

A COMPARISON OF THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF NATIVE AFRICAN
AMERICAN STUDENTS AND IMMIGRANT AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS
IN MATH AND READING: IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

A Doctoral Thesis Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education
in Professional Leadership

by

Lorena Denise Augustus

May 2013

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my children. First my two beautiful children Briana and Lorenzo, everything I do in life is for theirs to be better. It is my dream that by the time they receive advanced degrees of their own, they will begin to experience a world of education that has benefited from this study and those which will follow. Briana, so intelligent, creative, and analytical; always willing to learn something new. Lorenzo, my out of the box thinker, every day a question, such a desire to learn life's mysteries. I love you both dearly and I expect the very best from you and for you. Always remember that you can do anything. Always be true to yourselves and go out and make the world a better place. Mommy loves you.

To the students I've taught, way too many to name as well as those I am a principal to, I believe in education, discipline, and a positive attitude. You have shown me that when we have faith in you and your abilities you are able to do great things. This year marks 20 years in education, all in Alief ISD, there is no place I would have rather been, it was where I was needed, where I became more patient, where I cultivated minds, and where I became a better educator while learning from some of the best teachers, the children.

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I must give an enormous amount of credit to my parents, Kenneth and Ruth Johnson. They both expected great things from their youngest daughter. My mom was unshakeable in her belief in me and my ability to attend college, graduate, and be successful. Her anchor was in the educational process; she felt it was the key to all of life's opportunities. My dad spoke the words of leadership over me at a very early age. He always said I was not a follower and I was meant to lead. At first, I ran from his words only wanting to do my very best from behind the scenes not quick to step up as a leader. However, the role embraced me at every turn no matter how hard I tried to shun the responsibility of being a leader.

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everyone, encouraging us, and most importantly reminding us of looming deadlines.

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Abstract

Despite the emphasis on student achievement over the past 30 years, principals, teachers, and school leaders continue to make a concerted effort to address the definitive achievement gap, specifically between African Americans and Whites. While the gap may be narrowing, African American students underperform their peers and the opportunity for achieving at the same level as or better than their White, Hispanic, and Asian counterparts has continued to elude African American students.

In a myriad of studies, the African American group encompasses the performance of all African American students, whether they have recently immigrated from Africa or other countries. This study compared the academic achievement of elementary-age African American students on TAKS. The findings indicate Immigrant African American students perform better than Native African American students in reading; and in math, Native African American students perform better than Immigrant African American students. There were areas where the results were statistically significant.

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the Study

“You’re a leader, not a follower” is the mantra I often heard as a child. The words came from my father. Not as encouragement, but as a matter of fact. He was not college educated, nor did he have employment most of my childhood. However, it was an unspoken rule in my home that my sister and I would go to college. Trying our best was not good enough; we were expected to excel. When I brought home a ‘C’, ‘Are you stupid?’ was what I heard. I thought ‘I’ll show him, I’m not stupid’. It was his crude way of motivating success from his occasionally opinionated, non-conformist, and outspoken youngest daughter. Not acceptable parenting, but it worked. And it worked in most of my relatives’ homes in the late 1970s.

Growing up, my home was not perfect, my dad was an alcoholic, we lived on one parent’s salary, we felt the angst of discrimination; there were many challenges to overcome. Yet, the opportunity to learn and achieve was available to my family. We had to accept that we were Black, and the rest of the world may discriminate and count us out. Our parents believed that education was the key; therefore, they expected more. So, that is what we did. Me, my sister, and most of my cousins went to college and graduated; we were expected to succeed.

Fast forward 30 years, and I am the leader my father always said I would be; success is what I expect in my home, there are no exceptions for my children, college is not an option, it is an expectation. However, I realize there still seems to be this achievement gap between my race and those with whom my children go to school and those I work among. Blacks and Whites are not achieving academic success at the same rate, and I often wonder why. As a teacher, I began to observe with dismay that many of

my black students were behind but had the ability to learn. I lamented this phenomenon among my friends but never my colleagues, most of them White. I admit, it was embarrassing at times; but mostly, I did not want to subscribe to what many of them may have thought, those black kids are just not as smart as the others. Now as a leader of a campus that struggles to see our African American students achieve consistently, I need answers. This is a problem and there are questions that must be answered. Why does this group of people continue to struggle with academic achievement? And what are the leaders in schools going to do about it?

My background story is not so different from many of the students in this study; however, success was assumed and expected in my home. I believe a quality education should improve the station of my children, suburban children, immigrant children, and children of poverty in the same way, and I am very concerned when the system does not work for a large number of students from diverse backgrounds. My family history is fundamental to my research on African American achievement because like my mom always said, “each generation should do better than the one before them”, so there is this sense that I am accountable for ensuring the success of others of my race. Consequently, it is important that I devote my future work to solutions and not complaint. It is then, I will truly have embraced true success as not only my children can triumph; but also those whom I currently serve, as well as future generations.

Introduction to Academic Accountability

Many of America’s leaders seem to affiliate successfully overcoming life’s challenges with hard work, positive attitude, knowledge, and skills. Our public school systems are no exception. In an effort to increase the academic achievement of

disadvantaged students, former President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) on January 8 2002, which was a reauthorization of The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). At the core of NCLB is an accountability component which requires all students to reach proficiency or beyond in Reading and Math by the year 2014. One of the challenges facing our schools is the continued disparity among ethnic groups when comparing their achievement on standardized tests. As this date approaches, educational reform has again become the topic of many conversations regarding past efforts to close the achievement gaps. ‘Yes We Can’, an uplifting phrase of confidence made popular by the first African American president, has become the battle cry of many public schools when met with the task of preparing students to finish high school and attend college. However, the current American public education system, especially when compared globally, is in distress and evidence of good character and a ‘can do’ attitude has yet to resolve the larger issues facing our schools.

According to PISA (Program for International Student Assessment), in 2009 United States students rank 31 out of 65 countries in math and 17 out of 65 countries in reading (U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). PISA is coordinated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), an intergovernmental organization of industrialized countries. Begun in 2000, PISA is administered every three years (U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). Since America considers itself a major player in global economy, the general impression is that our schools should rank at the top when being compared with

countries worldwide. When this does not happen, it suggests that reform of our public schools is necessary.

The national fix has been to create a system of academic accountability that, in theory, will result in all students at minimum, demonstrating proficiency in reading and math. “Fueled by the poor test performance of inner-city students, those proposals have given rise to an overreliance on high-stakes testing as a vehicle for accountability” (Townsend, 2002, p. 222). NCLB has led to a focus on increasing standardized test scores, as the achievement of ethnic groups is measured nationally. NCLB required each state, beginning in 2003, to participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Mathematics and Reading assessments if they are to receive Title I education funding (Public Law 107-110 Title I Part A, Sec. 1111) (Vanneman, Hamilton, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009, p. 2). School leaders must analyze the results of these assessments and make decisions regarding annual budget, staffing, and instructional strategies that will increase each student’s ability to meet the expectations set forth by each state.

The situation is not becoming better as “public schools across the nation continue to struggle with persistent achievement gaps and this challenge has become even greater for schools with high poverty and high minority populations” (Li & Hasan, 2010, p. 48). In 2003 in the state of Texas, the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) became the high-stakes test administered to students in grades three through eleven to meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. However, in Texas African American students are still scoring lower than their Caucasian peers with a 22 point difference on those NAEP assessments in both reading and math (U.S. Department

of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). When Texas introduced a new assessment in 2012, reportedly with increased rigor and better alignment to educational standards, it was crucial that leaders of schools addressed this continued trend in which one group has made marginal growth in comparisons to other ethnic groups. This achievement disparity had narrowed but not closed significantly; therefore, solutions are necessary if the goal of truly closing this gap will be realized as a result of accountability initiatives.

Background of African American Students in Public Education

There has been quite a bit of attention to achievement for the past thirty years. Much of the focus has been to ensure that learning opportunities are equalized between the ever-emerging ethnic groups in America. However, there remains a concern in the United States that has been constant: the definitive gap which still continues to exist between these student subgroups even after legislation has provided funding, interventions, and focus on cultural aspects of working with diverse ethnic groups. There has been progress made since we first integrated public schools in the 1950's; however, that progress has not resulted in the gap closing significantly or a majority of students reaching proficiency or higher in reading and math.

The plight of the native African American student differs from that of the immigrant African American student with regard to cultural foundations and history of public education in America. Over the last century there has been major legislation, which is meant to ensure that the disadvantaged state of the African American community is improved through equal educational opportunities. The Black American Period from 1950-1980 (Collins, 2003) which emphasizes a period of time, marked by

the end of legal segregation, increased discrimination, and the beginning of social change. (Collins, 2008). For the purpose of this study, when there is a reference to native African Americans, the term Black or Black Americans will also be utilized to identify those who were born here in the United States. When term immigrant African American is used, it is to reference those students who were born outside the United States in African Nations or other countries and still identified as African American once migrating to the United States. This will be important in distinguishing between the variance in culture, realization of educational opportunity in America, and, most importantly, the mind set of those subjected to the residuals of slavery and discriminatory aftermath which occurred in American public schools. It is also critical to realize many people use the term African American to reference both groups at all times but there are native Black Americans who do not embrace the term African American when referring to themselves.

The landmark case of *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education (1954)* is the United States Supreme Court's effort to desegregate public schools and ensure that Black American Students were afforded the opportunity to be schooled alongside White students. While views of Black American students as inferior were prevalent and negative experiences for these students were perpetuated by the belief that Black students were deficient both intellectually and socially, there was also an opposition to these students being invited to attend historically White schools. Whites during this time felt Blacks were invading their neighborhoods and they were against being forced to have their children attend schools with Blacks.

A trend, which continues even currently, “White flight”, was the migration of Whites against integration fleeing to communities uninhabited by Blacks thus creating a de facto segregation. Not only did Whites leave neighborhoods to demonstrate their avoidance of integrating with Blacks, those who stayed utilized a threatening and violent approach to banning students from the doors of their schools. Many times too dangerous to integrate, Black families moved and continued to attend their own schools.

In more high profile cases, governmental military support enabled the desegregation of the schools. Once students became a part of these schools there was overwhelming bias from educators as well as the students, which was the facilitating agent that implemented a hidden curriculum, which resulted in high numbers of students being relegated to Special Education during this period. Discrimination was present in schools, and Black students were treated unfairly.

With a view of intellectual deficiency of African American children, special education was considered a convenient structure to correct deficient mothering practices and problematic family dynamics. As a result of this view, large percentages of African American students were placed in special education (Dunn, 1968). Initially, the structure of special education was successful in convincing the parents of African American children... (Collins, 2008, p. 3)

Ten years after the Brown v. Topeka case, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which included a ban against discrimination in education based on race, was passed. Only in recent years has there been an effort to undo this wrong by

regulating the policies against over identifying black students to be placed in Special Education. Needless to say, during this time, when comparing the performance of Black Students and White Students there was a significant gap, many times explained by erroneous concepts of inferiority, deep cultural differences, and poverty.

Even with the wrong doings of the educational systems, some of these Black students were able to excel and become productive members of society. During the aforementioned time period, there was quite a bit of angst in the Black community where the integration served to increase poverty in some areas and many students already at-risk for failure became more disadvantaged. “The consensus among dominant-grouped developmentalists is that a disproportionate number of ghetto children fail in school because they lack white middle class types of competencies, including rules of behavior for achievement” (Ogbu, 1991, p. 425).

However, it seemed that over time newly arriving African American students, considered immigrants, were doing much better than Black American students. While these students had different experiences, languages, and opportunities, they were still seen as Black based on the color of their skin. Currently, students identified as Blacks or African American include students whose parent’s country of origin is the United States as well as students who are from African descent, but not born in the United States. The term African American seems to be based more on skin color than country of origin. It is my hypothesis that students of genuine African American descent are faring better than their non-immigrant counterparts, Black American students. If this is the case, then

status of African American students is far worse and the injustices of the 1950s and beyond have truly made for a system that continues to be difficult to overcome. The dynamics of the African American community are rooted in slavery, negative perceptions, and the desire to assimilate White America. There is evidence that American-born Blacks have a greater desire to assimilate and refuse ethnic identification in order to be successful more so than African-born Americans or those with ties to their ethnic culture.

National data also suggests that the performance between different racial groups, as well as the achievement gap between Whites and Blacks, has narrowed but it is still significant enough to cause concern. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reports trends over the years, and from this we are able to analyze the performance of certain racial sub-groups of students:

... results show that, over time, black and Hispanic students have made great strides in improving performance in reading and mathematics; a breach still separated them from their white peers. For example, special analyses by the National Center for Education Statistics in 2009 and 2011 showed that black and Hispanic students trailed their white peers by an average of more than 20 test-score points on the NAEP math and reading assessments at 4th and 8th grades, a difference of about two grade levels. These gaps persisted even though the score differentials between black and white students narrowed between 1992 and 2007 in 4th grade math and reading and 8th grade math (NCES, 2009, 2011).

(Education Week, 2011, para. 3)

Educators, parents, and some leaders may suggest that this gap still exists for

reasons such as poverty, single-parent households, poor attendance, and lack of parental involvement. While these are valid explanations for the existence of this gap, we should dig deeper at root causes, which may highlight what could have an even greater impact. It is very challenging to overcome the residuals that occur within a race that has a history of discrimination, exclusion, and low expectations towards our African American students. Over the years the responses and solutions to this quandary have yet to produce results that would adequately compensate for the injustices of the past. While the gap may be narrowing, African American students still perform below grade level and the term proficiency does not suggest attainment of concepts and skills at a level of mastery.

Consequently, the opportunity for achieving at the same level as or better than their White, Hispanic, and Asian counterparts in the educational system continues to elude African American students. However, this is not a new phenomenon. The purpose of setting high expectations or goals for increased student achievement is that the process utilized to attain favorable results should demonstrate incremental progress and sustainable learning in a somewhat significant fashion. Words such as accountability, reliability, validity, and quality have become commonplace in discussions about the current state of education. Yet the value of our current system does not necessarily represent those words. An act, which was meant to improve the academic achievement of the disadvantaged (U.S. Department of Education, 2011) and close the achievement gaps between races of people, has not yet served its purpose.

According to data collected in 2009 by the *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)* and reported on *The Nation's Report Card*, the percentage of students in Texas who performed at or above the *NAEP* proficient level was 28%. This

percentage was not significantly different from that in 2007 (30%) and was not significantly different from that in 1992 (24 %) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009).

Some other data suggests that identification to ethnicity is an indicator of academic success, thereby supporting my hypothesis that African American students fare better than Black American students who attempt to marginalize their heritage in an effort to attain success. While there are studies that continue to report that there is a substantial gap in test scores between Black and White students, there is not a lot of current research that investigates the relationship within the African American sub-group to determine if a gap between these two groups of students is apparent.

Statement of the Problem

A recent report by the Schott Foundation which analyzes the national graduation data of Black males provides a glimpse of how well states are truly progressing when looking at the closing of the achievement gap (Holzman, 2012). Based on the data contained in this report, “state-reported graduation rate data (2009-10) indicates that, in 38 of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, Black males have the lowest graduation rates among Black, Latino and White, non-Latino male and female students” (Holzman, 2012, p. 6) with 52% of black males graduating nationally, while 78% of White males graduate from high school. This 26-point gap is comparable to the Black-White gaps found in NAEP reports for grades 4, 8, and 11 in math, reading, and science.

As this information continues to be reported, what is not included is the background of the males that are graduating. If an increasing number of those Black males and possibly females are from backgrounds other than the United States, this

dilemma is indeed urgent as we continue to enact legislation meant to help students of ethnically diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds. Furthermore, as we continue to report this data, it does not pass policymakers, educators, parents, and even the students. How does the information contained in reports such as this impact the self-efficacy students and attitudes of educators?

While the gap between disadvantaged and the more advantaged has remained unchanged, so has the gap between African American students and Whites. Even in more affluent neighborhoods and exemplary schools, there is a gap among African American Students and all other sub-groups. Because this gap continues to exist, there is a need to look specifically at this group of students and investigate possible reasons for this gap. This study determines if a gap exists within the African American sub-group which may further demonstrate the need to look more closely at how we are educating the native African American students within the school systems. There is a possibility that the culture created from past injustices against African Americans and subsequent racial discriminations may be consequential.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the performance of the African American sub-group on a state achievement assessment. The study specifically analyzed the difference among African American Students and Black Students to identify if there is a significant difference correlated to their origins. The study analyzed students within an ethnic group to determine if students of immigrant status perform better than their non-immigrant counterparts. Finally, discovering data that supports creating a system

which measures growth of African American students rather than comparing students with different circumstances in the same way was the ultimate goal of this study.

Significance of the study

A student's foundation is key in determining academic success. In the United States, much attention is concentrated on the achievement gap. "Although scores have increased for both Black students and White students, on average Black students do not perform as well as their White peers" (Vanneman, Hamilton, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009, p. 1). Despite the attention and targeted interventions for African Americans, they not only score below Whites, they also underperform students from other racial groups. There are various schools of thought that attempt to explain or support whether this phenomenon and much of the research suggests cultural aspects, societal implications, and attitudes towards African American learners as a cause for the continuance of this gap.

This study dug deeper into recent data to examine whether there were some underlying differences among the African American student group that is typically examined as one entity. This study analyzed the cultural student groups that exist within the African American group, native African American students, and immigrant African American students. This unique lens and line of study will shed some light on some different aspects of this culture and have significant implications for schools, instructional practices, and school leaders. Informing practice regarding some of the underlying sources that may differentiate African American students based on country of origin will assist in targeting efforts in various areas that will lead to a more viable

solution to closing the achievement gap and minimize reports that characterize this group as underperforming.

Research Questions

1. Is there a statistical difference in the reading performance of African American Students based on their country of origin?
2. Is there a statistical difference in the math performance of African American Students based on their country of origin?

Hypothesis

1. African American students born outside of the United States will perform statistically better than African American students born in the United States in reading.
2. African American students born outside of the United States will perform statistically better than African American students born in the United States in math.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used throughout this study. The definitions are given to provide clarity to the reader.

- **Academically Acceptable:** Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skill rating for individual campuses and district that indicates the entity met the minimum standards set forth by the state. *See Appendix B.*
- **Academically Unacceptable:** Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills rating in which a campus or a district does not meet the minimum academic standards on the state test. *See Appendix B.*

- **Achievement Gap:** for the purposes of education, refers to the disparity in academic performance between groups of students. It is indicated in grades, standardized-test scores, dropout rates, and college completion rates, and among other measures of success.
- **African American:** citizens or residents of the United States who have at least partial ancestry from any of the native populations of Sub-Saharan African. Other synonymous terms include, Afro American, Black American, and Negro American.
- **Black American:** citizens of the United States who have partial ancestry from any populations of African descent. Some Blacks distinguish themselves from African Americans with the usage of this term to indicate no knowledge of their true lineage and to denote a difference in those citizens or residents that are recent African Immigrants.
- **Cultural Diversity:** the quality of diverse or different cultures that exist in the world, a society, or an institution, as opposed to monoculture or a homogenization of culture.
- **Cultural Responsiveness:** the ability to take a person's culture which refers not only to race but unique characteristics of a community's population and specific cultural characteristics as important in improving the quality of services provided specifically in an instructional setting with the goal of valuing that culture and achieving positive outcomes within the targeted population.

- **Ethnic Sub-Group:** members of a group who identify with one another through a common heritage often consisting of a common language, common culture, and or ideology that stresses common ancestry.
- **Exemplary:** Advanced performance on Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills earned by a campus and/or a school district meeting criteria as determined by the state of Texas which exceeds above average performance expectations. *See Appendix B.*
- **Immigrant:** a person who migrates to another country, usually for permanent residency.
- **Involuntary Minority:** Ogbu (1994) uses this phrase in his works to refer to those minorities (non-White) who migrated to the United States involuntarily most commonly via slavery. Ogbu states this group also differs in their perceptions of aspects of African American culture.
- **Minority:** formally, the smaller in number of two groups forming a whole. For the purpose of education, the smaller percentages of any ethnic group comprising the whole group. For example, the White race in America outnumbers all others and is considered the majority; therefore, African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Pacific Islander are considered the smaller number and they are considered the minority.
- **NAEP:** National Assessment of Educational Progress is the only national assessment of what students know and can do in various subject areas. Assessments are conducted periodically in mathematics, reading, science, writing, the arts, civics, economics, geography, and U.S. history. NAEP results are based

on samples of students at ages 9, 13, or 17 years of age. Scores are compared among the states in grades 4, 8, and 11. When NAEP results are reported, they become a part of “The Nation’s Report Card”.

- **Proficiency:** advancement in knowledge and skills. Demonstrating proficiency on state assessments means students participating in the process scores at or above the predetermined minimum standard or expectation.
- **Recognized:** Above average performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills test, campus or district meets standards set forth by the state. *See Appendix B.*
- **TAKS:** Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills are designed to measure the extent to which a student has learned and is able to apply the defined knowledge and skills at each tested grade level. For the sake of this study, 3rd grade and 4th grade math and reading TAKS data will be analyzed.
- **TEA:** Texas Education Agency
- **Voluntary Minority:** Ogbu (1994) describes this minority groups as those that migrated to the United States voluntary based on the belief that there were opportunities for economic, educational, and support of family members left in the country of origin.

Summary

This dissertation is divided into five major chapters followed by a reference section and appendix. In Chapter 1, an introduction, the motivation for the study, conceptual framework, significance, purpose, and key definitions are given. Chapter 2 provides a literature review of key topics important to the study. Chapter 3 provides an

outline of the methodology and procedures for data collection and instrumentation.

There is also an explanation of the limitations of the study. Chapter 4 presents the results and a review of the salient points of the study. Lastly, Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings, implications for leaders, and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The following literature review is intended to provide relevant background about the achievement gap between Blacks and Whites that still remains almost 60 years after segregation was deemed unlawful. This review explored the history of public education with regards to African Americans and their relationships with Whites, the cultural dynamics that exist within their community and the self-precepts that impact academic achievement. Additionally, this review will take a look at the development of the current accountability system and legislature that led to the No Child Left Behind Act and its impact on public education.

The importance of high learner expectations, personal efficacy, and attitudes about learners are also areas, which will be included in this review. The research in these areas will demonstrate a need for further research into the qualitative aspects of academic achievement. This review is meant to give some context to the significance of delving into the factors, which may have contributed the achievement gap as well as discovering variables that may influence academic achievement.

Historical Perspective

In his book, *The Souls of Black Folks*, W.E.B. Dubois eloquently describes the duality of the Black man's experience in America. He coins the phrase 'the veil' as a metaphor to describe the use of a person's color to define his or her worth both by those who look upon the Black man and how the Black man looks upon himself. This metaphor also demonstrates the struggle of the Black American's attempt to be a valued part of society:

The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife----this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face. (Dubois, 1903, p. 9)

Although this book was written over 100 years ago, African American people, specifically the students of this nation, are still struggling with the duality of being an American and a person of African descent while trying measure up to the standards set by a nation who continues to see the African American as inferior. The educational experience mirrors W.E.B. Dubois' observation of this conflict in which simply being afforded an educational opportunity and equality has been impeded by years of discrimination and inadequate educational structures.

At the turn of the century, many African American leaders such as Dubois and Booker T. Washington differ with the foci of education for African Americans. Social equality and intellectual endeavors are supported by Dubois who also feels that voluntary segregation will further the educational experience more than integrating into a system that is not responsive to the African American culture. In contrast, Washington promotes Blacks placing emphasis on economic independence, industrial training, and becoming

friendly with White society but not by forcefully requiring acceptance of the African culture.

Within the Black race we see the start of a divisiveness regarding the best path of progress forward. In his speech to the Atlanta Cotton Sales and International Exposition (1895), Washington tells Blacks to “cast down their buckets where they are” to encourage economic independence more than attainment of advanced education and social equality. Here we have the beginnings of the perception in the Black community that schooling is not necessarily the only opportunity for financial success:

The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremist folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is important and right that all privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera-house... (Washington, 1895)

In 1896, *Plessey v. Ferguson* provided the first law that legalized segregation; hence ‘separate but equal’ accommodations were the norm for the next 50 years. While this case was originally brought to decide a complaint regarding railway-riding accommodations, its implications were far reaching. Schools, Businesses, Churches, and Public Establishments indicated they had separate but equal accommodations. This was not the case. Discrimination became rampant and the African American community was

denied many of the social and educational opportunities, which were to be guaranteed by the 14th amendment.

The landmark case *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* (1954) prohibits segregation in schools. This case would allow Black students to be taught alongside their White counterparts. Consequently, the implications of this case suggests an attempt to level the educational playing field; however, it could also be perceived that White schools were better and Black schools did not educate its youth as well as White schools. As Blacks pressed to desegregate schools, Whites organized for a last ditch effort (Franklin & Moss, 1988). “The Brown decision reflected the belief by the US Supreme Court that learning of Black students was inferior when students were educated in an all Black system” (Collins, 2008, pp. 2-3). Integrating the structures did not erase the perceptions the nation had of Black students as intellectually inferior to White students. Nonetheless, we continue to see many incidents of adults fighting for the rights of Black students to experience educational equality. One major example occurs several years after Brown, in 1957, when nine students were selected to attend a previously all white high school in Little Rock Arkansas. US Troops were sent in to escort the students to school because of threats to their safety.

In other ways, Southern leaders fought the school desegregation decisions. They considered numerous plans to avoid compliance, including turning over the public schools to private organizations, punishing as criminals any persons who attended or taught mixed classes, and encouraging “voluntary segregation” (Franklin & Moss, 1988). These cases demonstrated how tenuous race relations became when education was the focus, as well as the opposition of White America had toward desegregating the school

systems. Critics have characterized attempts to integrate schools as failed social experiments and charged that schools have actually harmed African American children. (Townsend, 2002).

In response to Section 402 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The United States Department of Education commissioned James S. Coleman and several other scholars to complete a survey on the equality of public schools (Coleman, et al., 1966). The resulting work, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (Coleman et al., 1966) also referred to as The Coleman Report, was one of the largest studies conducted regarding public education. The findings from this report indicated that of all the variables impacting achievement the school was least important and what was most important was the socioeconomic status of the school population. Based on this data, integration found new research-based support and busing became a tool to more effectively desegregate public schools. There was some research established to report the impact of integrating schools and well as determine if this had been successful in extinguishing discrimination and increasing the academic achievement of Blacks. Due to governmental insistence to integrate schools as well as some non-racial factors, many Whites began to flee urban areas to avoid being mandated to have their children attend schools, work alongside, and socialize with Blacks. The resulting urban neighborhoods experienced levels of poverty that are still present today. According to a study Frey (1979) looking at the migration of Whites from urban areas, racial factors are not the only reason for the move; however, they cannot be discounted:

Our findings do not allow us to discount the racial composition of the central city as a predisposing factor toward white suburban ward movement. Although we would have been prone to argue that a strong zero-order correlation between a

city's black population percentage and its level of white out-movement might mask other mobility-inducing features of cities with large concentrations of blacks such as higher taxes or greater crime rates, our findings, which control for these factors, do not lend support to this view. (Frey, 1979, pp. 443-444)

According to *Black Student Achievement in Desegregated Schools: Suggestions for Future Research*, the empirically collected data first published in 1978, recommends that traditional research models be abandoned and that considerations of other factors be explored. While Bradley and Bradley (1977) used a methodological analysis, it was found that many studies showed school desegregation to be positively related to black student achievement. However, it is reported that each of the studies, while well designed, indicated weak validity due to the use of unequivalent experimental and control samples (Bradley, 1978).

In 1983, a landmark report, *A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, was released. The findings regarding public education were addressed all areas and cited mediocrity as the culprit in a school system that was giving way to the innovations of other countries such as Japan and Russia. This report would have lasting impact on the Age of Accountability we are currently experiencing. The message is one of urgency in increasing the rigor in classrooms and responsibility for all students learning.

Achievement and Accountability

The United States is at a critical time educationally, wondering if the students can compete globally in a 21st century technological and digitally enhanced economy. U.S. students in the Class of 2011, with a 32 % proficiency rate in mathematics, came in 32nd

among the nations that participated in PISA (Peterson, Woessman, Hanushek, & Lastra-Anandon, 2011). We fared much better in Reading Proficiency ranking 17th. However, the top ten countries outperform the United States by a statistically significant amount (Peterson, Woessman, Hanushek, & Lastra-Anandon, 2011, Executive Summary, para. 2). Global competency must now be included in conversations about achievement and accountability. Globalization has led to an increase in the frequency and type of interactions among people of different cultural origins (Reimers, 2010). It is even now more important that, in a nation that continues to grow in diversity, we recognize the contributions and uniqueness of all ethnic groups especially as we educate them in our public schools.

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* has a very extraordinary goal: By 2013-2014, all students will reach high standards, at a minimum, attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics. As this date nears, much attention is focused on whether the accountability systems enacted by the *NCLB* have actually been successful in moving toward this goal. Some reports at first glance show progress; however, when we look deeper, achievement gaps have not truly closed, students entering college are not reading at an advanced level, and students are not thinking much more critically than they did before we became a nation of test takers and test teachers.

Beginning in the 2005-2006 school year, students in grades 3, 5, and 8 were expected to pass the Math and Reading TAKS or be subject to retention in their grade level. Students were given three opportunities during the school year to meet expectations on the assessments. The intent of The Elementary and Secondary Act when first authorized was meant to improve the educational achievement of low-performing

students, particularly low-income students and Black students. (Vanneman, Hamilton, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009). Instead of increasing reading and math proficiency, teachers began teaching to the test and students began learning test-taking strategies. “In the context of high-stakes testing, where the emphasis is on increasing scores, teachers, believing that they are elevating their urban students’ self-esteem, may in actuality promote activities that have very little to do with raising self-esteem” (Townsend, 2002, p. 226).

Each spring, school districts across Texas received scores with a rating of Acceptable, Recognized, or Exemplary. However, as school leaders in Texas analyze the scores, the national trend is apparent when comparing ethnic groups. A distinct achievement gap exists between African American and White students. At first glance, the results of the 2011 NAEP seem promising as 4th grade African American Students in Texas rank 4th nationally in Math and 8th nationally in Reading:

While 42 % of white students were identified as proficient in math, only 11 percent of African American students, 15 percent of Hispanic students, and 16 percent of Native Americans were so identified. Fifty percent of students with an ethnic background from Asia and the Pacific Islands, however, were proficient in math. In reading, 40 % of white students and 41 percent of those from Asia and the Pacific Islands were identified as proficient. Only 12 percent of African American Students, 5 percent of Hispanic students, and 18 percent of Native American student were so identified. (Peterson, Woessman, Hanushek, & Lastra-Anandon, 2011, p. vi.)

When looking at the data from NAEP, it is important that the underlying causes

be addressed as well, so that in developing solutions, we consider causes not uncovered in mere achievement assessments, which compare students without considering these factors:

The NAEP reading and mathematics scales make it possible to examine relationships between students' performance and various background factors measured by NAEP, such as race. However, a relationship that exists between achievement and another variable does not reveal its underlying cause, which may be influenced by a number of other variables. Similarly, the assessments do not reflect the influence of unmeasured variables. At the state level, changes in the size of the achievement gap between Black and White students could be affected by demographic changes in the size and makeup of the populations involved, as well as policy changes in the schools and communities. The results of this study are most useful when they are considered in combination with other knowledge about the student population and the education system, such as trends in instruction, changes in the school-age population, and societal demands and expectations. (Vanneman, Hamilton, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009, p. iv)

If we are to also look at the data from the College Entry Exams such ACT and SAT, disadvantaged students are not more prepared for college, as a gap exists there as well. Gallagher (2009) sites the 2005 ACT College Readiness Benchmark results for Reading which found that only about half the students tested were ready for college-level reading, and those scores were the lowest in the decade. Since 2005, there have been increases in subject areas and college readiness; however, the improvement is not substantial in granting opportunities to historically "disadvantaged groups". In 2011,

ACT results shows, “ that only 4 percent of black students met the college-readiness standards for all four subjects compared to 31 percent of whites, 15 percent for Pacific Islanders, and 11 percent for Hispanics and American Indians” (Zagier, 2011, p. para 12).

Currently the African American sub-group continues to underperform other groups in all areas tested. My research delves into the relationship among countries of origin of African American students. Ogbu (1991) identifies African Americans as voluntary and involuntary minorities in an attempt to qualify their perceptions and response to education. He further suggests that the academic performances in educational settings, while impacted by differences in culture and language, are not necessarily the reason for whether or not these students are successful. However, the cultural backgrounds should be considered when interacting with students in an instructional setting. Students are more likely to be successful if the school community values their culture. In her book, *The Dream Keepers*, Ladson Billings, indicates a focus on literacy enhanced with culturally relevant teaching strategies is the key to finding success with some of our most disadvantaged learners. “One of the critical national indicators of educational progress (and national development) is the literacy rate” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 111):

According to the 2010 National Assessment of Educational Progress Report, four of five fourth graders from low-income families are not proficient in reading. The Children’s Defense Fund reports that 85 percent of Black children do not read or do math at grade level by fourth grade. (Smiley, 2011, p. 350)

Disappointing as these numbers are, there is a possibility that when looking with the African American racial group, the performance of native African Americans may be

even worse which may suggest an even deeper problem. Ogbu (1991) suggests that varying types of minorities exist with differing educational implications requiring an approach to instruction that considers the influence of complex social, economic, historical, and cultural factors.

Attitudes Toward African American Learners

While looking at the general attitude toward African American students, “one obvious correlate to minority status that has long been examined in relation to academic achievement (and other constructs) is the presence of negative stereotypes” (Cokley & Collete, 2008, p. 351). In the public school setting, students are considered at-risk for failure if they meet certain criteria such as below level on literacy evaluations, previous retention, being a second-language learner, membership in the free and reduced national lunch program, an indicator of poverty, as well as several other indicators. Each year, schools must report the percentage of students considered at-risk. “The consensus among dominant-group developmentalists is that a disproportionate number of ghetto children fail in school because they lack white middle class types of competencies, including rules of behavior for achievement” (Ogbu, 1981, p. 425). Unfortunately, some administrators, teachers, parents, and even other students refer at-risk students as those kids. References such as this encourage negative stereotypes which make assumptions that these students are also at an intellectual deficit when compared with their White peers. Unless students with African American backgrounds become very resilient, highly motivated, and have a strong support network, increased negative interactions with faculty are likely to result in discouragement and a possible devaluing of school and academic success (Cokley & Collete, 2008).

Educators and school leaders unfamiliar with differences in cultural behavior and traditions, no longer able to logistically segregate students, sometimes decide upon educational segregation by placing students in Special Education programs which are meant for students with real cognitive deficits. Over identifying students for placement in special education was more of a convenient way to correct what these educators considered deficient mothering and dysfunctional family structures (Collins, 2008). Actions such as this illustrate a belief in the stereotype that these students are lower in intellect and aptitude. Not only are at-risk students living in lower socio-economic settings subject to a gap in achievement based on attitudes, so are students afforded an opportunity to live in suburbia with all the trappings of the good life. In his book *Black American Students in an Affluent Suburb: A Study of Academic Disengagement*, Ogbu (2003) concluded that these students' cultural attitudes hindered their own academic achievement, and that parents, educators, and/or policymakers too often neglect these attitudes. According to the Coleman Report, one of the largest studies on educational opportunity first reported that a student's educational attainment is tied mostly to family background and (less strongly) to the backgrounds of his or her peers (Marshall, 1998). Not only are the attitudes of those around students important, the students own self-concept comes into play as well when looking at attitudes that an impact academic success.

Self-Efficacy and African American Learners

The Black Power Movement began in the early 1970's and marks a time in history that emphasized racial pride and a promotion of self-esteem among Black Americans. "Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud", a song penned and made popular

by rhythm and blues singer James Brown exemplifies the mood and atmosphere among many Blacks during this time. Occurring after the tumultuous civil rights movement, the word power added to this movement conveys a sense of this new feeling of being in control of one's destiny. What this movement did for Blacks during this time was significant in that there was a sense of pride and self-acceptance that was not obvious prior to this time. Self-esteem was at an all-time high. Within the school systems, Blacks had overcome integration of public schools and were demanding equal opportunity for education, which was supported by laws of the time. The self-esteem of Blacks was very high; one would expect achievement to match:

Evidence from surveys conducted in various years from 1958 to 1976 indicates that there was no change in the race difference in personal efficacy over this 18-year period, which included the civil rights movement and improvement in the social status of black Americans (Converse et al. 1980, pp.7-19).

“Two major dimensions of self-perception, known to be positively correlated, are self-esteem and personal efficacy” (Hughes & Demo, 1989, p. 132). In classrooms across the nation, much emphasis has been placed on building a student's self-esteem in an effort to increase success on academic tasks; however, this strategy may not be as relevant as personal efficacy. “Social learning theorists define perceived self-efficacy as a sense of confidence regarding the performance of specific tasks” (Jinks & Morgan, 1999, p. 224). “Somewhat surprisingly black Americans have relatively high self-esteem but relatively low personal efficacy” (Hughes & Demo, 1989, p. 132). In comparison to Whites during this time, self-esteem was the same or higher, yet success and achievement

escaped Black students with minimal numbers seeking advanced degrees. As the national data repeatedly suggests, Whites outperform Blacks in every academic area, it leads to a mindset of inferiority as Bandura (1993) contends that human motivation is cognitively generated. While self-confidence can be maintained even when belief of ability is lacking, educators may mistake positive attitude for academic aptitude. In his study, Hughes found an apparent anomaly of high self-esteem coexisting with low personal efficacy among Black Americans is understandable when we take account of the fact that inequality has little effect on Black self-esteem but is an important determinant of personal efficacy (Hughes & Demo, 1989). Students who have a low sense of efficacy to manage rigorous academic demands they are especially vulnerable to achievement anxiety (Bandura, 1993). This inability to achieve academically may be a major factor in taking the steps necessary to have a successful career and life. “When people have a low sense of personal efficacy and no amount of effort by themselves or comparative others produces results, they become apathetic and resigned to a dreary life” (Bandura, 1982).

As educators adopt practices to help support disadvantaged learners, it is important to take into account how difficult situations are perceived. Bandura (1993) further suggests that there is a marked difference between possessing knowledge and skills and having the confidence to use them well under taxing conditions. In the urban neighborhoods where our most disadvantaged students dwell, they are subjected to the perils of poverty, higher crime rates, poor living conditions, and elevated stress levels. In addition to substandard living conditions, native African Americans continue to battle the residuals of slavery, segregation, and prejudice sometimes having difficulty overlooking the injustices of long ago. The inability to overcome past indiscretions still impacts

Native African Americans greatly. “Discrimination in institutional life has largely relegated blacks to subordinate positions and excluded them from positions of power, resources, and contexts of actions that afford individuals the best opportunities to experience themselves as powerful and autonomous” (Hughes & Demo, 1989, p. 153). The experience of public education differs for immigrant African Americans, as they seem to be able to overcome these challenges. In his research of voluntary immigrants (immigrant African American) and involuntary immigrant (native African American), Ogbu suggests that Immigrant African Americans are more successful academically because they are able to view education as an opportunity, eventually overcoming behavioral differences and subsequently adopting Western education:

They do so for two reasons: first, they tend to perceive school success as providing opportunities to achieve new desirable adult cultural/subsistence tasks; and second, they realize that their native rules of behavior for achievement and related competencies may not provide access to new desirable cultural tasks (Ogbu, 1981, p. 425).

In order to reach personal accomplishments, it is important to not only have the skill set but the self-beliefs or efficacy to use those skills well. Hence, a person with the same knowledge and skills may perform poorly, adequately, or extraordinary depending on fluctuations in self-efficacy thinking (Bandura, 1993). According to Bandura’s (1986) self-efficacy theories, the beliefs people hold about their abilities to make choices that will result in perseverance, accomplishment, and the ability to overcome obstacles that may otherwise impede their success. “People will approach, explore, and try to deal with situations within their self-perceived capabilities, but they will avoid transactions with

stressful aspects of their environment they perceive as exceeding their ability” (Bandura, 1977, p. 203). It is apparent from the research and literature that self concepts are integral in achieving success; the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goal setting people will set for themselves and commit to achieving (Bandura, 1993).

Today’s leaders will need to discern between those practices that build self-esteem and provide strategic instructional opportunities for students to experience success that reinforces self-control and belief in the ability to achieve while also honoring cultural differences, which will continue to increase in educational settings across the nation.

Comparing the Path of Immigrants, Hispanic and African American

One of the components of NCLB requires that the performance of ethnic subgroups be compared. The achievement gaps between Blacks and Whites are most commonly publicized and highlighted in conversations about education and achievement disparities. However, one of the largest growing ethnic groups, Hispanic Americans, as well as children of immigrants, mostly those with parents from Latin America, also present serious challenges for policymakers who are trying to reduce poverty and increase educational attainment among America’s youth (Mather, 2009). These challenges mirror the experience of African American students in their quest for quality educational opportunities.

According to a report generated by the Population Reference Bureau (Mather, 2009), there are nearly 16 million children living in immigrant families. As these students are enrolled in schools, there are standards for reporting ethnicity and race so that data collection can reflect the many cultural backgrounds in our schools. The Hispanic/Latino group can be classified into the ethnic category of Hispanic as well as

the race of American Indian, Asian, Black or African American, Pacific Islander, or White.

Nationally, 56 percent of children of immigrants are Hispanic. The Hispanic share ranges from 3 percent in Vermont to 84 percent in New Mexico. In addition to New Mexico, Hispanics represent more than two-thirds of children of immigrants in Arizona (80 percent), Texas (79 percent), Nevada (72 percent), Arkansas (70 percent), and Kansas and California (67 percent). (Fortuny, 2010, p. 2)

Regardless of the indicator chosen on race and ethnicity questionnaires, Hispanic students, immigrant or second generation, will be a key component in discussions regarding education policy and instructional practices in school settings. “Immigrant families are driving rapid population growth and growing race/ethnic diversity in local communities and school districts across the country” (Mather, 2009, p. 1). These immigrant students are projected to make up 23% of the labor force between 2000-2020 (Mather, 2009). Therefore, it is imperative that schools begin to incorporate best strategies for academic success when looking to reform the current accountability systems, design programs, and designate appropriate resources.

Many of the mistakes made with the education of the African American population can be avoided if school leaders research best practices for working with children of immigrants as well as those who are U.S. born to immigrant parents with similar cultural backgrounds. “Many stereotypes about ethnic minority groups such as African Americans and Mexican Americans include attributes related to low intellectual ability and often make group members themselves vulnerable to believing or acting on these negative stereotypes” (Cokley & Collete, 2008, p. 351).

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Teacher preparation programs in many universities and colleges include multicultural coursework as a part of the degree requirement. It is necessary learning for aspiring teachers to recognize that the success of students in their classes will be impacted by how well they value the numerous ethnic groups they will instruct. In public schools across America, there are more than 150 languages spoken. With those languages differences come cultural differences. Unfortunately, the ethnic group that continues to underperform the other groups is the African American student. Discovering a solution is even more elusive. Conversations about disparities in achievement between Black and White students, however, are hardly new. The publication of the Coleman Report in 1966 jumpstarted the opportunity to discuss gaps in performance between Black and White students, which was often from cultural deficit perspectives (Chambers, 2009; Coleman et al., 1966; Jencks & Phillips, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2006). Many researchers cite the importance of instruction that is culturally responsive to the students that inhabit our schools as a strategy for increasing the success of our African American students. The extent and purpose learners should be prepared for must be considered as we began to tackle reform of the NCLB Act of 2001. The cognitive aspects and social development of the learner is an important factor. Lev Vygotsky emphasizes how social contexts influence the cognitive development of the learner (McCleod, 2007). An understanding of the culture of some of our most disadvantaged learners and uses of culturally relevant teaching strategies could be meaningful in creating learning environments conducive to valuing African American

students' contributions to the school community. Many times teachers consider those past teaching experiences that have been effective and the impulse is to replicate that successful experience with all learners. Therein lies another problem; what works for one does not necessarily work for another. The system currently utilized often has educators making assumptions about specific objectives, which are to be taught in the same fashion in the past with no aforethought of the learner's cultural schema:

It is required of teachers, however, that they re-invent their passion in their teaching; they must identify and accommodate the difference brought with each new cohort of students, react to the learning as it occurs (every moment of learning is different), and treat the current cohort of students as if it is the first time that the teacher has taught a class—as it is for the students with this teacher and this curricula. (Hattie, 2009, p. 2)

Reform efforts include considerations of context and content of learning.

Analyzing past assessment tests, it is evident that items, which have meaning to African American and Hispanic cultures, are not always present. Hence, relevant connections to real world learning may be missing not only from the assessment but also from the teaching. Those experiences, when lacking, hinder a student's of comparable age, but varying socioeconomic status to perform equitably. We must personalize the learning environment for students. If we continue to decide what's important without considering the student, the results will remain the same:

Olson (2003) states it simply—it is the student themselves, in the end, not the teachers, who decide what students will learn. Thus we must attend to what the

students are thinking, what their goals are, and why they would want to engage in learning what is offered in schools. (Hattie, 2009, p. 241)

Now that these students are comprised of a variety of immigrants, educators must learn what the goals of these student are in order engage them in learning. When we review the social and behavioral research on education over the past 20 years, evidence points to an immigrant advantage in many indicators of academic progress and educational attainment. This is particularly true among Asian and African immigrants more than other groups (Crosnoe & Turley, 2011).

Interestingly, in the study by Major and Schmader, grade point average was a significant negative predictor of devaluing academic success for European American and Latino American students, but not for African American students. Instead, the strongest predictor of devaluing academic success for African American students was beliefs about systemic injustice, which was not predictive for European American or Latino American students. (Cokley & Collete, 2008, p. 353)

Perceptions are important in self-efficacy. According to the work of Carol Dweck (2006) included in her book *Mindset*, the view one adopts for himself or herself profoundly affects the way a person lives his or her life. If a person's mindset is fixed, then he or she is likely not to have the immediate ability to overcome a negative perception of his or her situation in life. (Dweck, 2006). Currently, the reports on student achievement denote that African Americans do not perform as well as White Americans on a multitude of achievement tests, from early childhood to pre-entry college and beyond. In his interview of a 17 year-old male on his way to adult prison, Tavis Smiley

unveils a disturbing mindset. When he questions the young man about if he is prepared for his impending move from juvenile incarceration to adult quarters, the young man replies, “Not yet. I believe that hasn’t dawned on me yet. Like, or maybe I will never be scared. I don’t know, it’s kinda like in our neighborhood, it’s like prison...is the norm” (Smiley, 2011, pp. loc. 991-992).

How does our educational system shift the mindset of African American students that seemed destined to fail? If we continue to assess students and then compare them nationally (Dweck, 2006), report that data, and then expect the mindset of students to be one of overcoming, compensating, and inferiority then we are building some pretty high standards. When comparing students, the system of accountability, it is important to realize the cultural differences of learners native to America and those considered immigrants as their experience impacts their learning.

The Impact of Expectations on Achievement

Research shows that other’s expectations in our abilities strongly influence our ability to succeed not only in the classroom, but also in the workplace, in athletics, and in life. In Greek literature, the character Pygmalion first appeared as the king of Cyprus and then again in a play also entitled *Pygmalion* written by George Bernard Shaw. In each story, the main character has positive thoughts or extraordinary expectations about an object or another person others would deem as average or less. In the Greek myth and the play, overwhelming positive thinking and actions toward an average object is attributed to the incredible results coming to fruition; a statue become a beautiful human being and an average country girl becomes a lady of distinction.

Currently, the “Pygmalion Effect” references a self-fulfilling phenomenon often referenced in education and sociology. This effect, also called the “Rosenthal Effect”, is based on the research conducted by Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson in 1968 in which students were randomly selected to be in classroom where teachers were told they were inclined to bloom intellectually. The results seem to give credence to the impact high expectations have on students when their teachers believe in their ability to perform academically. In his research, Rosenthal (1968) suggested that students would perform better because of their teacher’s belief in them to do so; thereby, the teacher’s interaction was one of positivity and high expectations.

High expectations from the teacher are not the only factor impacting a student’s academic success. The expectations of parents, and the student himself, also impact the student’s positive feelings about his or her achievement and ability to perform. Prior to Rosenthal’s study, Merton (1948) also suggested that teachers expecting students to do well would behave and interact with them in ways that led to the fulfillment of those expectations. Because the adult who spends the most time with the student during the school age years is the teacher, much of the research is focused on those expectations. However, there is some research being done as of late that interjects that even under the best circumstances, a teacher’s high expectations can be insignificant when parent or student expectations are unfavorable. According to the research, higher parental expectations for their children is linked to a greater likelihood of attending college (Hosler & Stage, 1992), selection of more core academic courses (Catsambis, 2001), and better academic performance (Ruthchick, Smyth, Lopoo, & Dusek, 2009). A parent’s SES status and education level also plays a part in increased expectations for their own

children. Typically parents with higher SES have more education than parents with lower SES, which is linked to higher educational expectations for their children (Hao & Bonstead-Bruns, 1998) (Ruthchick, Smyth, Lopoo, & Dusek, 2009). Additionally, higher SES families have more financial resources, which are key in the student's sense of obtaining an advanced degree (Ruthchick, Smyth, Lopoo, & Dusek, 2009).

The student's own perceptions or expectations are additionally important in predicting academic success. The SES among the African American student population also influences these expectations. Trusty (1998) found that the SES impacted African American males negatively, but had no impact on African American females. However, Trusty (1998) also found that children's perceptions of parent support for their education predicted the children's expectations beyond the impact of the SES (Ruthchick, Smyth, Lopoo, & Dusek, 2009). Additionally, in a follow-up study, Trusty (2000) found that parental attendance at extra-curricular events predicted the maintenance of high expectations more than the effects of SES and race. The beliefs of everyone in the learning community greatly impact whether students achieve. While there are other factors that bear some importance, the expectations of the teachers, the parents, and the students aligned for the greater good of student achievement, can overcome student behaviors and lower SES. Equally important in are the expectations of the leaders of school districts as well as individual campuses.

The Impact of Leadership on Student Achievement

Today's school leaders are under extreme pressure to manage their schools while figuring out a solution to the accountability dilemma. Both urban and suburban communities in the United States are faced with interacting and supporting a changing

racial and ethnic melting pot where the leaders must understand the needs, perspectives and intellect that students from diverse backgrounds bring to the school setting (Johnson, 2007). The demands of leaders in urban areas with challenges such as low poverty, high crime, differences in culture, and diverse ethnic group student populations are compounded when they face severe punitive sanctions if their students do not meet the standards of accountability set forth by NCLB. “Poor urban schools must raise test scores on state mandated assessments with fewer resources or face reorganization and possible closure” (Johnson, 2007, p. 49).

Based on findings presented in The Coleman Report (1966), schools were said not to matter as much in a student’s academic success, while the family background of the student and his peers were said to have more of an impact in predicting success. Schools leaders and staff have little influence over student background, and there are schools which reflect a student population with high poverty yet they highly effective in creating an excellent school with student achievement at the core. Lezotte (1997) as one of the original researchers involved in presenting the effective school correlates lists strong leadership as one the fundamental characteristics necessary for a school to achieve academic success. As cited in *Leadership and Sustainability*, Fullan (2005) presents research from highly effective, high-poverty schools and districts which identified a common theme crucial to their success as leadership at the school and the district. Fullan (2005) presents data from *Making Schools Work* (Ouchi, 2003) wherein the schools demonstrating the most success had the most decentralized management systems where campus leaders had the autonomy to make decisions regarding school budget and hiring

of staff. They were also fully responsible and accountable for the performance of their schools (Fullan, 2005).

In an era where school leaders are to make many decisions which are accountability driven, it is important that these leaders have a potpourri of resources that will help them develop and grow professionally in a way that makes them an effective leader producing the results necessary to move students and keep their jobs. As more schools begin to fall short when required to meet the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) which mandates schools to meet the standards of 100% of students to pass reading and math set by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, leaders will shoulder the brunt of the responsibility for failure. Leithwood *et al.* (1999b) has identified leadership practices associated with increased accountability (Leithwood, School leadership in the context of accountability policies, 2001). Analysis of the data from this study has resulted in a four-fold classification of approaches to educational accountability: market, decentralization, professional, and management approaches (Leithwood, School leadership in the context of accountability policies, 2001). There are also other forms of leadership when speaking of effectiveness; transformational, situational, instructional, and servant and many other forms of leadership discussed in administrator circles and among those concerned with improving leadership. “Practices associated with these forms of leadership, however, ought to be considered necessary but not sufficient part of an effective leader’s repertoire” (Leithwood, 2001, p. 227). In a review of studies of transformational leadership, evidence from 32 empirical studies published between 1996 and 2005 was used to examine the impact of this form of leadership on student achievement and student engagement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). The review of these studies found that

transformational leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) effects were mixed but trended toward a positive impact on student achievement; while no direct or indirect effect was determined (Leithwood & Slegers, 2006), the “potency of leadership for increasing student learning hinges on the specific classroom practices which leaders stimulate, encourage, and promote” (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005, p. 223).

While the solutions may not be simple, Leithwood (2004) indicates that successful leadership can be improved with three sets of practices that are basic cores: 1) Setting directions; 2) Developing people; and 3) Developing the organization for a framework of support of administrators, teachers, and students. Sergiovanni (2005) asserts that there are four leadership virtues at the core of leadership practice, which are necessary for improving the most challenging schools: hope, trust, piety, and civility,. There are many paths a school leader can take to improve the academic forecast for the students they serve. What is ultimately clear is the constant reflection, data analysis, and attention to educational policy that must occur in order to be effective.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter provides an outline for the quantitative research completed to determine the correlation between the math and reading performance of African American Students and their country of origin. Currently, with regard to student population reporting, the African American sub-group is inclusive of native born African Americans and Immigrant African Americans. In order to determine if the performance of either group is different, student data was disaggregated by their country of origin and students were denoted as Native African American (born in the United States) or Immigrant African American (born outside of the United States) Students. A Pearson's Chi-square Square Test for Independence was performed to analyze categorical data from the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) Reading and Math tests given to 3rd and 4th grade students in 2010 and 2011. This chapter also describes the research design, reviews the research questions, describes the setting and subjects, outlines the procedures, describes the instrumentation, discusses data analysis, and determines the possible limitations of the research study.

Description of the Research Design

The design of the study used a Pearson's Chi-square, also called the Test of Independence, to determine if there is significant relationship between African American student performance on Math and Reading TAKS and their country of origin. Students were categorized as Native African American (NAA) or Immigrant African American (IAA). Existing archival data regarding performance on TAKS determines if the student standard was "Met" or "Not Met". This data was then analyzed and compared to determine if student performance on TAKS is independent of their country of origin.

Additionally, the study reviewed a student's commended performance in Math and Reading on the TAKS tests. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) sets the standard for commended performance each year based on a number of criteria (see Appendix B). Only those students meeting minimum standards can then be given the additional status of commended, which demonstrates advanced proficiency on the TAKS. An analysis of NAA and IAA student performance in math and reading according to gender, grade level, language proficiency, and economically disadvantaged status was completed as well. The Pearson's Chi-square tells us whether the differences found are more likely to be chance occurrences or if there is statistical significance between the variables.

Research Questions

The impetus for this study acknowledges the fact that classroom, campus, and district leaders are responsible for providing an environment where all students can learn and achieve academic success. Strategies that incorporate cultural variance among subgroups can be relevant in supporting students from diverse backgrounds. Currently, African American students underperform their peers even with the implementation of legislation such as NCLB specifically meant to ensure that all students are expected to find success in subjects such as reading and math. This study reviewed the performance of this group of students by focusing on the following questions:

1. Is there a statistical difference in the reading performance of African American students based on their country of origin?
2. Is there a statistical difference in the math performance of African American students based on their country of origin?

Setting

For the purpose of this study, the data compiled came from what was referenced as Urban Independent School District (UISD). This school district is located in Southwest Houston and covers 36.6 square miles. The district encompasses twenty-four elementary schools, six intermediate schools, six middle schools, five high schools, and four additional alternative campuses to support the needs of a very diverse student population. The district serves approximately 45,000 students and employees over 6,000 people. Virtually every culture of the modern world is represented in its student enrollment, and, with more than 80 languages and dialects being spoken, UISD is one of the most ethnically diverse districts of its size in Texas.

The district first began as a rural school district and over the past 50 years has become a highly urban area surrounded by five other large school districts. The district has a high concentration of apartment homes; approximately 55,000 units are contained within the school district. According to the TEA (Texas Education Agency), the 2011 Accountability Rating for Urban Independent School District is recognized.

Subjects

The students of Urban Independent School District come from very diverse backgrounds. Of this ethnically diverse student population, the majority of the students are from African American and Hispanic backgrounds. According to the data available, approximately 12,000 students participated in the Spring administration of TAKS in 2010 and 2011 in UISD. Approximately 80.8% of the student population in the district is identified as economically disadvantaged, 35.9 % are Limited English Proficient students, and only 3.8% participate in the Gifted and Talented program.

Figure 3-1

Percentage of Students by Ethnic Sub-Group

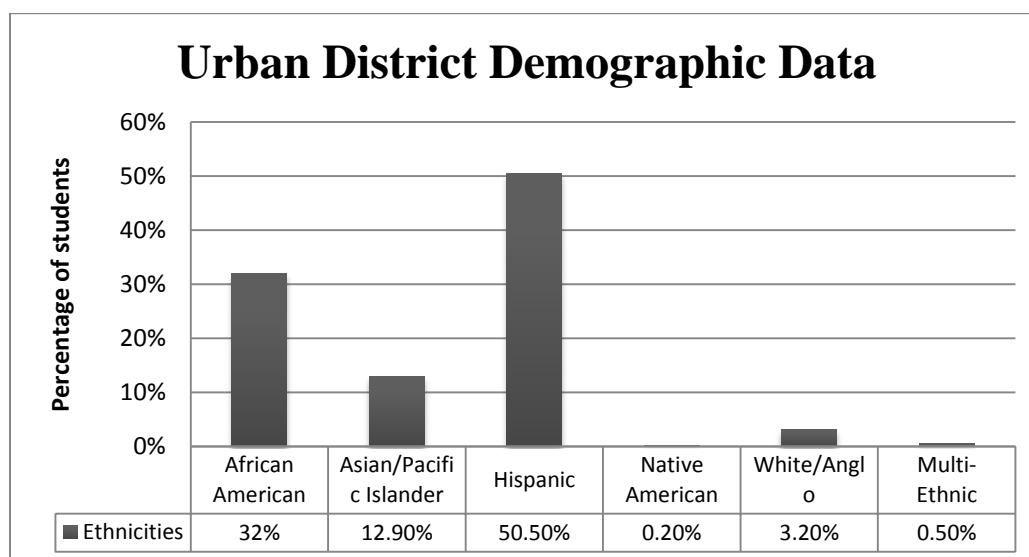


Figure 3-1 illustrates the demographic composition of the student population of the UISD.

The sample population for this study was the 3rd and 4th grade African American students of Urban School District who were enrolled during the Spring Administration of TAKS during 2010 Administration and the 2011 Administration. During this time period, 1856 African American students participated in TAKS administration.

Procedures

This study used existing archival data. The primary source of data was collected from Urban Independent School District. The UISD Instructional Review Board granted permission for the research. A request for data retrieval was made to the district's accountability director. Once data was received, the country of origin and immigrant status was determined. The home language survey has been completed by parents each

year, and when another language is spoken at home, the student may be categorized as Limited English Proficiency (LEP). That information is compiled and input in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). Additionally, the Urban District must denote country of origin when determining LEP status even if the home language survey indicated English is the primary home language. Students that are determined to be of immigrant African American status will be denoted as African American (IAA). Students that are determined to be of native African American status will be denoted as Native American (NAA). After determining immigrant status, math and reading performance results were analyzed using the Pearson's Chi-square Test for Independence.

Instruments

The country of origin was the independent variable and the two different achievement measures, performance on math and reading, were the dependent variables and all were determined to be categorical. The results from the 2010 and 2011 Spring Administration of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) were analyzed. The TAKS test is given each spring to students in grades 3-11. The purpose was to test the student's progress on TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills), which are the standards of what students in Texas public schools should know and be able to do. The TAKS system of testing was aligned with the NCLB act with regard to holding schools accountable for ensuring that students become proficient in reading and math.

Prior to NCLB, Texas implemented a system of accountability with a statewide testing program in 1979. The first test given in 1980, the Texas Assessment of Basic

Skills (TABS), was meant to assess minimum skills in math, reading, and writing. In 1986, the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) replaced TABS and became the first statewide test students in high school were required to pass in order to receive a diploma. With a shift from minimum skills to academic skills, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) was implemented in 1990. Through many changes in legislation and policy, TAKS replaced TAAS for grades 3-8 in 2003. Additionally, the Student Success Initiative (SSI), enacted in 1999, made satisfactory performance on the reading TAKS in grade 3 and reading and math TAKS in grades 5 and 8 a requirement for promotion to the next grade. The first group of students impacted by this law was the 3rd grade class of 2002-2003. This requirement remained in effect until 2009-2010.

In order to determine whether students would be categorized as native African American or Immigrant African American in this study, information was gathered from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). This system is used to collect information reported to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) regarding demographic and academic performance information of students enrolled in public school systems as well as personnel, financial, and organizational information (Texas Education Agency, 2013). Upon enrollment, parents complete a registration card, which includes demographic information such as ethnicity information. This information is then reported via PEIMS. According to the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), §89.1215, school districts shall require a home language survey to be completed and signed by parents when students are new to the district in prekindergarten through grade 8, which is then kept in the student's permanent record. This information is used to determine student's

language of instruction and inclusion in bilingual and or English as a Second Language programs.

This information is inputted into PEIMS by school employees based on information gathered from a document, the home language survey, completed by parents or guardians when their children are enrolled in school. Additionally, information regarding a student's economic status is also collected via PEIMS, when students participate in the National School Lunch Program, and an application is completed. Students determined to require free or reduce lunch are considered economically disadvantaged.

Data Analysis

The Pearson's Chi-square Test was used to analyze the results of the performance of African American students on TAKS test for reading and math. Because the Chi-square test evaluates two categorical variables, it can tell us if the frequencies are significantly different or occurring by chance and if the two variables have a relationship, for instance country of origin and academic performance. The Chi-square test was conducted for all African American students tested, categorized as either Native or Immigrant. This statistical procedure was viewed as the optimal statistical procedure to use because frequency data were present for reading and math performance, grade level, gender, EcoDis, and LEP. As such, the Pearson's Chi-square tests are the statistical procedure of choice when both variables are categorical. In addition, with the large sample size, the available sample size per cell was more than five in each of the categories reviewed with the exception of two occasions; Non-EcoDis IAA not meeting

Standard for math and Non-EcoDis IAA meeting commended performance. Therefore, the assumptions for utilizing a Chi-square were met.

Limitations

After a review of the data, it is possible that others will deem this research necessary in determining the root cause for continued achievement gaps in the African American culture. It is only then we can find a viable solution. At this point, the data reported may be convoluted if it indeed demonstrates that immigrant African Americans are the reason that the gap has closed, though minimally, still a decrease. The current national data from elementary age students to secondary students clearly shows that African American students consistently score below their peers in academic achievement assessments and standardized evaluative assessments. What is also clear is that there could be many other variables present attributed to determining why this gap began and has remained. Some of which may have nothing to do with country of origin. Additionally, there are differences in how African Americans are and were treated based on the region of the United States in which they migrated to or were born.

Further limitations are based on the fact that the data analyzed will only be from the 2010 and 2011 TAKS results in one school district representative of an urban community, which is highly mobile. This could impact that data in a negative fashion; therefore, it would be imperative that further research looks at trends across other regions and community types.

Children born to immigrant parents are considered Native Americans; however, because their parents are immigrants, many of the family structures, traditions, and behaviors reflect that of immigrant homes. The study is limited in that the student data of

second-generation students was included with native students when the structure of their homes, ideology, and cultural impact more closely mirror that of an immigrant student.

The determination of ethnicity presents a limitation to this study due to the nature of the instrument utilized to decide upon racial groupings. The registration card containing a student's demographic information is a self-reported instrument and may contain inaccurate information. The parents or guardians may have reported things as they understood them at the time, and it is possible the information may not have been consistent, as there is no ethnicity indicator guidance or module included when completing the cards. There is also the element of human error as the data is input by hand.

The use of the TAKS test itself is a limitation as it is a criterion-referenced assessment, which presents limitations because it evaluates individual performance on mastery of content, in contrast to a norm-referenced assessment, which evaluates performance in relation to a group.

This study is limited in that there was not a qualitative component wherein data was collected about parents, family dynamics, and cultural expectations. There was no data collected about teachers (their backgrounds and expectations), instructional practices, variances among schools, or extracurricular programs that could contribute to success of some students. Within school and home environments, there may be unseen dynamics within the culture of African Americans, immigrant and native, which would only be unveiled through a qualitative layer to this research. It is possible future researchers will compare the cultural influences that impact the families of the African American group.

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

In the United States, school reform efforts of the past have focused on ensuring that students receive not only a quality education in the public school setting, but one which will prepare them to compete globally in an advancing 21st century environment. In recent years, proponents of reform have found it necessary to enact legislation that hold school systems accountable for all students reaching, at minimum, proficiency in reading/language arts and mathematics. “Concern about Black-White disparities in academic performance on standardized tests has garnered attention at the highest levels and was even made one President Bush’s primary targets in the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2002)” (Chambers, 2009, p. 417). This act mandates that by the year 2014 100 % of students in the United States are proficient in reading and mathematics.

What has also been a key focus, yet elusive, is that disadvantaged students reach the goal at the same rate as their peers. Ten years after the enactment of NCLB, the achievement gap between Blacks and Whites continues to be of concern when looking at student performance on achievement tests. While reports show scores have increased for both Black students and White students, on average Black students consistently underperform other sub-groups as well as their White peers (Vanneman, Hamilton, Anderson, & Rahman, 2009). The national accountability system currently implemented can be linked to the testing system that originated in Texas in the early 90’s. To address long-standing gaps between minority and majority student achievement, the Texas Legislature enacted Texas Senate Bill 7 (1993), the incipient statute for the creation of the Texas public school accountability system to rate school districts and evaluate

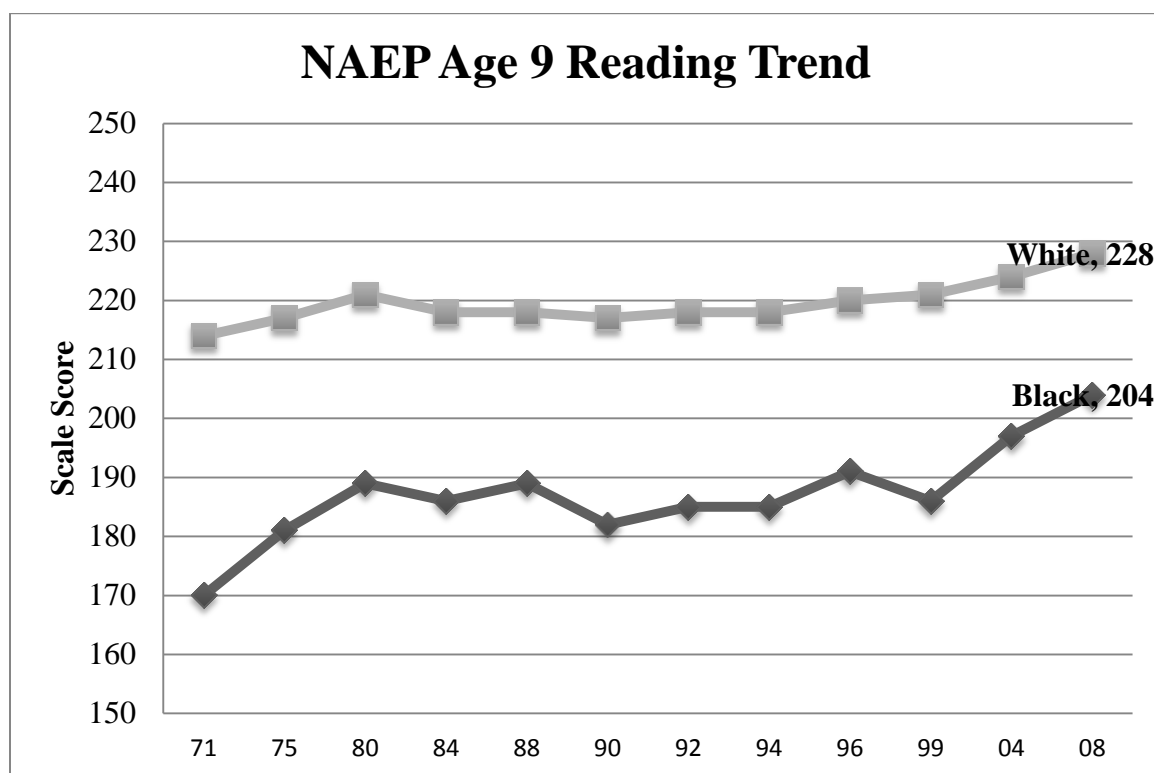
campuses (Heilig, Jez, & Reddick, 2012). The results of high-stakes testing for all student groups were deemed so good in Texas that the phenomenon was given the moniker, “The Texas Miracle”, encouraging President Bush to implement a national system of accountability, which mirrored what had been accomplished in Texas. The former superintendent of Houston ISD, Rod Paige, responsible for changing the accountability system for his district, became the United States Secretary of Education from 2001 to 2005. The most recent results for scores in Texas continue to show that African American students are faring better than those in other states. According to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), Texas African American students receive top rankings in reading and mathematics when compared nationally to other African American students.

Since 2003, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has supported research that compares the proficiency standards of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) with those of individual states. State assessments are placed onto a common scale defined by NAEP scores, which allows states’ proficiency standards to be compared not only to NAEP, but also to each other. (Bandeira de Mello, 2011, p. 2)

The NAEP tests the reading performance of students ages nine (grade four), thirteen (grade eight) and seventeen (grade twelve). Within each of these groups, the scores for Blacks and Whites are compared. Figure 4-1 shows the data reported for students in fourth grade, age nine reading as reported from 1971 through 2008. The figure illustrates national trends in White and Black average reading Scores.

Figure 4-1

Chart of Age 9 Reading as Reported from NAEP



A score of 208 is considered Basic, 238 is Proficient, and 268 is Advanced.

Based on the information in Figure 4-1, Black students have scored below basic from 1971 to present with an average score of 204 in 2008. Whites, on the other hand, have been above the basic standard and remained there from 1971-2008. Additionally, the information in this figure shows that there has been a narrowing of the gap; however, there is still a significant gap in 2008, six years after the enactment of NCLB.

When looking at the most recent data comparing the data nationally and in Texas, the reading performance data shown in Table 4-1 indicates that African American students ranked higher than their same age peers when compared within their respective sub-groups. This table illustrates data for fourth grade reading compared nationally to Texas Data.

Table 4-1

NAEP 2009 & 2011 Grade 4 Reading Data

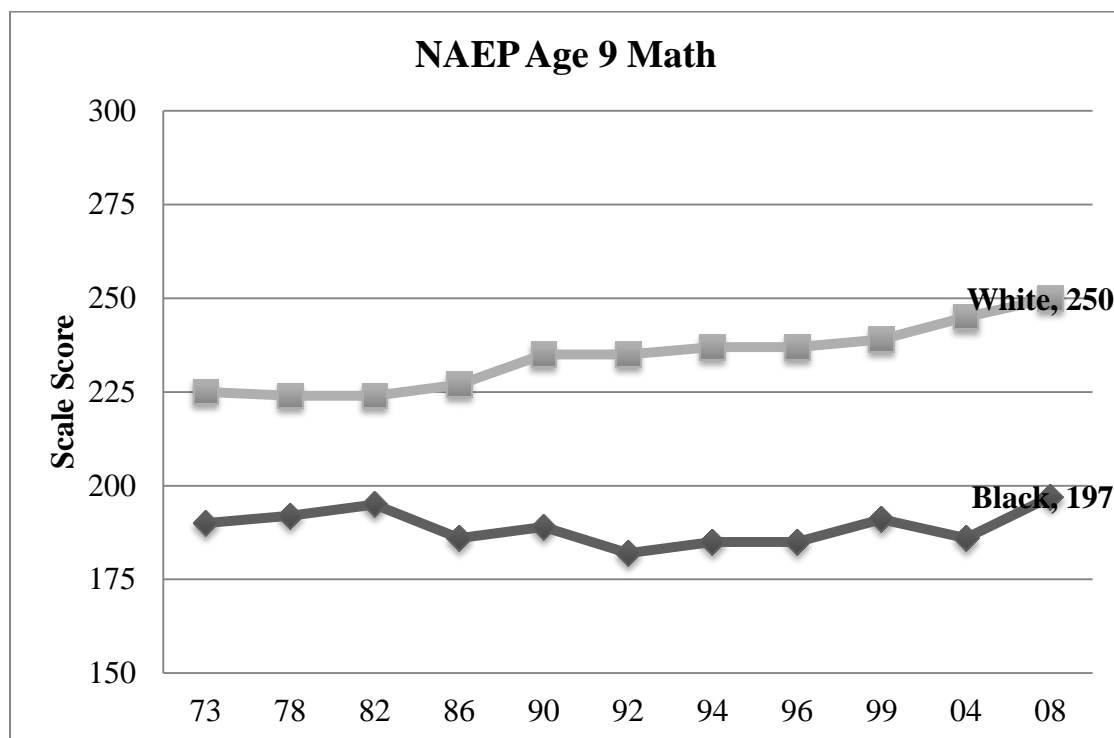
| Year | Jurisdiction | All Students | White | African American | Hispanic |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2011 | National | 220 | 230 | 205 | 205 |
| | Texas | 218 | 233 (12 th) | 210 (8 th) | 210 (15 th) |
| 2009 | National | 220 | 229 | 204 | 204 |
| | Texas | 219 | 232 | 213 | 210 |

Scores range from 0-500 on NAEP assessments. According to the information in Table 4-1, African American students ranked 8th among their same race peers with a score of 210 in 2011. This was a three-point drop from the previous assessment year of 2009. Additionally, the rank of 8th is higher than the rank of 12th when comparing the ranking of their White peers; however, the score is 22 points lower than that of their White peers, with a score of 233.

NAEP also tests students in math at ages nine (grade four), thirteen (grade eight) and seventeen (grade twelve). Figure 4.2 shows the Math NAEP data as reported from 1971-2008.

Figure 4-2

Average Math Scores for Age 9 as Reported by NAEP for 1971-2008



Similarly, the data for math indicates a gap between Blacks and Whites.

Table 4-2 shows data Nationally and from Texas from 2009 and 2011 on the Mathematics Assessment, which compares four student groups, All Students, White Students, African American Students, and Hispanic students.

Table 4-2

NAEP 2011 and 2009 Grade 4 Mathematics

| Year | Jurisdiction | All Students | White | African American | Hispanic |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2011 | National | 240 | 249 | 224 | 229 |
| | Texas | 241 | 253(7 th) | 232 (4 th) | 235 (12 th) |
| 2009 | National | 239 | 248 | 222 | 227 |
| | Texas | 240 | 254 | 231 | 233 |

Scores are based on a 0-500 scale with scores falling between 215 and 250 considered basic to proficient in Math. According to the data in Table 4-2, in 2011, of the student groups represented in Texas, African American students produced the best rankings when compared to their same race peers, ranking 4th nationally, while Whites ranked 7th and Hispanic students ranked 12th. The score of 232 for Texas African Americans is 21 points less than White students in the same grade. Of all groups represented the African American student performance is below all other groups in 2011 and 2009. Consequently, discussions regarding accountability continue to focus on the achievement of certain ethnic groups continuing to underperform Whites, even in Texas.

Therefore, an analysis of a portion of this accountability system may shed some light on whether the achievement gap is truly closing.

The purpose of this study was to examine the academic performance of African American Students as measured by the state accountability test, TAKS, to determine if there was a correlation between the performance of African American students on this assessment and their country of origin as reported by PEIMS. The students were identified as belonging to one of two groups: Native African American (born in the United States) and Immigrant African American (born outside the United States).

Currently, all African American students, regardless of their birthplace, are categorized as African American when looking at the data from the TAKS tests. This study compared Native African American students and Immigrant African American students to determine if there was a statistical difference in academic performance between these two groups of African American students in Reading and Math. Answers to the following questions were sought:

1. Is there a statistical difference in the reading performance of African American Students based on their country of origin?
2. Is there a statistical difference in the math performance of African American students based on their country of origin?

The sample population of the study included data from 24 elementary campuses in an urban Texas school district. When looking at accountability, the results are categorized in a variety of configurations: All students, African American (AA) students, Hispanic (HIS) students, Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students, Special Education (SE) students, and Economically Disadvantaged (EcoDis) students. Students excelling

beyond the met standard rate by a certain predetermined expectation are said to have commended performance. For the purpose of this study, the results of the African American students were compared by country of origin. EcoDis, SE, LEP, and Commended Performance.

Hypothesis

The data may show that the inclusion of immigrant African American students within the African American Group (also denoted as Black in some reports and references in this study) has impacted the closing of the gap as presented in the charts in Figures 4-1 and 4-2, and Tables 4-1 and 4-2. This may indicate that the closing of the gap, while narrow, is not due to the focused efforts created by legislature, but by a group that is less affected by the residuals of being Black in America being included in such data. As the immigrant population of all ethnic sub-groups grows, it is important that consideration of this sub-sub-group's impact be noted. These hypotheses can be contemplated once the data is analyzed.

Hypothesis 1: Reading Performance

H_0 = Performance on Reading TAKS is not correlated to country of origin, $p > .05$

H_A = Performance on Reading TAKS is impacted by country of origin, $p < .05$

Hypothesis 2: Math Performance

H_0 = Performance on Math TAKS is not correlated to country of origin, $p > .05$

H_a = Performance on Math TAKS is correlated to country of origin, $p < .05$

Demographic Data

This study included the results from 1,856 African American elementary students in grades three and four. Table 4-3 gives the total number of those students groups

according to birthplace, either United States (Native African Americans) or Outside of the United States (Immigrant African Americans).

The percentage of African American students born outside the United States who participated in the TAKS administration equals 157, which is 8% of the total number Immigrant African American (IAA) students tested. Native African Americans (NAA) represents 92% of AA students tested. When looking at the district from which the data was gathered, AA students make up 32% of the total school population. Appendix A contains table with a detailed breakdown of the birthplaces for all 1,856 students. The following tables present the demographic variations of the sample population by grade level, gender, economically disadvantaged status, and Limited English Proficiency.

Table 4-3

Birthplace Percentage of African American Students Tested

| Birthplace | # of Students | Percentage |
|--------------------------|---------------|------------|
| United States | 1,699 | 91.5% |
| Outside of United States | 157 | 8.5% |
| Total | 1856 | |

In Texas, students in grades 3 through 11 are tested each year. For the purposes of this study, data was gathered from the results of students in grades 3 and 4 only. The population sample consisted of 808 third grade students, which accounts for 43.5% of the students and 1048 fourth grade students for 56.5% of the AA students tested. Table 4-4 gives a comparison of those students.

Table 4-4

Grade Levels of African Americans Tested

| Grade Levels | # of Students | Percentage |
|--------------|---------------|------------|
| 3 | 808 | 43.5% |
| 4 | 1,048 | 56.5% |

In Texas, 3rd grade is the first year students participate in the state standardized testing program, taking reading and mathematics tests. In 4th grade students take reading, math, and writing state tests.

It is critical that any research and subsequent discussion of academic achievement, especially that of ethnic groups, include an inspection of the performance differences between boys and girls. According to data from the Schott Report, in 2012 Black males have the lowest graduation among their peers with only 52% graduating from high school nationally (Holzman, 2012). Therefore, there was a data analysis of the reading and math performance differences, which compared male NAA and IAA students and female NAA and IAA students.

Table 4-5

Gender of African American Students Tested

| Gender | # of Students | Percentage | # of NAA | # of IAA |
|--------|---------------|------------|----------|----------|
| Female | 882 | 47.6% | 809 | 73 |
| Male | 968 | 52.3% | 885 | 83 |
| Total | 1850 | 99.9% | 1694 | 156 |

Table 4-5 gives a breakdown of the gender of the African American students tested on TAKS. The total number indicates there is gender or assessment data missing for six students, five NAA students and one IAA student.

Another factor, which impacts a student's academic performance, is the Socio-Economic Status (SES) of the student. In the public school setting, that level is determined by the label of economically disadvantaged. The Coleman Report (Coleman, et al., 1966) suggested that the economic background of the family and students with in the school environment impacts the student's personal efficacy and ability to succeed academically and has more influence than the school. Therefore, the data was generated and NAA and IAA students who were labeled EcoDis were compared as well as those that were not labeled EcoDis. The table below shows the percentage of EcoDis AA students.

Table 4-6

Economically Disadvantaged (EcoDis) African American Students Tested

| EcoDis Status | # of Students | Percentage | # of NAA | # of IAA |
|---------------|---------------|------------|----------|----------|
| EcoDis | 1543 | 83.2% | 1403 | 140 |
| Not Eco Dis | 307 | 16.6% | 291 | 16 |
| Total | 1850 | 99.9% | 1694 | 156 |

Table 4-6 shows the number of AA students considered economically disadvantaged in the study. 83.2 % of the AA students are considered children at or below the poverty level. This status automatically identifies the students as at-risk for

failure. Of the 1856 students in the study, data for EcoDis status, data was missing for six students.

Within the African American subgroup there are students identified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP). According to Chapter 89 of the Texas Education Code, §89.1205, each school district that has an enrollment of 20 or more English language learners in any language classification in the same grade level district-wide shall offer a bilingual education program. Students identified as having another language as their first language must be provided instructional support through an English as Second Language (ESL) Program. AA students were identified as LEP or non-LEP and their performance on the Math and Reading TAKS was also compared. The table below shows the LEP data.

Table 4-7

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Status of African American Students Tested

| LEP Status | # of Students | Percentage | # of NAA | # of IAA |
|------------|---------------|------------|----------|----------|
| LEP | 143 | 8% | 64 | 79 |
| Non-LEP | 1709 | 92% | 1631 | 78 |
| Total | 1852 | | 1695 | 157 |

Table 4-7 shows the number of AA students tested identified as LEP. Students with the LEP label fall under one three scenarios; currently identified but monitored only, 1st year, or in their 2nd year. Non-LEP students have never been labeled as a student with limited English proficiency.

Question 1: Reading Performance

Question one of this study asks if there is a statistical difference in the reading performance of African American students based on their country of origin. The following data analysis looks at the reading performance of AA as a whole by grade level, gender, LEP status, and EcoDis status.

All African American reading performance. The data in Table 4-8 shows the number of African American (AA) students who met the standard for passing reading on the state TAKS test in 2010 and 2011. In order to meet the reading standard in 3rd grade, students were required to answer 21 of 36 questions correctly in 2010 and 22 of 36 questions in 2011. In 2010 and 2011, 4th graders needed to respond correctly to 27 of 40 questions in order to meet the passing standard on the reading TAKS. The table shows the number of students in both grades that passed the test.

Table 4-8

African American Students Performance on Reading TAKS

| Student Group | #Tested | # MS | % MS | # NMS | %NMS |
|---------------|---------|------|------|-------|-------|
| NAA | 1695 | 1393 | 82.2 | 302 | 17.8% |
| IAA | 157 | 135 | 86% | 22 | 14% |
| All AA | 1852 | 1528 | 83.2 | 285 | 17.5% |

Table 4-8 shows the number of students meeting the standard (MS) which is reported as Yes, or Not Meeting Standard (NMS) reported as No, along with a scale

score. Based the data shown, Immigrant African American (IAA) students performed better; 86% met the standard in comparison with their same age Native African American (NAA) Students, and 82.2% met the standard on the Reading TAKS.

The performance of IAA students meeting the standard for passing was also enough to impact the overall percentage of All AA students meeting standard for passing with 83.2% of AA students passing altogether. To ascertain whether country of origin impacts the difference in reading performance of NAA (within the United States) and IAA (outside of the United States) statistically significant a Pearson's Chi-square test was conducted. The relationship between these two variables was not significant, $X^2 (1, N = 1693) = 1.44, p = .23$.

Table 4-9 shows the percentage of students passing reading who received commended status. In order to reach commended status, students in 3rd grade must obtain 33 of 36 correct responses on the Reading TAKS, which is 92% correct and students in 4th grade must answer 37 out 40, which is a 93% accuracy rate.

Table 4-9

African American Commended Performance on Reading TAKS

| | CP | % | NCP | % |
|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| NAA | 479 | 28.3 | 1216 | 71.7% |
| IAA | 59 | 37.6% | 98 | 62.4% |
| Total AA | 538 | 29% | 1314 | 71% |

When scoring advanced proficiency, which equates to commended performance on the Reading TAKS, immigrant African American students out-perform Native African Americans by 9.3% points. Data analysis from the Chi-square test indicates the relationship between country of origin and commended reading performance is statistically significant, $X^2(1, N=1852) = 6.06, p < .05$.

African American reading performance by grade level. In Texas, the first year students are assessed for reading is in 3rd grade. In 2003, the Student Success Initiative (SSI) was enacted along with NCLB wherein students in grades 3, 5, and 8 were required to pass reading and math tests in order to be promoted to the next grade level. In 2008, this requirement was stopped; however, the pressure to pass the test is still felt in schools across the state, as the passing performance of this age group is still required in order to meet the federal guidelines required for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Table 4-10 shows the performance of AA 3rd grade students.

Table 4-10

African American 3rd Grade Reading Performance on TAKS

| | MS | % | NMS | % |
|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 624 | 84.9% | 111 | 15.1% |
| IAA | 65 | 89% | 8 | 11% |
| Total AA | 689 | 85.3% | 119 | 14.7% |

After conducting the Chi-square test on the reading performance of all 3rd grade AA students, there was not a statistically significant relationship present, $X^2(1, N=808) = .91, p = .39$.

The next table presents commended performance data for AA 3rd grade students. Commended Performance (CP) demonstrates advanced proficiency and those not making Commended Performance (NCP) score between minimum standard passing and above.

Table 4-11

African American 3rd Grade Commended Performance on TAKS

| Group | CP | % | NCP | % |
|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 239 | 32.5% | 496 | 67.5% |
| IAA | 27 | 37% | 46 | 63% |
| Total AA | 266 | 32.9% | 542 | 67.1% |

Based on the data shown in Table 4-11, IAA students out-performed NAA student in 3rd grade Reading TAKS. After performing the Chi-square tests, the analysis shows that the relationship was not statistically significant, $X^2(1, N=808) = .60, p = .44$.

Nationally, students in 4th grade are compared to determine what they know and can do in core subjects such as reading on the NAEP assessment. Currently, Texas AA 4th grade students rank eighth when compared to their same race counterparts. In Table 4-12, 4th grade reading performance is shown.

Table 4-12

African American 4th Grade Reading Performance on TAKS

| Group | MS | % | NMS | % |
|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 769 | 80.1% | 191 | 19.9% |
| IAA | 70 | 83.3% | 14 | 16.7% |
| Total AA | 839 | 80.4% | 119 | 19.6 |

The Chi-square test indicated there was not a statistical significance in the relationship between country of origin and reading performance of AA 4th grade students, $X^2(1, N=1044) = .51, p = .57$.

The next table presents the data for commended performance in Reading TAKS. In order to achieve this status, students must correctly answer 38 out of 40 questions on the 2010 Reading TAKS and 37 out of 40 on the 2011 Reading TAKS, indicating advanced proficiency. Table 4-13 shows the percentage of NAA and IAA students achieving commended performance separately, as well as all AA achieving commended performance as one group.

Table 4-13

African American 4th Grade Commended Performance on Reading TAKS

| | CP | % | NCP | % |
|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 240 | 25% | 720 | 75% |
| IAA | 32 | 38.1% | 52 | 61.9% |
| Total AA | 272 | 26.1% | 772 | 73.9% |

The data in Table 4-13 shows 38.1% of IAA students achieved commended performance and 25% of NAA students, which shows a 13% difference between the two groups, IAA students outperforming NAA students. The Chi-square test was performed and a statistically significant relationship was found between reading performance and country of origin, $X^2(1, N=1044) = 6.86, p < .05$.

African American reading performance by gender. Gender differences during the formative years of education play a huge role in future academic success. Educator perceptions and personal backgrounds influence instructional practices and impact the learning in classrooms. The addition of cultural differences compound educational practices even further as many educators assert their beliefs and forego research-based practices in favor of long-held misnomers about what works with gender and culturally different students. It is important to look at how student perform based on gender as well as within subgroups. The following tables show the performance, meeting standards and commended, of students according to gender.

Table 4-14

Female African American Students Reading Performance on TAKS

| Student Group | # Tested | #MS | %MS | #NMS | %NMS |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| Female NAA | 809 | 679 | 83.9 | 130 | 16.1 |
| Female IAA | 73 | 63 | 86.3% | 10 | 13.7% |
| Total | 882 | 742 | 84.1% | 140 | 15.9% |

Shown in Table 4-14, Female IAA students outperformed female NAA students by 2.4% points on TAKS reading. The Chi-square test conducted did not yield a statistically significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=882) = .28, p=.74$.

Table 4-15

African American Female Commended Performance on Reading TAKS

| Student Group | # Tested | #CP | %CP | #NCP | %NCP |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| Female NAA | 809 | 243 | 30% | 566 | 70% |
| Female IAA | 73 | 28 | 38.4 | 45 | 61.6% |
| Total | 882 | 271 | 30.7% | 611 | 69.3% |

The percentage of IAA students receiving commended performance is greater than the NAA with commended performance by 8.4%. The Chi-square test did not show there was a statistically significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=882) = 2.18, p=.15$.

Table 4-16 presents the data for AA male reading performance on TAKS.

Table 4-16

African American Male Performance on Reading TAKS

| Student Group | # Tested | #MS | %MS | #NMS | %NMS |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| Male NAA | 885 | 713 | 80.6% | 172 | 19.4% |
| Male IAA | 83 | 72 | 86.7% | 11 | 13.3% |
| Total | 968 | 785 | 81.1% | 183 | 18.9% |

Male IAA students outperformed Male NAA students by 6.1% on TAKS reading. The Chi-square test conducted did not yield a statistically significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=968) = 1.89, p=.19$.

Table 4-17 presents the data for male AA students receiving commended performance status on Reading TAKS.

Table 4-17

African American Commended Performance on Reading

| Student Group | # Tested | #CP | %CP | #NCP | %NCP |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| Male NAA | 885 | 235 | 26.6% | 650 | 73.4% |
| Male IAA | 83 | 31 | 37.3% | 52 | 62.7% |
| Total | 968 | 266 | 27.5% | 702 | 72.5% |

The percentage of IAA students receiving Commended Performance is greater than the NAA with Commended Performance by 8.4%. The Chi-square test indicated there was a statistically significant relationship between country of origin and gaining commended performance on reading TAKS, $X^2(1, N=968) = 4.44, p < .05$.

African American reading performance by economic status. Students in the public school setting are labeled Economically Disadvantaged (EcoDis) based on their socio-economic status. By legal definition, a student will be classified as such based on eligibility in the following:

- The program for Aid to Families with Dependent Children under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601).

- Benefits under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2011).
- To be counted for purposes of section 1005 of chapter 1 of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (chapter 1) (20 U.S.C. 2701).
- The free or reduced-price meals program under the National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751).
- Participation in the National School Lunch Act. The act prohibits the identification of students by name. However, State and local projects may use the total number of students participating in a free or reduced-priced meals program to determine eligibility for projects, services, and activities under the Vocational and Applied Technology Education Programs.
- (v) Participation in programs assisted under title II of the JTPA (U.S. Legal, Inc. , 2013).

The following tables will show the performance of AA students who were not identified as EcoDis as well as those that were EcoDis. Table 4-18 shows the reading performance of those who were not EcoDis.

Table 4-18

African American Students Reading Performance, Not Economically Disadvantaged

| Student Group | # Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 291 | 256 | 88% | 35 | 12% |
| IAA | 16 | 16 | 100% | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 307 | 272 | 88.6% | 35 | 11.4% |

Table 4-18 represents 16.6% of the AA students included in this study who were not considered EcoDis. The IAA students performed better with 100% of the non-EcoDis students meeting the standard for passing, while 88% of NAA students met the passing standard. The Chi-square test conducted reveals that there is not a statistically significant relationship. When performing the Chi-square the optimal observed and expected cell count should be more than five, in this instance 25% of the cells had a count less than five which impacts the validity of the Chi-square test. Therefore, a Fisher's Exact Test, used for smaller or imbalanced sample sizes, was also performed and the analysis confirmed there was not a statistically significant relationship between country of origin and the reading performance of AA students, $X^2(1, N=307) = 1.14, p = .29$. The Fisher's Exact Test yielded a p value of .23.

Table 4-19 has similar results when looking at the commended performance of student not identified as economically disadvantaged.

Table 4-19

Commended Performance on Reading TAKS of African American Students, Not Economically Disadvantaged

| Student Group | # Tested | CP | % | NCP | % |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 291 | 110 | 37.8% | 181 | 62.2% |
| IAA | 16 | 7 | 43.8% | 9 | 56.2% |
| Total | 307 | 117 | 38.1% | 190 | 61.9% |

IAA students receive achieve commended performance at a higher percentage than NAA students by 6%. The Chi-square test was conducted and there was not a statistically significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=307) = .29, p = .61$.

Table 4-20 displays the reading performance data of economically disadvantaged AA students. The students shown represent 83.4% of the students included in this study.

Table 4-20

Economically Disadvantaged African American Performance on Reading TAKS

| Student Group | # Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|----------|------|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 1403 | 1137 | 81% | 266 | 19% |
| IAA | 140 | 118 | 84.3% | 22 | 15.7% |
| Total | 1543 | 1255 | 81.3% | 288 | 18.7% |

IAA students identified as EcoDis out-performed NAA EcoDis students by 3.3%. The Chi-square results indicate there is not a statistically significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=1543) = .88, p = .35$.

Table 4-21

Commended Reading Performance of African American Economically Disadvantaged Students

| Student Group | #Tested | CP | % | NCP | % |
|---------------|---------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| NAA | 1403 | 369 | 26.3% | 1034 | 73.7% |
| IAA | 140 | 53 | 37.1% | 88 | 62.9% |
| Total | 1543 | 421 | 27.3% | 1122 | 72.7% |

Table 4-21 shows the commended performance for reading TAKS for economically disadvantaged AA students. IAA EcoDis students achieve commended performance 9.8% higher than NAA students. The Chi-square test was performed and a statistically significant relationship was found, $X^2(1, N=1543) = 7.52, p < .05$.

African American reading performance by LEP status. Currently, quite a bit of discussion surrounds Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students and the support provided is meant to provide instructional strategies that help these students acquire English, academically and socially. Within these conversations, African American students are not typically on the agenda of educators in the public school sector. Most students benefitting from bilingual classes are Hispanic.

Many times, AA students for whom English is their second language are enrolled into general education classrooms staffed with a certified ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher. Oftentimes these students must overcome the challenges of poverty, cultural differences, and language barriers. It is important that we survey how these students fare when held to the same standards as students with English as their first

language. The study gives information for NAA and IAA students who are Non-LEP and students identified as LEP Table 4-22 shows the reading performance data for non-LEP NAA and IAA students.

Table 4-22

Reading Performance of Non-LEP African American Students

| Student Group | # Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|----------|------|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 1631 | 1335 | 81.9 | 296 | 18.1% |
| IAA | 78 | 69 | 88.5% | 9 | 11.5% |
| Total | 1709 | 1404 | 82.2% | 305 | 17.8% |

According to the data in Table 4-22, IAA Non-LEP student performed better than NAA Non-LEP students by 6.6%. A Chi-square test was conducted and no statistically significant relationship was found, $X^2(1, N=1709) = 2.29, p = .14$.

Table 4-23 shows the commended reading performance of this same group.

Table 4-23

Commended Reading Performance of Non-LEP African American Students

| Student Group | #Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|---------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| NAA | 1631 | 456 | 28% | 1175 | 72% |
| IAA | 78 | 35 | 44.9% | 43 | 55.1% |
| Total | 1709 | 491 | 28.7% | 1218 | 71.3% |

The commended performance of IAA Non-LEP students, at 44.9%, is 16.9% higher than the NAA rate of 28%. The Chi-square test showed that the relationship between country of origin of AA students and commended reading performance was statistically significant, $X^2(1, N=1709) = 10.4, p < .05$.

Table 4-24

Reading Performance of LEP African American Students

| Student Group | # Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 64 | 58 | 90.6% | 6 | 9.4% |
| IAA | 79 | 66 | 83.5% | 13 | 16.5% |
| Total | 143 | 124 | 86.7% | 19 | 13.3% |

In Table 4-24, NAA students, with 90.6% meeting the standard for reading, out-perform IAA students by 6.1%. There was not a statistically significant relationship when the Chi-square test was performed, $X^2(1, N=143) = 1.53, p = .22$. Table 4-25 will present the reading commended performance for the same group.

Table 4-25

Commended Reading Performance of LEP African American Students

| Student Group | # Tested | CP | % | NCP | % |
|---------------|----------|----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 64 | 23 | 35.9% | 41 | 64.1% |
| IAA | 79 | 24 | 30.4% | 55 | 69.6% |
| Total | 143 | 47 | 32.9% | 96 | 67.1% |

The data in Table 4-25 shows that NAA students achieved Commended Performance 5.5% points higher than IAA students. When the Chi-square test was conducted, a statistically significant relationship was not present, $X^2(1, N=143) = .50, p = .48$.

Question 2: Math Performance

Research Question two asks if there is a statistical difference in the math performance of African American students based on country of origin. The acronym STEM, which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, has become the new educational trend when discussing critical thinking necessities in curriculum updates and foci for students even at the elementary level.

This study looked specifically at the math performance of students, as there is much concern about the academic performance of African Americans nationally in this area. The results will include an analysis of AA in the categories of grade level, gender, economic status, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) status.

All African American math performance. The data in table 4-26 shows the number of students meeting the standard for passing math on the 2010 and 2011 Spring Administration of TAKS. In order to meet the standard for math, students must correctly answer 27 or more of 40, which is a 68% accuracy rate.

Table 4-26

African American Performance on Math TAKS

| Student Group | #Tested | #MS | % | #NMS | % |
|---------------|---------|------|-------|------|-------|
| NAA | 1695 | 1348 | 79.5% | 347 | 20.5% |
| IAA | 157 | 121 | 77.1% | 36 | 22.9% |
| All AA | 1852 | 1469 | 79.3% | 383 | 20.7% |

Table 4-26 shows that NAA students met the standard at 2.4 % points higher than IAA students. A Chi-square test was conducted and a statistically significant relationship was not present, $X^2(1, N=1852) = .53, p = .47$

Table 4-27 provides data for the commended math performance for AA students. In order to receive commended performance in Math, 3rd grade students needed to correctly answer 37 out of 40 questions correctly and 4th grade students need to answer 39 out of 42 questions correctly.

Table 4-27

African American Commended Math Performance

| Student Group | # Tested | #CP | % | #NCP | % |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| NAA | 1695 | 356 | 21% | 1339 | 79% |
| IAA | 157 | 39 | 24.8% | 118 | 75.2% |
| All AA | 1852 | 395 | 21.% | 1457 | 78.7% |

The percentage of students reaching commended performance is greater for IAA students by 3.8% points than NAA students. A statistically significant relationship was not present after the Chi-square test was performed, $X^2(1, N=1852) = 1.26, p = .26$.

African American math performance by grade level. The next set of table will show the math performance of African American student by grade levels. NAEP looks at the progress of 4th grade students in core subjects such as reading and math and compares the results nationally. Texas AA students currently rank 4th nationally among their same race peers; however, the score is at the basic proficiency level. An important aspect of this study is to analyze the data by grade level and uncover any relationship between country of origin and performance. Third grade is the first year students in Texas are tested on Math. Table 4.28 shows 3rd grade math performance on TAKS.

Table 4-28

African American 3rd Grade Math Performance on TAKS

| | #Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|--------|---------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 735 | 595 | 81% | 140 | 19% |
| IAA | 73 | 57 | 78.1% | 16 | 21.9% |
| All AA | 808 | 652 | 80.7% | 156 | 19.3% |

Table 4-28 shows that NAA students performed better on the Math TAK than IAA students with a difference of nearly 3% points. The Chi-square test indicated there was not a statistical relationship, $X^2(1, N=808) = .35, p = .55$.

Table 4-29 presents the results for 3rd grade commended performance on TAKS. In order to receive commended performance, 3rd grade students had to correctly answer 37 out of 40 questions, which is a 93% accuracy rate.

Table 4-29

African American 3rd Grade Commended Math Performance

| | #Tested | CP | % | NCP | % |
|-------|---------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 735 | 153 | 20.8% | 582 | 79.2% |
| IAA | 73 | 16 | 21.9% | 57 | 78.1% |
| Total | 808 | 169 | 20.9% | 639 | 79.1% |

According to the data in Table 4-29, NAA students did slightly better with 79.2% meeting standard opposed to IAA students with 78.1% meeting the standard. A Chi-square test indicated there was not a significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=808) = .05, p = .83$.

Table 4-30 shows the math performance for AA 4th graders. In order for 4th grade students to meet the standard for math they must correctly answer 28 out of 42 questions, or 67% or better.

Table 4-30

4th Grade African American Math Performance on TAKS

| Student Group | #Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|---------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 960 | 753 | 78.4% | 207 | 21.6% |
| IAA | 84 | 64 | 76.2% | 20 | 23.8% |
| Total AA | 1044 | 817 | 78.3% | 227 | 21.7% |

Table 4-30 shows that 4th grade NAA students, at 78.4%, performed better on math than IAA, with 76.2% meeting the standard. There was not a statistically significant relationship present after the Chi-square test was conducted, $X^2(1, N=1044) = .23, p = .63$.

Table 4-31 shows the 4th grade commended performance for math. In order to achieve commended performance, which are 93% correct responses indicated advanced proficiency on the test.

Table 4-31

African American 4th Grade Commended Performance on Math TAKS

| Student Group | # Tested | CP | % | NCP | % |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 960 | 203 | 21.1% | 757 | 78.9% |
| IAA | 84 | 23 | 27.4% | 61 | 72.6% |
| Total AA | 1044 | 226 | 21.6% | 818 | 78.4% |

While NAA students performed slightly better on Math TAKS, the Commended Performance results show IAA achieving this status at a greater rate than NAA by a difference of 6.3% points. When performing a Chi-square test, there was not a statistically significant relationship present, $X^2(1, N=1044) = .23, p = .63$.

African American math performance by gender. The following tables present the data for math performance of African American students on TAKS according to gender. A long-standing belief in education circles is that boys perform better in math than girls. Stereotypes such as this, coupled with those held about African American learners, impact the educational environment for these students. Therefore, it is important to analyze the data according the gender to uncover any significance to achievement based on country of origin. The first set of tables will compare female AA and then male AA. Table 4-32 shows the data for female AA students.

Table 4-32

Female African American Students Math Performance

| Student Group | # Tested | #MS | %MS | #NMS | %NMS |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| Female NAA | 809 | 643 | 79.5% | 166 | 20.5% |
| Female IAA | 73 | 59 | 80.8% | 14 | 19.2% |
| Total AA | 882 | 702 | 79.6% | 180 | 20.4% |

The data in Table 4-32 indicates that female IAA students perform slightly better on the Math TAKS with 80.8% of those students meeting the standard expectation and

79.5% of NAA meeting the standard. There is not a statistically significant relationship present according to the Chi-square test, $X^2(1, N=882) = .07, p = .79$.

Table 4-33 shows the commended performance on Math TAKS. Students must achieve correctly answer 39 out of 42 questions, a 93% accuracy rate.

Table 4-33

African American Female Commended Performance on Math TAKS

| Student Group | # Tested | #CP | %CP | #NCP | %NCP |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| Female NAA | 809 | 154 | 19% | 655 | 81% |
| Female IAA | 73 | 16 | 21.9% | 57 | 78.1% |
| Total | 882 | 170 | 19.3% | 712 | 80.7% |

Table 4-33 shows that Female IAA students achieved commended performance status at a slightly higher percentage at 21.9% opposed to the Female NAA of 19%.

When the Chi-square test was performed, it indicated no statistically significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=882) = .36, p = .55$.

Table 4-34 presents the data for the math performance of AA male students.

Table 4-34

African American Male Math Performance on TAKS

| Student Group | # Tested | #MS | %MS | #NMS | %NMS |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| Male NAA | 885 | 704 | 79.5% | 181 | 20.5% |
| Male IAA | 83 | 62 | 74.7% | 21 | 25.3% |
| Total | 968 | 766 | 79.1% | 202 | 20.9% |

According to the data in Table 4-34, Male NAA students outperformed Male IAA students by 4.8.points on TAKS Math. The Chi-square test conducted did not yield a statistically significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=968) = 1.08, p=.30$.

Table 4-35 presents the data for male AA students receiving commended performance status on Math TAKS.

Table 4-35

African American Male Commended Performance on TAKS

| Group | # Tested | #CP | %CP | #NCP | %NCP |
|----------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| Male NAA | 885 | 202 | 22.8% | 683 | 77.2% |
| Male IAA | 83 | 23 | 27.7% | 60 | 72.3% |
| Total | 968 | 225 | 23.2% | 743 | 76.8% |

The data in Table 4-35 shows that Male IAA students achieved commended performance at higher percentage, at 27.7%, more than Male NAA students, at 22.8%.

However, there was not a statistically significant relationship present after performing the Chi-squared test, $X^2(1, N=968) = 1.01, p=.31$.

African American math performance by economic status. The following tables will show the math performance of AA students who were not identified as EcoDis as well as those that were EcoDis. Table 4-36 shows the math performance of those who were not EcoDis.

Table 4-36

African American Students Math Performance, Not Economically Disadvantaged

| Student Group | # Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 291 | 253 | 86.9% | 38 | 13.1% |
| IAA | 16 | 16 | 100% | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 307 | 269 | 87.6% | 38 | 12.4% |

Table 4-36 represents the 16.6% of the all the AA students included in this study, who were not considered EcoDis. The IAA students performed better with 100% of the non-EcoDis students meeting the standard for passing, while 87.6% of NAA students met the passing standard. The Chi-square test conducted reveals that there is not a statistically significant relationship. When performing the Chi-square the optimal observed and expected cell count should be more than five, in this instance 25% of the cells had a count less than five which impacts the validity of the Chi-square test. Therefore, a Fisher's Exact Test, used for smaller or imbalanced sample sizes was also performed and the analysis confirmed there was not a statistically significant relationship

between country of origin and the reading performance of AA students, $X^2(1, N=307) = 2.38, p = .12$. The Fisher's Exact Test yielded a p value of .24.

Table 4-37 shows the math commended performance result of student not identified as economically disadvantaged.

Table 4-37

Commended Performance of African American Students, Not Economically Disadvantaged

| Student Group | # Tested | CP | % | NCP | % |
|---------------|----------|----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 291 | 82 | 28.2% | 209 | 71.8% |
| IAA | 16 | 4 | 25% | 12 | 75% |
| Total | 307 | 86 | 28% | 221 | 72% |

While Table 4-37 showed IAA Non-EcoDis students performed better on the Math TAKS than NAA Non-EcoDis students, the same was not true when comparing the math Commended Performance of AA Non-Eco-Dis students. According to the information in table, NAA students achieved commended performance at a higher percentage than NAA students by 3.2 points. The Chi-square test was conducted and there was not a statistically significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=307) = .29, p = .61$. The Fisher's Exact Test was also conducted as one of the observed cells, and an expected minimum counts were both less than five. The results of the Fisher Test yielded a p-value of 1.00, which confirms there was not a statistically significant relationship present.

Table 4-38 displays the math performance data of economically disadvantaged AA students. The students shown represent 83.4% of the students included in this study.

Table 4-38

Economically Disadvantaged African American Math TAKS Performance

| Student Group | # Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|----------|------|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 1403 | 1095 | 78% | 308 | 22% |
| IAA | 140 | 105 | 75% | 35 | 25% |
| Total | 1543 | 1200 | 77.8% | 343 | 22.2% |

The data included in Table 4-38 indicates NAA Eco-Dis students performed better on the Math TAKS than did IAA EcoDis students. NAA student were 78% successful at meeting minimum or better standards, while IAA students were 75% successful at meeting the standard. The Chi-square test indicated there was not a statistically significant relationship present, $X^2(1, N=1543) = .68, p = .41$.

Table 4-39 presents the commended math performance data for economically disadvantaged AA students.

Table 4-39

Economically Disadvantaged African American Students Commended Math Performance

| Student Group | #Tested | CP | % | NCP | % |
|---------------|---------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| NAA | 1403 | 274 | 19.5% | 1129 | 80.5% |
| IAA | 140 | 35 | 25% | 105 | 75% |
| Total | 1543 | 309 | 20% | 1234 | 80% |

Again, as seen with Non-EcoDis NAA students, EcoDis NAA students perform better than IAA students on Math TAKS, yet the EcoDis IAA students, with 25%, achieve commended status at a higher percentage than EcoDis NAA, with 19.5%. The Chi-square test was conducted and a statistically significant relationship was not present, $X^2(1, N=1543) = 2.38, p = .12$.

African American math performance by LEP status. The following tables will present information for African American students who are of Native or Immigrant status who are not LEP as well as though who are given this status. In public schools, this determination is made when students are enrolled and parents complete the Home Language Survey and indicate that English is not the student home language. They will then indicate what that language is, and if there are 20 or more students on a campus in the same grade that speak that language, the law requires the student be entered into a bilingual classroom where then can transition into English Proficiency with the support of a teacher who speaks their native tongue. The African American students who are identified as LEP (in Texas) speak many different dialects and do not have the opportunity to be a part of a bilingual program. However, they will be able to participate

in the ESL program with a certified teacher. Table 4-40 presents data for AA students not identified as LEP

Table 4-40

Math Performance of Non-LEP African American Students

| Student Group | # Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|----------|------|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 1631 | 1295 | 79.4% | 336 | 20.6% |
| IAA | 78 | 68 | 87.2% | 10 | 12.8% |
| Total | 1709 | 1363 | 79.8% | 346 | 20.2% |

According to the data in Table 4-40, Non-LEP IAA students, with 87.2% meeting the math standard, performed better than Non-LEP students with 79.4%, a difference of 7.8 points. A Chi-square test was conducted and no statistically significant relationship was found, $X^2(1, N=1709) = 2.79, p = .11$. Table 4-41 will show the commended reading performance of this same group.

Table 4-41

Commended Performance of Non-LEP African American Students

| Student Group | #Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|---------|-----|-------|------|-------|
| NAA | 1631 | 337 | 20.7% | 1294 | 79.3% |
| IAA | 78 | 23 | 29.5% | 55 | 70.5% |
| Total | 1709 | 360 | 21.1% | 1249 | 78.9% |

The commended performance of IAA Non-LEP students, at 29.5%, is 8.8 points higher than the NAA rate of 20.7%. The Chi-square test showed there was not a statistically significant, relationship present, $X^2(1, N=1709) = 3.49, p = .06$.

The data in the next tables present data for AA students identified as LEP. In order to be classified in this category students may be monitored ESL student, first year, or second year ESL students, or have been an ESL student at some time in their educational career.

Table 4-42

Math Performance of LEP African American Students

| Student Group | # Tested | MS | % | NMS | % |
|---------------|----------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 64 | 53 | 82.8% | 11 | 17.2% |
| IAA | 79 | 53 | 67.1% | 26 | 32.9% |
| Total | 143 | 106 | 74.1% | 37 | 25.9% |

In Table 4-42, LEP NAA students, with 82.8% meeting the standard for math, outperform IAA students by 15.7 points. The Chi-square tests showed that there was a statistically significant relationship, $X^2(1, N=143) = 4.55, p < .05$. Table 4-43 will present the reading commended performance for the same group.

Table 4-43

Commended Reading Performance of LEP African American Students

| Student Group | # Tested | CP | % | NCP | % |
|---------------|----------|----|-------|-----|-------|
| NAA | 64 | 19 | 29.7% | 45 | 70.3% |
| IAA | 79 | 16 | 20.3% | 63 | 79.7% |
| Total | 143 | 35 | 24.5% | 108 | 75.5% |

The data in Table 4-43 shows that LEP NAA students achieved commended performance at 9.4% points higher than LEP IAA students. When the Chi-square test was conducted, a statistically significant relationship was not present, $X^2(1, N=143) = 1.72, p = .19$.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Overview of Study

This chapter includes a summary of the results presented in Chapter Four. There will be specific discussion and commentary that hopefully encourages further dialogue among those concerned with educational reform. The results of the study may assist leaders in finding successful solutions to truly closing the achievement gap and inspiring additional research on the topic of African American Achievement. This study examined the academic performance of African American Students as measured by the state accountability test, TAKS to determine if there was a correlation between the performance of African American students on this assessment and their country of origin as reported by PEIMS. When looking at data nationally and in the state of Texas, all African American students regardless of birthplace are grouped together when reporting their performance on state and national assessments.

Specifically, this study also sought to look at this particular student group separately based on their country of origin. The students were identified as belonging to one of two groups: Native African American (born in the United States) and Immigrant African American (born outside the United States). The study looked at these two groups in a miscellany of configurations: by grade level, gender, SES status, and LEP status. The hypothesis was that African American students born outside of the United States perform better than native African American students on local assessments, hence elevating the overall scores of African American Students as reported on TAKS. This being the case, when it is reported that the achievement gap is closing it may due more to the mixing of

both groups of African American students and not necessarily the attention to an actual solution to long-standing disparities between Blacks and Whites in the United States.

Discussion of Results

The first research question was, “Is there a statistical difference in the reading performance of African American students based on their country of origin?”

Finding 1: IAA students performed better in almost every category of Reading TAKS; comparing All African American Students, by grade level, by gender, by economically disadvantaged status, and Non-LEP status. A statistically significant relationship did not exist in most cases; however, IAA students consistently demonstrated a better passing rate in reading.

The only area where Native American students outperformed Immigrant African American students in reading was when the group was categorized using LEP Status. This indicates that students with English as their second language, but born in the United States, may be of 2nd generation, born to parents who recently immigrated. The sample of LEP African American students contained 143 students, of those, 64 were categorized as NAA. The highest passing percentage of any group, in reading or math, was the sample of LEP African American students at 90.6% of those students passing reading TAKS. When looking at the Commended Performance for reading TAKS, IAA economically disadvantaged students outperformed NAA students by 9.8% points.

There was a statistically significant relationship in this case between achieving Commended Performance and country of origin being outside of the US. This further supports my hypothesis that the culture of those outside of the US even when supplanted

provides a cultural environment that overcomes hardships and promotes academic success.

Finding 2: While in most cases the results where IAA students outperformed NAA students in almost all areas of TAKS Reading except where NAA were identified as LEP, there was not a statistically significant relationship present. There were several areas in which the results did indicate a statistically significant relationship between country of origin and performance on reading. Based on the results yielded from the Chi-square test, there was a statistically significant relationship present between immigrant African students achieving Commended Performance in reading, in head to head comparison, by grade level (4), Non-LEP, and EcoDis. This finding suggests that the country of origin impacts the student's ability to excel. Because Commended Performance requires a much higher percentage of correct responses, the immigrant students inclusion in the African American Subgroup seems to bolster the overall scores and supports my hypothesis that this group of student performs better, thereby assisting in closing of the achievement gap.

The second research question was, "Is there a statistical difference in the reading performance of African American students based on their country of origin?"

Finding 1: NAA outperformed immigrant AA students on Math TAKS in almost all areas except for Commended Performance status. The data collected does not indicate a statistical difference in math performance on TAKS in most areas. The only exception was with regard to NAA students identified as LEP. The results in that category were statistically significant, indicating a relationship between country of origin and math performance on TAKS. The commended performance of IAA was also greater than that

of NAA; however, it was not statistically significant. However, the fact that U.S. born students are identified as LEP suggests that they were born to immigrant parents whose children are culturally more similar to IAA than NAA.

Finding 2: While NAA students performed better on Math TAKS, IAA student achieved commended performance at a greater percentage than NAA in general, by grade levels (3rd and 4th grade), and in the Non-LEP category. Achieving commended performance at a higher rate, although the general performance was not better, suggests that IAA students excel and reach advanced performance at a greater rate than NAA students.

Implications for School Leaders

Many efforts to increase academic achievement among the African American student have focused on the building of self-esteem first. Intellectual expectations pushed to the side to encourage ethnic pride through more cultural acceptance and activities, which may recognize acceptance of differences. However, increasing self-esteem has had literally no impact on increasing self-efficacy, which may be more important in the acquisition success and utilization of academic opportunity. Studies of race differences in personal efficacy find that Blacks tend to score lower than Whites (Coleman et al. 1966; Gordon 1969; Hunt and Hunt 1977; Hughes & Demo, 1989). Social learning theorists define self-efficacy as a sense of confidence regarding the performance of specific tasks (Jinks & Morgan, 1999, p. 224). Educators can be more successful working with AA students if they believe that all students can achieve intellectual milestones and forego old precepts that building self-esteem will suffice when faced with providing rigorous instruction.

Transforming schools into places where learning occurs for all student groups implies that leaders of today's schools must focus on more than instructional leadership. Leithwood (1992) suggests that former top-down power to control must give way to "strong cultures of influence" where teachers are helped to find greater meaning in their work, to meet higher-level needs through their work, and to develop enhanced instructional capacities. Principals and central office personnel working with native ethnic sub-groups will need to first look at their own practices and discern if they indeed have focused on the vision and mission statement prevalent in schools across the nation.

As we continue to look at the data from this study and others that will follow, it is important that we expand our research efforts to analyze the cultural differences that exist between immigrants and native Americans, specifically those residing in low poverty communities. While those of immigrant status seem to overcome the challenges of low income, native Americans seem to experience more difficulty achieving academic success when met with the same obstacles. Central office personnel, school leaders, teachers, and parents can make more informed decisions about students if they consider that the current structure of accountability obstructs the success of ethnic groups who encounter the challenges of high poverty, language barriers, and cultural differences.

As we continue to make reforms to the educational system, principal preparation programs must be inclusive of culturally responsive instructional practices and promotion of self-efficacy strategies. More developments should include programs which focus on principal sustainability as not only teacher burnout is a concern but also principal burnout as well. Continuing education for school leaders should be linked to universities so that current research is filtered to practicing campus leaders.

Implications for Further Research

The diverse cultures that make up the United States present a particular challenge to educators, school leaders, and policymakers as they seek the best ways to ensure all students are successful academically and socially. Very early in this study there were questions and ideas that could stimulate further research.

One area for further research is a restructuring to the sample population. The population could be expanded to include the secondary student population. At the middle school level 8th grade data is tracked by NAEP as well as 11th grade data at the high school level.

This study looked at data from an urban ISD. Further studies could focus on suburban schools that do not have the challenges of poverty, high crime, and lower expectations. This study looked strictly at African American Students as either born in the United States or born outside of the United States. Students born of immigrant parents typically set up their homes and view educational opportunities differently than African Americans with a longer lineage of Americanism, especially with regard to the history of slavery, subsequent discrimination, and the inferiority complex that accompanies this particular group of African Americans. A student of immigrant African parents recently responded to me “Nigerian parents are different from Black parents!” She was commenting about disciplinary consequences and expectations for grades. Her mother frequently threatens to send her back to Nigeria so she can be more respectful of education. This commentary lends itself to support another area for further research, the addition of a survey.

In order to research the phenomenon of student achievement, it is crucial that the analysis of the quantitative data take place: however, there are some factors that are deep-rooted and cannot be uncovered just looking at the numbers. Creswell (2013) indicates that inquiry on the qualitative level is a way to give credence to the social and human aspects of problems “without apology or comparisons to quantitative work” (Creswell, 2013, p. 6). While completing this study, I did have the opportunity to speak with many students, parents, and educators with different experiences in education, and I could only imagine how another layer which captured the human side of this issue would have added to the message and urgency of this dilemma.

Another possibility for research would be to compare all immigrant and 2nd generation groups with native-born Americans to compare each groups academic success. The Hispanic sub-group is the largest growing ethnic group; however, there are groups of Asian students entering our schools as well. All groups experience hurdles that include language, poverty, and cultural differences as they access the school system that are similar to the African American’s educational history.

One last area of research would be to compare African American immigrants to those who are also immigrants but receive schooling in other countries where they are the minority. The structure of the systems in America are different for many reasons, and the Black American is an involuntary immigrant who struggled to have equal opportunity to learn. It is possible that there is a correlation to the system and further research may uncover a variable that will assist reformers when redesigning the systems and policies for educating for all.

Conclusion

I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids-and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me. Like the bodiless heads you see sometimes in circus sideshows, it is as though I have been surrounded by mirrors of hard, distorting glass. When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or fragments of their imagination indeed, everything and anything accept me.

— (Ellison, 1952, p. 3)

For too long the achievement gap reported depicts African American people as inferior, and the impact is damaging to a group who many times already sees themselves as less than. Black people, African American, immigrant or native, are more than what history has done to them, what it says about them, what surrounds them; we are more than a one-day assessment. As America continues to report the “lessness” of one entire group of people based on an assessment, they will continue to fulfill this prophecy. As other researchers begin to peel through why African American students are underperforming other groups according to the data that is reported, it will be important to quantify the impact of the systematic demise of the self-efficacy that has occurred when nationally we report that the group is behind.

Adding value to our students academically is paramount to their future success; however, the current accountability compares students with language differences, substandard living arrangements, lower SES, and inadequate family structures to students with the opposite and expects the growth to be identical. When it is not, only the assessment information is given with no reference to the growth of the students. In a

recent study, Kirabo Jackson (2013) suggests that the results of tests created for accountability do not demonstrate that instructional practices utilized by teachers and schools with the best results impact the cognitive and non-cognitive behaviors that are tied to future success.

As the previous research has shown, it is very difficult to rebound from challenging circumstances especially if there is a system, which reports your intellectual inferiority. In changing current systems, it is my hope that systems are inclusive of the potential to learn so that students can focus on that more than how they measure up when the yardstick is not aligned to the unit.

Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental...The freedom to learn...has been bought by bitter sacrifice. And whatever we may think of the curtailment of other civil rights we should fight to the last ditch to keep open the right to learn...We must insist upon this to give our children the fairness of a start which will equip them ...to judge what the world is and what its greater minds have thought it might be.

-W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Freedom to Learn", ([1949] 1970b)

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APPENDIX A
Human Subjects Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
DIVISION OF RESEARCH

November 15, 2012

Lorena Augustus
c/o Ms. Rayyan Amine
Educational Leadership & Cultural Studies

Dear Lorena Augustus,

Based upon your request for exempt status, an administrative review of your research proposal entitled "A COMPARISON OF THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF NATIVE AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS AND IMMIGRANT AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN MATH AND READING: IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS" was conducted on October 11, 2012.

At that time, your request for exemption under **Category 4** was approved pending modification of your proposed procedures/documents.

The changes you have made adequately respond to the identified contingencies. As long as you continue using procedures described in this project, you do not have to reapply for review. * Any modification of this approved protocol will require review and further approval. Please contact me to ascertain the appropriate mechanism.

If you have any questions, please contact Alicia Vargas at (713) 743-9215.

Sincerely yours,



Kirstin Rochford, MPH, CIP, CPIA
Director, Research Compliance

*Approvals for exempt protocols will be valid for 5 years beyond the approval date. Approval for this project will expire **October 1, 2017**. If the project is completed prior to this date, a final report should be filed to close the protocol. If the project will continue after this date, you will need to reapply for approval if you wish to avoid an interruption of your data collection.

Protocol Number: 13063-EX

APPENDIX B

TAKS Accountability Category Requirements

Table 8: Requirements for Each Rating Category

| | Academically Acceptable | Recognized | Exemplary |
|--|--|---|---|
| Base Indicators | | | |
| TAKS (2010-11) (including TAKS (Acc), -Alt, and -M) All Students <i>and each student group meeting minimum size:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> African American Hispanic White Econ. Disadvantaged | Meets each standard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading/ELA..... 70% Writing..... 70% Social Studies 70% Mathematics..... 65% Science..... 60% OR Meets Required Improvement | Meets 80% standard for each subject OR Meets 75% floor and Required Improvement | Meets 90% standard for each subject |
| ELL Progress Indicator (2010-11) TELPAS or TAKS All ELL Students ≥ 30 | N/A | 60% at or above criteria OR Meets Required Improvement | 60% at or above criteria OR Meets Required Improvement |
| Commended Performance (2010-11) (including all TAKS) <i>if meets minimum size:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Students and Econ. Disadvantaged | N/A | Meets 15% standard for Reading/ELA and Mathematics | Meets 25% standard for Reading/ELA and Mathematics |
| Completion Rate I (Class of 2010) <i>if meets minimum size:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Students African American Hispanic White Econ. Disadvantaged | Meets 75.0% standard OR Meets Required Improvement | Meets 85.0% standard OR Meets floor of 75.0% and Required Improvement | Meets 95.0% standard |
| Annual Dropout Rate (2009-10) <i>if meets minimum size:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Students African American Hispanic White Econ. Disadvantaged | Meets 1.6% standard OR Meets Required Improvement | Meets 1.6% standard OR Meets Required Improvement | Meets 1.6% standard OR Meets Required Improvement |
| Additional Provisions | | | |
| Exception(s) <i>(See Chapter 3 for more details.)</i> | May be applied to TAKS indicators if district or campus would be <i>Academically Unacceptable</i> due to not meeting <i>Academically Acceptable</i> criteria. | May be applied to TAKS or ELL indicators if district or campus would be <i>Academically Acceptable</i> due to not meeting <i>Recognized</i> criteria. | No more than one may be applied to TAKS or ELL indicators if district/campus would be <i>Recognized</i> due to not meeting <i>Exemplary</i> criteria. |
| Check for Academically Unacceptable Campuses (District only) | N/A | A district with a campus rated <i>Academically Unacceptable</i> cannot be rated <i>Recognized</i> . | A district with a campus rated <i>Academically Unacceptable</i> cannot be rated <i>Exemplary</i> . |
| Check for Underreported Students (District only) | N/A | A district that underreports more than 150 students or more than 3.0% of its prior year students cannot be rated <i>Recognized</i> . | A district that underreports more than 150 students or more than 3.0% of its prior year students cannot be rated <i>Exemplary</i> . |
| Federal Race/Ethnicity Provision <i>(See Appendix J)</i> | If recalculated African American and White student group performance results in a higher rating for a campus or district, the higher rating will be assigned. | | |

APPENDIX C
Birthplace of African American Students

Table A-0-1 Birthplace of African American Students

| Birthplace | Number of Students |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Africa | 8 |
| Belarus | 1 |
| Burundi | 2 |
| Cameroon | 8 |
| Canada | 1 |
| Congo | 1 |
| Equatorial Guinea | 1 |
| Eritrea | 2 |
| Ethiopia | 3 |
| Gabon | 1 |
| Gambia | 1 |
| Germany | 2 |
| Ghana | 3 |
| Guang Dong | 1 |
| India | 1 |
| Ireland | 1 |
| Italy | 2 |
| Ivory Coast | 4 |
| Jamaica | 7 |

| | |
|---------------------------|------|
| Kenya | 5 |
| Liberia | 2 |
| Nigeria | 78 |
| Republic of Congo, Africa | 2 |
| Republic of Gabon | 1 |
| Republic of Cameroon | 1 |
| Republic of Rwanda | 1 |
| Senegal | 1 |
| Sierra Leone | 3 |
| Somalia | 2 |
| South Africa | 2 |
| Sudan | 2 |
| Syria | 1 |
| Taiwan | 1 |
| Tanzania | 3 |
| Trinidad Tobago | 1 |
| United States | 1699 |
| West Indies | 1 |
| Total | 1856 |
