AN EXAMINATION OF COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH IN THE
SUCCESS OF BLACK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

A Dissertation
Submitted to
the Temple University Graduate Board

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

---

by
Crystal Marie Menzies
May 2016

Examining Committee Members:

Dr. Will Jordan, Advisory Chair, Teaching & Learning
Dr. Maia Cucchiara, Teaching & Learning
Dr. Yasuko Kanno, Teaching & Learning
Dr. James Earl Davis, Policy, Organization, & Leadership Studies

ABSTRACT

Dominant education ideology focuses on the numerous challenges encountered by low-income Black youth in urban education settings. Although much of the research seeks to highlight structural challenges faced by these students, the general interpretation of these studies may reinforce the popular belief that academic underperformance by low-income Black students is the result of family structure and maladaptive familial behaviors. The implications of this ideology is that these family characteristics foster low achievement because students enter schools without normative skills and knowledge, in addition to adhering to beliefs that do not value education (Ogbu & Simmons, 1998). Some research argues that low-income Black students that demonstrate success in schools do so because they have adopted White middle-class normative capital (Hubbard, 1999). Yosso (2005) argues that the analysis of student narratives of success through the lens of Critical Race Theory offers a critique of deficit theorizing and shifts the perspective away from White middle-class culture to the cultural capital of minority communities. Yosso posits that low-income minority communities have cultural capital that is not widely recognized in research that she describes as *community cultural wealth*. This qualitative study explored if community-derived "capital" is utilized by high-achieving, low-income Black high school students in order to succeed academically in educational institutions. This inquiry privileged the narratives of high-achieving Black students from disadvantaged communities in order to understand the factors that contribute to their academic success, from their perspectives. Seven high achieving Black high school students from Philadelphia who were enrolled in a college access mentoring program were chosen for this study. Interviews and observations were

conducted to allow the researcher to examine the experiences of study participants in a naturalistic setting while engaging with their life histories through narrative. Participants were selected and observed once a week at their mentor site, in addition to participating in three rounds of interviews during spring/summer 2015. Two of the seven participants were also observed in their high schools. Student-participants engaged in three rounds of interviews that focused on family background and dynamics, educational experiences, and aspirations. Additionally, one mentor for each student-participant was interviewed.

This examination of community cultural wealth found that aspirational, familial, and navigational capital are vital in the academic success of the participants in this study. Linguistic capital and social capital only moderately apply to rationalizations for their high academic achievement, and resistant capital does not apply in the explication of their success.

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandfather, Edgar Menzies, who immigrated to the

United States from Guyana and dedicated his life to educating students of color.

Throughout this process, your memory provided solace and motivation in difficult

moments. I also dedicate this to my students Josh, Daisy, and Amanda, who passed away

much too soon. Your deaths forever changed me, and it is in your honor that I fight for

quality education that recognizes and supports the whole child.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people I would like to thank for their encouragement and support throughout this journey. I am grateful to the faculty members who have supported and challenged me throughout the past five years: Dr. Michelle Byng, Dr. Novella Keith, and Dr. Erin Horvat. I am especially grateful for the support of my advisory committee—Dr. Yasuko Kanno for her thoughtful suggestions, Dr. Maia Cucchiara for her meaningful feedback and guidance throughout my doctoral journey, Dr. James Earl Davis for his continuous support and encouragement, and Dr. Will Jordan for his wealth of knowledge, sound guidance, and reassurance throughout this experience.

I am exceedingly grateful to my amazing family and friends! Thank you to my mom, Vikki; my dad, Patrick; my brother, Marcus; My grandmothers, Eula and Edna; and a multitude of aunts, uncles, and cousins. Thank you to my supportive and hilarious Spelman homies: Shanequa, Megan, Arienne, Courtney, Sheena, Nikole, Jennifer, and Abusheri. Thank you to my sorors of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., especially Carliss, Laura, and LeConte, for providing me with the inspiration and motivation to undertake this journey. To the close friends I have met along this journey, thank you for being my Philly family: Briana, Gerard, Dana, David, Doñela, Brandon, Annette, Peter, Bowie, Amber, John, Julia, Meg, Ben, Ife, Jennifer, Karin, and Kelly. To my DC people: Liz, Stephanie, and Viviana, thank you for giving me the final push I needed to complete this document. To the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College-Philadelphia Chapter, thank you for encouraging me when circumstances were difficult. I would also like to thank Angela Campbell for helping me navigate this process, and to the entire Urban Education family. To Jordan, thank you for coming through in the clutch!

Finally, I would like to thank Megan O'Brien and the staff at Mentor Youth for allowing me access to your brilliant students. I am grateful for the seven individuals whose honesty and insight provided the narrative for this dissertation. I wish you luck on your educational journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The challenges facing low-income communities of color in urban environments are well documented. These communities encounter a lack of adequate health care and nutrition, and a dearth of decent housing (Noguera, 2003a). Additionally, these communities face high rates of unemployment, crime, and prevalent substance abuse (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Wilson, 1987). As a result of these systemic inequalities, Black children who grow up in these environments are more likely to face academic challenges including grade retention, low achievement test scores and high rates of drop out (Darling-Hammond, 2010; McLoyd, 1998; Swanson, 2010). Much of the research surrounding Black[1] youth focuses on these negative aspects of urban schooling (Anderson, 1999; Archambault, Janosz, Morizot, & Pagani, 2009; Clark, Lee, & Goodman 2008; Fenning & Rose, 2007). While much of this research intends to highlight the discriminatory nature of education in the United States, some of the literature speaks of Black children—and the communities that raise them—as deficient in qualities that are valued by White middle-class society (Harper, 2015; Ogbu, 2003). In education research, there has been more emphasis on documenting educational issues for Black youth, and little attention to rectifying educational problems (Harper, 2009).

In addition to the prevalence of deficit research in the study of Black youth, particularly those from low-income communities, the way Bourdieu's theoretical concept of *capital* has been traditionally applied to this population obscures the skills acquired in their communities that may be transferred across fields of interaction to enable their

---

[1] Although the term "Black" will be used predominantly throughout the text, I will use the terms "Black" and "African-American" interchangeably when referencing extant literature that uses either term.

success. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) theorized that individuals and groups have different types of capital—economic, social, cultural and symbolic—that are structured according to power relations within that society. Cultural capital refers to the informal accumulation of social skills, habits, linguistic styles, tastes and abilities that a person inherits as a result of his or her economic resources (Allan, 2006; Yosso, 2005). According to Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), the importance of capital is dependent upon a structured system of social relations known as a field (Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Thorpe, 2009). Based on this theory, one can have valuable forms of cultural capital within a field, such as a low-income neighborhood, but that same cultural capital may not have the same value in another field, like a public school. Some scholars have interpreted Bourdieu's theory as an assertion that people of color in poor communities lack the social and cultural capital that is necessary for social mobility, particularly social mobility via educational attainment (Yosso, 2005). Furthermore, some studies suggest that people from these communities who do succeed are able to convert their community-derived capital into cultural capital that has value in education settings; this implies that those who *do not* succeed are unable or unwilling to convert their skills into capital that has value in educational institutions (Carter, 2003; Dika & Singh, 2002; Portes, 1998). Social capital theory as articulated by Bourdieu argues that all communities have social and cultural capital, however, only the social and cultural capital that is present in the dominant class is recognized and rewarded by institutions. However, we do not know if Black students utilize non-dominant capital to succeed in academic institutions.

Many scholars argue that the dominant forms of cultural capital that are valued in educational settings are representative of White, middle-class norms (Bourdieu &

Passeron, 1990; Carter, 2003; O'Connor, Lewis, & Mueller, 2007; Ogbu & Simons, 1998). Communities that do not foster these norms are sometimes described as having "non-normative" or "non-dominant" capital (Carter, 2005). Yosso (2005) posited that low-income Black and Latino communities have capital that is unrecognized by traditional cultural capital theory, which she calls *community cultural wealth*. She argued that this capital is utilized within their communities and classrooms. In addition to Yosso, other researchers have examined community cultural wealth among Latino students (Auerbach, 2006; Liou, Antrop-González, & Cooper, 2009), and linguistic minority college students (Oropeza, Varghere, & Kanno, 2010). However, the types of community cultural capital that high achieving, low-income Black high school students may acquire in their communities has not been thoroughly investigated. Additionally, a paucity of research examines high-achieving Black student narratives—especially from students' perspectives—to assess if these students are actually transferring their community cultural wealth across fields into school settings to facilitate their success.

Context

"Deficit" theorizing in relation to Black children reifies the belief that most of these children are struggling under the weight of White middle-class expectations, and thus limits the range of possible solutions that education stakeholders are willing to undertake (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Noguera, 2003a; Reddick, Welton, Alsandor, & Denyszyn, 2011; Yosso, 2005). For example, Ogbu and Simons (1998) asserted that African-American students, and other involuntary immigrants, believe the opportunity structure is closed to them and thus rebel against White middle-class norms; these authors believe Black students develop an *oppositional culture* to mainstream American values

which manifests in low academic achievement. In literature about immigrant populations, some scholars argue that immigrant groups who identify with marginalized and racialized groups at the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy, particularly African-Americans, will unsuccessfully assimilate in American society, with academic underachievement as one characteristic of this negative association (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Portes, Fernández-Kelly, & Haller, 2005). In other words, immigrant groups that identify with Black culture/people are less likely to successfully assimilate and demonstrate academic achievement. These studies can be interpreted to represent a homogenous African-American culture that deviates from the norm and fosters maladaptive outcomes for Black youth, as well as those who associate with them. Theories that analyze poor Black students as culturally deficient embolden policy makers who argue against an infusion of resources within low-income communities, and perpetuate the negative images of poor communities of color (O'Connor, 2001).

Some research highlights the resilience of children from low-income communities, but these studies frame student academic success as an anomaly; these students succeed despite their communities, and not because of community-derived capital (Gordon-Rouse, 2001). Minority status, urbanicity, low socioeconomic status, and non-native English speaking home environments are identified as risk factors that generate barriers to school success (Finn & Rock, 1997). While it has been shown that structural barriers disadvantage these populations (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Noguera, 2003a), some research on high-achieving Black students in urban environments suggests that they activate forms of social and cultural capital traditionally recognized by the

dominant society to succeed in the school setting (Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1997).

Carter (2003) challenged the deficit narrative by arguing that groups of African-American students have "Black" cultural capital; non-dominant capital which entails resources that "lower status individuals" use to authenticate ethnic cultural positions *within* their communities or peer groups (p. 138). However, she maintained that successful Black students utilize dominant cultural capital to achieve in educational institutions. In contrast to research that argues Black student success is a result of adopting White middle-class normative (dominant) capital, there is research that suggests that minority secondary students succeed because of capital and/or skills attained within their marginalized communities that are not recognized by the dominant culture, however, these studies do not examine which forms of capital are transferred across settings and how they are utilized by African-American secondary students (Hubbard, 1999; Newman, Myers, Newman, Lohman, & Smith, 2000; Yosso, 2005). Yosso countered deficit thinking in research by arguing that there are forms of cultural capital that marginalized groups utilize *within institutions* that traditional theories of capital do not recognize. She argued that marginalized minority communities of color nurture and empower their children through community and culture based forms of social and cultural capital, known as community cultural wealth: Aspirational, Navigational, Social, Resistant, Familial, and Linguistic (Orozepa et al., 2010). While types of community-derived capital extant in underserved communities has been identified, there has not been sufficient investigation into the mechanisms by which students utilize community assets to succeed in educational institutions. There is a dearth of research on academically

successful, low-income high school students and the types of community cultural capital they draw upon in explaining their success in academic institutions.

Despite the prevalence of research that theorizes the causes of maladaptive outcomes of poor children, there are studies that highlight factors that contribute to student success. Individual psychological characteristics such as self-efficacy, problem-solving skills, and feelings of competency are important components in a student's ability to adjust to stressful situations and persist academically (Bandura, 1986; Garmezy, 1983; Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Lord, Eccles, & McCarthy, 1994). Parental involvement is also recognized as a key element of Black and Latino student success (Coleman, 1991; Epstein, 1995; Lareau, 1989; Yan, 1999). Individual student characteristics and family support contribute to positive academic outcomes for youth of color from disadvantaged backgrounds.

School level factors such as supportive teacher-student relationships and high teacher expectations are also positively correlated with academic achievement and positive school adjustment (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Mangiante, 2011; Rodriquez, 2012; Suarez-Orozco, Rhodes, & Milburn, 2009). Research also demonstrates that specific areas related to facilities, teacher quality, and curriculum make a significant difference in student outcomes (Baker, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Lipman, 2004). Comprehensively, these authors argue that increased funding for smaller class sizes, high-quality teachers, and per-pupil expenditures for instruction led to significant increases in achievement. Not only do students in smaller classes achieve better outcomes, but class size reduction can also close the "achievement gap" for disadvantaged students (Finn & Achilles, 1999; Finn, Gerber, Achilles, & Boyd-Zaharias,

2001; Konstantonopoulos & Chung, 2009). Although we know some of the psychological, familial, and school contextual factors that facilitate student success, we do not yet know how these domains operate within student narratives that are situated within the community cultural wealth conceptual framework.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was two-fold: (a) to examine if community-derived capital is activated by high-achieving, low-income Black high school students in order to succeed in educational institutions, or, if students ascribe their success to other factors; and (b) to critically examine the utility of community cultural wealth in the explication of academic success for marginalized youth. The narratives of high-achieving students were used to examine the role of particular types of community-based capital in the academic success of minority students from low-income communities. *High-achieving* is defined as those students who are high academic achievers based on Grade Point Average (GPA) and standardized performance measures of achievement. Additionally, students who maintained high grades, yet underperform on standardized measures of achievement were also considered high achieving for the purpose of this study. Findings from numerous studies indicate that standardized exams privilege students from economically advantaged homes, thus it is important to recognize other measures of achievement representative of noncognitive skills (Croizet & Dutrévis, 2004; Latimore, 2005; Sacks, 1999; Smyth & Banks, 2012).

This study used qualitative interviews and observations of high achieving Black high school students from low-income communities that participated in a Philadelphia-based mentor program called Mentor Youth. Interviews and observations were

conducted with the students during their participation in Mentor Youth. A select few students were also observed in their high schools. Additionally, one adult who works with each student in an academic setting (teacher or mentor) was interviewed as well.

Theoretical Framework

Yosso (2002, 2005) posited that low-income minority communities have cultural capital that is not widely recognized in research called *community cultural wealth*. There are six forms of capital recognized within this framework: aspirational, navigational, social, resistant, familial and linguistic. Aspirational capital is the ability to maintain high aspirations despite challenging circumstances. Navigational capital represents the skills necessary to navigate social institutions, particularly those that perpetually disadvantage minorities. Social capital refers to the networks of people whom support and guide minority students. Resistant capital entails the ability of minorities to challenge negative stereotypes through the ownership of counter identities. Familial capital includes knowledge acquired through kinship networks, including emotional and moral learning, and linguistic capital encompasses the multilingual communication skills extant in communities of color. Recognizing community cultural wealth in the context of urban schooling provides an empowering foundation in which to analyze minority student experiences.

The forms of capital highlighted in this study are derived from Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw, 1995; Solozarno, & Villalpando, 1998). Solorzano and Villalpando distinguished five principles of Critical Race Theory that should inform theory, research, policy, pedagogy and curriculum: (a) the centrality of race, (b) challenge to dominant ideology, (c) commitment to social justice, (d) centrality of experiential knowledge, and

(e) an interdisciplinary approach. Critical race theorists assert that influential educational research posits poor academic performance among minority students is the fault of students and their families because these students enter schools without normative skills and knowledge, in addition to adhering to beliefs that do not value education (Yosso, 2005). Yosso asserted that the analysis of student narratives of success through the lens of Critical Race Theory offers a critique of deficit theorizing and empirical research and shifts the perspective away from White middle-class culture to the cultural capital of minority communities. Specifically, through the narratives of highly successful Black students, this study sought to problematize research that represents their communities as deficient, and examines the ways in which their success may be explained through unrecognized forms of capital that are successfully transferred across fields.

Research Questions

The central, two-part research question guiding the study is as follows:

> *How do high achieving Black students from impoverished neighborhoods explain their academic success?* The embedded question is:

>> *To what extent do these students identify community-derived capital, such as linguistic, navigational, familial, social, resistant, or aspirational, as important to their academic success?*

Significance of the Study

Although a vast amount of research focuses on Black youth from impoverished communities, little research emphasizes the narratives of Black secondary students who are high achievers and successfully navigate educational institutions using community-derived capital. The lack of narratives focusing on high achieving high school students

of color perpetuates the discourse of pathology that surrounds Black youth, especially as it relates to educational attainment. Furthermore, the role that community cultural wealth and unrecognized forms of capital play in their success is under-theorized in the literature. Examining the way that community cultural wealth and expanded views of capital manifest in student achievement may foster in-depth understanding of factors that contribute to the success of students in marginalized communities without further stigmatizing those communities.

The common discourse among policy makers and some educational scholars frames Black communities from a deficit perspective, and as a result, ascribes superficial solutions to the problems produced by systemic inequalities, with little community engagement or input. A substantial amount of social justice literature does attempt to frame challenges in these communities as resulting from perpetual discrimination, yet this literature can also reify deficit narratives by comparing low-income populations to White middle-class populations. Since these communities are traditionally viewed as lacking types of capital that are valued in mainstream society, the input of community members is not taken into consideration when education and poverty reduction policies are developed. Instead, policy makers and researchers may be able to draw from the communities and youth themselves to develop solutions to problems related to academic achievement, while concurrently addressing systemic, asymmetrical power dynamics. Lastly, schools may use the narratives of these students to create conditions to foster the success of all of their students.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature on high achieving Black students from low-income communities and the various factors that are believed to contribute to their success. The social context of urban schooling for Black and Latino students is examined to highlight the challenges faced by students of color in city schools. Bourdieu's explication of capital and how his theories have been used in educational research are also presented, along with a description of the tenets of community cultural wealth. Additionally, characteristics of high achieving students, and the unique position of high achieving Black students, are explored.

Black and Latino Students in Urban Environments

Large proportions of Black and Latino youth live in underserved communities. Residential segregation along racial and economic lines, and disinvestment in predominantly minority communities has negatively impacted the inhabitants of these neighborhoods. Many of these neighborhoods suffer from housing, health and educational disparities, high rates of crime, and high unemployment/underemployment (Noguera, 2003a; Wilson, 1987).

The legacy of social, political, and economic discrimination continues to affect the quality of urban public schools today. For example, large-city school systems serving poor students of color often have inferior facilities and they are often under-resourced and mismanaged in comparison to wealthier suburban districts (Noguera, 2003a). Many urban schools are characterized by stagnant student performance, student discipline

problems, poorer student health, and limited access to instructional resources (Lewis, James, Hancock, & Hill-Jackson, 2008). Urban schools also have less qualified teachers and larger class sizes (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Swanson (2010) also stated that poor students in urban areas graduate at rates that typically range from 55 percent to 60 percent. In contrast, Darling-Hammond contended that wealthier districts have extensive technology supports and advanced academic curriculum with high graduation rates. Overall, there is general consensus that the social context of the school affects levels of student achievement, persistence, as well as student aspirations for college and careers (Plucker, 1998).

There has been increased scrutiny about the quality of urban schools. Systemic reform refers to the educational policies enacted on the state and federal level to engender accountability within publicly funded school systems (David & Cuban, 2010; Lipman, 2004). This "top-down" approach has far-reaching implications for schools, teachers, and students. Systemic reform efforts have led to a rise in charter schools and education management organizations (EMOs), increased scrutiny of teachers unions, and greater emphasis on standardized test scores to determine school effectiveness. Lipman argued these efforts have the greatest effect on minority serving schools, yet with contested outcomes. It is critical to understand how students who demonstrate high academic achievement in these circumstances are able to navigate multiple worlds.

Bourdieu and Capital

Bourdieu's conceptualization of capital has tremendously impacted educational research. Scholars have utilized his theories to examine systemic perpetuation of educational inequality. Particularly, scholars have used his work to analyze the role of

poverty and race in educational inequities. According to Bourdieu, there are four types of capital: economic, symbolic, cultural, and social. Economic capital strongly affects an individual or group's level of other capitals (Bourdieu, 1986). Although economic capital is foundational, the interplay of other forms of capital strongly influence the persistence of class inequalities. For the purpose of this study, only social and cultural capital will be discussed.

Bourdieu's theory of social capital applies to the social networks an individual is situated within; the people one knows, and how those people are positioned in society (Allan, 2006; Bourdieu, 1986). Cultural capital refers to habits, tastes, linguistic styles and social skills that a person acquires due to their economic status. One's cultural capital is influenced in part by their social capital. The individuals whom one associates with influence and reinforce patterns of behavior and linguistic styles.

The traditional applications of Bourdieu's theories on capital offer critical examinations as to why inequality persists. Lareau (2002), a preeminent scholar on the theories of Pierre Bourdieu, demonstrated the various inequalities that result from different types of capital, especially social and cultural capital. In regards to social capital, middle-class families have social networks that include professionals. According to Lareau, these social networks are a valuable resource when parents face childrearing challenges and seek opportunities for their children. Conversely, poor and working-class families are less likely to associate with professionals. Due to historical discriminatory paradigms, low-income Black communities generally do not have the types of capital that are rewarded in U.S. society. One of the valued aspects of social capital is having connections to professionals. Professionals represent the dominant institutions in society,

and a lack of professional connections further isolates these communities from positions of power and the tools to increase one's cultural capital. Discrepancies in cultural capital yield "unequal profits" in a society that holds cosmopolitan values in high esteem. Based on Bourdieu's theory, racism, sexism and poverty have led to decreased opportunities for the attainment of economic, social and cultural capital, which in turn facilitated asymmetrical power dynamics that manifest in social institutions and reinforce systemic inequalities. The dynamics of intersecting oppressions that arose from historical-social factors that excluded low-income Black communities from the development of dominant (White middle-class) forms of capital have led to conditions that foster low educational achievement, according to this theoretical application.

Bourdieu's analogy of a rugby field helps us to conceptualize how capital operates. Fields are symbolic and empirical spaces where social actions take place via the relationships among actors (Allan, 2006; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Each person has a position in the field, and the capital that person has is dependent upon their position in the field, and the rules of the game. In other words, fields are organized spaces of "dominant and subordinate positions" that are based on the quantity of capital held by actors (Swartz, 1997, p. 123). A person may have capital that is valued within one field of interaction, but that capital may not have value in another field (Lareau & Horvat, 1999). For example, Carter (2003) argued that some Black students have large amounts of cultural capital within their community, but that capital does not transfer to useful cultural capital within academic settings. Field as a conceptual tool within this study may demonstrate how dominant actors misrepresent and misidentify the success of

subordinate actors through the use of their own cultural and intellectual lens, further subjugating traditionally marginalized students within the field of academic institutions.

Social capital theory as articulated by Bourdieu (1986) posits that all communities have social and cultural capital; however, only the social and cultural capital that is present in the dominant class is recognized and rewarded by institutions. As a result, groups that are successful within educational institutions are seen as having sufficient quantities of social and cultural capital, while communities that struggle within these institutions are seen as lacking in specific forms of capital that are valued by the dominant class (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Cammarota, Moll, Gonzalez, &Cannella, 2012). An application of this perspective means that students from low-income communities that succeed in schools do so because they have acquired traits that are valued by the dominant class, while their less successful peers have not acquired, or demonstrate, those valued traits. Allard (2005) and Yosso (2005) argued that the Bourdiean perspective in research on education has rarely examined the characteristics present in low-income and minority communities that foster educational achievement. While it has been asserted that capital attained in disenfranchised communities is converted into valuable capital in institutional settings, the specific community cultural wealth that Black high school students utilize to succeed in school has not been examined (Rios-Aguilar, Kiyama, Gravitt, & Moll, 2011; Yosso, 2002).

Community Cultural Wealth

Despite the challenges faced by low-income communities, and the schools that serve them, many Black and Latino students demonstrate high academic achievement within school. Some scholars argue that these students succeed despite the circumstances

in their families and communities (Levine & Nidiffer, 1996; Wang et al., 1997) while others argue that they succeed because of resources they draw from their communities (Rios-Aguilar et al., 2011; Yosso, 2005).

The concept of *funds of knowledge* highlights the resources and knowledge of working-class families (Rios-Aguilar et al., 2011). Similar to Bourdieu's (1986) definition of social capital, the concept of funds of knowledge asserts that community membership can convert familial/cultural knowledge into advantages for its affiliates. Yosso (2005) developed the concept of *community cultural wealth*, which includes funds of knowledge, to critique and re-conceptualize Bourdieu's articulation of cultural capital in order to include the cultural experiences of communities of color, specifically Latino communities. Yosso argued that researchers have used Bourdieu's theory "to assert that some communities are culturally wealthy while others are culturally poor" (p. 76). The theoretical framework of community cultural wealth seeks to illuminate the capital that is present in marginalized communities.

Community cultural wealth consists of six forms of capital: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistant (Yosso, 2005). Aspirational capital pertains to the capacity to sustain hope despite obstacles that may make attaining these dreams extremely challenging. Linguistic capital refers to the social and intellectual skills obtained through communication experiences in multiple styles or languages. Familial capital references "cultural knowledges . . . that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition" (p. 79). This concept expands the idea of family to varied forms of kinship, such as immediate and extended family, close friends, neighbors, etc. Social capital represents networks of individuals and community

resources that provide social contacts and auxiliary support to maneuver through dominant institutions. Navigational capital refers to the actual skills related to maneuvering within institutions. Lastly, resistant capital represents oppositional knowledge, beliefs, and savvy that collectively challenge inequality. Together, these varied forms of capital are imbued within minority students from low-income communities. However, we do not precisely know which forms of capital are most utilized by successful Black students within formal schooling environments, or if these types of capital are used at all.

The forms of capital highlighted in this study are derived from Critical Race Theory (Crenshaw,1995). Solorzano and Villalpando (1998) distinguished five principles of Critical Race Theory that should inform theory, research, policy, pedagogy and curriculum: (a) the centrality of race, (b) challenge to dominant ideology, (c) commitment to social justice, (d) centrality of experiential knowledge, and (e) an interdisciplinary approach (Harris, 2002). According to Yosso (2005), influential educational research asserts poor academic performance is the fault of Black students and their families because these students enter schools without normative skills and knowledge, in addition to beliefs that do not value education. The analysis of student narratives of success through the lens of Critical Race Theory offers a critique of deficit theorizing and empirical research and shifts the comparative perspective away from White middle-class culture to the cultural capital of minority communities.

High-Achieving Students

Grade Point Averages (GPAs) and standardized exam scores are commonly used to identify and label students that are considered high-achieving (Cohn, Cohm, Balch, &

Bradley, Jr., 2004; Harper, 2005). SAT scores and high school GPA are significant

predictors of an individual's GPA in college (Betts & Morrell, 1999; Cohn et al., 2004).

To complement these commonly used measures of student achievement, additional

noncognitive factors that contribute to student achievement have been identified.

 Recent literature has highlighted the importance of "noncognitive factors" in the

academic success of students. According to Bandura (1999) and Mischel and Shoda

(1999), every psychological process is dependent upon cognition, thus "noncognitive"

can be considered a misleading term (West et al., 2014). However, despite its

problematic nomenclature, noncognitive has become a term that represents skills that are

not traditionally assessed on standardized measures of achievement. Noncognitive

factors are the strategies, behaviors, skills and attitudes that are crucial to academic

achievement and persistence, but may not be reflected on assessments of cognitive ability

(Farrington et al., 2012).

 Farrington et al. (2012) have delineated five broad categories of noncognitive

factors that are associated with academic performance: academic behaviors, academic

perseverance, academic mindsets, learning strategies, and social skills. Academic

behaviors include regular attendance, being prepared for class, participation in class, and

studying outside of school hours. Academic perseverance is defined as a student's

propensity to thoroughly complete school assignments on time, and to the best of their

ability regardless of level of challenge or obstacles. Academic mindsets are described as

"the psycho-social attitudes or beliefs one has about oneself in relation to academic

work" (p. 9). Learning strategies are simply methods used by students to help them

remember/think about academic material. Social skills represent interpersonal abilities

such as empathy, collaboration, assertiveness, and responsibility. Each of these categories have complex relationships to each other, yet it is important to note that they each represent qualities that contribute to student success in schools.

Factors that Contribute to Student Success

Research has documented various intrinsic and extrinsic factors that contribute to student success. Many of these students are labeled "resilient" for their ability to overcome obstacles to achieve academic success. The following section will present the research on resilience, in addition to highlighting many of the factors that have been identified to contribute to student success.

Resilience

Educational resilience is a term used to describe a set of personal characteristics that foster academic success despite personal adversities and environmental challenges (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1997). Current research has demonstrated that educationally resilient students are strongly influenced by their home environment, teacher expectations, and classroom climate (Cunningham & Swanson, 2010). Increased emphasis has been placed on the characteristics that educationally resilient students display, such as high self-concept, high educational aspirations, as well as high levels of social and academic interaction and consistent proactive participation (Wang, Waxman, & Freiberg, 1996). The majority of resiliency research analyzes intrinsic student characteristics and how they manifest in academic tasks, but the resiliency research does not analyze student strengths within a framework that highlights community cultural wealth.

Identity

The concept of identity is most commonly interpreted through two paradigms: a traditional psychological framework and a sociocultural framework (Howard, 2003). The traditional psychological approach focuses on internal characteristics that are developed during critical stages in development and are fixed regardless of the setting. In contrast, sociocultural frameworks view identity as internally constructed and externally reconstructed depending upon the cultural and social settings. In the latter case, identity varies across context. This study views identity development as a continuous process that allows an individual to negotiate many identities (DeCuir-Gunby, 2009).

Academic identity is one component of a larger, comprehensive self-concept that is integral in academic motivation and performance (Howard, 2003). For Black and Latino students, academic identity is connected to racial and gender identities as well. As such, academically successful students navigate complex social patterns to become high achievers. Within the United States, race as a social component—not a biological one— most influences identity development within adolescents (DeCuir-Gunby, 2009). It is important to establish how *racial identity* and *ethnic identity* are defined to comprehend how these identity constructs affect youth. Smith, Levine, Smith, Dumas and Prinz (2009) defined ethnic identity as a sense of belonging to an ethnic group and the behaviors, feelings and thoughts that become part of group identification. Racial identity is defined as acceptance of racial group membership (Smith et al., 2009). As such, Howard argued that when investigating academic identity for students of color, one must center the analysis within gender, race and class frameworks.

In *The Attitude-Achievement Paradox Among Black Adolescents* (1990), Roslyn Mickelson stated that race is the most powerful predictor of achievement. Positive identity development, especially in regards to racial-ethnic identity are crucial for academic success. Several studies have found self-esteem and ethnic identity to be related among adolescents, but the relationship is stronger for African-American youth and Latino youth than it is for White students (Bracey, Bámaca, & Umaña-Taylor, 2004; Smith et al., 2009). Smith et al. found that racial identity is almost as important as parental support in regards to academic achievement, and racial/ethnic esteem and identification were related to fewer instances of delinquency. The data shows that identity is an important facet for the academic achievement for Black students.

Aspirations, Expectations, and Attitudes

Aspirations and expectations have been shown to be factors that contribute to student achievement. Expectation is routinely defined as the conviction an individual holds for their future level of achievement/attainment; the level of achievement/attainment that they believe they are *most likely* to accomplish (Carpenter, 2008; Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011). Expectation differs from aspirations, which is defined as the future level of achievement that one hopes for (Carpenter, 2008). Educational aspirations are significant, positive predictors of academic self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy is a predictor of academic achievement (Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996; Uwah, McMahon, & Furlow, 2008). Research demonstrates that student expectations predict achievement, and students with higher expectations tend to have higher levels of academic achievement (Ou & Reynolds, 2008; Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Irving, Widdowson, & Dixon, 2010; Tavani & Losh, 2003).

Student expectations are related to student attitudes towards the value of education. Mickelson (1990) described the difference between concrete attitudes and abstract attitudes about educational attainment and their relationship to achievement for African-American students. Abstract attitudes represent the theoretical significance students place on the value of education. In her study, Black students espoused a rhetorical significance to education. Abstractly, they believe that education is the foundation for success and upward mobility. However, these abstract attitudes about education are not found to be predictors of academic achievement. Despite a generally held belief in the value of education, concrete attitudes are more specifically connected to academic achievement. Concrete attitudes are the (perceived) reality that students *experience* in regards to education and its tangible effect on their lives and their loved ones. Pessimistic concrete attitudes lead to low achievement, whereas optimistic concrete attitudes lead to high academic achievement. Student expectations, what they actually believe they will achieve, are strongly related to their concrete attitudes about the utility of educational attainment.

Class and race impact student expectations, aspirations, and attitudes. Strayhorn (2009) linked low socioeconomic status with low educational expectations, suggesting that when Black males in lower socioeconomic classes are compared to their middle- or upper-class peers, they have significantly lower educational expectations. Concrete attitudes are most affected by family context and socialization, which leads to the development of an academic self-concept that determines their educational attainment (Mickelson, 1990). Concrete attitudes are class- and race-specific with ties to material reality and are thereby crucial for understanding how family background and race

influence achievement in school. For African-Americans students, pessimistic concrete attitudes reflect a low level of self-efficacy due to their material reality and perceptions of how racial obstacles impact their loved ones. Thus, Mickelson argued, low expectations are largely shaped by not seeing the tangible benefits of education in the lives of loved ones. High achieving students have high expectations regarding their future, despite having few examples in their personal lives (Howard, 2003).

Adult Expectations/Relationships

There has been a substantial amount of research on the role of parental expectations and involvement in the academic success of adolescents (Carpenter, 2008; Coleman, 1991; Hayes, 2012). Trusty, Plata, and Salazar (2003) found that parental expectations and involvement had the largest impact on student success, even when accounting for socioeconomic status and prior achievement in schools. It has been asserted that parental expectations affect student outcomes directly through interactions with children, and indirectly through parental beliefs and perceived efficacy in the provision of academic support for their children (Rubie-Davies et al., 2010; Wentzel, 1998). For African-American students, parental involvement correlates with better behavior, low rates of absences from school, high academic achievement, and more positive attitudes towards school (Cole-Henderson, 2000; Hayes, 2012; Taylor, Hinton, & Wilson, 1995). Narratives of African-American students in high school highlight the role of parents, particularly mothers, in their academic achievement (Howard, 2003; Newman et al., 2000; Reddick et al., 2011).

Positive teacher-student relationships are crucial for emotional, behavioral and cognitive outcomes for students, particularly for African-American youth (Ferguson,

2003; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Murray & Zvoch, 2011; Tyler & Boelter, 2008; Wiggan, 2008). Murray and Zvoch found that African-American high school seniors from low-income backgrounds reference trusting relationships with teachers as one of the main reasons for school persistence. Black students also attribute their academic identities and college aspirations to relationships with their teachers (Howard, 2003). Schools that cultivate positive relationships between students and teachers have higher math achievement and high graduation rates (Barile, Donohue, Anthony, Baker, Weaver, & Henrich, 2012; Muller, Katz, & Dance, 1999).

The extant literature on teacher expectations analyzes the impact of teacher perceptions on African-American student performance on standardized tests as compared to White students (Ferguson, 2003; van Den Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010), as well as the effect of teacher expectations and effectiveness on overall academic achievement of minority students (Mangiante, 2011; Rodriquez, 2012; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009). According to Tyler and Boelter (2008), low academic achievement in middle-grade African American students is linked to perceptions of low teacher expectations and negative perceptions of the teacher-student relationship. Tyler and Boelter established that maladaptive outcomes, such as cheating and dropping out, are linked to students' classroom experiences, especially their interactions with teachers. Academic efficacy, a characteristic that has been positively associated with multiple academic achievement factors, is also significantly affected by teacher expectations.

There is also a body of research that describes student perceptions of teacher expectations and the positive effect of perceived high expectations on student achievement (Mickelson, 1990; Pringle, Lyons, & Booker, 2010). Taylor and Wang

(2000) found that student *perceptions* of high adult expectations had a direct effect on student achievement. Studies also document the academic and social experience of Black immigrant youth and how teacher expectations correlate to their achievement (Nicolas, DeSilva, & Rabenstein, 2009). The literature overwhelmingly demonstrates the significant impact teacher perceptions and expectations have on the academic outcomes of minority students.

Research has shown that mentor programs can positively impact at-risk students (Dappen & Isernhagen, 2006; Keller, 2005; Rhodes, 2002). Freedman (1993) described mentoring as a " one-to-one relationship between a pair of unrelated individuals, usually of different ages . . . a mentor is an older, more experienced person who seeks to develop the character and competence of a younger person" (p. 31). Studies by both Keller and Rhodes highlighted that mentor programs typically aspire to pair a caring, capable adult with a youth who comes from a disadvantaged background, and/or demonstrates "at-risk" behaviors. Through the development of close, caring relationships with adolescents, mentors engender positive "protective factors" that place youth on paths to positive outcomes (Zand, Thomson, Cervantes, Espiritu, Klagholz, LaBlanc, & Taylor, 2009).

Mentor relationships nurture positive growth across multiple domains. Zand et al. (2009) reported an association between improved psychological and behavioral outcomes for youth and positive relationships with adults. In their study, they reported that at-risk youth that formed at least one positive relationship with an adult were less likely to develop problematic behaviors than those without a positive relationship. Additionally, they found that youth improved in core competencies such as school-based functioning, familial relationships, relationships with other adults (i.e., school personnel), and life

skills. Rhodes (2002) asserted that mentors enhance social skills, improve cognitive skills, and promote positive self-identity.

Extracurricular Activities

Several studies have demonstrated a relationship between student grades and involvement in extracurricular activities such as sports and after school clubs (Broh, 2002; Stewart, 2008). Gutman and McLoyd (2000) found that for youth living in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods, high achievers were participants in more religious and extracurricular activities than low achieving students. High-achieving Black students also identified participation in extracurricular activities as a reason for their academic achievement (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Wiggan, 2008). Hubbard (1999) found that low-income African-American males were more likely to identify athletic programs as a source of motivation.

Peer Group Influence

Peer groups have a strong influence on the academic achievement of high school students, and this is particularly true for high achieving students from economically disadvantaged communities (Noguera, 2003b). Peer influence manifests in different ways, for example, Newman et al. (2000) found that peers influence the day-to-day behaviors such as classroom behavior and time spent on homework for urban, Black youth. High achieving African-American girls identified peer support as instrumental to their success (Hubbard, 1999), and Black students that were high achievers in math referenced successful peers and role models in math as factors that contributed to their math success (Moody, 2004). Horvat and Lewis (2003) demonstrated that high achieving

students navigate multiple peer groups, some of whom are unsupportive. However, their supportive peers offset negative pressure and positively encourage their associates.

School Climate

Extant research shows that the academic performance of students, particularly African Americans, is largely influenced by the social support they receive at school, particularly from teachers (Hersi, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1997; Noguera, 2003b). According to Noguera, effective schools have a clear sense of purpose, high expectations, rigorous curriculum, productive relationships with parents, are orderly and safe, and have a commitment to educate all students. Research also demonstrates that school climate conditions also affect student aspirations, and aspirations are linked to academic achievement (Roeser et al., 1996; Plucker, 1998). Plucker asserted schools that inspire students, foster a sense of belonging, and instill self-confidence in their students are linked to high student aspirations.

High-Achieving Black Students

The literature on high achieving Black students highlights that there are several factors that contribute to their success. These factors include school connectedness, parental and peer support, and student gender. Additionally, high achieving Black students display characteristics such as the ability to code-switch, racial pride and/or strong ethnic identity, and self-efficacy.

School Connectedness

School climate is important for all students, but especially important in the achievement of Black students (Stewart, 2008). Academically successful Black students generally have a strong sense of school connectedness, or a *psychological sense of school*

belonging, which is the degree in which students believe themselves to be valued, accepted, respected, and welcomed as members of the school community (Goodenow, 1992; Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Uwah, McMahon, & Furlow, 2008). A critical determinant of student feelings of inclusiveness is the teacher-student relationship (Sizemore, 1988). Research suggests that for African Americans particularly, encouragement and support from teachers is important for academic achievement (Ladson-Billings, 1997; Lee, 2000; Noguera, 2003a). Carter (2005) argued that students' perceptions of school belonging are linked with their racial, ethnic, and gender ideologies. Meaning the structure of their race, gender, and ethnic identities influence perceptions of their schools' receptivity.

Gender

Gender is a salient characteristic in the achievement of African-American high school students. Numerous studies have highlighted gender disparities among the academic achievement and college enrollment rates among African-Americans (Cose, 2003; Hubbard, 2005; Strayhorn, 2008; Uwah et al., 2008; Wiggan, 2014). Cose reported that Black females had higher GPAs than Black males, were more likely to attain higher levels of education, and hold more managerial and professional positions than Black males. In a study of high-achieving African-American students who participated in AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), an in-school educational program which aims to increase academic achievement among minority and low-income students, Hubbard found that girls attended four-year colleges at considerably higher rates than boys in the study, despite all students being considered "high achieving."

Several studies have examined school related factors that contribute to gender disparities in achievement and attainment among African-American youth. Teachers are more likely to have low-expectations for African-American males, and are more likely to view their behavior negatively, resulting in negative attention and poor evaluations (Downey & Pribesh, 2004; Grant, 1985). Black boys are also disciplined more severely and more frequently than girls (Lipman, 1998). These school based discriminatory actions have long-term consequences for African-American males. Hubbard (2006) argued that a large part of African-American girls' success is due to their tendency to challenge discrimination they face, as opposed to boys who were less likely to challenge discrimination and viewed it as a normal part of their schooling experiences.

Recent research problematizes the standard narrative of high achieving Black girls and troubled Black boys (Allen, 2015; Blake, Butler, Lewis, & Darensbourg, 2011). According to Blake et al., Black girls are disciplined at higher rates than any other racial group within the same gender. The same study also found that they are also perceived to be verbally disrespectful and combative by school staff. Allen studied high achieving Black males who view their academic identity as a form of resistance against White hegemony. Extant research on race and gender intersectionality highlights a complex portrait of Black schooling experiences that does not simply fit into one narrative.

Parental Support

Parental support and involvement is a consistent theme in the academic success of Black high school students (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Yan, 1999). According to Yan, parents of academically successful low-income African-American students help with homework, engage in consistent and meaningful dialogue, uphold clear behavioral

boundaries, and create home environments that are emotionally supportive. High-achieving Black students typically have parents who participate in school activities, and contact schools more frequently than parents of low-performing students (Clark, 1983). Studies by both Yan and Clark also found that parents of highly successful Black students also have high educational expectations of their children.

Parent-child discussion is another important aspect of academic success for African-American students (Clark, 1983; Hayes, 2012; Stewart 2008; Yan, 1999). Yan argued that parents of high achieving Black students were more likely to discuss plans for the future and experiences in school as compared to low-performing students. In *Family Life and School Achievement: Why Poor Black Students Succeed or Fail*, Clark (1983) stated that frequent family discussions about school issues also correlated with high academic achievement.

As race continues to impact African-Americans across many areas of life, the parents of high-achieving Black students make an effort to promote the positive racial/ethnic socialization of their children as a buffer against racial discrimination from a young age (Yan, 2009). Baker (2014) found that Black parents of high-achieving Kindergarten students not only engaged in traditional measures of home learning stimulation such as reading to children, helping with homework, etc., they also had frequent discussions about cultural heritage. Coard and Sellers (2005) posited that African-American parents engage in "mainstream" parenting practices, such as encouraging the values and goals of the dominant culture—White and middle-class—in addition to promoting the values and goals of African-American heritage.

Peer Groups

While much of the literature on high-achieving Black students focuses on the role of parenting in their academic success, peers also impact high educational achievement for this population (Darensbourg & Blake, 2014; Hubbard, 2005; Stewart, 2008). Peers are important in effecting the values, aspirations, and motivation of Black high school students (Bedsworth, Colby, & Doctor, 2006; Griffin, Allen, Kimura-Walsh, & Yamamura, 2007). Darensbourg and Blake asserted that students influence each other in terms of the emphasis they place on the efficacy of education in their future success, which consequently impacts their achievement and behavioral engagement within schools. Peers also provide encouragement for participation and persistence in academic activities, and the pursuit of post-secondary education (Holland, 2011). One study of peer, family, and neighborhood effects on academic outcomes found that the extent to which Black students believed their peers intended to complete high school significantly correlated to student GPA and intentions to graduate from high school (Williams, Davis, Saunders, & Williams, 2002).

Savvy

Academically successful students also demonstrate skills that enable them to astutely navigate different environments. In a study about high-achieving Black students in an AVID program, Hubbard (2005) found that most students in the program maintained relationships with friends from their neighborhood who were not academically inclined, yet did not let them negatively influence their achievement.

These students also displayed a critical consciousness regarding education systems, yet still played by the rules of educational institutions. Wiggan (2014)

described these students as "playing the game": although they do not necessarily believe that grades and test scores are true measures of their intelligence or achievement, they still strove to meet school standards of academic achievement and intelligence. Hubbard (2005) found that while high-achieving Black students demonstrated a critical awareness of systemic inequality, they still promoted traditional achievement beliefs. The same study also found that high-achieving girls were more likely to challenge discrimination than their male counterparts.

In traditional scholarship of academic success, part of "playing the game" entails the acquisition of dominant (White middle-class) cultural capital (Fordham, 1996; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu, 1987). Cultural capital includes speaking styles, how to interact with others, knowledge of specific types of books, food, music, etc. (Carter, 2005). High-achieving students who acquire White middle-class cultural capital are able to access prestigious social groups and institutions (Lamont & Lareau, 1988). Phelan, Davidson, and Yu (1998) identified strategies that adolescents use when encountering "borders," which are "features of cultural difference that are not politically neutral" (p. 10). High-achieving Black students adapt specific strategies to successfully navigate their multiple cultural and socioeconomic borders.

Racial Pride/Ethnic Identity

A strong sense of racial pride and/or ethnic identity is also important in the academic success of African-American students (Butler-Barnes, Chavous, Hurd, & Varner, 2013; Eccles, Wong, & Peck, 2006; Ward, 1990). Butler-Barnes et al. found that black youth who receive positive images of being Black tend to demonstrate higher academic achievement than those who do not. Eccles, Wong and Peck argued that

instances of racial discrimination can negatively affect the achievement of African-American adolescents, but a positive connection to their ethnic group reduces the deleterious effects of discrimination in their academic self-concept and school achievement.

Self-efficacy

High-achieving African-American students generally have high self-efficacy beliefs, which consequently contribute to their academic success. Self-efficacy is a self-belief about one's ability within a specific sphere (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Academic self-efficacy is the belief one has about their ability and agency in academic settings (Bandura, 2001; Butler-Barnes et al., 2013). Students with high self-efficacy beliefs demonstrate higher levels of achievement, have strong academic motivation, and are more likely to persist despite facing academic obstacles (Jones & Ford, 2013). Clark (1983) found that students with positive self-perceptions—who are assertive, independent, and feel a sense of power over their academic lives—are generally more motivated to achieve academically.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study consisted of interviews and observations to allow the researcher to examine the experiences of study participants in a naturalistic setting while engaging with their educational histories through interviews. Student-participants took part in three rounds of interviews that focused on family background and dynamics, educational experiences, and aspirations. Seven participants were selected and observed once a week at their mentor site, in addition to participating in three rounds of interviews during spring/summer 2015. Two of the seven participants were also observed in their high schools. Additionally, one mentor for each student-participant was interviewed.

Methodological Rationale

Critical Race Theory scholars have called for more theorizing and counter storytelling from scholars of color to analyze the experiences of marginalized youth within institutional spaces (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). In response, Yosso (2005) developed a framework—Community Cultural Wealth—through which to view the non-dominant capital mobilized by marginalized youth within school contexts. I also sought to answer this call by centering Black students' experiential knowledge in explications of their school success through the lens of community cultural wealth. Use of experiential knowledge can counter White hegemonic discourse that frames Black student success as the attainment of White normative values (Liou, Antrop-Gonzalez, Cooper, 2009; Solórzano & Ornelas, 2002).

This study explored the experiences and perspectives of high-achieving Black students from low-income communities. Due to the centrality of student perspectives,

qualitative methods were the most appropriate for this study. Qualitative research is inductive; researchers/observers move from the particular to the general. This form of inquiry posits that reality is subjective and thus focuses on the complexity of individual meaning (Creswell, 2007). The purpose of this type of inquiry is to capture the lived experiences of individuals and/or groups within specific contexts. Furthermore, the researcher focused on how the *participants* made meaning in relation to the problem or context under inquiry (Creswell, 2007; Punch, 1998). For qualitative scholars, knowledge is situated within specific contexts as interpreted through the lived experiences of individuals and allows for in-depth exploration of the perspectives of individual participants (Creswell, 2009).

Students' lived experiences and the meanings they create based on those experiences are best encapsulated using qualitative methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative inquiry describes and interprets the myriad ways people make meaning of their world, and relies on interviews, observations, artifacts, visual and historical materials, and other data for those descriptions and interpretations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Since the purpose of this study was to explore how high-achieving Black students rationalized their success and utilized community-based strengths within academic environments, both interviews and observations were utilized.

Research Site

The city of Philadelphia provides the backdrop for students' educational experiences within the school district. Philadelphia was named "the poorest big city in America" due to high rates of deep poverty and unemployment; to note, high crime rates exacerbate the challenges faced by low-income families (Bunch, 2014). In addition to

poverty and crime, deeply entrenched racial segregation is evidenced in economic and residential sectors (Blanc & Simon, 2007). The School District of Philadelphia is tasked with educating the youth of Philadelphia within this context. The district itself has been plagued by school closures, budget cuts, and cheating scandals that have negatively impacted the participants of this study, and highlight the importance of access to resources like the college access mentor program discussed in this study.

School Closures

The School District of Philadelphia is the eighth largest district in the nation (The School District of Philadelphia, 2015). The district has a long history of strife and has been plagued by fights over racial segregation, the teaching of African American Studies, and the opening of charter schools (Blanc & Simon, 2007). In 2001 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania took control of the school district over claims of academic and fiscal crisis. In 2001, Pennsylvania's Republican Governor Tom Ridge collaborated with the Democratic mayor of Philadelphia, John Street, to establish the School Reform Commission (SRC) that replaced the traditional school board with five appointed members, three of whom are appointed by the governor and two of whom are appointed by the mayor. Blanc and Simon also reported that despite changes in the district governing body, the performance gap between White students and African-American students has remained high—in comprehensive high schools, less than 50 percent of ninth-grade students graduate within four years. In 2011, the hallmark newspaper, *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* exposed a cheating scandal that would eventually implicate 53 schools and 138 educators in the district (Graham & Purcell, 2012).

In addition to academic underperformance and educator malfeasance, the district has also experienced yearly fiscal crises due to cuts in federal and state funds, as well as declining enrollment due to the growth of charter schools in the city. The district failed to plan for a reduction of federal stimulus funds that reduced both direct federal and state allocations to schools in the city of Philadelphia. Additionally, the school district lacked the authority to levy new taxes; any additional tax funds must be approved from the state legislature (Caskey & Kuperberg, 2014).

Budget Cuts

The growth of charter schools in the city has also had a negative fiscal impact on district schools by reducing the number of enrolled students—and their accompanying funds—in public schools. Since the 2001 state takeover of the School District of Philadelphia, a new governance model has assigned private organizations control of a substantial portion of the lowest-performing schools in the district (Blanc & Simon, 2007). This led to an expansion of charter schools that operated within the city, from 40 charter schools in 2001 to 84 by 2013 (Jack & Sludden, 2013). By 2013, charter school enrollment had increased by 40,000 students in Philadelphia, with charters accounting for a quarter of the public school options in the district, and 30 percent of the student public school population (Eichel, 2013). Overall, Eichel reported that the growth of charter schools facilitated a 50,000-student enrollment decrease in district schools.

While the intra-district shifts in enrollment decreased the number of students attending district schools, the simultaneous decrease in federal and state funds allocated to the School District of Philadelphia resulted in a $1,327 loss per student and created a $1.35 billion deficit (Jack & Sludden, 2013). To trim the deficit, the district proposed to

close 23 schools and drastically cut district personnel, including critical school staff. Despite widespread protests by parents, students, and teachers, the 23 schools were eventually closed, affecting approximately 15,000 students. In July 2013, the district sent more than 3,700 layoff notices to teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school support personnel (McCabe & Herold, 2012). The demographic fallout from these school closures and layoffs significantly affected Black and Latino students and families; nationwide, school closures disproportionately affect Black and Latino students from low-income families (Lipman & Haines, 2007; Maxwell, 2006; Valencia, 2008).

Primary Research Site

Mentor Youth is a non-profit mentoring program for high achieving, low-income high school students in the city of Philadelphia. The program mentored Philadelphia tenth to twelfth graders, and closely facilitated their academic success through college acceptance. There were 27 high school students in the program at the time of data collection, 12 of whom identified as Black. The program's strong academic component focused on writing, critical thinking, and math skills. In addition to the development of academic skills, they also received SAT test preparation, gained experience in debate and public speaking, and attended college preparation workshops. The Mission Statement of the program explains:

> Our goal is to guide Philadelphia students from sophomore year through graduation in gaining acceptance to college and preparing for real world success. Our students are hand-selected by guidance counselors from more than a dozen local high schools and go through a rigorous application process. Once admitted, students are paired with two dedicated mentors. Our mentors are Philadelphia

professionals who give their time while pursuing full-time careers or graduate

degrees. In addition to the mentor relationship, students benefit from SAT Prep,

academic summer program participation and college application assistance.

More details about program structure will be discussed in the Findings chapter.

Secondary Research Sites

My intention was to observe each participant in their high school, however, only

two out of seven schools allowed me to conduct observations of study participants. Since

school observations were not central to the study, I will include brief descriptions of the

two high schools where I observed participants, as well as an overview of the sites I did

not gain access to for observations.

The first observation site was a special admissions magnet school located in a

quaint section of the city near downtown that serves fewer than 900 students. The

schooling environment was formal yet comfortable. It has received several awards for

academic excellence, although in recent years, student test scores on the state

examination have decreased. The student body was diverse compared to the

comprehensive high school in the participant's neighborhood, and Black and Latino

students made up approximately 73 percent of the student body. Approximately 90

percent of students were considered economically disadvantaged. The majority of

teachers were White.

The second site of observation was also a special admissions magnet school that

was located in a wealthy, urban community in Philadelphia. The atmosphere was casual

and students were encouraged to be responsible without intense monitoring of behavior

or activities. White students were a slight majority, but Black students constituted a large

minority of the student population. The majority of students in the school were not economically disadvantaged, although there was a substantial minority, fewer than 45 percent, who were considered economically disadvantaged. The majority of the teachers were also White.

Unobserved Participant High Schools

There were five schools that did not allow me to observe study participants in the classroom setting. School A is a large comprehensive high school in an economically depressed neighborhood in Philadelphia. Two years prior to data collection, it became a receiving school for students whose high school was closed by the city. The school is approximately 80 percent Black, and 100 percent of students are considered economically disadvantaged. Serious incidents, including assaults and possession of weapons, increased dramatically after the exiled students were enrolled in the school. School B is also a comprehensive high school located in a mixed income, immigrant neighborhood relatively close to downtown. Like school A, school B was also a receiving school for students who were displaced due to school closures, and there was also an increase in serious incidents following the merger of the student body. A little over half of the student population is Black, and 100 percent of the students are considered economically disadvantaged.

School C is a charter school that is also located in an economically depressed neighborhood in the city. Local families were initially excited about the opening of a new school, but after budget cuts to extracurricular programs and high teacher turnover within the first three years of operation, some parents and students began to express

complaints. Demographic information about the student body is not accessible to the public.

School D is a well-regarded magnet school located in a middle class neighborhood just near downtown. Approximately 90 percent of students are economically disadvantaged and nearly half are Black. School E is a special admissions magnet school in a severely economically depressed community in Philadelphia. The student body is approximately 90 percent Black, and 100 percent of the student population is considered economically disadvantaged.

Sampling

The participants in the dissertation study were recruited through Mentor Youth. Mentor Youth provided mentors and other services to students who were considered high-achieving using Grade Point Average (GPA) above 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, and behavioral referrals from teachers. High school GPA is a strong predictor of high school performance and graduation, in addition to college completion (Allensworth & Easton, 2005, 2007; Camara & Echternacht, 2000; Geiser & Santelices, 2007). GPA is also a principle driver of differences in educational attainment by race/ethnicity and gender (Allensworth & Easton, 2007; Jacob, 2002; Roderick, Nagaoka, & Coca, 2006). Since a purpose of this study is to highlight students who do not conform to negative, stereotypical narratives, it was important to access students who demonstrated both high achievement as demonstrated through GPA and positive behavioral referrals. Students who were involved with Mentor Youth also qualify for free and reduced lunch, a standard measure of low-socioeconomic status (Ransdell, 2011).

Once a site that served high-achieving, low-income students was identified, homogenous sampling was used, focusing on student race (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). In addition to high academic achievement and low socioeconomic status, further criteria for inclusion in this study was students' race—African-American/Black—in order to explore the experiences and perceptions of Black students. All students attended publicly funded high schools in the city of Philadelphia, and have attended publicly funded schools in the city throughout their entire educational careers. There were a total of 12 students who fit the inclusion criteria, and 7 of the 12 mentees received parent permission, and submitted required consent and assent forms on time.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted between February 2015 and June 2015 at the site location for the Mentor Youth program in Philadelphia, and a total of seven students remained as participants throughout the duration of the study. Data collection consisted of three elements: (a) three rounds of one-on-one interviews with each student-participant; (b) weekly observations of each student-participant in their mentor program, and observations of two participants in their high schools for one day; and (c) one-on-one interviews with a mentor of each student-participant (See Tables 3.1 and 3.2). Observations of students at the mentor site took place throughout the duration of the study.

Table 3.1.
Interviews

Informant Type	Number of Informants	Number of Interviews	Total Interviews Conducted
Student-Participants	7	3	21
Mentors/Program Staff	7	1	7
Total			**28**

Table 3.2.
Observations

Location	Number of Hours
Program Site	16
School Site One	5
School Site Two	5
Total	**26**

Interviews

The central component of data collection focused on the narratives of high achieving Black students who participated in an academic and college preparation mentor program. For this portion of the study, seven students were interviewed in-person three times at their mentor site. Semi-structured interview questions were the preferred interview structure for this study. Semi-structured interviews allowed guided dialogue that provided insight into student perspectives and the nuances of their experiences (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Siedman (2006) advocated three distinct interviews that focus on a different purpose. The first round of student-participant interviews focused on students' life history and self-perceptions. The second round of student-participant

interviews focused on racial identity and racialized experiences in community and academic settings. The last round of student-participant interviews focused on their aspirations, skills, and attributions for success.

Toward the end of the spring semester, students' mentors were interviewed once at the mentor site or via Skype. Two mentor program administrators were also interviewed to provide details about program history, function, and goals. In total I conducted 28 interviews and approximately 26 hours of observations. The individuals who were interviewed during this study provided unique insight into the strengths and motivations of the student participants. However, this study privileged the narratives of student-participants to highlight why they believed they were successful, thus mentor interviews were not utilized in data analysis.

Student Interviews

The first round of student interviews focused on each student's life history and self-perceptions. The second round of interviews gauged their perceptions of their interactions with peers and adults within their communities and high schools, and examined the centrality of race in those experiences. Additionally, this interview attempted to understand how they viewed their racial identity, and if it played a role in their academic self-perception. The last one-on-one interview focused on student aspirations and reflections on their navigation of different fields—home, school, and community.

Mentor Interviews

Mentors from the data collection site provided insight into the intellectual and noncognitive abilities of students in an academic setting, and why they believe these students are successful.

Observations

The second component consisted of observations of student-participants at their mentor site every Saturday from 10:30am–2:30pm throughout the academic semester, from February 2015 to June 2015. Observations at the mentor site focused on the behaviors that students engaged in that may promote success in educational institutions. Since only two Philadelphia high schools allowed me access to their classrooms, two students were observed for one day during school hours within their high school setting.

Throughout the majority of my observations at the mentor program, I was an observer-participant, meaning participants knew of my presence, but my engagement with them was limited. As students and staff became more familiar with my educational and career background, I was asked to become more involved in one class discussion about race-based affirmative action; the program instructor spoke to me directly about strategies to foster a positive discussion. During observation days, I had informal conversations with study participants to gauge their overall well-being and build rapport.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis was an iterative process that began during the initial stages of data collection (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). The first step entailed collecting data from interviews and observations. Within 24 hours, interviews were recorded and transcribed and field notes from observations were recorded. I began analysis using the process of open coding where data was read several times, and then I began developing preliminary,

descriptive codes based on student responses (Strauss & Corbin, 2015). Next, I used the

process of axial coding whereby recurring themes in the initial codes were identified to

create multiple categories.

Themes emerged from the categories and were compared to the theoretical tenets

of community cultural wealth, meaning I used the theoretical lens of community cultural

wealth (CCW) to gauge if emergent themes were representative of CCW. One purpose

of this study was to analyze the academic success of Black students from low-income

communities through the community cultural wealth framework, and in the process,

examine the applicability of CCW to explications of their academic achievement. I

categorized data based on the six types of capital posited by the community cultural

wealth framework—familial, social, navigational, resistant, aspirational, and linguistic.

Themes that problematized or disconfirmed the different types of capital explicated in

this theory were also identified. Descriptive coding that was not relevant to the research

was not included in analysis for this study. To meet IRB requirements of confidentiality,

data was stored using Microsoft Word in a password-protected computer and paper

copies of field notes were kept in a locked file cabinet. Participants were assigned aliases

with limited descriptive information.

Positionality

I am the principle instrument in a qualitative study and the interpretations that

were made are viewed through my lens (Creswell, 2007). As a result, it is important that

I present my positionality. I am a woman of African-American and Caribbean heritage,

and I am currently a doctoral candidate at a large urban university in the Northeast. My

experience as an educator in low-income communities has spurred my interest in

studying high-achieving Black students from these communities. I have six years of K-12 teaching experience in urban schools. My first instructional position was at an alternative school that served students with high needs in southern California. The majority of our students were Black and Latino males who lived in foster care or group homes. Afterwards, I spent four years as an 8th grade U.S. History and Civics instructor at a high-performing charter middle school in Los Angeles. All of the students were Black or Latino and lived in high-poverty neighborhoods. As an instructor, I took on additional responsibilities in order to provide my students with a rigorous, holistic educational experience. In my classroom, I found students who succeeded despite having to overcome many obstacles, and after studying the various challenges faced by urban youth and urban schools for many years, I wanted to focus on those Black students who have a narrative that diverges from the mainstream perceptions of Black youth of color from low-income communities.

I believe that race and class shape our experiences and the lens through which we view the world. Indeed, my race, gender, class, and career background may lead to bias in my interpretation of the data. However, I hoped that member checks and triangulation would mitigate some of the biases associated with my positionality.

I did not have prior contact or knowledge with the students in my study, nor with the majority of Mentor Youth program staff, except Megan O'Brien. My observations—and at times, participation—did not interfere with program activities and classroom instruction. However, I understand that since I am the main instrument for interpretation, my prior experience as a secondary history instructor may have influenced how I interpreted observations and interviews.

Validity and Ethical Considerations

Assessing validity in qualitative research can be quite challenging. Validity generally represents the procedure by which the researcher attempts to demonstrate that the data collected is true to the phenomenon (Lichtman, 2013). In this study, validity was assessed by member checks, which is a technique where the participant confirms what is said. In addition, this study relied upon triangulation, which is a technique whereby multiple forms of evidence are used to confirm a concept (Lichtman, 2013). I developed interview protocols to ensure that interviews were structured the same way. Interviews with student participants and mentors were conducted at the program site. For member checking, I cross-referenced interview statements and observational data with participants to check the accuracy of the account. I triangulated data by interviewing mentor program administrators and mentors about the student-participants, in addition to gathering observational data.

Ethical considerations are important in qualitative research. Creswell (2008) highlighted several steps to avoid ethical breaches, including "informing participants of the purpose of the study, refraining from deceptive practices, sharing information with participants, being respectful of the research site, reciprocity, using ethical interview practices, maintaining confidentiality, and collaborating with participants" (p. 238). In my study, informed consent was obtained from all participants, and I maintained a respectful distance from program activities while observing students. Before each interview, I informed participants that they did not have to answer any questions they did not feel comfortable answering, and they could withdraw from the study at any time. I

informed teachers, program staff, and student-participants of my role as the researcher

and established clear boundaries with those with whom I interacted.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In response to the call from Critical Race Theorists for scholars of color to explore the experiences of marginalized youth within institutional spaces (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002), *community cultural wealth* seeks to illuminate the non-dominant capital mobilized by marginalized youth within school contexts. Data shows that community cultural wealth provides a useful lens for examining the academic success of seven high achieving Black high school students from Philadelphia. Black high school students do utilize non-dominant capital to succeed in educational institutions, but not all types of capital were equally relevant to student success. Aspirational, familial, and navigational capital were all factors in the academic success of study participants. Social and linguistic capital were also explanatory factors in their success, but to limited degrees, and student narratives highlighted the continued importance of institutional agents in the success of low-income minority students. Resistant capital was not a strong explanatory factor in their success. This chapter includes a detailed site description of the mentor program where the majority of observations took place, profiles of each student and their educational histories, and presents the examination of community cultural wealth in their academic success.

Primary Site Description

Mentor Youth is a nonprofit college preparatory mentoring program for low-income high school students that started in New York City and now has branches in several major cities across the United States. Mentor programs typically aspire to pair a caring, capable adult with a youth who comes from a disadvantaged background (Keller,

2005; Rhodes, 2002). Through the development of close, caring relationships with adolescents, mentors engender positive "protective factors" that place youth on paths to positive outcomes (Zand et al., 2009). In addition to connecting youth with caring adults, Mentor Youth also has a strong focus on academic competencies and preparing Philadelphia students for the academic and social cultures of colleges and universities. The program began operating in Philadelphia in 2012 when they accepted their first sophomore class. The program served 27 low-income sophomores, juniors and seniors from the city of Philadelphia at the time of data collection. Adults in the program consist of program administrators, tutors for academic sessions, and mentors.

The program was housed in downtown Philadelphia in a multi-story annex building that was associated with a large, urban university. The university's flags surrounded the city block where the program takes place and added to the collegiate atmosphere of the program. Students chatted quietly as they showed their school IDs to the building security guard, and then they took an elevator to the fourth floor of the large, glass building. The hallways were a neutral cream color that is reminiscent of office spaces rather than a university building. Chairs and couches were located at the end of each hallway. When students entered their classrooms, they were greeted by two program administrators who started each session by asking the students about their week. Once tutoring sessions began, the atmosphere was relaxed, but productive. Once the tutors arrived, the sessions were more lively (Field Notes, March 14, 2015).

During the school year, each student was paired with two mentors whom they meet every Saturday in grade-level groups. Classes commenced at the beginning of September and concluded toward the middle of May, consisting of approximately 24

sessions in total. The Saturday sessions began with tutoring during the morning block, from 10:30am to 12:00pm, followed by lunch. During the afternoon block, from 12:00pm to 2:30pm, students met with their mentors. Mentor-mentee pairs engaged in activities focusing on college readiness, public speaking, debate, study skills, etc. There were also workshops that focused on a variety of college-related topics, and 5- or 6-week series where students engaged in controversial topics such as affirmative action. The program promoted student participation in summer enrichment programs, and participating students had all expenses covered by the program (food, room and board, flights, etc.). The academic summer programs were not affiliated with Mentor Youth. Program staff, tutors, and mentors are unpaid. Funding for program operations comes from private donations, and an annual fundraising event.

Overview of Mentors and Applicants

Mentors generally find out about the program through word-of-mouth. In fact, in the first two years, all mentors were friends, or friends of friends, of the program administrators. The program was also discussed in a well-known book that increased the number of mentor applicants. Some mentors found the program through Google searches about mentoring as well. Out of the approximately 45 mentors I observed in program sessions, only two appeared Black, and there were a small number of Asian and Latino mentors as well. The vast majority of the remaining mentors were White.

In order to recruit applicants, Mentor Youth staff initially reached out to local high school counselors to spread the word about their program, and admissions has becoming increasingly selective as word-of-mouth spreads. The program focuses on students who qualify for free and reduced lunch—a standard measure of low-income--

and have at least a 3.0 GPA (Ransdell, 2011). In addition to GPA and economic characteristics, Mentor Youth also looks for students who have college aspirations but may not have the resources and "college knowledge" to achieve their goals (Conley, 2005).

Student Profiles—Family, Academic Self-appraisal, and Career Goals

The seven high school students in this study are of African-American descent (non-Caribbean or non-African immigrants) and come from several low-income neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Each student attends a school outside of their local neighborhood due to the encouragement of either a middle school teacher or counselor (See Table 4.1). Brief profiles of their family characteristics, academic histories, and career goals are discussed in the profiles below.

Table 4.1
Demographic Information

Participant	Gender	Age	Class Year	School Type
Bakari	Male	18	Senior	Magnet
Daria	Female	17	Senior	Comprehensive
Damien	Male	15	Sophomore	Magnet
Rebecca	Female	16	Junior	Magnet
Tiffany	Female	15	Sophomore	Charter
Kwame	Male	17	Senior	Comprehensive
Sarah	Female	17	Junior	Magnet

Bakari

Bakari attends a magnet school in a severely economically depressed section of the city. He stands about 5'10" with a medium build, with brown skin and a playful smile. He is outgoing and describes himself as optimistic and social, yet focused completely on school. He lives with his mother and two sisters, and while his maternal grandfather does not live with the family, he is involved in Bakari's life. He had the opportunity to study in Morocco one summer through a program he applied to via Mentor Youth, and that experience shaped his career aspirations and life goals. He wants to study Arabic and become a translator or a diplomat. He has been a member of Mentor Youth for three years, since his sophomore year in high school.

Daria

Daria attends a traditional public school in a mixed-income portion of the city, but it is not her neighborhood school. She is quiet, but not shy, and has a friendly demeanor. She describes herself as dedicated and participates in several after-school activities while working part-time to help support her family. She lives with her mother and three sisters; her father is not involved in her life. When I asked her about her early experiences in school, she stated that she was not always a good student. In elementary, she did well academically and behaviorally in a charter school, but when she transferred to a public middle school, she began to misbehave due to the behavior of her peers. After being physically assaulted by girls in her neighborhood who attended her school, she realized the importance of peer groups and their effect on one's behavior. Since that turning point, Daria has been a part of the program for three years. Her ninth grade math teacher, Mentor Youth administrator Megan O'Brien, is the reason she applied for the mentor

program, and she credits Mentor Youth for keeping her on track. Daria aspires to be a middle school teacher.

Damien

Damien attends one of the top performing magnet schools in the city of Philadelphia. He is short with a slim build, brown skin, a low haircut, and wire-rimmed glasses. He is outgoing with people he feels comfortable with, but keeps to himself if he does not know someone well. During the mentor session discussions, he seemed to enjoy going against the opinions of everyone else, yet he expressed his contrarianism in a playful way that other students did not find threatening. His parents are divorced, and he splits his time between his mother and his father. Although he used to be close to his mother, Damien acknowledged there is distance between them now and he would rather keep to himself when at home. However, he considers his school to be his third home, and the place where he is most comfortable. Damien loves poetry and writing, and would love to be a writer as a career choice, as well as an English teacher or a school counselor so he can encourage high school students to achieve their goals. This is his first year participating in Mentor Youth.

Rebecca

Rebecca attends a prestigious magnet school near downtown. She wears long twists that frame a round face and perpetual smile. She describes herself as well-rounded, social, and smart, and says that other people call her outspoken, although she does not agree. She lives with her mom and two sisters now, but her parents lived together for years before they separated. Although her family is not close-knit in the traditional sense, they still maintain close relationships. Rebecca states that she was not

always a good student behaviorally, but academics always came easily for her. She

admits that she struggles to stay focused in school due to boredom and she feels she can

push herself harder. Although she has high aspirations, she is not sure she wants to put in

the work to reach her goals. Rebecca aspires to be a dermatologist, but is concerned

about the time she would need to dedicate in school. She has been a part of Mentor

Youth for two years and believes the program helps her stay on track.

Tiffany

Tiffany attends a charter school in an economically depressed section of the city.

She has a slim, athletic build and caramel-colored skin. She wears her shoulder length

hair in braided extensions. She is confident and outgoing, and is comfortable expressing

her opinion. However, she has a tendency to shut down and become brusque when

stressed or unhappy about a situation. She lives with her mom, step-father, and little

sister and describes her family as happy and supportive. Like some of the other female

participants, Tiffany shared that she exhibited negative behavior prior to high school, but

still performed well academically. She would like to attend a top-tier university and

become a forensic pathologist. This is her first year participating in the mentor program,

and she identifies its tremendous impact on her aspirations and efficacy.

Kwame

Kwame attends a comprehensive public high school—not his neighborhood

school—near the outskirts of the city. He is tall and slender with skin the color of

chocolate. Kwame is shy and seems to always wear a nervous grin. He lives with his

mom and two sisters, and he does not have a relationship with his father. He describes

himself as funny and athletic, although he does not play organized sports because he

wants to focus on school. He would like to study astronomy, but is not sure what career path he will pursue. Although Kwame is generally shy, when he has a goal, he will do what it takes to reach that goal, including contacting college administrators and financial aid to ask for more money; in fact, he was awarded $5,000 for doing so. However, mentor program personnel who know Kwame well are concerned about his academic skills when he enrolls in college. They believe his school has not prepared him to take college-level coursework and they plan to maintain contact with him as he matriculates through college, even though the program generally does not continue through college. He has participated in the mentor program for three years.

Sarah

Sarah attends one of the highest ranked magnet schools in the city. When she is in an uncomfortable setting or does not know someone well, she has a reserved, taciturn demeanor that can be perceived as rude. However, in the school setting, where she is most comfortable, Sarah is outgoing and friendly. She lives with her mom and has a total of five siblings, four of whom remain in the house. Sarah's older sister graduated from the same high school and is currently a college student. Her career goal is to become a teacher. Sarah is the only female participant in the study that did not describe negative behavior issues in her prior educational experiences. She has been a member of Mentor Youth for two years.

Educational Context

Participants' educational experiences were impacted by both the fiscal instability of the School District of Philadelphia and the socio-economic positioning of their respective communities. It is important to highlight their experiences and perspectives

relating to their educational histories in order to gain insight into the strengths and attitudes relevant to their academic success. School closures and/or budget cuts directly impacted study participants, and the lack of economic opportunities and resources in their respective communities have influenced how they view their neighborhood schools. Indeed, their perceptions of their current high school experiences are explored as well. Due to school choice initiatives and school closures, each participant attends high school outside of their local community.

Effect of Budget Crisis on Study Participants

The budget context has affected the educational experiences of the participants in this study. All but two participants in this study addressed how school closures and budget cuts affected their educational experiences. In their study of school closings in Chicago, Lipman, and Person (2007) found that teachers at schools where students would be relocated, referred to as "receiving schools," were afraid that newly displaced students would bring down test scores. In the same study, displaced students were concerned about crossing gang boundaries. Daria, who as a junior was displaced when her high school closed, expressed similar concerns about the dangers of attending her new school:

I was scared to go there in the first place because I thought there was

going to be fights every day. I just pictured it as a dungeon or something.

I heard people were jumping people, bullying, it was crazy.

Kwame, who was a student at a receiving high school, stated that the school climate became increasingly negative with the addition of new students from a shuttered school, "it's different from what it used to be . . . behavior wise." He elaborated, "We was on a good track, but once Hamilton kids came here, it started going down." He also stated that

his school had an effective principal who also helped improve the school, but he was subsequently laid off during the severe round of budget cuts.

Although Tiffany and Rebecca did not attend comprehensive high schools, citywide budget cuts also affected their schooling experiences. As a magnet school student, Rebecca felt her biggest challenge was a lack of opportunity due to scarce resources. Similarly, while Tiffany enjoyed her charter school experience when she was in middle school, she is now eager to leave:

> I'm trying to get out of my school now because they cut everything. They
>
> cut all of the sports, they cut all of the extra classes. [There are] no more
>
> extra-curricular classes or any programs after school no more. It's just . . .
>
> I really don't enjoy there anymore.

Despite the challenges faced by students in the district, the participants in this study were still able to achieve academically.

Past Neighborhood School Experiences and Perceptions

Each of the student-participants lived in economically deprived sections of the city, and none of them attended their neighborhood school due to the intervention of teachers or guidance counselors in middle or elementary school. When asked about their perceptions of their neighborhood schools, each participant described a lack of resources, opportunities, and negative school climates that they attribute to negative student behavior. Rebecca, a junior at a magnet school in the city, confided, "Our neighborhood school is bad. It's terrible. It's . . . [name of two local schools] so both of them are terrible options". Damien lamented that he "wouldn't have as many opportunities" if he attended his neighborhood school.

The students believed that their educational experiences would have been different if they attended their neighborhood schools. Daria, who has attended her neighborhood schools for longer durations than the other participants, negatively described her public school experience: "I went to public school and it was like all these bad kids, teachers don't have them under control". Similarly, Damien, a sophomore at a project-based magnet school, also believed that he would have had a different experience if he attended his neighborhood school. Damien imagined that he would be " stressed from the school community". Furthermore, Kwame expected more difficulties if he were attempting to focus on academics because of the behavior of students who attend his neighborhood school: "My neighborhood school is not that good. It's really not that good, so I just think it would be harder to learn because of the students". Tiffany exclaimed that she would never attend her neighborhood school because of its poor reputation and lack of academic rigor:

> My neighborhood school is [names school] and they have a very bad reputation. I know a lot of people that go there, and they are trying to say its getting better, but the people I know get no work done. Like I can ask them a question, and they'll be like "What is that?" They aren't on . . . I would say the reading level the work level that I'm on, so why would I downgrade?

Each of the students expressed the belief that attending their neighborhood school would negatively impact their socio-emotional health, and their academic progress.

Students' Perceptions and Experiences of Current Schools

Each study participant attended a magnet or charter school in the city of Philadelphia. Collectively, the participants felt their educational experiences were better in comparison to what they believe they would experience in their neighborhood schools. They perceived more supportive peers, more resources, and more competent and caring school staff. Although each student described the benefits of attending their respective schools as opposed to their neighborhood schools, some participants were still critical about the lack of academic rigor and resources that existed in their current schools.

Damien, who described a tense family environment, described how his school resembles another home: "My school is like my . . . I guess I got to say a third home . . . because my dad's house is a second home, but . . . I can just relax at my school and feel free". The participants also described peer and school staff support. Damien expresses comfort in his interactions with teachers and his advisor, and has a special connection with his English teacher due to his love of writing. Both Damien and Kwame received support from their peers—both African-American and non-Black—in school. This finding is contrary to studies that state high-achieving Black students, particularly males, do not receive positive peer support (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). Sarah believed that the positive school climate at her school, as compared to neighborhood schools, is because it is a special admissions institution.

> It's a small school and we have special admissions, so we umm…pick our students, and so, neighborhood schools don't get to do that and so everybody gets to come . . . and so . . . we have a more friendlier environment since everyone isn't allowed to come.

Studies show that a positive, supportive school climate contributes to academic achievement (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013).

Project-based, experiential learning was important to Sarah, who was particularly interested in discussing the academic ideology of her school. She described her school as special because they do not take many tests. While they do take standardized exams, she perceived that her school "isn't really test centered, so you aren't stuck memorizing stuff from a book. You learn more from experience". Diamond (2007) found that didactic instruction was more prevalent in schools with large low-income, African-American populations, even though research suggests that this population of students benefits more from engaged pedagogy. Sarah praised the focus on critical thinking in her school:

> It's definitely a good school. We focus more on critical thinking rather
>
> than, more than other schools. We're kind of like, anti-testing. Not
>
> exactly anti-testing, but the teachers feel that teaching testing, how to test,
>
> is more . . . It doesn't help students in the future, and so we . . . The things
>
> we learn, or that are taught, are more to force us to draw ideas from things
>
> around us.

Nationwide, school districts are under intense pressure to increase performance on standardized tests, and many students and teachers are critical of the emphasis on high-stakes tests to assess student achievement (Lattimore, 2005; Lipman, 2004; Jones & Egley, 2004). Sarah's comments echo the sentiments of those who are critical of the focus on high-stakes tests as unsatisfactory in providing the skills necessary to thrive in our society (Barksdale-Ladd & Thomas, 2000).

Not all of the participants have positive academic experiences within their current schools. Tiffany, a student at a charter school characterized by fiscal instability and negative school climate in the city, expressed concern over the lack of academic rigor at her school:

> Like academic wise, it's not organized so when I go to these classes here
> [at the mentor program], I'm like, "what are you guys talking about?" I'm
> still in basic Algebra and that's just sad. Now, all these other schools are
> taking their PSATs and I have yet to take my PSATs. I just need to get
> out of there now.

Tiffany would like to transfer out of her current school to one that she believes will better prepare her academically. This exemplifies a nationwide trend in urban schools—high-achieving students who exit under-performing schools (Lutton & Metzker, 2014).

Daria and Sarah both mentioned the resources available at their respective schools, such as a one-to-one laptop program and extensive extracurricular activities, in contrast to their neighborhood schools. Contrary to other students' experiences at their choice schools, Tiffany expressed frustration at the lack of resources at her school due to severe budget cuts: "In seventh grade, I was on the basketball team, I was a track leader…because I was the best runner on the team and they took everything away". Each student has been affected by budget cuts and school closures in some way, but depending on school climate and organization, some participants continued to have more positive educational experiences.

Community Cultural Wealth

The presence and utilization of community cultural wealth has not been examined among high achieving Black high school students. This study sought to examine the relevance of community cultural wealth in the success of Black high school students from low-income communities. Results from this study show that this population does utilize non-dominant capital to succeed in educational institutions, but not all types of capital were equally relevant to student success based on student narratives. This examination of community cultural wealth found that aspirational, familial, and navigational capital strongly apply to the academic success of the participants in this study. Linguistic capital and social capital only moderately apply to rationalizations for their high academic achievement, and resistant capital does not apply in the explication of their success. Although the findings are presented in distinct sections according to the six forms of community cultural wealth (aspirational capital, familial capital, navigational capital, linguistic capital, social capital, and resistant capital), these forms of capital are not static and discrete, but instead represent transient processes that inform one another (Yosso, 2005).

This chapter also provides examples of how some forms of community cultural wealth are operationalized or evidenced as noncognitive factors that promote student achievement. Noncognitive factors in school performance are those strategies, attitudes and skills that foster achievement (Farrington, et al., 2012). "Noncognitive" can be perceived as a misnomer since most human behaviors are related to cognition (Borghans, Duckworth, Heckman, & Weel, 2008). However, the term will be used in this study to differentiate between student aptitude. *Academic behaviors* are those actions generally

linked with being a "good student": completing homework, studying, class participation, attending class, and other behaviors. *Academic perseverance* refers to "a student's tendency to complete school assignments in a timely and thorough manner, to the best of one's ability, despite distractions, obstacles, or level of challenge" (Farrington et al., p. 9). *Academic mindsets* are psycho-social beliefs and/or attitudes about academic tasks as they relate to oneself. *Learning strategies* are "processes and tactics one employs to aid in the cognitive work of thinking, remembering or learning" (p. 10). Lastly, *social skills* are interpersonal characteristics such as empathy, responsibility, assertion, and others.

Aspirational Capital

Aspirational capital is applicable in explaining the academic achievement of the participants in this study. Yosso (2005) defines aspirational capital as "the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers" (p. 77). Although the participants in this study were from low-income communities and experienced some family and schooling instability, the results from student narratives show that students still maintained high academic and career aspirations. Additionally, participants converted their aspirational capital into motivation to both persist in school and achieve high marks.

Familial Capital

Familial capital is also critical in explications of academic success for these students. Familial capital refers to the "cultural knowledges" and "pedagogies of the home" cultivated among kinship networks (Yosso, 2005, p. 79). Familial capital strongly influenced aspirational capital, which fosters academic achievement through the knowledges and values that undergird academic mindsets and persistence. Through

storytelling, elders within a kinship network highlight family struggles and triumphs and present alternative paths to youth. Family financial and emotional support allows participants to build other forms of capital that are applicable to student success, and participants gained skills and adaptive mechanisms which they convert to academic behaviors that facilitate academic success.

Navigational Capital

Navigational capital strongly applied to the academic success of students in this study. Navigational capital refers to the set of knowledges and skills utilized to maneuver through social institutions (Yosso, 2005). Study participants adeptly navigated educational institutions with positive social and academic outcomes, although they used different strategies when interacting with their peers within school. They also engaged in behaviors that garnered rewards from institutional agents, in addition to demonstrating academic perseverance. Through successfully managing peer groups, positive relationships with adults in educational settings, and academic perseverance, study participants were able to convert their navigational capital into behaviors, mindsets, and characteristics that promote academic success.

Linguistic Capital

Linguistic capital only moderately applies to explanations of student academic achievement. Yosso (2005) defines linguistic capital as "the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style" (p. 78). Study participants engaged in a variety of communication styles with high rates of verbal participation in educational institutions, all of which fostered positive relationships with institutional agents and contributed to high academic achievement. However,

institutional agents had the power to legitimize, reward, and punish certain speech behaviors, a fact that underscores the continued relevance of dominant cultural capital in the academic achievement of these students.

Social Capital

Like linguistic capital, social capital only moderately applies to the academic success of these participants. As defined by Yosso (2005), "Social capital can be understood as networks of people and community resources" (p. 79). Data showed that study participants were able to access valuable resources through community and kinship networks, but traditional applications of social capital—relationships with teachers and adults within other educational institutions—were still important for academic success. Data also showed that students were uprooted from their local neighborhood contexts, thus supplying limited access to community social capital.

Resistant Capital

Resistant capital was limited in explaining the success of the study participants. Resistant capital refers to the skills and knowledge emerging from oppositional behavior that challenges inequality (Yosso, 2005). Students were able to identify stereotypes and yet resist internalizing those stereotypes. However, many expressed colorblind ideologies and did not demonstrate an awareness of racialized structures in their lives. They also demonstrated a reluctance to acknowledge the possibility of maltreatment due to race, and occasionally, a reluctance to even discuss the topic of racial discrimination.

Strongly Applied to Academic Success

Aspirational, Familial, and Navigational capital are each elements of community cultural wealth that strongly apply to the academic success of study participants.

Participants were able to convert these types of capital into profits that promoted academic achievement.

Aspirational Capital

Student narratives show that aspirational capital is applicable in explaining the success of study participants, and it is a form of capital that has the capacity to produce profits in the form of academic achievement. According to Yosso (2005), aspirational capital "refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers" (p. 77). Each of the students in this study had high career aspirations and the expectation that they would attend college, despite the fact that the vast majority of the people in their families and communities did not attend college. Their aspirations were heavily influenced by familial capital, and family characteristics, and they believed that their aspirations set them apart from the typical Black high school student in Philadelphia.

> Bakari: It depends what college I go to but if I was to go to a college that
>
> has an Arabic major, I'd rather be a major in Arabic and like I
>
> want to work with United Nations as a Arabic translator.
>
> Sarah: [I want to] go into education and be a teacher.
>
> Kwame: I like astronomy. It's a career I want to pursue.
>
> Daria: [I want to become a] middle school teacher.
>
> Tiffany: Well, I want to become a forensic pathologist.
>
> Damien: I would like to be a high school English teacher or school
>
> counselor so I can encourage high school students to achieve their
>
> goals. Eventually I want to retire as a full therapist and publish

literature. A dream path I would like to have is being a famous

screen playwright, playwright, poet, author, and director.

Rebecca: I want to be a dermatologist.

Kwame, a college-bound senior, best represents aspirational capital in that he expressed high hopes for the future despite having tremendous financial and social burdens to overcome. His family faced challenging financial circumstances, his home environment was chaotic, and he lived in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the city of Philadelphia. Yet despite his circumstances, Kwame aspired to study astronomy and expressed a strong desire to make a better life for his family and help them move out of their neighborhood: "I think I'm the only chance that I got to bring my family from living in North Philadelphia. I want everything. I want my mom to have better". Studies show that students of color like Kwame who grow up in impoverished communities with little parental school involvement are less likely to complete high school and enroll in college than their more economically-advantaged peers, yet he was able to maintain aspirations of economic advancement despite the real barriers he faced (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Noguera, 2003a). Kwame's statement also highlights the important role of familial capital in the success of participants in this study, a finding which will be discussed in-depth in a latter section.

Many of the participants in this study expressed a belief that they are different than the typical Black high school student in Philadelphia, namely that their aspirations differentiate them from most of their peers. They believed that most Black students in Philadelphia were complacent and did not strive to achieve. Throughout our interviews, Kwame often articulated that he made a concerted effort to not engage in behaviors that

he felt were stereotypical of young Black men, such as "selling drugs, because they think it's cool." He felt engaging in these behaviors would distract him from achieving his goals. Although he held some negative views about some of his peers, he did not internalize those views. This is important because internalizing negative stereotypes has been shown to adversely affect achievement (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Although he was frequently exposed to students who did not maintain a similar academic orientation, his aspirational capital was converted to the motivation to achieve. According to Kwame, the students involved in Mentor Youth "are high achieving because we actually try to do good". In aspiring to do well, he engaged in behaviors that led to academic achievement.

Other participants in the study echoed Kwame's beliefs about their peers' lack of aspirations. Daria, who was also a college-bound senior, stated: "You can tell that they don't have more, they don't care more than the high school diploma. I refuse to be like that". She later added: "I want better, and I have a lot of people like supporting me, pushing me to become better. Bakari, another college-bound senior, expressed a similar sentiment: "What makes me different is that I'm really ambitious and I really want to be great". Damien, the youngest participant in the study, attributed his academic motivation to his career aspirations: "I try to think ahead and prepare myself for a good future in a career". Like Kwame, the other participants converted their aspirational capital into academic motivation and behaviors that fostered persistence/perseverance.

Each participant expressed a strong desire to attend college, which is also representative of their aspirational capital. Extant literature states that college enrollment rates for low-income youth vary according to parent educational attainment, and students whose parents did not complete high school—or have only a high school diploma—are

least likely to enroll (Choy, 2001). Kwame and the other participants in this study each

had limited exposure to college-educated adults in their families and their local

communities, yet they each chose career fields in which they must attain a college degree.

Each student expressed the belief that going to college was the only way to achieve their

financial and career goals. Bakari, a senior who planned to attend a local university in

the fall, summarized these ideals: "In my opinion, to become successful in this life, I have

to go to college. I have to get the most I can out of education so that way I can really

succeed in life". These youth were able to nurture a "culture of possibility" even though

their families have not attained the level of education they hope to pursue (Gandara,

1982).

　　　　For students who come from families that struggle financially, attending college

and subsequently having a stable career was an important goal for the future. Rebecca, a

high school junior, synthesized this belief:

　　　　I can make a lot of money over the decades if I go to school. The highest

　　　　paying jobs making the most money, you have to go to school for a long

　　　　time to get most of them . . . I need stability, that's why I want to go to

　　　　school, too. I want to be able to make sure I have a job.

Rebecca's aspirations for financial stability motivated her to succeed in school in

the hopes of attending college. Just as Kwame also sought to earn enough money

to move his family out of their dangerous neighborhood, other students expressed

similar motivations. The above examples bolster research that argues that first-

generation college students privilege career trajectory and financial stability when

aspiring to attend college (Saenz et al., 2007). Their aspirations to attend college

and have a stable, well-paying career motivated these students to achieve academically, and thus is instrumental in their academic success.

In addition to financial imperatives, some of the participants also verbalized a desire to expand their social networks, have different experiences, and pursue their love of learning through college attendance. Rebecca explained: "I want to go to college, not only because you need a degree, but it also seems like it would be a good place to meet people, and learn different things". Bakari invoked a similar sentiment: "My goal is to travel the world, and make connections to people from all over the world and especially in the Middle East, I want to bridge the gap between the Middle East and the United States". In addition to the material advantages of a college education and professional career, these high achieving students also aspired to deepen their learning beyond the realm of academics. Previous literature argues that being a minority from a poor community may constrain what one sees as possible, thus limiting aspirations (Strayhorn, 2009). However, these students highlight how the aspirational capital that does exist in low-income youth actually transcends their present reality.

Participants in this study expressed how activating aspirational capital fostered academic perseverance. Rebecca and Tiffany best articulate this idea. Despite feeling as if she is not challenged in school, Rebecca's career goals motivate her to persist: "I feel like I know that you have to finish school to get a job. I want to have a job so I know I have to finish school, even this school". Tiffany's desire to learn more about forensics inspired her to persist in school beyond her senior year in high school: "I'm interested in forensics, and since high school only lasts until twelfth grade, why stop there? So I want

to go to college". For Rebecca, aspirations, coupled with the knowledge of how to achieve her goals, set her apart from many of her peers. Rebecca elaborated:

 I think I see myself different because I had bigger goals and a plan for how to get there, because a lot of people may say they want to be a doctor or a lawyer, but they don't really know how you come to that, and they don't really look into it, so they might be confused. For example, one of my sister's friends said that she wanted to be a lawyer, so . . . I think she graduated high school a while ago, but now she's going to . . . she's going to like . . . I think her community college is for criminal justice. You can do that, but afterwards, you have to take the LSAT and, I don't really know if she knows that or not.

As the quote above implies, tacit or practical knowledge is important for academic achievement (Somech & Bogler, 1999). For these students, aspirational capital is vital in their academic success, but that success is in relation to the activation of skills that are necessary to navigate educational institutions.

Prior research has explored the high educational aspirations held by Black youth, but in some cases, their academic achievement does not align with their aspirations (Mickelson, 1990). The students in this study held high aspirations to attend college, attain financial security, and support their families. Extant research does not examine how aspirational capital is converted into academic achievement through the activation of noncognitive factors that promote student success. This research shows that study participants were able to convert their aspirational capital into academic achievement by using their aspirations as a motivating factor in goal setting and perseverance. However,

aspirational capital is only one component in their achievement; other forms of community cultural wealth were utilized in their academic success as well.

Familial Capital

According to the participants, parents were instrumental in forming their high aspirations, thus highlighting the importance of familial capital in shaping aspirational capital. Familial capital refers to the "cultural knowledges" cultivated among kinship networks (Yosso, 2005, p. 79). Among the participants in this study, familial capital was important for academic success. Family struggles and triumphs expressed through storytelling motivated participants to achieve academically in order to secure a more stable financial future. For most participants, familial support was critical for their academic success, and they defined support as: monitoring school-related tasks, meeting basic living needs, role modeling, and verbal expressions of encouragement. They also described a multitude of skills and beliefs gained from their families that they utilize to achieve academically. Student responses show that the academic success of these participants is partly due to the activation and embodiment of familial capital.

Bakari best illustrates the role of familial capital in academic success. One of my interviews with Bakari took place when he needed to choose a university to attend in the fall. He was accepted into several universities, but he narrowed his choice down to two—one local mid-tier university near his hometown of Philadelphia, and a prestigious university in Washington, DC. While he was nervous about making the "wrong" decision, he could not suppress his prideful smile when he shared his dilemma. Bakari, who was raised by a working-class mother and his grandfather, whom he affectionately called "pop pop," credited his family with his academic success:

People that really believe in me, they really invest their time and their

money into advancing me, so I know that I have to succeed for them. It's

not just for me. It's for my family and for my friends. They're the ones

that supported me".

Storytelling and Cautionary Tales

Student narratives emphasized family struggles and triumphs as expressed

through storytelling and cautionary tales as motivation for academic success. Bakari's

father was not involved in his life, but his grandfather took on that role of a father figure

for him. His grandfather often shared his educational history with Bakari. "When he

[grandfather] was in school, he was like a top student, too, but he fell off due to other

things outside of school". Those "other things" included negative peer pressure, and the

necessity to earn an income, so he emphasized the importance of choosing positive, like-

minded peers for his grandson, and he also prioritized academics. Although Bakari's

grandfather is now his parent, he has fulfilled a paternal role in Bakari's life, and research

suggests that parental attitudes towards education influence academic success (Wang,

Peterson, & Morphey, 2007).

Daria stated that her mother pushed her to succeed and set high goals for herself

because of the mistakes she made in her youth. Tiffany also shared how her mother's

stories have impacted her:

She's [mother] one of the main people that actually motivated me to do

my work. We had these talks and it's like she says, "Don't be like how I

was. Don't make any wrong decisions" basically. When I hear her stories

and her background and what happened when she first met my dad and

how things went downhill, it just motivates me to . . . like, "I have to do

this."

For African-Americans in particular, oral tradition and storytelling are integral

parts of the socialization process (Carter-Black, 2007). For the students in this

study, cautionary tales that emerge from family history were essential for their

academic motivation.

What Support Looks Like to Students

In much of the education literature, positive, effective parental support for

academically successful students is defined as intensive engagement in academic affairs,

effective communication, and engagement with academic activities outside of school

(Brody et al., 2004; Hill et al., 2004). However, for the high-achieving Black students in

this sample, parental support was demonstrated differently. Students described parental

support as meeting basic survival needs, openness to student extracurricular engagement,

and role modeling. Students also described parental monitoring of school-related tasks,

and verbal expressions of encouragement as support. However, parental-child

engagement and perceived parental support were not uniform across the sample.

According to Bakari, parental support encompassed having a stable home

environment where his basic needs were met, and providing materials for school. Bakari

noted: "My mom always contributes by just being there for me, supporting me everyday

with food, a roof over my head, everything". Bakari also acknowledged how witnessing

his mom work hard motivated him to work studiously as well in the hopes of being able

to provide for her one day:

> Just seeing her do her thing really like helps me want to strive more
> because to see her do everything on her own makes you really want to
> work hard so that way she won't have to work no more when I get older.

For Bakari, having a supportive family allowed him to concentrate on school without the pressure to contribute financially to the household. Additionally, for Bakari, Sarah, and Daria, parental support also meant allowing them to pursue their extracurricular interests. This is important because literature suggests there is a positive relationship between academic achievement and extracurricular involvement (Broh, 2002; Crosnoe, 2001; Eccles & Barber, 1999; Feldman & Matjasko, 2005).

Students identified monitoring school-related tasks as an element of parental support as well. For participants, monitoring tasks entailed verbal check-ins regarding school work and the college application process, even if parents were not directly involved in their academic coursework or the college application process. Sarah's mother checked in to ensure that she was still maintaining good grades and often told her to make sure her "[college] application is the best it can be". Kwame's mother also prodded him to complete assignments and meet college deadlines:

> Yeah, she makes sure [college application tasks are complete]. Not to the
> extent she does with the class work. She knows that when it comes to
> schoolwork, I do my school work so I can have my good grades. She
> doesn't have to worry about that. When it comes to this college thing
> now, she's constantly reminding me of stuff. FAFSA. Everything. She
> makes sure she reminds me.

Even though their parents may not be aware of the specific requirements and tasks related to successfully applying to college, they verbally remind their children to stay abreast of necessary tasks. Parental reminders about academics and the college application process may demonstrate their commitment to their child's academic success, even if they did not have the know-how to help them directly. As familial capital undergirds the academic mindsets of the participants in this study, it proves to be a critical aspect of academic performance (Farrington et al., 2012).

Words of encouragement were also identified by some of the students as a form of parental support. Daria's grandmother consistently told her how proud she is: "My grandmother, she is like my supporter, too. She always tells me, 'Oh my god I'm so proud of you. You are doing the d-a-m-n thing!'" Daria also related this "no excuses" attitude to familial support with specific references to school absences: "I can't miss one day of school. If I'm sick, [her mother asks] 'You need to go to the doctors?' [Daria replies] 'No, I don't want to go to doctor, it's not that bad.' [Mom responds] 'All right, you can go to school'". Her mother's insistence on attending school is an example of the value she places on education. Rebecca's mom encouraged her to do well in school, although she did not push her hard to succeed. Parental positive reinforcement of student academic achievement supports extant research that highlights the role of parental support in the achievement of low-income African-American students (Kerpelman, Eryigit, & Stephens, 2007). Contrary to prior research, student narratives from this study show that intensive parental engagement in schools is not the only form of parental support that fosters academic achievement for low-income Black students. In the process

of utilizing familial capital—notably in the form of words of encouragement—participants' families inspire academic persistence.

Not all students expressed positive family support. Damien, whose parents were divorced, stated that in general, he was most supported by his family, teachers, and mentors. Contrary to other students, he expressed a disconnect between himself and his parents, despite being close to them in the past. Although he felt disconnected from his family at the time of his interview, it can be argued that his past family closeness provided the foundational familial capital necessary to support his academic mindset through adolescence (Kerpelman et al., 2007). However, from Damien's perspective, familial capital was not a relevant factor for his academic success in high school. This example illustrates the limits to familial capital in explications of academic success, but also the importance of embodying other forms of community cultural wealth to be successful in school.

Skills and Beliefs Gained within Families

The participants highlighted a variety of skills and mindsets they gained from their family. Work ethic, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism are themes that arose frequently in interviews. These attributes gained from their families highlight how familial capital is converted to positive adaptive behaviors that encourage academic success.

When Kwame was interviewed about why he was successful, he identified self-efficacy beliefs that stemmed from his family values:

> Only you can determine your future. You can't depend on anybody else, well, you can depend on other people, but only you can actually forge

your future. You can't let anything hold you back. If you want to do

something, you can do it.

Academic self-efficacy is a predictor of academic achievement (Roeser, Midgley &

Urdan, 1996; Uwah, McMahon, & Furlow, 2008). Kwame's self-efficacy beliefs stem

from his family, and he harnessed familial capital to engage in behaviors that promoted

academic achievement.

> Similarly, Bakari often discussed the role his grandfather played in his life. He

detailed how his work ethic, passion for education, and responsibility came from his

grandfather's example:

> My pop pop [grandfather] helps a lot too because he's like the only male
>
> role model in my family. To see him take care of everything too shows
>
> like how a man is supposed to act and how's he supposed to do this thing
>
> for his family.

In addition to his grandfather, Bakari also attributed his work ethic to his mother.

> Probably work ethic because of my mom and my pop pop. They work a
>
> lot, like a lot of hours. My mom works overtime sometimes they do 11–
>
> 11, 11–7 shifts so that taught me about work ethic. Same with my pop
>
> pop. He taught me work ethic, if you maintain a good work ethic you can
>
> go far.

He also expressed that his passion for education is influenced by his mom and

grandfather as well:

> I think it comes from just my mom and my pop pop because I know that to
>
> really make it, I really have to get an education. I really have to strive

> hard for them so I feel as though, if I put more emphasis on school work
>
> then I can really like go far in life.

Bakari and Damien were the only two participants in the study who had a consistent familial male presence in the household. Positive male role models and paternal figures correlate with academic achievement, and more pro-social behaviors towards peers (Bryant & Zimmerman, 2003; Hurd & Zimmerman, 2008). These relationships are especially positive for Black children (Coley, 1998).

Like Bakari, Rebecca also attributed her passion for learning new things to her family, particularly her mother. She proudly recalled: "She [mother] would bring up topics, stuff that I'd know about, like politics and stuff like that . . . Everyone can't talk about stuff like that. Interest in academic subjects and tasks directly relates to academic achievement (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Hulleman & Harackiewicz, 2009).

Resilience is a skill the students believed they have gained from their families. According to Cunningham and Swanson (2010), resilience is "a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity" (p. 473). Students identified familial struggles as a source of their motivation and perseverance. Bakari admires his mother and grandfather's fortitude and ability to persevere through struggle.

> What I admire most is that how independent they are. To have so much
>
> responsibility and not have it, like, break them down. Like don't waver at
>
> all. That really shows me . . . Whatever I'm coming through is nothing
>
> compared to what they're going through . . . just on top of that, carrying
>
> the whole family. Being able to take all that in and not waver.

Educational resilience for Black Americans is strongly influenced by home environment and is an important aspect of academic success (Cunningham & Swanson, 2010). Resilience gained within the home environment is an asset that students utilize to achieve in school.

Some participants expressed that they learned what behaviors to avoid based on their family's history. Daria's mother pushed her and her siblings to not make the same mistakes that she did, and Daria internalized those messages and used them to motivate her in school.

> I think what motivates me is seeing my mom struggle because she's a high
> school drop out. She's taking classes right now to get her GED and it's
> like that motivates me 100 percent. Not to down talk her, but it seems
> what not to be. You know what I mean? Not to make these mistakes and
> that's why she pushes us so hard.

Based on her mother's struggles, Daria learned to focus on educational attainment because from her perspective, it is necessary for a more secure financial future. Tiffany and Sarah, whose mothers both had children in late adolescence, were motivated by their mothers' resilience despite facing challenges as teen mothers. Maternal examples of alternative life paths created conditions that motivated many of the female participants to succeed academically.

Although there are challenging financial and social barriers to overcome for Black students from low-income communities, the high-achieving students in this sample were able to develop strength from their families' struggles. Rebecca expressed an ability to

maintain a positive outlook and healthy perspective on challenges she faced because of the negative situations her family has experienced:

> A lot of the other kids that are known to be smart always worry about their grades. Because I know what my parents went through, they didn't go to college and get a job. But we're doing okay, I know that if I don't do the best I know it will be okay. I have a calmness and I don't freak out, like "Oh my gosh I got any eight–five!" So I'm like, "It's going to be okay."

The ability to thrive in adverse circumstances is an essential component for the academic success of the students in this study (Cunningham & Swanson, 2010). A hallmark of familial capital is the ability to cope, which informs the educational, moral, emotional and occupational consciousness of students of color from disadvantaged communities (Auerbach, 2001; Lopez, 2003; Reese, 1992; Yosso, 2005). In turn, a positive academic mindset is a noncognitive skill that correlates with strong academic performance (Farrington et al., 2012).

Although participant responses highlighted the role of familial capital in their academic achievement, other forms of community cultural wealth must accompany familial capital in order to translate into positive academic outcomes. The students recognized the limitations of being nurtured in low-income families in regards to their career and educational goals. Daria explained that because her mom did not finish high school, and her older siblings did not attend college, her mom is "not used to these things" [college application process]. She added: "I know it's hard for her, but she's still on task and makes sure that I'm on task and I admire that". Despite encouragement from

their families, the mentorship of institutional agents who have "college knowledge" is still relevant for student achievement and educational attainment.

Students have identified the adaptability to adverse circumstances that emerges from familial capital, but the actual skills they utilized in their adaptation processes represent navigational capital. Navigational capital refers to savvy and skills required to successfully navigate social institutions (Yosso, 2005). Because of her hectic home life and community life, Daria felt as if she was more empathetic towards others and could positively adapt her emotional state to help calm them down. On the other hand, Sarah, who had four siblings living in the home, believed that one of her most important skills was the ability to "make a space for myself to think". As demonstrated by these examples, their turbulent family life has positively affected their ability to cope with distractions which is an important component of academic persistence (Farrington et al., 2012).

Bakari, Tiffany, and Rebecca have each identified a family member's ability to navigate different spaces as a skill they admired and hoped to emulate. Tiffany recognized that she learned how to interact with different groups of people from her family. Bakari assessed that he was comfortable around different types of people and in different environments, and believed he inherited this quality from spending time with his grandfather and seeing how he interacted with a variety of people. His grandfather also imparted the importance of making a good first impression with people: "You never know, you may meet that person again, so make a good impression because you never know who that person may be to help you in the future". Rebecca highlighted her mother's ability to still maintain her independence, but successfully adapt among diverse

groups, as a skill she gained as well. Some aspects of the navigational capital students display derive from their familial capital, further illustrating the reflexivity of community cultural wealth.

For most study participants, familial capital provided the foundational knowledges and values that facilitated academic mindsets and persistence for students. Through cautionary tales and storytelling, families passed down collective knowledge and highlighted alternative paths for study participants. Youth expressed that familial support took on a variety forms, and that they adopted pro-academic attitudes, resilience, and valuable skills from their families that they converted into behaviors that fostered academic achievement. Participant responses expand upon extant notions of the type of familial characteristics that foster academic achievement for low-income Black high school students.

Navigational Capital

Navigational capital is an aspect of community cultural wealth that applies in the explication of student success. Navigational capital refers to the set of knowledges and skills mobilized to maneuver through social institutions (Yosso, 2005). Study participants utilized three methods for interacting with peer groups within school: (a) They altered their behavior in front of peers with maladaptive behaviors in order to appear complicit in negative behaviors, while still engaging in academic behaviors; (b) they expressed disdain for negative behaviors but still interacted strategically with peers; or (c) they minimized interactions with those peers, preferably with no interactions. They also took initiative to achieve goals and recognized the importance of having a plan. As study participants demonstrated high levels of social and academic interactions, they

consequently were able to minimize distractions to focus on goal attainment. Ultimately, these youth exercised navigational capital to engage in behaviors that cultivated academic success while also maintaining generally positive social outcomes within the school setting.

The ability to successfully navigate the disparate values of multiple peer groups is an important skill for adolescents (Phelan, Yu, & Davidson, 1994). In this study, students demonstrated diverse methods for interacting with their peers in school and in their neighborhoods in order to minimize conflict. Rebecca represents a compelling example of one method in which she used her navigational capital to maneuver among her lower-achieving, disengaged peers without succumbing to low academic achievement herself. Research shows that high achieving students usually associate with other high achieving students (Holland, 2011). However, observations of Rebecca in her high school revealed a student who adeptly moves among diverse-performing peer groups while highlighting or minimizing certain aspects of her personality to fit in with particular groups. She engaged positively with other high-achieving peers and instructors while in her Honors and Advanced Placement courses (Rebecca, Field Notes, May 5, 2015). While her classmates in these courses were generally participatory and on-task, Rebecca exhibited the same behavior. However, in her general education courses, there were multiple instances of maladaptive behavior; many students were disengaged and disrespectful to the instructor. While in these more antagonistic spaces, Rebecca's navigation of classroom culture was more complex. Observations of her group in French class illustrated these complexities:

> The teacher walks over to Rebecca's group member, Natalia, and tells her
> to use a large piece of paper to take notes. Natalia says sharply, "Why?
> Why you got a attitude?" The other students snicker. The teacher repeats
> his instructions in a softer voice and walks away. Rebecca laughs after the
> teacher walks away. Natalia curses at him under her breath, but loud
> enough for the back of the class to hear. Rebecca laughs, but doesn't say
> anything. (Rebecca, Field Notes, May 5, 2015)

In this instance, Rebecca appeared to support her classmate's rude behavior by laughing, but she did not make rude comments herself, and she did not make additional negative comments like the other girls in her group (Rebecca, Field Notes, May 5, 2015).

I also observed that she completed tasks while appearing to be disengaged. For example, when the teacher began to address the class and provided instructions for the upcoming task, Rebecca's other group members began discussing hair loudly:

> Rebecca takes notes, following the teacher's instructions, as her group
> discusses hair [the other girls do not take notes], but she periodically
> participates in the group discussion. When we are alone outside the
> classroom, she says, "that class is ratchet [vulgar, inappropriate]" and
> looks away to avoid eye contact with me. (Rebecca, Field Notes, May 5,
> 2015)

While she engaged in off-topic conversations with her peers, she also made sure to continue taking notes, which demonstrated a commitment to academic behaviors even when appearing disengaged. Her comments to me afterward demonstrated that she was aware that her classmates' behavior was inappropriate, even though she participated in

that behavior to a limited extent. Nelson and DeBacker (2008) found that when students were in classroom contexts where peers were not supportive of academic achievement, high achievers were more likely to report maladaptive academic and social behaviors. Rebecca expressed maladaptive social behaviors, but she still engaged in academic behaviors that encouraged school success.

Rebecca was also able to maintain friendships with peers who achieve academically, and those who did not: "I have two best friends, but one of them is not really into school, so I don't really talk about it [school] with her. Some people care and some people don't". Her ability to engage with low-achieving peers and yet achieve academically is an example of her navigational ability. Her plasticity and outward complicity was utilized as a resource to maintain positive peer relationships with disruptive students while simultaneously engaging in behaviors that foster academic success.

Kwame and Tiffany socialize strategically with a wide variety of peers, but unlike Rebecca, they were able to recognize and resist negative peer pressure, meaning they did not participate in maladaptive behaviors even amongst peers who demonstrated those traits. Kwame succinctly reflected: "Some friends motivate me and some friends like [to apply] peer pressure". He added that he did not engage in negative behaviors, even when pushed. Despite negative pressure, he still associated with those peers, but was not swayed by their behavior. Tiffany expressed how she developed skills to work with a variety of people, even if she did not get along with them:

> There's a couple of kids that I won't really get along with because of the
> way they act but it's just the way my mom raised me, so there's a lot of

stuff that I developed patience for, because I have to work with them. I

don't pay attention to the other people and what they do, but I also do help

people when they ask for help.

Like Kwame, Tiffany engaged with peers who did not share the same academic mindsets,

yet she was not influenced by their behavior. The ability to sustain high levels of

achievement despite distractions or stressful interactions is an integral component of

navigational capital (Yosso, 2005). Students were able to convert their navigational

capital into academic persistence, which is defined as a student's demonstrated ability to

complete academic tasks despite obstacles, distractions, or degree of difficulty

(Farrington et al., 2012). Academic perseverance has been shown to impact school

performance.

Damien, Sarah, and Daria preferred to interact solely with peers who shared the

same academic mindsets as themselves. Academic mindset is defined as the

psychological and social beliefs one has about academic work in relation to oneself

(Farrington et al., 2012). While in school, Damien described himself as social, but adds

that he " . . . does not feel comfortable interacting with peers in my neighborhood

because they aren't like me". He explained further: "Outside of school I'm quiet and stay

to myself either writing or doing activities to keep my stress down". In-school

observations of Sarah also show a student who was selective about her peer group. In her

classes, she sat with the students who were the most engaged in the lesson (Sarah, Field

Notes, May 14, 2015). After being physically assaulted by some of her peers due to her

friendship with another girl who was not well liked, Daria learned to only associate with

like-minded peers who stay out of trouble. After she was assaulted, she found out that

her friend knew she was going to be attacked, but did not warn her. After this experience, she adapted a more selective discernment about her peers: "It's like if you surround yourself in positive things then positive things will come. Surround yourself in negative things and negative things will come. So yeah, watch who you hang around". Damien, Sarah, and Daria utilized a selective approach in peer association that supports research about high-achieving Black students and their peers; academically successful students generally limit social interactions to peers who positively impact their academic choices and goals (Holland, 2011).

The students described themselves as people who took initiative to achieve their goals, moreover, this proactive assertion was another important component of navigational capital that they demonstrated. Rebecca began to independently research high-paying careers in eighth grade, and when Tiffany was in late elementary and a counselor recommended she attend charter or private schools, she researched her educational options herself. Participants also engaged in behavior like Bakari, who researched a variety of topics in order to learn more about how to achieve his goals: "I look up stuff, I read, I see what I need to do to really make it farther, or I'll think about what I'll do and will this affect my chance of going somewhere or not going somewhere". Previous research highlights the importance of assertion and initiative in future career and life outcomes for youth (Farrington et al., 2012; Malecki & Elliot, 2002).

Kwame best illustrates the use of initiative to achieve goals. Kwame's main educational concern was financing his education and graduating college with minimal debt. During a senior workshop at Mentor Youth, Kwame's university of choice offered him $5,500 in student loans. In response, he countered: "I want to apply for more

scholarships," and then approached Mentor Youth's financial aid advisor—a man who worked for financial aid for a local university—about applying for scholarships (Kwame, Field Notes, March 14, 2015). Not only did Kwame independently make the decision to apply for more funds, he sought out someone who had the knowledge to help him finance his education. Additionally, prior to speaking with the mentor, he emailed the school and requested additional scholarship money and was awarded an additional $5,000 (Kwame, Field Notes, March 14, 2015). The agency he demonstrated in this instance is representative of navigational capital (Yosso, 2005). In activating his navigational capital, he was able to secure additional funds for college.

Study participants also addressed the importance of having a plan, and recognizing concrete steps to achieve a goal, which have been identified as noncognitive learning strategies that are important in academic achievement (Farrington, et al., 2012). Goal setting—and implementing realistic steps to achieve those goals—are vital characteristics of navigational capital. Damien said that he tries to think about and prepare himself for a strong career in the future. Tiffany also acknowledged that having a plan is an important trait: "You can't get anything done if you don't have a plan and have everything organized and know what you are going to do, and I think that's one of my strongest skills". Rebecca's previous quote about having goals can also be used to highlight the importance of *having a plan* to attain goals:

> I think I see myself different because I had bigger goals and a plan for
> how to get there, because a lot of people may say they want to be a doctor
> or a lawyer, but they don't really know how you come to that, and they
> don't really look into it, so they might be confused. For example, one of

> my sister's friends said that she wanted to be a lawyer, so . . . I think she
>
> graduated high school a while ago, but now she's going to a community
>
> college for criminal justice. You can do that, but afterwards, you have to
>
> take the LSAT and, I don't really know if she knows that or not.

Self-directed goals that are tied to specific strategies are more likely to be implemented

and can impact educational outcomes (Gollwitzer, 1996; Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry,

2004). Study participants are able to use the roadmap for their goals to persist through

school and achieve academically.

    Students also exhibited an ability to minimize distractions in order to focus on

tasks that will enable them to achieve their goals. This is especially challenging in the

age of social media and constant connection (Jacobsen & Forste, 2011). Tiffany

explained: "Cutting people off, cutting my outside world off, like Twitter and stuff, it

helps me [focus on school]". Bakari similarly expressed: "I'm still open minded to new

things, like I play around a lot, but when it comes down to work, I get my work done

first. That's the first step I have to do. Get my work done". He also discussed the

importance of prioritizing the mentor program: "There were certain times where I wanted

to do something else, but I realized that its real beneficial if I take the program on

Saturdays". The ability to prioritize school and career related tasks is a hallmark of

academic perseverance, which is critical in sustaining academic achievement (Farrington

et al., 2012).

    Previous research has not explored the connection between noncognitive factors

that promote academic achievement and navigational capital evidenced in community

cultural wealth. Student narratives and observations showed how navigational capital is

mobilized in student behaviors that encourage academic success. Study participants used various strategies to adeptly navigate peer groups to maintain positive peer relationships and engage in academic behaviors. They engaged in behaviors that garnered rewards from institutional agents, and they demonstrated noncognitive skills that are representative of navigational capital that have been shown to promote academic performance.

Moderately Applied to Academic Success

Linguistic and social capital are applicable to participant success, however, their direct—or indirect—conversion to academic achievement in education spaces is mediated by institutional agents such as teachers or mentors. Institutional agents remain critical in legitimating forms of capital that can be converted into rewards within institutional settings.

Linguistic Capital

Linguistic capital moderately applies to the academic success of the low-income, high-achieving Black students in this study. Yosso (2005) defines linguistic capital as "the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style" (p. 78). Linguistic capital also entails the social and intellectual skills garnered through experiential communication utilizing multiple languages or styles. Most participants engaged in a variety of communication styles with high rates of verbal participation in academic and program activities, which then fostered positive relationships with institutional agents. However, institutional agents had the power to legitimate or punish styles of communication that were not representative of White normative styles of communication. While participants demonstrated linguistic

capital, it was only converted to academic achievement when validated by institutional agents.

Tiffany best represents the usefulness and limitations of linguistic capital in explaining the academic success of students in the sample. Tiffany was one of two sophomores in the study, but despite being one of the youngest participants, she expressed the most overall confidence in her academic abilities. Tiffany was by far my most verbose personal communicator and appeared to enjoy herself throughout the interview process. In observations of Mentor Youth sessions with the sophomore class, she was participatory and did not hesitate to give her opinion on a variety topics. Her confidence and outspoken nature won her many friends and the respect of program staff and peers, but it sometimes led to her being reprimanded by adults in the program and her school.

In both the school and mentor program setting, my observations revealed that almost all students consistently engaged with adults and peers through verbal communication, and they were more likely to participate in class discussions than their non-Black peers (Field Notes, February 28, 2015; Field Notes, April 11, 2015). Tiffany was comfortable asking for help and asking questions when she did not know something (Tiffany, Field Notes, April 11, 2015). When questions were posed to the class, the few Black students were usually the first students to raise their hands and respond. Sarah was the only participant who kept to herself during sessions in the mentor program, but in school, she was vocal with her classmates, as well as in response to teacher inquiries (Sarah, Field Notes, May 14, 2015). High levels of social and academic interactions are characteristic of high achieving students (Wang, Waxman, & Freiberg, 1996). Research

shows positive correlations between academic achievement and classroom participation. Frequent verbal interactions are characteristic of study participants and represent linguistic capital as a resource they carry with them into academic settings to advance their achievement.

The students displayed a variety of communication styles to navigate the school and mentor program setting. Their effective communication techniques were often used to put those around them at ease. Tiffany, who said that she was labeled a behavior problem by teachers in elementary school, eventually learned that "it's not what you say, it's how you say it." She attributed her current status as a high achieving student to learning this lesson: "I live by these [aforementioned] quotes and these sayings so I have to watch what I say and how I say it. That's what basically gets me to where I am now". Research shows that despite high academic achievement, educators persistently question the behavior of Black girls (Morris, 2007). Tiffany's past history of being labeled a "behavior problem" due to her communication style is an example of the limitations of linguistic capital in the explication of academic success for study participants. Negative teacher perceptions can negatively impact the achievement of Black students (Ferguson, 2003; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Tyler & Boelter, 2008).

In my observations of students during the mentor program sessions, I noticed that male participants used humor in many instances, particularly when speaking with program personnel (Bakari, Field Notes, March 14, 2015; Damien, Field Notes, April 11, 2015; Kwame, Field Notes, March 14, 2015). Literature argues that teachers perceive young Black males as threatening, so the use of humor can be a tool that these male participants utilized to appear less threatening (Grant, 1985; Noguera, 2003a, 2003b).

Being perceived as a threat in educational institutions can have dire effects for Black students, particularly Black males, with increased disciplinary measures impacting them throughout their lifespan (Monroe 2005; Simon & Burns, 1997). In particular, male participants utilized various communication styles to encourage positive interactions with program staff. Previous research highlights that Black boys generally use humor to appeal to their peers (Allen, 2013), but the high-achieving Black males in this study directed their humor towards program staff in order to achieve more favorable outcomes. For boys and girls, making mentors—and presumably teachers—feel at ease in their presence is an important linguistic and navigational tool that can indirectly affect their academic achievement.

Social skills such as assertion are positively correlated with student grades, and past study participants have demonstrated this social skill in program observations (Wentzel, 1991). Compared to their non-Black peers in the Mentor Youth program, these Black students were vocal about their opinions, even if their opinions were contrary to the majority of the students and/or staff. For example, Mentor Youth sought to develop students' debate skills. For one of the activities, they divided the sophomore class into two groups to debate affirmative action. In a previous activity that I did not observe, the students gave speeches for or against affirmative action. When assigning groups for this activity, the administrators then purposely placed students in a group that had to argue a viewpoint that was opposite their own. Tiffany was upset that she was required to argue against affirmative action when she supports the policy, and she debated the matter with one of the program administrators:

Tiffany: I came to Mentor Youth to be around different types of people. I

didn't want to be surrounded by only Black people!

Jorge (program administrator): We have to put the personal aside, it's an

academic exercise.

Tiffany: I don't agree that we could put our personal feelings aside. How

can I argue without my feelings?

Jorge: Personal feelings aren't data. In eleventh grade, I had to argue that

Andrew Jackson was a good guy. I disagreed with that.

Tiffany crosses her arms and looks down at the table

Jorge: You have to understand the other side in order to better articulate

your argument. I feel strongly about this as a first-generation

Latino male. I never want to say your personal feelings don't

matter, this strengthens your argument. It will be an

uncomfortable exercise.

Tiffany places her head on the table and remains silent for the first few

minutes of the discussion, but then she eventually begins to

contribute to the group discussion. (Field Notes, April 11, 2015)

After this exchange, the program administers decided to stage an intervention with

Tiffany because they felt she was becoming too antagonistic toward program staff and

peers in the mentor program (Field Notes, April 11, 2015). Speaking up for oneself is a

valuable characteristic for students who are traditionally marginalized and silenced within

educational institutions (hooks, 1989). However, verbal assertion can have negative

consequences for Black students, particularly Black girls (Fordham, 1993; Morris, 2007;

Odumosu, 2015). Disproportionate discipline policies towards vocal Black girls show the continued importance of institutional agents such as teachers or program staff in legitimating or devaluing Black student behavior, and consequently influencing academic achievement.

Yosso (2005) stated that communicating through visual art, music, or poetry is also a characteristic of linguistic capital. Both Tiffany and Damien referenced their love for writing, especially poetry, and how it impacted their communication style and intellect:

> Tiffany: My poetry actually moves me mentally even though it's coming
>
>> from me. It's just the certain things that I think about and hearing
>>
>> other people's poetry, it moves me too.
>
> Damien: I'm a very poetic person when I try to be like I try to be
>
>> descriptive and figurative when I'm talking to someone.

The participants in this study demonstrated multiple modes of communication that allowed them to successfully navigate the mentor program, and they expressed how adults outside of the mentor program context, including teachers, were comfortable around them. This is important because teacher perceptions and interactions significantly impact the academic outcomes of minority students (Ferguson, 2003; Mangiante, 2011; Rodriquez, 2012; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009; van Den Bergh et al., 2010).

Student narratives showed that study participants do exhibit characteristics of linguistic capital and utilize this form of capital as a resource to create conditions for academic success. High rates of participation, engagement in the arts, and assertion are characteristics of study participants that may indirectly contribute to their academic

success. However, due to asymmetrical power dynamics in the student/adult relationship within educational institutions, only certain forms of linguistic capital are legitimized and rewarded, and thus contribute to academic achievement.

Social Capital

The community cultural wealth framework highlights social capital as an important characteristic of communities of color. As defined by Yosso (2005), "Social capital can be understood as networks of people and community resources" (p. 79). These familial/community networks provide emotional and practical support to navigate through society's institutions. Since familial capital was discussed at length in previous sections, this study focused social capital analysis on the networks of people outside of participant's families. Social capital was a vital theme that emerged from the data as community and kinship networks were important in providing study participants access to resources. However, the data supported the continued importance of institutional agents in the academic success and opportunity of low-income students of color. Results also showed that school choice initiatives created conditions where high-achieving students were disembedded, or uprooted and separated, from their communities.

Participation in Mentor Youth was identified as meaningful for the students in this study, and each student found out about Mentor Youth through their social networks. Whether it was a teacher, parent, or friend of a parent, the importance of social capital as a conduit for instrumental and emotional support, and resources, is underscored in the experiences of the participants in this study.

Daria's story illustrates the impact that a caring teacher can make on educational outcomes for low-income youth. Daria was a college-bound senior at the time of data

collection, and she credited Mentor Youth for helping her along that path. She recounted that in middle school, she was not performing to her full capabilities, and her math teacher, Mentor Youth program director Megan O'Brien, told her about the program. Daria's involvement with Mentor Youth subsequently increased her aspirations and motivation in school.

As Daria's story shows, through their participation in the mentor program, students have increased their aspirations, gained valuable skills, and accessed resources that they traditionally would have limited access to. When asked who supported them most in their academic careers, the students mentioned Mentor Youth alongside their family. As discussed previously, the students are critically aware of the challenges faced within their educational environments, and they believe that participation in the mentor program has filled the academic and resource gaps left by their schools.

> Bakari: I always felt like I could speak, but like, ever since I joined
>
> > Mentor Youth, I believe my speaking has gotten a lot better. I'm
> >
> > able to articulate with anyone about anything.
>
> Tiffany: [in response to her school not preparing her academically] I feel
>
> > as though I'll be pretty prepared with the help of Mentor Youth.
>
> Damien: That's why I joined Mentor Youth, so I could take the next step
>
> > to better myself and better my lifestyle in the future.

Participant responses underscore the importance of mentor programs in supporting students from under-resourced districts. Youth involved in mentor programs are more likely to show higher academic achievement and an improved attitude toward school; these effects were especially strong for minority youth even when the focus of the

program was not on academic achievement (Dappen & Isernhagen, 2006; Thompson, Kelly, & Vance, 2001). Based on student narratives, programs like Mentor Youth remain instrumental in the academic success of low-income minority youth by bolstering forms dominant cultural capital that closely align with middle-class White normative behaviors (Rendón, Jalomo, & Nora, 2000).

In addition to their involvement in the mentor program, the participants in this study were also active in a variety of extracurricular programs. For example, Tiffany was involved in basketball and track, Bakari was a member of his church's choir, vice president of student council at his high school, and a member of the rotary club. Although the participants enjoyed a wide variety of extracurricular activities, they conceded that their engagement was important for reasons related to networking, and raising their social status within schools. Scholarship shows that extracurricular activities are known to increase student perceptions of school connectedness, which may lead to increased academic achievement (Brown & Evans, 2002; Jenkins 1997).

Students discussed the role of teachers or adults in other educational institutions as providing them with support, as well as the skills necessary to thrive academically. Tiffany explained, "My teachers were the people that motivated me like, 'You've got to stay out of trouble'". In addition to his teachers, Damien mentioned a counselor from the Boys and Girls Club as a person who helped motivate him and hone his academic skills, "He [the counselor] was helping me out with my writing and everything like helping me continue when I wanted to stop for a bit, he kept pushing me to keep on going". Indeed, research has shown that caring teachers are especially important for low-income minority students (Muller, 2001).

Interestingly, three of the four girls who participated in this study were labeled as behavior problems by teachers in elementary or middle school. Although much of the literature highlights challenges Black boys face in educational institutions (Noguera, 2003a), recent scholarship has begun to analyze the way Black girls' behavior is interpreted in schools (Morris, 2007; Odumosu, 2015). Labeling students as behavior problems can produce negative academic outcomes for students, particularly students of color (Noguera, 2003b; Ferguson, 2003; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Tyler & Boelter, 2008). When Daria joined Mentor Youth, there were equally four Black boys and four Black girls in her class, but eventually, all of the girls in her cohort stopped attending the sessions. It is interesting that the majority of the Black males persisted in the program, while the majority of Black females did not. Recent scholarship highlights that in majority White environments, Black males may find it easier to adapt than Black females due to perceptions of "coolness", whereas Black girls are perceived as abrasive (Holland, 2012).

Despite labels that often adversely affect the academic outcomes of Black students, teachers intervened and mentored the girls who were labeled as behavior problems.

> Rebecca: In elementary . . . some years I would be bad in school, not
>
> grade-wise, but I know my teachers wouldn't like me that much,
>
> because I would act up.
>
> Tiffany: In seventh grade, it was just horrible, I didn't care about my
>
> grades, I didn't care who was talking to me, the teachers . . . but I
>
> didn't get into fights. It was just my mouth.

Daria: I was always bad. When I went from charter school to the public

school, was out of hand, and that it when I met Megan. You know

Megan [program director at Mentor Youth].

Daria's comment about her behavior prior to forming a bond with her eighth grade teacher highlights the critical role of institutional agents—particularly teachers—in validating and transferring traditional forms of cultural capital to disadvantaged students. Both Tiffany and Rebecca attested to changing their behavior through their interactions with caring teachers as well.

Peers have substantial influence upon achievement, engagement, and motivation (Kindermann, 2007). Contrary to Fordham and Ogbu's (1986) hypothesis that high-achieving Black students fear being labeled as "acting White" and ostracized by their same-race peers, participant responses in this study show that students, overall, perceive positive support from their peers in school. Sarah illustrated this point when she discussed the reactions of her peers to her academic success: "In regards to my academic achievement my peers' reactions are not ones of surprise, because everyone in our school strives to be good at something. When you achieve your goal they are happy for you". Social support of peers is important in academic achievement, and highlights how community cultural wealth's interpretation of social capital does play a role in the success of the study participants (Holland, 2011).

Yosso (2005) defines community cultural wealth as a product of kinship networks, neighborhood networks, and other community-based systems from which students of color derive their non-dominant capital. The data in this study shows that students derive capital from their families and institutional peer networks, however, these

students are disembedded from their local neighborhood context. Giddens (1990) describes modernity as a period where social relations are removed from their local contexts of interaction; the processes that lift social relations from their local contexts are referred to as *disembedding mechanisms*. In the context of this study, school choice has operated as a disemdedding mechanism for high-achieving students; the participants in this study were removed from their neighborhood schooling context, resulting in youth who were distant from peers in their communities.

Additionally, neighborhood conditions such as violence may prohibit the accumulation of social capital by limiting opportunities for peer interaction. Some students stated that they did not interact with members of their community, mainly because they believe their neighborhoods are dangerous.

> Rebecca: I don't really go outside . . . I mean, I guess it is a dangerous neighborhood, but I'm used to that, because that's where I grew up.

> Damien: I do not feel comfortable interacting with peers in my neighborhood because I do not talk to anyone.

> Kwame: I don't really know anybody like that on my block. It's not really a good neighborhood so I don't want to be involved in the streets.

Tiffany was the only participant who shared that she does interact with peers in her community. She also lived in a low-income neighborhood, but she stated that because there was not much violence and drug abuse, she felt connected to her peers in the community; she said they "have each other's backs". In addition to

attending schools outside of their community, neighborhood conditions and violence foster distance between students and their local peers. For study participants, academic success cannot be attributed to social capital attained within the context of interactions with their neighborhood peers.

Social capital as articulated in the Community Cultural Wealth framework only moderately applies to the academic success of the participants in this study. Students gained access to resources such as mentor programs and other extracurricular activities via their community networks, and they had supportive peers within their school community. However, relationships with teachers and adults in educational institutions remain important for their academic success. Additionally, neighborhood violence and being disembedded from their local school community were prohibitory factors in gaining and mobilizing community social capital.

Weakly Applied to Academic Achievement

Although students recognized the presence of racial stereotypes, they did not express their academic achievement and educational experiences through a race-centric lens. Indeed, they were not motivated by racial justice and they displayed a reluctance to acknowledge the salience of race in their experiences.

Resistant Capital

Student narratives revealed that resistant capital is not a relevant explanatory factor in the academic achievement of these participants. Resistant capital refers to the skills and knowledge emerging from oppositional behavior that challenges inequality (Yosso, 2005). Specifically, transformative resistant capital includes "cultural knowledge of the structures of racism and motivation to transform such oppressive structures" (p.80).

This study sought to examine if transformative resistant capital—referred to in this study as "resistant capital"—was converted to motivation to succeed academically and persist through school. Data showed that study participants expressed colorblind ideology, a reluctance to acknowledge race and/or racial discrimination in their lives, and lack of awareness of racialized structures in their educational experiences. However, students did display an awareness of, and resistance to, racial stereotypes. Therefore, students did display some elements of resistant capital, but forms of resistant capital were not expressed as explanations for their academic success.

Colorblind ideology asserts that the acknowledgement of race and racialized systems is racist, and the way to end racial discrimination is to simply ignore race and treat every individual equally. Yet in adhering to colorblind outlooks and policies, we ignore persistent, pernicious racial discrimination (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). Damien and Sarah best exemplify colorblind ideology in that both believe their experiences as Black students in Philadelphia are no different than any other student and race does not play a role in their experiences.

> Damien: I think that my racial identity does not impact how my
>
> community and teachers see me as a student.
>
> Sarah: I go to a school where a high-achieving Black student isn't an
>
> oddity. Not everyone is high achieving grade-wise, but
>
> they surpass others in areas that matter most them. I might not
>
> face any challenges as a high-achieving Black student, but as a
>
> student I face the challenge of balancing school life/work
>
> and home life/work.

Damien and Sarah both articulated that they do not face any specific challenges as Black students. During a discussion of affirmative action in the sophomore classroom at Mentor Youth, moreover, Damien preferred to argue that race-based admissions should not exist because everyone should be treated the same, and affirmative action was actually unfair to White students (Field Notes, April 11, 2015). Sarah and Damien's expressions of colorblind beliefs are representative of a lack of resistant capital.

Instead of the motivation to transform the racial status quo, some participants espoused beliefs that aligned more closely to respectability politics: a tendency among some members of marginalized groups to police the values and behavior of people of the same race to adhere to White normative standards, under the assumption that maltreatment is due to non-normative aesthetics and behaviors and not due to race (Harris, 2003). Tiffany expressed this ideology when asked if she faced any challenges as a high-achieving Black student from Philadelphia:

> Umm, honestly no I don't. I know there are a lot of things that people talk about, like, we as Black Americans can't really get, but I personally believe it's all about your personality and how you present yourself. And that's like my mom, my mom's main thing: "Don't act like the butthole outside. Like, you represent our family and I go outside and I act my best." So I really don't think that's really what happens.

Tiffany asserted that the way Black Americans present themselves factors into the attainment of resources and opportunities. When asked about people's preconceived notions about her, Tiffany described:

Like, when I first came here they thought I always was mean because most

Black females that are downtown represent themselves as they don't care.

There's a lot of people that come out here showing their body off, being

disrespectful, cursing out the elderly people and it's just to show off. I'm

not that type person and I explained that to them. Now, they're all my

best friends but I just don't tolerate bullying. That's one thing so that's

why they all like me. I'm just straightforward with everything.

In the quote above, Tiffany detailed how her peers from other racial backgrounds stereotyped her as a young Black woman, but her behavior and values eventually overcame their pre-conceived notions. Again, in accordance with respectability politics, Tiffany proposed that a person's behavior directly justifies their treatment by others. Yet many scholars have critiqued respectability politics as a belief system that maintains the status quo and blames marginalized groups for inequitable treatment, despite evidence that personal characteristics do not mitigate racial discrimination (Harris, 2003; Lamb & Plocha, 2015). Interestingly, Tiffany did not display any discomfort or anger about being stereotyped by her non-Black peers. Tiffany's expression of respectability politics is not representative of resistant capital, and thus this form of capital is not relevant to her success.

Rebecca and Bakari also exemplify a lack of resistant capital in their views of their racially segregated public education. When asked if racial discrimination was present in his educational experiences, Bakari replied that because his school's student population is predominantly Black, there were no issues around race:

No, I wouldn't say that, probably because my school is predominantly

Black. I really feel like I haven't really felt that visible in race because

everyone is the same color, but if I was to go into a different school, then I

feel as though, yeah, it would impact it, because there's rarely diverse

schools around here. It'd probably be different types of groups and stuff

like that, but as for my school, no. I don't really think that race impacts

anything.

He added that the majority of the teachers are "international," from various countries

across the world. Rebecca echoed a similar sentiment, however, she focused more on the

student-teacher relationship:

Not in this specific school since I feel like there's a lot of Black people,

it's like half Black and other kinds of people . . . they make the other half.

So I think the teachers are used to teaching Black students, so they know

different ways to reach us.

Essentially, Rebecca and Bakari view majority-Black environments as being inherently

devoid of racism. Recognition of larger educational issues the students mentioned in

prior interviews, such as lack of resources, and critical reflections about why they are in

racially segregated schools in the first place, do not appear to be a part of their

perceptions of inequality. Esposito and Murphy (2010) argue that racism is often viewed

as a series of micro-level interactions, not as a structural problem, and since some study

participants do not perceive micro-level racial aggressions in their school environment,

they believe that racism does not exist. Students' lack of critical reflection regarding

their segregated educational experiences illustrates a lack of resistant capital. Research

shows that adolescents who live and attend schools in racial enclaves may not perceive the salience of race in their daily lives and experiences (French, Seidman, Allen, & Aber, 2006). In turn, Rebecca and Bakari's inability to perceive structural racism in their schools may result from their developmental stage coupled with minimal exposure to more racially diverse schooling contexts that may highlight the salience of race.

Resistant capital encompasses recognition of racial discrimination, and a conscious struggle against racial stereotypes through academic achievement. Since some study participants did not display these characteristics, resistant capital is not a strong explanatory factor in their academic achievement. For example, some participants showed a reluctance to acknowledge that maltreatment may be due to racial discrimination. When discussing teacher perceptions, Rebecca alluded to teachers initially stereotyping her due to her race and subsequently being "shocked" at her academic aptitude, yet then she did not acknowledge it as discrimination. Rebecca posited: "But I know maybe sometimes they [the teachers] may be shocked that I'm a good student when they meet me . . . but I don't think I've ever been like discriminated against". Even though she perceived her teachers as having low expectations because of her race, she did not equate those attitudes to racial discrimination. When Kwame was asked if he believes that race impacts how adults in his school view him, he replied, "kind of . . . no". His initial reaction of "kind of" appears to suggest that perhaps he does believe he is viewed differently due to his race, but then he quickly added "no" to claim he is not perceived differently. Similarly, when Sarah was asked about racial tropes, she was unwilling to address stereotypes she may have encountered about Black youth, or other groups. Sarah disclosed, "I don't like to stereotype people because of where they

are or ethnic background". When asked to reflect on her experiences as a Black student

in Philadelphia, she reiterated that her experiences were no different than any other

student in the city.

Although resistant capital is not evidenced in students' responses about race and

their academic achievement, students did display some form of resistant capital by

acknowledging that there are some negative stereotypes of Black youth, and by not

internalizing those pervasive negative stereotypes. While Kwame identified one of his

biggest challenges is resisting stereotypes, he believes he is overcoming those challenges.

Bakari was unfazed by stereotypes and he instead chooses to highlight the positive

expectations people hold about him:

> I feel as though I have a lot of expectations because of all the things that I
>
> have accomplished at a young age and the things I don't take part in, such
>
> as going out, like parties or smoking and doing other things.

Student views on race show some similarities to *cultural mainstreamers* in Carter's

(2005) book *Keepin' It Real: School Success Beyond Black and White*. Cultural

mainstreamers have racial identities that are central to their lives, but they see academic

behaviors as racially neutral. In this instance, a resistance to partaking in stereotypical

negative behaviors can contribute to positive school experiences.

The participants expressed some awareness of racial stereotypes, but their

adherence to colorblind ideology, refusal to acknowledge maltreatment due to race, and

inability to perceive structural racism means that resistant capital is not a strong

explanatory factor in explications of their high academic achievement. Most of the study

participants believed their experiences were no different than those of any other student

in the city of Philadelphia, and that personal characteristics can mitigate any racial

discrimination they receive. These findings illustrate the complexity of racial identity

and academic achievement in education research. Some research argues that high-

achieving Black students see academic achievement as an act of racial uplift, (Allen,

2015; DuBois 1969; Freire 1970), while other research argues high-achieving Black

students adopt a raceless, or White, academic persona (Fordham 1988; Fordham & Ogbu,

1986).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to evaluate community cultural wealth in the academic success of high-achieving Black students from low-income communities who participated in a college access mentor program, Mentor Youth, in Philadelphia. Specifically, this study examined if pillars of community cultural wealth such as aspirational, familial, navigational, social, linguistic and resistant capital were relevant to their academic success, and if so, to what extent. Seven participants engaged in three rounds of interviews and were observed during their participation in the mentor program; among these participants, two were observed further in their high schools.

The results of this study show that there are forms of community-derived capital that are utilized to achieve academic success. Analysis of the data showed that aspirational, familial, and navigational capital were explanatory factors in their academic success. The conversion of social and linguistic capital into academic performance was complicated by asymmetrical power dynamics within educational institutions between students and teachers/program staff and thus highlighted the continued relevance of institutional agents in legitimating and rewarding White normative behaviors for academic success. Additionally, the presence of colorblind ideology and a reluctance to attribute maltreatment to racial discrimination meant that resistant capital was not a strong explanatory factor in student success. Data also supported the reflexivity of the various forms of capital that comprise community cultural wealth.

Forms of Community Cultural Wealth Mobilized in Student Academic Success

Data from this study shows that students of color from low-income communities have cultural capital that they are transferring across fields of interaction to achieve within dominant institutions. Aspirational, familial, and navigational capital were each forms of community cultural capital that were applicable to student academic achievement. Influential research related to high-achieving Black high school students from low-income communities argues that this population may be successful because they gain White middle-class values and capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Fordham, 1988; Ogbu & Simmons, 1998), but this study found that types of capital derived from their low-income Black communities are converted into academic success. Additionally, previous research has not analyzed the community cultural wealth utilized by Black high school students from low-income communities.

Aspirational Capital

Aspirational capital refers to the sustainment of hopes and dreams despite challenging barriers to goal attainment (Yosso, 2005). Prior research has explored the educational aspirations held by Black youth from low-income communities and found that low socio-economic status generally has a negative impact on high educational aspirations (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Strayhorn, 2009). However, the participants in this study developed and maintained high aspirations despite their socio-economic circumstances, which is representative of possessing aspirational capital. Participants held high aspirations to attend college, attain financial security, and support their families. Literature on low-income, college-aspiring students supports student aspirations to gain financial security and provide financial support for families (Saenz,

Hurtado, Barrera, Wolf, & Yeung, 2007). Study participants were able to convert their aspirational capital into academic achievement by using their aspirations as a motivating factor in goal setting and persistence.

This study also explored the relationship between noncognitive factors related to academic performance and community cultural wealth. Existing research shows that educational aspirations are significant, positive predictors of academic self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy is a predictor of academic achievement (Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996; Uwah, McMahon, & Furlow, 2008). However, current research has not analyzed the relationship between aspirational capital, as articulated by the community cultural wealth framework, and noncognitive academic performance factors. This study found that aspirational capital was translated into motivation that fostered academic perseverance. Academic perseverance entails goal setting, persistence, and academic mastery (Farrington et al., 2012).

Familial capital was instrumental in developing aspirational capital, which is consistent with prior research that highlights the importance of both individual and family level variables in the development of educational aspirations (Coleman, 1991; Epstein, 1995; Lareau, 1989; Yan, 1999). Thus aspirational capital was only one contributing component in their achievement and other forms of community cultural wealth were utilized in their academic success as well.

Familial Capital

Familial capital—the "cultural knowledges" cultivated among family and kinship networks—provided the foundational knowledges and values that facilitated academic mindsets and persistence for students. The link between noncognitive factors that

promote academic achievement and familial capital has not been previously explored in educational research literature. Study participants described noncognitive factors such as academic mindsets and perseverance that fostered academic success. Academic mindsets are the psycho-social beliefs students had about academics in relation to themselves (Farrington et al., 2012), and persistence represents the continuance of academic matriculation (Russell & Atwater, 2005). For participants in this study, familial capital was represented through oral traditions, parental support, and skills and mindsets cultivated within the family. These characteristics and knowledges shaped the noncognitive skills articulated by study participants.

Through cautionary tales and storytelling, families passed down collective knowledge and highlighted alternative paths for study participants For African-Americans, storytelling and oral traditions are an integral part of the socialization process (Carter-Black, 2007). In the African-American community, storytelling provides practical guidelines for navigating life's challenges, and presents options available to individuals or groups (Banks-Wallace, 2002). When incorporated into curriculum as culturally-relevant pedagogy, oral tradition may also enhance academic achievement for Black students (Flowers & Flowers, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Study participants used family histories as motivation to create alternate life paths through academic success.

Student narratives in this study highlighted the various forms of family/parental support that can foster high aspirations and academic achievement. Beneficial parental support is often defined as intensive engagement in academic interests, frequent communication about school related tasks, and engagement in extracurricular academic

activities (Brody et al., 2004; Hill et al., 2004; Yan, 1999). However, the youth in this study described less intensive academic engagement from their parents, and instead expressed that familial support was evidenced via financial support for basic needs, words of encouragement, and permission to engage in extracurricular activities. Thus expanded notions of familial characteristics that can facilitate academic achievement among low-income Black students were elucidated in this study.

Participants also described the skills and mindsets they gained from their families such as pro-academic attitudes, resilience, and work ethic that they converted into behaviors that fostered academic achievement. Resilience literature highlights the importance of positive adaptation to challenging circumstances (Cunningham & Swanson, 2010). The ability to overcome school and financial instability was particularly important for the academic success of students in this study

Navigational Capital

Knowledges and skills that are employed to maneuver institutions are representative of navigational capital. Student narratives and observations showed how navigational capital is mobilized through student behaviors that encourage academic success. Research on noncognitive factors that influence academic performance provided insight into some of the non-academic skills that can inform the operationalization of navigational capital. Noncognitive factors are defined as "sets of behaviors, skills, attitudes, and strategies that are crucial to academic performance in their classes, but that may not be reflected in their scores on cognitive tests" (Farrington et al., 2012, p. 2). Navigational capital translated most directly to academic success through the activation of behaviors that cultivated in-school achievement.

Study participants used various strategies to adeptly navigate peer groups to maintain positive peer relationships while consistently engaging in academic behaviors, which are behaviors that demonstrate academic engagement such as going to class, studying, completing homework, etc. (Farrington, et al., 2012). Some literature on peer selection asserts that high achieving students generally associate with peers with similar academic mindsets (Holland, 2011), however, study participants presented a more nuanced picture of peer interaction which more closely aligns to Carter's (2005) conception of various modes of peer engagement. Carter defined Cultural straddlers as students who succeed academically and are popular with a diverse group of peers. One participant in this study associated with academically and behaviorally diverse peer groups; she adapted her *social behavior* to the peer group she was around at that time, but continued to engage in *academic behaviors* regardless of the group context. Another group of study participants engaged with academically and behaviorally diverse peers, but did not outwardly augment their behavior to conform to social pressures. Both strategies used by the two groups of participants are analogous to peer interactions of cultural straddlers observed in Carter's study. In the present study, I also observed a group of participants who interacted solely with peers who shared the same academic mindset and pro-academic behaviors. Regardless of the strategy used, each participant was able to navigate their peer groups in a way that fostered positive social and academic outcomes.

Through observations and participant narratives, students exhibited academic perseverance and displayed noncognitive learning strategies that facilitated school success. Self-discipline is characteristic of academic perseverance, and students

expressed an ability to minimize distractions and selectively isolate themselves in order to focus on academic and college related goals. Students engaged in learning strategies and social skills such as goal-setting and assertion which they leveraged into academic behaviors to actualize goals. This aligns with literature that highlights the role of educational goals of high achieving students as a factor in their achievement (Carroll, Durkin, Hattie, & Houghton, 1997). However, goal setting, academic behaviors, and the employment of other noncognitive strategies that promote academic achievement have not been situated within the community cultural wealth framework in extant research. The exploration of navigational capital in this study has articulated a relationship between community cultural wealth and the activation of noncognitive skills.

Community Cultural Wealth and Power

Linguistic and social capital represent forms of community cultural wealth that contributed to the academic success of study participants, but their explanatory factor is mitigated by power dynamics within dominant institutions such as schools. Although the use of social and linguistic capital were mediated through legitimation practices within schools, this framework still provides a useful lens into how linguistic and social capital are operationalized by African-American students from low-income communities.

Linguistic and Social Capital and the Limits of Community Cultural Wealth

Together, linguistic and social capital represent the complex relationship between participant academic success and community cultural wealth. Linguistic capital is the social and intellectual skills gained through utilization of various communication styles, and social capital is the networks of people and resources in the community (Yosso, 2005). Student narratives showed that study participants exhibited linguistic capital

attributes and utilized this form of capital as a resource to create conditions for academic success. High rates of academic participation and verbal communication, engagement in the arts, humor, and being assertive are characteristics of study participants that may indirectly contribute to their academic success. Social capital was evidenced by students gaining access to resources, such as Mentor Youth, via their community networks, in addition to emotive and functional support from peers. Despite access to resources through community and kinship networks, relationships with teachers and adults in educational institutions remained important for their academic success. Additionally, neighborhood violence and disembedment from their local school communities were prohibitory factors in gaining and mobilizing community social capital.

High levels of social and academic interactions are characteristic of high achieving students (Wang, Waxman, & Freiberg, 1996), and observations of the participants in this study were no different. School and mentor program observations showed students who demonstrated higher rates of verbal interactions with peers and adults than their non-Black peers. Study participants were also more likely to assert their opinions, even if contrary to the beliefs held by the majority of the class. Extant research shows that high rates of participation and assertion in educational institutions correlated with academic achievement (Appleton, Christenson, & Furlong, 2008; Farrington et al., 2012). Two participants expressed their love for writing and poetry, and how engagement in the art motivates them to achieve which supports research that argues that the arts, particularly poetry increases literacy (Hughes, 2007).

Findings from this study highlight the complexity of gender performance and institutional legitimation practices. There were some variances in communication

technique by gender with boys often utilizing humor when communicating with program staff, which could be a strategy to portray themselves as non-threatening to White staff members. In a qualitative study of minority students in White schools, Holland (2012) found that Black male students consciously made themselves more approachable by changing their behavior and speech to appear less aggressive and downplay stereotypes. This study builds upon the limited extant research that analyzes the diverse communication styles of Black males that promote positive social and academic outcomes in educational institutions. These findings lend particular insight into how Black males positively interact with White adults in educational environments. The majority of educational research on Black males in elementary and secondary school focuses on the negative outcomes of Black male interactions in schools (Harper, 2009; Jackson & Moore, 2008; Noguera, 2003b). The linguistic malleability of the male participants in the present study elicited positive reactions from mentor program staff.

Contrary to the males in the study, three of the four females expressed being labeled as behavior problems by teachers in elementary and middle school due to their communication styles. They were perceived as being abrasive and having a negative attitude; their experiences support findings from a growing body of literature about the labeling of Black girls as loud, abrasive, and aggressive (Holland, 2012; Morris, 2007; Odumosu, 2015). Morris found that teachers attempted to change the behavior of Black girls they deemed as "loudies" in order to mold their behavior into forms that were more representative of passive views of femininity. The three girls in this study who were labeled as behavior problems also described interventions by teachers to alter their behavior, which underscores the continued relevance of institutional agents in

legitimating expressions of forms of capital as they relate to academic success. The plight of Black girls in educational institutions is only recently being examined in depth across disciplines (Blake et al., 2011), and findings from this study highlight the relevancy of an intersectional approach in the study of Black girl's experiences in schools.

School choice initiatives and neighborhood conditions, particularly violence, stymied the potential for increased community social capital for study participants. Each participant attended a high school outside of their local community. Six out of seven participants took advantage of school choice initiatives, and one student was forced to attend another school because her neighborhood high school was closed due to budget cuts. While existing research has examined the effect of school choice on academic achievement for both low-income minority students who attend choice schools, and those who remain in neighborhood schools (Archbald, 1995; Cullen, Jacob, & Levitt, 2000; Flaxman, Guerrero, & Gretchcn, 1997; Gamoran, 1996; Neild, 2004), I did not encounter literature that examined school choice as a disembedding mechanism—a process by which students' social relations are removed from their local contexts—and the consequences of these policies on the attainment of community social capital. Results from this study show that school choice acts as a disemebedding mechanism by removing high achieving students' social relations from their local contexts thereby decreasing their accumulation of community social capital.

Neighborhood conditions also limited participant ability to develop community social capital, beyond their familial networks. Participants held negative views of their neighborhood schools and felt those schools were characterized by lack of resources and opportunity, and negative school climates. Six of the seven participants felt unsafe in

their neighborhoods and limited their contact with neighborhood peers as a result. The likelihood of experiencing violence is higher for Black youth living in poverty, and social distrust is high in impoverished communities that experience high rates of violence (Richardson & Van Brakle, 2013). These conditions create barriers to the formation of community social capital.

Due to asymmetrical power dynamics in the student/adult relationship within educational institutions, only certain forms of linguistic capital are legitimized and rewarded, and social ties to teachers, program staff, and other institutional agents remained relevant to student success. While the students, especially males, displayed diverse communication styles that fostered positive interactions with program adults, three of the four girls discussed being punished for non-normative communication styles in previous schooling environments. Through the intervention of teachers, they were encouraged to communicate in styles that were perceived as more acceptable, illustrating the role of institutional agents in imparting White normative forms of cultural capital.

Perceptions of Racial Stereotypes Within A Raceless Self

Resistant capital did not strongly apply to student success. Participants expressed awareness of racial stereotypes, however, they did not internalize those stereotypes, or see race as relevant to their educational experiences. Interestingly, students were able to highlight stereotypes when referencing the behavior of other Black youth, but expressed colorblind ideology when referencing their own achievement.

Resistant Capital

Findings from participant narratives on race highlight the complexity of racial identity and achievement for low-income Black students. Resistant capital as utilized in

this study represents an awareness of racially oppressive structures and the motivation to challenge inequality and transform those structures (Yosso, 2005). The participants expressed some awareness of racial stereotypes, but their adherence to colorblind ideology, refusal to acknowledge maltreatment due to race, and inability to perceive structural racism means that resistant capital is not a strong explanatory factor in explications of their high academic achievement.

Previous research argues that a strong sense of racial pride and/or ethnic identity is important in the academic achievement of Black students (Butler-Barnes, Chavous, Hurd, & Varner, 2013; Eccles, Wong, & Peck, 2006; Ward, 1990), but the participants in this study did not express a strong sense of racial pride, and in some cases, they were critical of the behavior of their same-race peers. Overall, participants viewed their racial identity as a minimal component of their overall identity, even if they expressed positive identification with Blackness.

Participants in this study were also reluctant to attribute negative schooling experiences to race. Eccles, Wong and Peck (2006) argued that instances of racial discrimination can negatively affect the achievement of African-American adolescents, and perhaps their reluctance to acknowledge discrimination is a consequence of their "raceless" academic persona. Fordham (1988) states that racelessness is a strategy for vertical mobility that is used by some high achieving Black students.

Colorblind and post-racial ideology assert that racism is no longer relevant in American society, and acknowledgement of race is in fact racist (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). Critics of colorblind ideology argue that colorblindness perpetuates persistent racism (Warmington, 2009). In the midst of highly publicized racially motivated police killings

of unarmed Black men and women and the subsequent rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, the expression of colorblind ideology among study participants was surprising, particularly in the city of Philadelphia where numerous protests against racism and racial violence took place within the year that data collection took place. However, there is research that highlights colorblind ideology among both high achieving and low-achieving Black students which may be a result of educational systems that are imbued with colorblind ideology (Fordham, 1988; Ransom, 2015). It is possible that the inability/reluctance of high achieving Black students to recognize societal and institutional discrimination could undermine the collective power of all Black students (McKenzie, 2003). Their academic success despite facing numerous challenges could be framed within individualistic narratives that place the onus for achievement on individual students and not the institutions that are ill-equipped to serve them, and thus perpetuate inequality for Black students as a collective. Also, academically successful Black students have the navigational ability to successfully advocate for increased opportunities for their peers, and their inability to recognize unjust educational systems undermines their nascent power.

Summary

Black male and female students in this study articulated the various forms of community cultural wealth they carry with them into educational institutions to foster academic success. They described how their aspirations motivated them to strive beyond their current circumstances. They articulated the knowledges and values they attained from their families and how family characteristics infused them with direction, resilience and aspirations. Participants shared how they successfully navigate disparate peer groups

and engage in behaviors that engender academic achievement. Observations revealed multifaceted communication styles that sometimes furthered aims, and sometimes stymied goal attainment if institutional agents did not legitimize their forms of expression. Students were able to access valuable resources through their kinship or community networks, but institutional agents remained critical to their academic success. Lastly, students articulated colorblind ideology and a reluctance to acknowledge racial discrimination in their lives. Despite the complexity of the manifestation of community cultural wealth in their academic success, this framework provides fresh insight into the academic achievement of Black students from low-income communities in Philadelphia. The findings from this study have several implications regarding factors that contribute to academic achievement for African-American students, and how educational institutions can harness community cultural capital to encourage achievement among more Black students.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Schools can be sites of social transformation (Horvat & Davis, 2011), and findings from this study can inform school organization, culture, and instruction to harness the community cultural wealth of students to (a) increase academic and social outcomes for marginalized youth, and (b) re-imagine the relationships between teachers and students. Not only can schools begin to recognize the non-dominant capital that low-income, minority students carry with them into the school setting, they can create the conditions for students to mobilize that capital into school success.

The role of institutional agents, particularly teachers, provided a backdrop for students' educational histories and trajectories. Student narratives from this study can

inform teacher education programs to take a strengths-based approach when discussing the social context of schooling in impoverished communities of color. It is also critical that present and future teachers are made aware of the power they have in recognizing and legitimating forms of capital

Implications for Theory and Research

This qualitative study sought to illuminate the relationship of community cultural wealth to the academic achievement of seven high-performing Black students from low-income communities. Expanded notions of cultural capital have been presented to assert a strengths-based approach when referencing the families and communities that nurture resilient, academically successful students.

Data from this study also reinforces the power of institutional agents in legitimating and rewarding forms of capital when they align with White normative behaviors. However, it was shown that there are forms of community-derived capital that are unrecognized by institutions yet engender institutional rewards for the actor. In order to tell our own stories and counteract deficit narratives, it is critical that scholars of color continue to identify and articulate the strengths that children of color employ to survive—and oftentimes thrive—in oppressive conditions.

This study also articulated a connection between research on noncognitive factors related to student success, and non-dominant capital. Noncognitive research provided insight into the academic mindsets, beliefs, and behaviors that emerged from the forms of capital in community cultural wealth; a link which had not yet been explored in previous research.

Student attitudes regarding racial discrimination and adherence to colorblind ideology has implications for how we explore Black identity and beliefs about group identification. Blacks are generally perceived as a monolith (Coleman, 1988; De Jong & Madamba, 2001) with occasionally deleterious consequences when Blacks are perceived as a threat (Costa Vargas, 2011). However, these student narratives show that collective racial solidarity and/or identification is not automatic, even across diverse educational settings that are situated within racially charged social contexts.

Further Research

The call for more theorizing and counter storytelling from scholars of color was a key motivation for my undertaking this study. Results from male and female student narratives show that Critical Race Theory scholars should apply an intersectional lens to analyze the mobilization and reception of non-dominant capital in school settings.

Also, more research should examine school choice as a disembedding mechanism, and its effects on both individual racial ideology, and on the accumulation of community cultural wealth. If the foundation of Black resistance (and resistance movements of all oppressed groups) stems from community connections, then what are the implications for the long terms efficacy of community-based social justice movements? Examining the role of resistant capital among a larger sampling of high-achieving Black students may highlight more nuances in this phenomenon.

There also needs to be additional analysis into how community cultural wealth is operationalized by students who demonstrate a variety of achievement levels in school settings. Understanding how different groups operationalize their capital may provide insight into how to better serve all students. Lastly, the relationship between

noncognitive skills,community cultural wealth, and institutional agent perceptions of community-derived capital, should be examined to further promote academic achievement for marginalized youth.

Limitations

While this study highlighted the manifestation of community cultural wealth in the academic achievement of Black students from low-income communities in Philadelphia, some limitations exist. Lack of access to participant high schools limited the observation of student behaviors across multiple fields of interaction. Through previous research experience with Philadelphia schools, I noticed teachers and administrators were initially distrustful of an outside agent coming into their schools for interviews and observations, which may be a result of the stream of controversies and instability that has affected the district in recent years.

Accessing high achieving students from one mentor program may also be a limitation due to sampling bias. All participants were exposed to the same cultural milieu of the program and perhaps high-achieving students outside of Mentor Youth would frame aspects of their success differently.

Conclusions

Social capital theory as articulated by Bourdieu argues that all communities have social and cultural capital. However, only the social and cultural capital that is present in the dominant class is recognized and rewarded by institutions. Results from this study partially support the argument that White normative capital remains the standard by which student behavior is rewarded or punished. However, the data also shows that students are transferring community cultural wealth across fields and mobilizing those

forms of capital to achieve academically. Recognizing the capital that students attain within their communities and families presents a counter-narrative to research that emphasizes deficits and posits youth of color as "problems to be fixed". Challenging perceived wisdom may empower communities—and the schools that serve them—to become transformative spaces that nurture strengths in the fight to overcome systemic inequalities.

REFERENCES

Allan, K. (2006). *Contemporary social and sociological theory: Visualizing social worlds*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press. Retrieved from http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip062/2005030933.html

Allard, A. C. (2005). Capitalizing on Bourdieu: How useful are concepts of "social capital" and "social field" for researching "marginalized" young women? *Theory and Research in Education, 3*(1), 63–79. doi:10.1177/1477878505049835

Allen, Q. (2013). Balancing school and cool: Tactics of resistance and accommodation among black middle-class males. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 16*(2), 203-224. doi:10.1080/13613324.2012.725041

Allen, Q. (2015). 'I'm trying to get my A': Black male achievers talk about race, school and achievement. *The Urban Review, 47*(1), 209-231. doi:10.1007/s11256-014-0315-4

Allen, W., Kimura-Walsh, E., Griffin, K., & Yamamura, E. (2007). Those who left, those who stayed: Exploring the educational opportunities of high-achieving Black and Latina/o students at magnet and nonmagnet Los Angeles high schools, 2001–2002. *Educational Studies, 42*(3), 229–247. doi:10.1080/00131940701632662

Allensworth, E., & Easton, J. Q. (2005). *The on-track indicator as a predictor of high school graduation.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Allensworth, E., & Easton, J. Q. (2007). *What matters for staying on-track and graduating in Chicago public schools.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Anderson, E. M. (1999). *Code of the street: Decency, violence, and the moral life of the inner city*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton.

Appleton, J. J., Christenson, S. L., & Furlong, M. J. (2008). Student engagement with school: Critical conceptual and methodological issues of the construct. *Psychology in the Schools, 45*(5), 369–386. doi:10.1002/pits.20303

Archambault, I., Janosz, M., Morizot, J., & Pagani, L. (2009). Adolescent behavioral, affective, and cognitive engagement in school: Relationship to dropout. *The Journal of School Health, 79*(9), 408–415. doi:10.1111/j.1746-1561.2009.00428.x

Archbald, D. A. (1995). A longitudinal cohort analysis of achievement among elementary-magnet students, neighborhood-school students and transfer students. *Journal of Research & Development in Education, 28*(3), 161–168.

Auerbach, S. (2001). *Under co-construction: Parent roles in promoting college access for students of color* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR.

Auerbach, S. (2006). "If the student is good, let him fly": Moral support for college among Latino immigrant parents. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 5*(4), 275–292. doi:10.1207/s1532771xjle0504_4

Baker, C. E. (2014). Parenting and cultural socialization as predictors of African American Children's science and social studies achievement. *Journal of African American Studies, 18*(1), 92–107. doi:10.1007/s12111-013-9257-2

Baker, J. (1998). The social context of school satisfaction among urban, low-income, African-American students. *School Psychology Quarterly, 13*(1), 25–44. doi:10.1037/h0088970

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

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

Bandura, A. (1999). Social cognitive theory of personality. In L. Pervin & O.P. John (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 154–196). New York, NY: Guilford Publications.

Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology, 52*, 1–26.

Banks-Wallace, J. (2002). Talk that talk: Storytelling and analysis rooted in African American oral tradition. *Qualitative Health Research, 12*(3), 410–426. doi:10.1177/104973202129119892

Barile, J. P., Donohue, D. K., Anthony, E. R., Baker, A. M., Weaver, S. R., & Henrich, C. C. (2012). Teacher-student relationship climate and school outcomes: Implications for educational policy initiatives. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 41*(3), 256–267. doi:10.1007/s10964-011-9652-8

Barksdale-Ladd, M. A., & Thomas, K. F. (2000). What's at stake in high-stakes testing: Teachers and parents speak out. *Journal of Teacher Education, 51*(5), 384–397. doi:10.1177/0022487100051005006

Bedsworth, W., Colby, S., Doctor, J., & Bridgespan Group. (2006). *Reclaiming the American Dream.* San Francisco, CA: Bridgespan Group.

Betts, J. R., & Morell, D. (1999). The determinants of undergraduate grade point average: The relative importance of family background, high school resources, and peer group effects. *The Journal of Human Resources, 34*(2), 268–293.

Blake, J. J., Butler, B. R., Lewis, C. W., & Darensbourg, A. (2011). Unmasking the inequitable discipline experiences of urban black girls: Implications for urban educational stakeholders. *The Urban Review,43*(1), 90-106. doi:10.1007/s11256-009-0148-8

Blanc, S., & Simon, E. (2007). Public education in Philadelphia: The crucial need for civic capacity in a privatized environment. *The Phi Delta Kappan, 88*(7), 503–506. doi:10.1177/003172170708800708

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2006). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States* (2nd ed.). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Borghans, L., Duckworth, A. L., Heckman, J. J., & Weel, B. T. (2008). The economics and psychology of personality traits. *The Journal of Human Resources, 43*(4), 972–1059. doi:10.1353/jhr.2008.0017

Borman, G. D., Rachuba, L. T. (2001). *Academic success among poor and minority students: An analysis of competing models of school effects.* Baltimore, MD: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk.

Bourdieu, P. (1986/2011). The forms of capital. In I. Szeman & T. Kaposy (Eds.), *Cultural theory: An anthology* (pp. 81–93). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. C. (1977). *Reproduction in education, culture and society* (R. Nice, Trans.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. D. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Bracey, J. R., Bámaca, M. Y., & Umaña-Taylor, A. J. (2004). Examining ethnic identity and self-esteem among biracial and monoracial adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 33*(2), 123–132. doi:10.1023/B:JOYO.0000013424.93635.68

Broh, B. A. (2002). Linking extracurricular programming to academic achievement: Who benefits and why? *Sociology of Education, 75*(1), 69–95.

Brown, R., & Evans, W. P. (2002). Extracurricular activity and ethnicity: Creating greater school connection among diverse student populations. *Urban Education, 37*(1), 41–58. doi:10.1177/0042085902371004

Bryant, A. L., & Zimmerman, M. A. (2003). Role models and psychosocial outcomes among african american adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 18*(1), 36–67. doi:10.1177/0743558402238276

Bunch, W. (2014, May 14). In ruins: How Philadelphia became the poorest big city in America. Retrieved from http://articles.philly.com/2014-05-14/news/49823799_1_west-philadelphia-deep-poverty-hunting-park

Butler-Barnes, S. T., Chavous, T. M., Hurd, N., & Varner, F. (2013). African American adolescents' academic persistence: A strengths-based approach. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 42*(9), 1443–1458. doi:10.1007/s10964-013-9962-0

Camara, W. J., & Echternacht, G. (2000). The SAT I and high school grades: Utility in predicting success in college. New York, NY: The College Entrance Examination Board.

Cammarota, J., Moll, L., Gonzalez, M., & Cannella, C. (2012). Sociocultural perspectives on interpersonal relationships in schools. *Journal of the Association of Mexican American Educators, 6*(3), 12–16.

Carpenter, D. M., Jr. (2008). Expectations, aspirations, and achievement among Latino students of immigrant families. *Marriage & Family Review, 43*(1–2), 164–185. doi:10.1080/01494920802013078

Carroll, A., Durkin, K., Hattie, J., & Houghton, S. (1997). Goal setting among adolescents: A comparison of delinquent, at-risk, and not-at-risk youth. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 89*(3), 441–450. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.89.3.441

Carter, P. L. (2003). "Black" cultural capital, status positioning, and schooling conflicts for low-income African American youth. *Social Problems, 50*(1), 136–155.

Carter, P. L. (2012). *Keepin' it real: School success beyond Black and White*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195168624.001.0001

Carter-Black, J. (2007). Teaching cultural competence: An innovative strategy grounded in the universality of storytelling as depicted in African and African American storytelling traditions. *Journal of Social Work Education, 43*(1), 31–50. doi:10.5175/JSWE.2007.200400471

Caskey, J., & Kuperberg, M. (2014, Fall). The Philadelphia school district's ongoing financial crisis. *Education Next*. Retrieved from http://educationnext.org/philadelphia-school-districts-ongoing-financial-crisis/

Choy, S., & MPR Associates, B., CA. (2001). Students whose parents did not go to college: Postsecondary access, persistence, and attainment. *Findings from the condition of education.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Clark, M. A., Lee, S. M., Goodman, W., & Yacco, S. (2008). Examining male

    underachievement in public education: Action research at a district level. *NASSP*

    Bulletin, 92(2), 111–132. doi:10.1177/0192636508321155

Clark, R. (1983). *Family life and school achievement: Why poor Black children succeed*

    or fail. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Coard, S. I., & Sellers, R. M. (2005). African American families as a context for racial

    socialization. In V. C. McLoyd, N. E. Hill, & K. A. Dodge (Eds.) *African*

    American family life: Ecological and cultural diversity (pp. 264–284). New

    York, NY: Guilford Press.

Cohn, E., Cohn, S., Balch, D. C., & Bradley, J., Jr. (2004). Determinants of

    undergraduate GPAs: SAT scores, high-school GPA and high-school rank.

    Economics of Education Review, 23(6), 577–586. doi:

    10.1016/j.econedurev.2004.01.001

Cokley, K., Awosogba, O., & Taylor, D. (2014). Social achievement goals, efficacious

    beliefs, and math performance in a predominately African American high school.

    Journal of Black Psychology, 40(3), 215–238.

Cole-Henderson, B. (2000). Organizational characteristics of schools that successfully

    serve low-income urban African American students. *Journal of Education for*

    Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR), 5(1), 77–91.

    doi:10.1207/s15327671espr0501&2_6

Coleman, J. S. (1991). *Parental involvement in education.* Washington, DC: U.S.

    Department of Education.

Coley, R. L. (1998). Children's socialization experiences and functioning in single-mother households: The importance of fathers and other men. *Child Development, 69*(1), 219–230. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1998.tb06144.x

Conley, D. T. (2005). *College knowledge: What it really takes for students to succeed and what we can do to get them ready* (1st ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Corbin, J. M., & Strauss, A. L. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Cose, E. (2003). *The Black gender gap*. New York, NY: IBT Media, Inc.

Crenshaw, K. (1995). *Critical race theory: The key writings that formed the movement*. The New Press.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Croizet, J., & Dutrevis, M. (2004). Socioeconomic status and intelligence: Why test scores do not equal merit. *Journal of Poverty, 8*(3), 91–107. doi: 10.1300/J134v08n03_05

Crosnoe, R. (2001). The social world of male and female athletes in high school. *Sociological Studies of Children and Youth, 8,* 89–110.

Cullen, J. B., Jacob, B. A., & Levitt, S. D. (2005). The impact of school choice on student outcomes: An analysis of the Chicago public schools. *Journal of Public Economics, 89*(5), 729–760. doi:10.1016/j.jpubeco.2004.05.001

Cunningham, M., & Swanson, D. P. (2010). Educational resilience in African American adolescents. *The Journal of Negro Education, 79*(4), 473–487.

Dappen, L., & Isernhagen, J. C. (2006). Urban and nonurban schools: Examination of a statewide student mentoring program. *Urban Education, 41*(2), 151–168. doi:10.1177/0042085905282262

Darensbourg, A. M., & Blake, J. J. (2014). Examining the academic achievement of Black adolescents: Importance of peer and parental influences. *Journal of Black Psychology, 40*(2), 191–212. doi:10.1177/0095798413481384

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Securing the right to learn: Policy and practice for powerful teaching and learning. *Educational Researcher, 35*(7), 13–24. doi:10.3102/0013189X035007013

Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine our future*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

David, J. L., & Cuban, L. (2010). *Cutting through the hype: The essential guide to school reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

De Jong, G. F., & Madamba, A. B. (2001). A double disadvantage? Minority group, immigrant status, and underemployment in the United States. *Social Science Quarterly, 82*(1), 117–130. doi:10.1111/0038-4941.00011

DeCuir-Gunby, J. T. (2009). A review of the racial identity development of African American adolescents: The role of education. *Review of Educational Research, 79*(1), 103-124.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Diamond, J. B. (2007). Where the rubber meets the road: Rethinking the connection between high-stakes testing policy and classroom instruction. *Sociology of Education, 80*(4), 285–313. doi:10.1177/003804070708000401

Dika, S. L., & Singh, K. (2002). Applications of social capital in educational literature: A critical synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 72*(1), 31–60.

Downey, D. B., & Pribesh, S. (2004). When race matters: Teachers' evaluations of students' classroom behavior. *Sociology of Education, 77*(4), 267–282. doi:10.1177/003804070407700401

DuBois, W.E.B. (1969). The talented tenth. In B.T. Washington (Ed.), *The negro problem: A series of articles by representative American negroes of today.* Miami: Mnemosyne Publishing Inc.

Eccles, J. S., & Barber, B. L. (1999). Student council, volunteering, basketball, or marching band what kind of extracurricular involvement matters? *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *14*(1), 10–43.

Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology, 53*, 109–132.

Eccles, J. S., Wong, C. A., & Peck, S. C. (2006). Ethnicity as a social context for the development of African-American adolescents. *Journal of School Psychology, 44*(5), 407–426. doi:10.1016/j.jsp.2006.04.001

Egan, R. D. (2013). *Becoming sexual: A critical appraisal of the sexualization of girls*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

Eichel, L. (2013). *Philadelphia 2013: The state of the city*. The PEW Charitable Trusts. Retrieved from: http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2013/03/23/philadelphia-2013-the-state-of-the-city

Epstein, J. L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *The Phi Delta Kappan, 76*(9), 701–712.

Farrington, C. A., Roderick, M., Allensworth, E., Nagaoka, J., Keyes, T. S., Johnson, D. W., . . . Consortium on Chicago School Research. (2012). Teaching adolescents to become learners: The role of noncognitive factors in shaping school performance—A critical literature review. *University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.* Chicago, IL.

Feldman, A. F., & Matjasko, J. L. (2005). The role of school-based extracurricular activities in adolescent development: A comprehensive review and future directions. *Review of Educational Research, 75*(2), 159–210. doi:10.3102/00346543075002159

Fenning, P., & Rose, J. (2007). Overrepresentation of African American students in exclusionary discipline the role of school policy. *Urban Education, 42*(6), 536–559. doi:10.1177/0042085907305039

Ferguson, R. (2003). Teachers' perceptions and expectations and the Black–White test score gap. *Urban Education, 38*(4), 460–507. doi:10.1177/0042085903254970

Finn, J., Gerber, S., Achilles, C., & Boyd-Zaharias, J. (2001). The enduring effects of small classes. *Teachers College Record, 103*(2), 145–183. doi:10.1111/0161-4681.00112

Finn, J. D., & Achilles, C. M. (1999). Tennessee's class size study: Findings, implications, misconceptions. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 21*(2), 97–109. doi:10.2307/1164294

Finn, J. D., & Rock, D. A. (1997). Academic success among students at risk for school failure. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 82*(2), 221–234. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.82.2.221

Flaxman, E., Guerrero, A., & Gretchen, D. (1997). *Career development effects of career magnets versus comprehensive schools.* Berkeley, CA: National Center for Research in Vocational Education.

Flowers, T. A., & Flowers, L. A. (2008). Factors affecting urban African American high school students' achievement in reading. *Urban Education, 43*(2), 154–171. doi:10.1177/0042085907312351

Fordham, S. (1988). Racelessness as a factor in Black students' school success: Pragmatic strategy or pyrrhic victory? *Harvard Educational Review, 58*(1), 54–84.

Fordham, S. (1993). "Those loud Black girls": (Black) women, silence, and gender "passing" in the academy. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 24*(1), 3–32.

Fordham, S., & Forsey, M. (2000). *Blacked out: Dilemmas of race, identity, and success at capital high.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Fordham, S., & Ogbu, J. U. (1986). Black students' school success: Coping with the "burden of 'acting White.'" *The Urban Review, 18*(3), 176–206. doi:10.1007/BF01112192

Freedman, M. (1993). *The kindness of strangers: Adult mentors, urban youth, and the new voluntarism*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum

French, S. E., Seidman, E., Allen, L., & Aber, J. L. (2006). The development of ethnic identity during adolescence. *Developmental psychology*, *42*(1), 1–10.

Furrer, C., & Skinner, E. (2003). Sense of relatedness as a factor in children's academic engagement and performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 95*(1), 148–162. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.95.1.148

Gammage, J., Graham, K. A., & Purcell, D. (2014). Pa. attorney general is probing cheating at Phila. schools. *The Philadelphia Inquirer.* Retrieved From: http://articles.philly.com/2014-01-20/news/46349694_1_philadelphia-schools-53-district-schools-principals

Gamoran, A. (1996). Student achievement in public magnet, public comprehensive, and private city high schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 18*(1), 1–18. doi:10.2307/1164227

Gandara, P. (1982). Passing through the eye of the needle: High-achieving Chicanas. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 4*(2), 167–179. doi:10.1177/07399863820042003

Geiser, S., & Santelices, M. V. (2007). *Validity of high-school grades in predicting student success beyond the freshman year: High-school record vs. standardized tests as indicators of four-year college outcomes*. Berkeley, CA: Center for Studies in Higher Education.

Giddens, A. (1990). The consequences of modernity. *Polity*, *53*(83), 245–260.

Gollwitzer, P. M., & Bargh, J. A. (1996). *The psychology of action: Linking cognition and motivation to behavior*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Goodenow, C., & Grady, K. E. (1993). The relationship of school belonging and friends' values to academic motivation among urban adolescent students. *The Journal of Experimental Education, 62*(1), 60–71. doi:10.1080/00220973.1993.9943831

Gordon Rouse, K. A. (2001). Resilient students' goals and motivation. *Journal of Adolescence, 24*(4), 461–472. doi:10.1006/jado.2001.0383

Grant, L. (1985). *Uneasy alliances: Black males, teachers, and peers in desegregated classrooms.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Griffin, K. A., Allen, W. R., Kimura-Walsh, E., & Yamamura, E. K. (2007). Those who left, those who stayed: Exploring the educational opportunities of high-achieving Black and Latina/o students at magnet and nonmagnet Los Angeles high schools (2001–2002). *Educational Studies, 42*(3), 229–247. doi:10.1080/00131940701632662

Gutman, L. M., & McLoyd, V. C. (2000). *Parents' management of their children's education within the home, at school, and in the community: An examination of African-American families living in poverty. Urban Review, 32*, 1–24.

Gutman, L. M., & Midgley, C. (2000). The role of protective factors in supporting the academic achievement of poor African American students during the middle school transition. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *29*(2), 223–249.

Harper, S. R. (2005). Leading the way: Inside the experiences of high-achieving African American male students. *About Campus, 10*(1), 8–15. doi:10.1002/abc.118

Harper, S. R. (2009). Niggers no more: A critical race counternarrative on black male student achievement at predominantly white colleges and universities. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education,22*(6), 697.

Harper, S. R. (2015). Success in these schools? visual counternarratives of young men of color and urban high schools they attend. *Urban Education, 50*(2), 139-169. doi:10.1177/0042085915569738

Harris, C. (2002). Critical race studies: An introduction. *UCLA Law Review, 49*(5), 1215–1239.

Harris, P. (2003). *Gatekeeping and remaking: The politics of respectability in African American women's history and Black feminism.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hayes, D. (2012). Parental involvement and achievement outcomes in African American adolescents. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 43*, 567–582. Retrieved from http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA300981436&v=2.1&u=temple_main&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w&asid=66a8eb4cb4f0eba79b92fd390c51d6c9

Hersi, A. A. (2011). Immigration and resiliency: Unpacking the experiences of high school students from Cape Verde and Ethiopia. *Intercultural Education, 22*(3), 189–202. doi:10.1080/14675986.2011.592033

Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Leavy, P. (2006). *The practice of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hill, N. E., Castellino, D. R., Lansford, J. E., Nowlin, P., Dodge, K. A., Bates, J. E., & Pettit, G. S. (2004). Parent academic involvement as related to school behavior,

achievement, and aspirations: Demographic variations across adolescence. *Child Development, 75*(5), 1491–1509. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2004.00753.x

Holland, M. M. (2012). Only here for the day: The social integration of minority students at a majority White high school. *Sociology of Education, 85*(2), 101–120. doi:10.1177/0038040712440789

Holland, N. E. (2011). The power of peers: Influences on postsecondary education planning and experiences of African American students. *Urban Education, 46*(5), 1029–1055. doi:10.1177/0042085911400339

hooks, b. (1989). *Talking back: Thinking feminist, thinking Black*. Boston, MA: South End Press.

Horvat, E. M., & Lewis, K. S. (2003). Reassessing the "burden of 'acting White'": The importance of peer groups in managing academic success. *Sociology of Education, 76*(4), 265–280.

Howard, T. C. (2003). "A tug of war for our minds": African American high school students' perceptions of their academic identities and college aspirations. *The High School Journal, 87*(1), 4–17. doi:10.1353/hsj.2003.0017

Hubbard, L. (1999). College aspirations among low-income African American high school students: Gendered strategies for success. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 30*(3), 363–383.

Hubbard, L. (2005). The role of gender in academic achievement. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 18*(5), 605–623. doi:10.1080/09518390500224887

Hughes, D. J. (2007, October). Poetry: A powerful medium for literacy and technology development. *The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat.* Retrieved from http://www.edu gov.on. ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/Hughes.pdf

Hulleman, C. S., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2009). Promoting interest and performance in high school science classes. *Science, 326*(5958), 1410–1412. doi:10.1126/science.1177067

Hurd, N. M., Zimmerman, M. A., & Xue, Y. (2009). Negative adult influences and the protective effects of role models: A study with urban adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 38*(6), 777–789. doi:10.1007/s10964-008-9296-5

Jack, J., & Sludden, J. (2013). School closings in Philadelphia. *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education, 10*(1).

Jackson, J. F. L., & Moore, J. L. (2008). Introduction: The african american male crisis in education: A popular media infatuation or needed public policy response? *American Behavioral Scientist, 51*(7), 847-853. doi:10.1177/0002764207311992

Jacob, B. A. (2002). Where the boys aren't: Noncognitive skills, returns to school and the gender gap in higher education. *Economics of Education Review, 21*(6), 589–598. doi:10.1016/S0272-7757(01)00051-6

Jenkins, P. H. (1997). School delinquency and the school social bond. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 34*(3), 337–367. doi:10.1177/0022427897034003003

Jones, B. D., & Egley, R. J. (2004). Voices from the frontlines: Teachers' perceptions of high-stakes testing. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 12*(39), 1–29. doi:10.14507/epaa.v12n39.2004

Jones, M. H., & Ford, J. M. (2014). Social achievement goals, efficacious beliefs, and math performance in a predominately African American high school. *Journal of Black Psychology, 40*(3), 239–262. doi:10.1177/0095798413483556

Jung, M., Vargas, J. H. C., & Bonilla-Silva, E. (2011). *State of White supremacy: Racism, governance, and the United States*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Keller, T. E. (2005). A systemic model of the youth mentoring intervention. *The Journal of Primary Prevention, 26*(2), 169–188. doi:10.1007/s10935-005-1850-2

Kerpelman, J. L., Eryigit, S., & Stephens, C. J. (2008). African American adolescents' future education orientation: Associations with self-efficacy, ethnic identity, and perceived parental support. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 37*(8), 997–1008. doi:10.1007/s10964-007-9201-7

Konstantopoulos, S., & Chung, V. (2009). What are the long‑term effects of small classes on the achievement gap? Evidence from the lasting benefits study. *American Journal of Education, 116*(1), 125–154. doi:10.1086/605103

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465–491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1997). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lamont, M., & Lareau, A. (1988). Cultural capital: Allusions, gaps and glissandos in recent theoretical developments. *Sociological Theory, 6*(2), 153–168.

Lareau, A. (1989). *Home advantage: Social class and parental intervention in elementary education*. New York, NY: Falmer Press.

Lareau, A. (2002). Invisible inequality: Social class and childrearing in Black families and White families. *American Sociological Review, 67*(5), 747–776.

Lareau, A., & Horvat, E. M. (1999). Moments of social inclusion and exclusion race, class, and cultural capital in family-school relationships. *Sociology of Education, 72*(1), 37–53.

Lattimore, R. (2005). African American students' perceptions of their preparation for a high-stakes mathematics test. *The Negro Educational Review, 56*(2–3), 135–146.

Lee, V. E. (2000). Using hierarchical linear modeling to study social contexts: The case of school effects. *Educational Psychologist, 35*(2), 125–141. doi:10.1207/S15326985EP3502_6

Leventhal, T., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2000). The neighborhoods they live in: The effects of neighborhood residence on child and adolescent outcomes. *Psychological Bulletin, 126*(2), 309–337. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.126.2.309

Levine, A., & Nidiffer, J. (1996). *Beating the odds: How the poor get to college*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lewis, C. W., James, M., Hancock, S., & Hill-Jackson, V. (2008). Framing African American students' success and failure in urban settings: A typology for change. *Urban Education, 43*(2), 127–153. doi:10.1177/0042085907312315

Liou, D. D., Antrop-Gonzalez, R., & Cooper, R. (2009). Unveiling the promise of community cultural wealth to sustaining Latina/o students' college-going

information networks. *Educational Studies: Journal of the American Educational Studies Association, 45*(6), 534–555. doi:10.1080/00131940903311347

Lipman, P. (1998). *Race, class, and power in school restructuring.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Lipman, P. (2004). *High stakes education: Inequality, globalization, and urban school reform*. New York, NY: RoutledgeFalmer.

Lipman, P. (2011). *The new political economy of urban education: Neoliberalism, race, and the right to the city*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Lipman, P., & Haines, N. (2007). From accountability to privatization and African American exclusion: Chicago's "Renaissance 2010." *Educational Policy, 21*(3), 471–502. doi:10.1177/0895904806297734

Lipman, P., & Person, A. S. (2007). Students as collateral damage? A preliminary study of Renaissance 2010 school closings in the Midsouth. Chicago, IL: Kenwood Oakland Community Organization.

López, G. R. (2003). Parent involvement as racialized performance. *Counterpoints*, *195*, 71–95.

Lord, S., Eccles, J. S., & McCarthy, K. (1994). Surviving the junior high school transition family processes and self-perceptions as protective and risk factors. *Journal of Early Adolescence,* 14(2) 162–199.

Lutton, L., & Metzger, B. (2014, July 17). The big sort: How Chicago's school choice system is tracking kids into different high schools based on achievement. *The Hechinger Report*. Retrieved from http://hechingerreport.org/big-sort-chicagos-school-choice-system-tracking-kids-different-high-schools-based-achievement/

Malecki, C. K., & Elliott, S. N. (2002). Children's social behaviors as predictors of academic achievement: A longitudinal analysis. *School Psychology Quarterly, 17*(1), 1–23. doi:10.1521/scpq.17.1.1.19902

Mangiante, E. M. S. (2011). Teachers matter: Measures of teacher effectiveness in low-income minority schools. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability, 23*(1), 41–63. doi:10.1007/s11092-010-9107-x

Maxwell, D. L. (2006). Student perceptions of school and personal factors. *Academic Exchange Quarterly, 10*(3), 39-43.

McKenzie, R. (2003). *Some Key Influences on the Development of Black Self-organisation in the Labour Movement: A Paper Presented to London Metropolitan University Working Lives [Research] Institute Lunchtime Seminar Series on 12 November 2003*. London Metropolitan University.

McLoyd, V. C. (1998). Socioeconomic disadvantage and child development. *American Psychologist, 53*(2), 185–204.

McNamara Horvat, E., & Earl Davis, J. (2011). Schools as sites for transformation: Exploring the contribution of habitus. *Youth & Society, 43*(1), 142–170. doi:10.1177/0044118X09358846

Mickelson, R. A. (1990). The attitude-achievement paradox among Black adolescents. *Sociology of Education, 63*(1), 44–61.

Mischel, W., & Shoda, Y. (1995). A cognitive-affective system theory of personality: Reconceptualizing situations, dispositions, dynamics, and invariance in personality structure. *Psychological Review, 102*(2), 246–268. doi:10.1037/0033-295X.102.2.246

Monroe, C. R. (2005). Why are "bad boys" always Black? Causes of disproportionality in school discipline and recommendations for change. *The Clearing House, 79*(1), 45–50.

Moody, V. R. (2004). Sociocultural orientations and the mathematical success of African American students. *The Journal of Educational Research, 97*(3), 135–146.

Morris, E. W. (2007). "Ladies" or "loudies"?: Perceptions and experiences of Black girls in classrooms. *Youth & Society, 38*(4), 490–515. doi:10.1177/0044118X06296778

Muller, C. (2001). The role of caring in the Teacher‐Student relationship for at‐risk students. *Sociological Inquiry, 71*(2), 241–255. doi:10.1111/j.1475-682X.2001.tb01110.x

Muller, C., Katz, S. R., & Dance, L. J. (1999). Investing in teaching and learning: Dynamics of the teacher-student relationship from each actor's perspective. *Urban Education, 34*(3), 292–337. doi:10.1177/0042085999343003

Murray, C., & Zvoch, K. (2011). Teacher–Student relationships among behaviorally at-risk African American youth from low-income backgrounds: Student perceptions, teacher perceptions, and socioemotional adjustment correlates. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 19*(1), 41–54. doi:10.1177/1063426609353607

Neild, R. C. (2004). The effects of magnet schools on neighborhood high schools: An examination of achievement among entering freshmen. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR), 9*(1), 1–21. doi:10.1207/S15327671ESPR0901_1

Nelson, R. M., & DeBacker, T. K. (2008). Achievement motivation in adolescents: The role of peer climate and best friends. *The Journal of Experimental Education, 76*(2), 170–189. doi:10.3200/JEXE.76.2.170-190

Newman, B. M., Myers, M. C., Newman, P. R., Lohman, B. J., & Smith, V. L. (2000). The transition to high school for academically promising, urban, low-income African American youth. *Adolescence, 35*(137), 45–66.

Nicolas, G., DeSilva, A., & Rabenstein, K. (2009). Educational attainment of Haitian immigrants. *Urban Education, 44*(6), 664–686. doi:10.1177/0042085908322704

Noguera, P. A. (2003a). *City schools and the American Dream: Reclaiming the promise of public education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Noguera, P. A. (2003b). The trouble with Black boys: The role and influence of environmental and cultural factors on the academic performance of African American males. *Urban Education, 38*(4), 431–459. doi:10.1177/0042085903038004005

O'Connor, A. (2001). *Poverty knowledge: Social science, social policy, and the poor in twentieth-century U.S. history*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

O'Connor, C., Lewis, A., & Mueller, J. (2007). Researching "black" educational experiences and outcomes: Theoretical and methodological considerations. *Educational Researcher, 36*(9), 541-552.

Odumosu, L. C. P. (2015). *Why do smart Black girls get in trouble?* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Temple University, Philadelphia, PA.

Ogbu, J. U. (1987). Variability in minority school performance: A problem in search of an explanation. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 18*(4), 312–334.

Ogbu, J. U. (2003). *Black American students in an affluent suburb: A study of academic disengagement*. Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.

Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. (1998). Voluntary and involuntary minorities: A cultural-ecological theory of school performance with some implications for education. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 29*(2), 155–188.

Oropeza, M. V., Varghese, M. M., & Kanno, Y. (2010). Linguistic minority students in higher education: Using, resisting, and negotiating multiple labels. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 43*(2), 216–231. doi:10.1080/10665681003666304

Ou, S., & Reynolds, A. J. (2008). Predictors of educational attainment in the Chicago longitudinal study. *School Psychology Quarterly, 23*(2), 199–229. doi:10.1037/1045-3830.23.2.199

Oyserman, D., Bybee, D., Terry, K., & Hart-Johnson, T. (2004). Possible selves as roadmaps. *Journal of Research in Personality, 38*(2), 130–149. doi:10.1016/S0092-6566(03)00057-6

Phelan, P., Davidson, A. L., & Yu, H. C. (1998). *Adolescents' worlds: Negotiating family, peers, and school*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Phelan, P., Yu, H. C., & Davidson, A. L. (1994). Navigating the psychosocial pressures of adolescence: The voices and experiences of high school youth. *American Educational Research Journal, 31*(2), 415–447. doi:10.2307/1163316

Plucker, J. A. (1998). The relationship between school climate conditions and student aspirations. *The Journal of Educational Research, 91*(4), 240–246. doi:10.1080/00220679809597549

Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology, 24*(1), 1–24. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.24.1.1

Portes, A., Fernandez-Kelly, P., & Haller, W. (2009). The adaptation of the immigrant second generation in America: A theoretical overview and recent evidence. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 35*(7), 1077–1104. doi:10.1080/13691830903006127

Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the immigrant second generation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Pringle, B. E., Lyons, J. E., & Booker, K. C. (2010). Perceptions of teacher expectations by African American high school students. *The Journal of Negro Education, 79*(1), 33–40.

Punch, K. F. (1998). *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ransdell, S. (2011). There's still no free lunch: Poverty as a composite of SES predicts school-level reading comprehension. *American Behavioral Scientist, 56*(7), 908–925. doi:10.1177/0002764211408878

Ransom, J. C. (2015). *Voices from the educational fringe: An ethnographic study exploring educational experiences of African American males in an alternative GED program* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Temple University, Philadelphia, PA.

Reddick, R. J., Welton, A. D., Alsandor, D. J., Denyszyn, J. L., & Platt, C. S. (2011). Stories of success: High minority, high poverty public school graduate narratives on accessing higher education. *Journal of Advanced Academics, 22*(4), 594–618.

Rendón, L. I., Jalomo, R. E., & Nora, A. (2000). Theoretical considerations in the study of minority student retention in higher education. In J. M. Braxton (Ed.), *Reworking the student departure puzzle* (pp. 127–156). Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Reese, L. J. (1992). *Ecocultural factors influencing the academic success of young Latino students* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of California, Los Angeles.

Rhodes, J. E. (2002). *Stand by me: The risks and rewards of mentoring today's youth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Richardson Jr, J. B., & Van Brakle, M. (2013). The everyday struggle: Social capital, youth violence and parenting strategies for urban, low-income Black male youth. *Race and Social Problems, 5*(4), 262–280. doi:10.1007/s12552-013-9103-0

Rios-Aguilar, C., Kiyama, J. M., Gravitt, M., & Moll, L. C. (2011). Funds of knowledge for the poor and forms of capital for the rich? A capital approach to examining funds of knowledge. *Theory and Research in Education, 9*(2), 163–184. doi:10.1177/1477878511409776

Rodríguez, M. A. (2012). "But they just can't do it": Reconciling teacher expectations of latino students. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership, 15*(1), 25–31. doi:10.1177/1555458912442605

Roeser, R. W., Midgley, C., & Urdan, T. C. (1996). Perceptions of the school psychological environment and early adolescents' psychological and behavioral functioning in school: The mediating role of goals and belonging. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 88*(3), 408–422. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.88.3.408

Royster, P., Gross, J., & Hochbein, C. (2015). Timing is everything: Getting students

    back on track to college readiness in high school. *The High School Journal, 98*(3),

    208–225.

Rubie-Davies, C. M., Peterson, E., Irving, E., Widdowson, D., & Dixon, R. (2010).

    Expectations of achievement: Student, teacher and parent perceptions. *Research*

    in Education, (83), 36–53.

Sacks, P. (1999). *Standardized minds: The high price of America's testing culture and*

    what we can do to change it. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books.

Saenz, V. B., Hurtado, S., Barrera, D., Wolf, D., & Yeung, F. (2007). *First in my family:*

    A profile of first-generation college students at four-year institutions since 1971.

    Higher Education Research Institute: University of California, Los Angeles.

The School District of Philadelphia. (2015). Retrieved from http://www.phila.k12.pa.us/

Sciarra, D. T., & Ambrosino, K. E. (2011). Post-secondary expectations and educational

    attainment. *Professional School Counseling, 14*(3), 231–241.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in*

    education and the social sciences (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College

    Press.

Simon, D., & Burns, E. (2010). *The corner: A year in the life of an inner-city*

    neighborhood. Edinburgh, England: Canongate Books.

Sizemore, B. A. (1988). The Madison elementary school: A turnaround case. *The Journal*

    of Negro Education, 57(3), 243–266.

Smith, C. O., Levine, D. W., Smith, E. P., Dumas, J., & Prinz, R. J. (2009). A

    developmental perspective of the relationship of racial-ethnic identity to self-

construct, achievement, and behavior in African American children. *Cultural*

Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology, 15(2), 145–157. doi:10.1037/a0015538

Smyth, E., & Banks, J. (2012). "There was never really any question of anything else":

Young people's agency, institutional habitus and the transition to higher

education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 33*(2), 263–281.

doi:10.1080/01425692.2012.632867

Solórzano, D. G., & Ornelas, A. (2002). A critical race analysis of advanced placement

classes: A case of educational inequality. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 1*(4),

215–229. doi:10.1207/S1532771XJLE0104_2

Solórzano, D. G., & Villalpando, O. (1998). Critical race theory, marginality, and the

experience of students of color in higher education. In C.A. Torres & T.R.

Mitchell (Eds.), *Sociology of education: Emerging perspectives* (pp. 211–224).

Albany: State University of New York Press.

Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling

as an analytical framework for education research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*(1), 23–

44. doi:10.1177/1077800402008001003

Somech, A., & Bogler, R. (1999). Tacit knowledge in academia: Its effects on student

learning and achievement. *The Journal of Psychology, 133*(6), 605–616.

doi:10.1080/00223989909599766

Steele, C. M., & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test

performance of African Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social*

Psychology, 69(5), 797–811. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.69.5.797

Stewart, E. B. (2008). Individual and school structural effects on African American high school students' academic achievement. *The High School Journal, 91*(2), 16–34. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40364137

Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Strayhorn, T. L. (2009). Different folks, different hopes: The educational aspirations of Black males in urban, suburban, and rural high schools. *Urban Education, 44*(6), 710–731. doi:10.1177/0042085908322705

Suárez-Orozco, C., Rhodes, J., & Milburn, M. (2009). Unraveling the immigrant paradox: Academic engagement and disengagement among recently arrived immigrant youth. *Youth & Society, 41*(2), 151–185. doi:10.1177/0044118X09333647

Tavani, C. M. L.,Susan C. (2003). Motivation, self-confidence, and expectations as predictors of the academic performances among our high school students. *Child Study Journal, 33*(3), 141–151.

Taylor, L. C., Hinton, I. D., & Wilson, M. N. (1995). Parental influences on academic performance in African-American students. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 4*(3), 293–302.

Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research, 83*(3), 357–385. doi:10.3102/0034654313483907

Thompson, L. A., & Kelly-Vance, L. (2001). The impact of mentoring on academic achievement of at-risk youth. *Children and Youth Services Review, 23*(3), 227–242. doi:10.1016/S0190-7409(01)00134-7

Thorpe, H. (2009). Bourdieu, feminism and female physical culture: Gender reflexivity and the habitus-field complex. *Sociology of Sport Journal, 26*(4), 491–516.

Trusty, J., Plata, M., & Salazar, C. F. (2003). Modeling Mexican Americans' educational expectations: Longitudinal effects of variables across adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 18*(2), 131–153. doi:10.1177/0743558402250345

Tyler, K. M., & Boelter, C. M. (2008). Linking Black middle school students' perceptions of teachers' expectations to academic engagement and efficacy. *Negro Educational Review, 59*(1–2), 27–44.

Uwah, C. J., McMahon, H. G., & Furlow, C. F. (2008). School belonging, educational aspirations, and academic self-efficacy among African American male high school students: Implications for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 11*(5), 296–305. doi:10.5330/PSC.n.2010-11.296

Valencia, R. R. (2008). *Chicano students and the courts: The Mexican American legal struggle for educational equality*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

van den Bergh, L., Denessen, E., Hornstra, L., Voeten, M., & Holland, R. W. (2010). The implicit prejudiced attitudes of teachers: Relations to teacher expectations and the ethnic achievement gap. *American Educational Research Journal, 47*(2), 497–527. doi:10.3102/0002831209353594

Wang, A., Peterson, G. W., & Morphey, L. K. (2007). Who is more important for early adolescents' developmental choices? Peers or parents? *Marriage & Family Review, 42*(2), 95–122. doi:10.1300/J002v42n02_06

Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997). Fostering resilience: What do we know? *Principal, 77*(2), 18–20.

Wang, M. C., & Taylor, R. D. (2000). *Resilience across contexts: Family, work, culture, and community*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Wang, M. C., Waxman, H. C., & Freiberg, H. J. (1996). *Classroom and shadowing observations: An integrative analysis*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York.

Ward, J. V. (1990). Racial identity formation and transformation. In C. Gilligan, N. D. Lyons, & T. J. Hammer (Eds.), *Making connections: The relational worlds and adolescent girls at Emma Willard School*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Warikoo, N., & Carter, P. (2009). Cultural explanations for racial and ethnic stratification in academic achievement: A call for a new and improved theory. *Review of Educational Research, 79*(1), 366–394.

Warmington, P. (2009). Taking race out of scare quotes: Race-conscious social analysis in an ostensibly post-racial world. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 12*(3), 281–296. doi:10.1080/13613320903178253

Wentzel, K. R. (1991). Relations between social competence and academic achievement in early adolescence. *Child Development, 62*(5), 1066–1078. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.1991.tb01589.x

Wentzel, K. R. (1998). Social relationships and motivation in middle school: The role of parents, teachers, and peers. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 90*(2), 202–209. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.90.2.202

West, M. R., Kraft, M. A., Finn, A. S., Martin, R. E., Duckworth, A. L., Gabrieli, C. F. O., & Gabrieli, J. D. E. (2015). Promise and paradox: Measuring students' noncognitive skills and the impact of schooling. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis,* 1–45. Retrieved from http://cepr.harvard.edu/files/cepr/files/cepr-promise-paradox.pdf doi:10.3102/0162373715597298

Wiggan, G. (2008). From opposition to engagement: Lessons from high achieving African American students. *The Urban Review, 40*(4), 317–349. doi: 10.1007/s11256-007-0067-5

Wiggan, G. (2014). Student achievement for whom? High-performing and still "playing the game," the meaning of school achievement among high achieving African American students. *The Urban Review*, *46*(3), 476–492.

Williams, T. R., Davis, L. E., Saunders, J., & Williams, J. H. (2002). Friends, family, and neighborhood: Understanding academic outcomes of African American youth. *Urban Education, 37*(3), 408–431. doi:10.1177/004208502128847423

Wilson, W. J. (1987). *The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Yan, W. (1999). Successful African American students: The role of parental involvement. *The Journal of Negro Education, 68*(1), 5–22.

Yosso, T. J. (2002). Toward a critical race curriculum. *Equity &Excellence in Education*, *35*(2), 93–107.

Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of

    community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 8*(1), 69–91.

Zand, D. H., Thomson, N., Cervantes, R., Espiritu, R., Klagholz, D., LaBlanc, L., &

    Taylor, A. (2009). The mentor–youth alliance: The role of mentoring

    relationships in promoting youth competence. *Journal of Adolescence, 32*(1), 1–

    17. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2007.12.006

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Interview One—Life and Educational History
The first interview will focus on the students' life history and self-perceptions.
1. Tell me about yourself, describe your:
    a. Family
    b. Community/neighborhood
    c. Schools you have attended
        i. Were the schools you attended considered "good schools"? Why or why not?
        ii. How do you see your academic performance in elementary school and middle school?
        iii. What factors do you think influenced your performance?
2. You are in this program because you have shown to be a good student, how do you describe yourself, academically?
3. What do you believe has contributed most to your academic success?
4. Have any of your family members or community members played a role in your academic success? If so, who and how?
5. Are there any skills or beliefs that you have developed in your families and/or communities that have helped you succeed in school?
6. Have any family members or community members been influential in your life? If so, whom? If not, why do you believe that is the case?
    a. What strengths does this person have? What skills do they have?

Interview two—In-School Experiences and Race
This interview will focus on their interactions with peers and adults during their high school years, as well as their current experiences in high school. Particular attention will be paid to racial identity.
1. Who are the groups of people, or individuals, who support you most in your academic career?
2. Do you face any challenges as a high achieving Black student in high school? If so, what are they?
    a. Do you believe you are overcoming these challenges? If so, how?
3. Do you believe your race/racial identity impacts how community members and school personnel view you as a student?
4. What reactions do you get from peers in school, and peers in the community, regarding your academic achievement?
5. When you think of a "Black high school student from Philadelphia", what images/words come to mind? Do those images and words fit how you see yourself?
    a. How are you different, or the same, as those images/words?

Interview three—Reflection on Skills
The third interview will focus on student aspirations and reflections on their navigation of different contexts.

1. Why do you want to go to college?
    a. Which colleges would you like to attend?
2. What career path would you like to pursue? Why?
3. What skills do you believe you have that help you to achieve in school?
4. Do you act the same in school as you do outside of school (language, actions) Why or why not?
5. Do you believe you are successful because of natural qualities within yourself, or because of your family/community environment, or a combination of both? Please Explain.
6. Is the school that you attend in your neighborhood?
    a. Why do you attend that school?
    b. Do you believe your experiences would be different if you attended our neighborhood school? Why?
    c. Do you feel comfortable interacting with peers from your neighborhood? Why or why not?

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARENTS

Parent/Guardian Informed Consent for Child Participation-Study

Title of Research: An Examination of Community Cultural Wealth in the Success of Black High School Students

Investigators and Department: Crystal Marie Menzies, Doctoral Student Investigator; Department of Teaching & Learning: Urban Education Program, Temple University.
Will J. Jordan, Ph.D., Principal Investigator; Associate Professor of Urban Education, Department of Teaching & Learning, Temple University

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?
We invite your child to take part in this research study because they have been identified as a high achieving African-American high school student.

What should I know about this research?
- Someone will explain this research to you.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- You can choose not to take part.
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
- Your decision will not be held against you.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

Who can I talk to about his research?
If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, you may contact the research team. Address: Temple University, Ritter Hall, 1301 Cecil B. Moore Ave. 2nd Floor, Room 268. Phone number: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. Email: crystal.menzies@temple.edu or wjjordan@temple.edu

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board. You may talk to them at (215) 707-3390 or e-mail them at: irb@temple.edu for any of the following:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Why is this research being done?
I am currently engaged in a study that is interested in what Black and/or African American high school students think about their academic success and the impact of their

communities and families on their achievement. To really understand how young African American students see their success in terms of their community and family, I am asking for student participation in this study, and thus your permission to allow your child to participate.

How long will I be in this research?
We expect that you will be in this research for five months, February 20, 2015 until June 20, 2015.

What happens if I agree to be in this research?
      The data sources will consist of observations at the mentor site, observations at a select few high school sites, documents from students, and interviews with participants, parents/guardians and teachers/mentors.

    If you agree to this research, students will be observed during program activities during Minds Matter sessions, and may be observed three times during school hours at their high school. The researcher will interview the student participants three times during the course of the research. The interviews will be recorded.

- The first round of interviews will be conducted at the Minds Matter program site at the end of February and will last approximately 30-90 minutes. The second round of interviews will be a focus group--groups of student participants who are interviewed together--that will take place at the Minds Matter program site at the end of March, and the last round of interviews will be conducted at the end of April at the Minds Matter program site.
- The researcher may follow up with the student participant via email or phone within a week of student interviews.
- Observations at the Minds Matter program site, and at the students' high schools will be for the duration of program activities/school day. Students will be observed in their schools three times, and at the Minds Matter site 7 times.
- The student participant will interact with the doctoral student investigator, Crystal Menzies.
- Research will be conducted at the Minds Matter program site and at student participants' high schools from February 21st, 2015 to June 20th, 2015.

Is there any way being in this research could be bad for me?
- There are minimal physical risks in this research project since the study procedures are solely interviews and observations. During the interviews and focus group there are questions regarding their perceptions of the influence of their families and communities on their academic success that will pose no physical danger.
- In terms of emotional or psychological discomfort, the interview questions will not reveal deeply personal information about the students and their families, however, a question about family support may cause fear, shame, or guilt depending upon the circumstances of the student. *Students are strongly encouraged to avoid answering any question that feels uncomfortable in any way.*
- Socially, students who are observed in their high schools or during Minds Matter meetings may feel some discomfort or embarrassment due to a researcher

> observing their behavior in a group setting.
- Although the study team has placed safeguards to maintain the confidentiality of your child's personal information, there is always a potential risk of an unpermitted disclosure. To that degree, all documents and information pertaining to this research study will be kept confidential, unless required by applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations to be disclosed. Your signature means that you understand that records and data generated by the study may be reviewed by Temple University and its agents, the study sponsor or the sponsoring agents (if applicable), and/or governmental agencies to assure proper conduct of the study and compliance with regulations. You understand that the results of this study may be published. If any data is published, your child will not be identified by name.

Will being in this research help me in any way?
We cannot promise any benefits to you or others from taking part in this research. However, possible benefits include you (your child) may benefit from the study by having an opportunity to reflect upon your academic experiences in a way that helps you, other students, and educational stakeholders to better understand the relationships between cultural values, community resources, and personal academic success. Your insights may contribute to knowing and understanding what factors contribute to the academic achievement of students, and may possibly improve educational outcomes in diverse cities. Documenting the students' reflections on their classes may help teachers, politicians, and researchers to become more aware of how specific community members, experiences, and activities influence adolescents' academic development

What happens to the information that is collected for this research?
To the extent allowed by law, we limit the viewing of your personal information to people who have to review it. We cannot promise complete secrecy. The IRB, Temple University, Temple University Health System, Inc. and its affiliates, and other representatives of these organizations may inspect and copy your information. *If the research team uncovers abuse, neglect, or reportable diseases, then this information may be disclosed to appropriate authorities.*

Will I be paid for taking part in this research?
If you agree to allow your child to take part in this research, we will pay your child a $20 gift card for a local bookstore for your time and effort. Federal tax law requires to you to report this payment as income to the Internal Revenue Service.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student (18 or older) in order to release any information from a student's education record. As part of the study, I may review student assignments and academic records (grades and coursework) for the purpose of understanding the different ways students use their skills and strengths to be successful in their high schools.

The records would only be released to the researchers, Crystal Menzies and Dr. Will Jordan. If you request, the school will provide the student with a copy of the records disclosed to the researchers. If you, the parent and would like your child to receive a copy of the records, the school will release the records to the student as well.

As an ethical researcher, I will keep you and your child's information confidential, and maintain the privacy and anonymity of you and your child to the best of my ability. I will not show or share the names of the parents or students whose records are released to research team. I will not connect you or your child's name or other identifying information to any of the disclosed records.

Signing your name below indicates that you have read and understand the contents of this Consent Form and that you give your consent for your child to take part in this study.

_____
Participant's Printed Name

_____   _____
Participant's Signature   Date

_____   _____
Parent/Guardian's Signature   Date

_____   _____
Investigator's Signature   Date

APPENDIX C: AUDIOTAPE CONSENT

An Examination of Community Cultural Wealth in the Success of Black High School Students

Crystal Marie Menzies, Doctoral Student Investigator; Department of Teaching & Learning: Urban Education Program, Temple University, crystal.menzies@temple.edu
Will J. Jordan, Ph.D., Principal Investigator; Associate Professor of Urban Education, Department of Teaching & Learning, Temple University, wjjordan@temple.edu

<u>Permission to Audiotape student</u>

Investigator's Name: Crystal Marie Menzies

Department: Teaching and Learning

Project Title: **An Examination of Community Cultural Wealth in the Success of Black High School Students**
Subject: Students' perceptions of the reasons for their academic success

Date:

Log #:_____

I give **Crystal Marie Menzies**, permission to **audiotape** my child. This **audiotape** will be used only for the following purpose (s):

<u>RESEARCH</u>

This **audiotape** will be used as a part of a research project at <u>Minds Matter Philadelphia</u>. I have already given written assent for my participation in this research project. At no time will my name be used. _____

<u>WHEN WILL I BE AUDIOTAPED?</u>

I agree for to be audiotaped during the time period: <u>January 2015</u>

to <u>June 2015</u>   .

<u>HOW LONG WILL THE TAPES BE USED?</u>

I give my permission for these tapes to be used from: <u>January 2015</u>

to June 30, 2015   .

According to Temple University Institutional Review Board policies, the audiotapes must be stored for no longer than three (3) years after completion of the study. As of June 1, 2018 the researcher will destroy all audiotapes associated with this study. If the researcher wishes to store the audiotapes longer, than permission must be received from the IRB.

WHAT IF I CHANGE MY MIND?

I understand that I can withdraw my permission at any time. Upon my request, the **audiotape**(s) will no longer be used. This will not affect my care or relationship with Minds Matter Philadelphia in any way.

I understand that I will not be paid for being audiotaped or for the use of the audiotapes.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

If I want more information about the **audiotape**(s), or if I have questions or concerns at any time, I can contact: _____

Investigator's Name: Crystal Marie Menzies

Department: Teaching & Learning

Institution: Temple University

Street Address: 1301 Cecil B. Moore Avenue, Ritter Hall, Rm. 448 attn: Will Jordan

City: Philadelphia   State: PA

Zip Code 19122

Phone: ██████████

This **form** will be placed in my records and a copy will be kept by the person(s) named above. A copy will be given to me.

Please print

Child's Name: _____

Date:_____

Address: _____

_____

Phone:_____

Child's Signature:_____

Parent Signature:_____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D: CODEBOOK

1. **Perceptions of Community:** Participant perceptions of their neighborhoods.

2. **School Experiences and Perceptions**: Student perceptions of their current and previous schools, and their schooling experiences.

3. **Teacher Perceptions**: How participants believe their teachers view them.

4. **Challenges:** Overall challenges participants believe they face as students, challenges in attaining goals, and challenges as individuals.

5. **Academic Identity:** How participant descriptions of themselves as in relation to academics and educational institutions.

6. **Racial Identity/perceptions:** Participant's racial ideology and self-perceptions.

7. **Perceptions of their Peers**: How participants view their peers.

8. **How Peers View Them:** How participants are viewed by their peers in school and in their neighborhoods.

9. **Peer Selection:** The types of people participants associate with and why.

10. **Perceived Skills:** Skills participants use to succeed in school and the mentor program.

11. **Aspirations:** Hopes and dreams for their future.

12. **Application of Skills:** How students utilize skills in educational institutions.

13. **Family Descriptions**: Family characteristics and descriptions of their family environment.

14. **Familial Support**: Descriptions of the ways their families support them.

15. **Perceptions of Success:** How participants perceive success in educational institutions.