensation per se, but he would always provide us with money whenever we needed it. My best hard work lesson was when he watched me split large blocks of timber on one hot summer day in preparation for the winter. (My grandparents used a wood stove for heat.) My granddad handed me a freshly sharpened ax and told me not to stop until the ax got tired. I stated, “But Granddaddy, the ax won’t get tired.” With his less than proficient use of the English language, he responded, “That’s what I know.” I commenced swinging the ax for the next couple of days until all the blocks were split into appropriate sizes for the wood stove. Though I was exhausted and hot from the strenuous activity in the middle of summer, I later found great appreciation in my work. My grandparents had the fuel needed to keep them warm well into the winter months. Also, at the end of the summer, my granddad gave me a significant
amount of money to purchase most of the school clothes needed by my brother and me, and in doing so, he reminded me of how hard work pays.

My introduction and affinity to my topic of the children of the Prince Edward County, VA people who were denied an education began with my experience as a Board of Directors member for the Robert R. Moton Museum, Inc., the once all-Black school. In that role I met several of the former locked-out students and became fascinated with their stories, many of which are not found in any history books. In 2004, I served as the program chairperson commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education decision. One of the events held during the week-long celebration was a panel discussion of Second Generation children who had obtained doctorates. As adults, the panelists shared perspectives of their experiences and how those experiences affected their childhood and educational pursuits. I sat in the audience in awe of their stories and developed the burning question: How did they achieve their academic success in spite of their circumstances? As I continued to ask that question, I reflected on my life to determine what had made me successful as the first Black physics graduate from my very old alma mater, and as a master's level educated person. How did I succeed? Why did I not drop out of high school like my brother who is only one year younger than me? How did I make it to college whereas most of my Washington Park friends ended up in a correctional institution at least once in their lives?

I will pause now from some of my experiences to reflect on their meanings to me. The time in Washington Park was a period of significant adversity for me. Those scenes of violence and poverty were a part of my life, but I was determined not to allow that culture to define who I would become. Seeing friends and family members involved with many crimes motivated me to be different. I have always wanted to stand out from my surroundings and be a trailblazer. Even though I do not have a pristine past, I did not get sucked into that way of life because I wanted to break the trend of what I saw in my community. My uncle was the only person that I knew who completed college, and I looked up to him. However, aspiring for higher education was hardly modeled for me. So, defying the odds, I decided early that I would attend college with no aspiration for pure learning, but just to be different from the fellas in the neighborhood. In order to get to college, though, I knew that I had to make myself marketable with high grades, community service, and participation in co-curricular activities like the Forensics Team, Students Against Drunk Driving, and varsity football and tennis. My motivation to be different was one major factor for my academic success.

My father's alcohol abuse and lack of involvement in my life were also important to my success. As an 8-year-old, I pledged not to drink alcohol because I saw how it affected my father, and I knew that I could not be different if I followed his model. As I got older, I began thinking that I would be like my father if I drank alcohol. To me, drinking translated to poor grades and performances in all the endeavors that I needed to distinguish me. Also, I saw how my parents were not successfully married, and I developed two goals that I still have today. 1) I will be a great husband. 2) I will be a wonderful father. As I developed these goals, I began to see that a college education could be the vehicle for my plans. So to set myself further apart from my surroundings, I felt that college would be where I could find the perfect mate for me, even though I found that person in my high school sweetheart. (By the way: we are happily married with two beautiful children.) Ironically, my father's role as a husband and father informed me of to be successful in those roles.
As I prepare to study the children of the “Crippled Generation,” I realize that I am attracted to their stories and abilities to reach academic success in spite of their families’ situations. They were raised in a segregated community where they experienced a double dose of oppression. Some Whites’ racist ideology created psychological effects, while some Blacks’ second-class mentality did not nurture a “can-do” spirit. The Second Generation was able to overcome these challenges by way of some processes. My major processes were my drive to be different, hard work ethic instilled by my grandfather, and my spirituality. In some ways, I think that I will discover similar processes within the Second Generation, but I also realize that we could be completely different. Though the Black community was deflated as a group, I suspect that the group of academically successful children had loving parents and family members who constantly encouraged them to succeed. I believe this support fueled their desire to get an education far beyond what their parents received. I also believe that their deeply seated religious beliefs were a source of strength during the adversity. I hope to find great inspiration within the voices of the Second Generation. I hope to find the answer to my burning question of how they succeeded. Because I am like the Second Generation, in that we all are African American, from rural low socioeconomic settings, and first generation college students, I hope to gain some personal value from studying their processes for success.

The processes that I feel are pertinent to Prince Edward’s Second Generation and me are related to the construct of resilience—the capacity to be strengthened by overcoming a bunch of life’s crap! This concept resonated with me when I worked with a group of students who experienced constant adversity, but always strived to complete their academics. One student was in her forties, aspiring to complete her bachelor’s degree. During my time assisting this non-traditional aged student, her husband beat her, causing noticeable physical and emotional bruises. Further, her husband emptied her checking account and moved his girlfriend into their home and bedroom while she had to sleep on the couch, all while grappling with some significant medical issues. Nonetheless, this student did everything possible to remain in college and get good grades. Though she cried often in my office, she still persisted toward her degree. What motivated her? How did she achieve in spite of the horrible family situation? There were other students with equally debilitating stories who also demonstrated resilience. In each case, I was compelled to do all that I could to assist them. If, however, I had a greater understanding of processes that help students from troubled homes to become successful, then I would be a better educator. The results of my Prince Edward Second Generation study could add to the literature on other successful people from depressed settings.

It is no secret that I feel a connection to the Second Generation. In spite of my strong affinity with this group, I realize that I may discover that we are not alike. My initial impression was that I see myself reflected in this group. My study of them may reveal that we share little. To understand their perspectives, though, is a risk that I am willing to take. Learning that we have few or no resilience commonalities may propel me to study other groups who have demonstrated resilience. I would also be disappointed to learn that there were no identified resilience processes for this group, but rather some other phenomenon like luck or opportunity that accounted for their success. Even so, my interest in this group and attention given to its connection to a landmark Supreme Court case are enough incentive to pursue this study.
Vita

Randolph Williams, Jr.

Birthdate: March 24, 1974

Birthplace: Emporia, Virginia

Education: 2006-2013 The College of William and Mary Williamsburg, Virginia Doctorate of Philosophy

2001-2004 Longwood University Farmville, Virginia Master of Science

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