August 1999

Perceptions of Factors Associated With Academic Success Among African American Students on Four Predominantly White Campuses in Northeast Tennessee

Jean M. Harper
East Tennessee State University

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PERCEPTIONS OF FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ACADEMIC SUCCESS
AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS ON FOUR
PREDOMINANTLY WHITE CAMPUSSES
IN NORTHEAST TENNESSEE

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
East Tennessee State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Jean Morgan Harper
August 1999
APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Graduate Committee of

JEAN MORGAN HARPER

met on the

5th day of May, 1999

The committee read and examined her dissertation, supervised her
defense of it in an oral examination, and decided to recommend that her study
be submitted to the Graduate Council, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership.

Signed on behalf of
the Graduate Council

[Signatures]

Signed on behalf of
Dean, School of Graduate Studies

[Signature]
ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS OF FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ACADEMIC SUCCESS AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS ON FOUR PREDOMINANTLY WHITE CAMPUSES IN NORTHEAST TENNESSEE

by

Jean Morgan Harper

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between the perceptions of successful African American sophomore students and their adjustment to academic success at predominantly White colleges and universities.

Twenty African American sophomore females and twenty African American sophomore males from two predominantly White community colleges and two predominantly White universities participated in the study. Each subject completed a demographic survey and participated in an interview.

Results indicated that both the attitudes of African American students toward education and their perceptions of the attitudes of those in the educational system towards African American students played an integral role in the academic success of these students.

Conclusions of the study emphasized the need for predominantly White institutions of higher learning to provide support systems that will increase academic success. Nine recommendations were developed for institutions to implement for success for African American students.

The review of literature and data presented in this study implies that African American students on predominantly White campuses experience academic success when in a supportive and inclusive environment.

Chair: Dr. Terrence Tollefson, Ph.D.
DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my mother, Margaret Katherine Bigby Jackson, my first and best teacher. You have taught, and are still teaching me, the true value of supportive relationships.

To my daughters, Erika Nicole Lopez and Kristi Denise Harper, whose love and understanding helped sustain me during the difficult times.

Finally, to those original African American college students, without whose experiences on predominantly White campuses, none of this would have been possible.

To friends and supporters, Dr. N. Doris Haywood, Dr. Doris Scott Crawford, Dr. J. Harvey Gillespie, Ms. Marva N. Martin, and Ms. Aubrey Della Shoemaker.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of any research project depends upon the cooperation of many people. The present study is no exception.

To Dr. Terrence Tollefson, this writer wishes to express a very special debt of gratitude. Thanks for his role as mentor, counselor, and advisor, and for his encouragement and unlimited help from the very beginning.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROVAL</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposes of the Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Institutions Selected</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions of Terms</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of the Study</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Overview of African Americans in Higher Education</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal and Social Integration</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration and the Courts</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trends of African Americans in Postsecondary Education</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of African American Students on Predominantly White Campuses</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education and African American Males</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education and African American Females</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence of African American Students</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel of Experts</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot Study</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Level</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College GPA Level</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Area</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Level Of Mother</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Level Of Father</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Income</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Accommodation</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason For Selection Of School</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Members At The Institution Care</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About African American Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There Is A Faculty Member Who Has Been Very Helpful to Me</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Feel Comfortable With The Friendships I Have Established At This Institution</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Am Involved In Campus Activities</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Responses</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Findings</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation for Improved Practice</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation for Further Research</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A Letter to Panel of Experts</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B Letter to Student Services Personal</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C Informed Consent</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D Demographic Questionnaire</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX E Interview Questions</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Number Of Bachelor’s Degrees Conferred (in thousands)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Percentage of High School Graduates Enrolled in College, by</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age, race/ethnicity, and type of institution: October 1973-94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Percentage of High School Graduates Enrolled in College, by</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age, race/ethnicity, and type of institution: October 1973-94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Age By Gender</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Grade Point Average By Grades</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. High School Location By Gender</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gender By Mother’s Education</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gender By Father’s Education</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Family Income By Gender</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Encouragement By Gender</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Living Accommodation By Gender</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Institution Selection By Gender</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Employment By Gender</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Question 1 By Gender</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Question 2 By gender</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Question 3 By gender</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Question 4 By gender</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figures</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age By Gender</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Grade Point Average By Gender</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. High School Location By Gender</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gender By Mother’s Education</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gender By Father’s Education</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Family Income By Gender</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Encouragement By Gender</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Living Accommodation By Gender</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Institutional Selection By Gender</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Employment By Gender</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Question 1 By Gender</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Question 2 By Gender</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Question 3 By Gender</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Question 4 By Gender</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

An examination of the research of Peterson, Blackburn, Gamson, Cuce, and Davenport (1979), Hughes (1987), and Trent (1984) has indicated there may be significant differences between the educational persistence rates of African American males and White males on college campuses. Although a significant minority of African American men and women still attend historically Black institutions, the majority of Black students now attend predominantly White institutions. The growth in racial integration experienced in the last four decades has had numerous effects on African American society. Some of the positive effects have included increased educational access, opportunities, and overall quality of education for African Americans; however, even in light of their increased opportunities, not all of the effects have been positive.

Statement of the Problem

Declining Black college enrollment in the 1970s represented a serious challenge to institutions of higher learning. The National Center for Education Statistics (1996) reported that, compared to 1981 levels, the number of
bachelor’s degrees earned in 1993 was up for males and females in all racial/ethnic groups. The rate of increase was greater for females than for males in each group. Although there were numerous studies that clearly showed the differential social utility of education along class and racial lines (Jencks, et al., 1979; Ogbu, 1983), minorities had retained their faith in education as a social, economic, and political equalizer. Part of African American students’ development in predominantly White colleges (PWCs) was the creation of a socially oriented climate that fostered interpersonal relations. PWCs were perceived by African American students as environments that were predominantly intellectually oriented, independence oriented, achievement oriented, and competition oriented. A combination of these orientations produced the best environment for African American students for whom socially oriented climates were crucial for learning and growth.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine factors that were associated with persistence and academic success of African American students in Northeast Tennessee at two predominantly White community colleges—Pellissippi State Technical Community College and Northeast State Technical Community College—and two predominantly White universities—The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and East Tennessee State University. In addition, this study focused on campus environment, particularly as it related to cultural
sensitivity and the developmental needs of African American students. Although a significant minority of African American men and women still attend historically Black institutions, the majority of African American students in the United States now attend institutions in which the student body is predominantly White (Peterson et al., 1979; Thomas & Hill, 1987; Trent, 1984).

**Significance of the Problem**

Almost 30 years after the Civil Rights movement placed top priority for higher education on improving race relations, feelings of student isolation and insensitivity toward African American students continued to plague colleges and universities across the country. In the search to better understand the dynamics of African American students' participation in higher education, scholars and administrators struggled with determining how to promote academic success among African American students on their White campuses. Too often, however, institutions failed to listen closely to the students themselves. Frequently, administrative strategies and programs implemented to deal with these problems went astray, even though they appeared to be logical and sound. These may have failed because administrators developed strategies and programs without input as to how students viewed and perceived any problems. Students' perceptions about the problem of minority participation in higher education can provide insights and suggest new lines of enquiry that can lead to an increase in graduation rates among African American students in PWCs. Despite
generations of experience with a significant presence of African American students in White institutions of higher education, there still existed only a limited and imprecise understanding of the factors that affected the increase and decrease in an institution’s enrollment of African American students.

Limitations

The sample used in this study consisted of African American sophomore students from four predominantly White institutions located in Northeast Tennessee. They included The University of Tennessee, Knoxville; East Tennessee State University; Northeast State Technical Community College; and Pellissippi State Technical Community College. The population was drawn from a list of currently enrolled students supplied by student affairs staff of each institution. Student affairs staff identified sophomore students whom they considered successful. Grade-point-average, involvement in campus activities, and student leadership were considered in determining success. The researcher chose a systematic sample of five males and five females from each institution to participate. A total of 40 students participated in this study. The perceptions of those individuals selected to participate in the study limited the research. Readers should not make generalizations from this study to other colleges and universities within the Tennessee Board of Regents systems or elsewhere due to the differences in location and demographics within Tennessee.
Most of the existing literature failed to provide information based on gender. While this omission may not be intentional, nevertheless there was a void. The results of this study should reduce this gap.

**Overview of Institutions Selected**

The four higher educational institutions that these African American students selected are very different from one another. Each college or university has an institutional climate and student culture that may lead its African American students to view academic success from a unique perspective.

Northeast State Technical Community College provides technical, trade, and liberal arts programs that are directly relevant to the needs of citizens and employees within the region (*Northeast State Catalog, 1997-98*).

Pellissippi State Technical Community College focuses on technical programs in business and engineering technologies. Pellissippi State Technical Community College has become the second largest technical community college in Tennessee. It serves Tennessee's third largest metropolitan community, Knoxville (*Pellissippi State Catalog, 1998-99*).

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, located near the center of Knoxville's business district, is a comprehensive, major public university that is rated among the best in the United States (*U.S. News and World Report, 1998*).

East Tennessee State University, located in upper East Tennessee, is a medium-sized yet comprehensive university with a tradition of student success,
involving high-quality learning in a student-centered environment. It is one of 46 institutions in the Tennessee Board of Regents system, the seventh largest system of higher education in the nation (East Tennessee State University News University Relations, 1997).

Definitions of Terms

This study uses several terms to refer to African American students. The study uses the terms "Colored," "Negro," "Black(s)," and "African Americans" interchangeably for the same racial group. The term used follows the terms selected by the authors of the various studies.

**Academic Achievement** - A measure of knowledge gained in formal education, usually indicated by test scores, grade-point-averages, and degrees (Volkart, 1986, p. 201).

**Academic Success** - Persistence without dropping or stopping out. Maintaining academic progress and passing grades.

**Alienation** - The experience of isolation resulting from powerlessness (Macionis, 1997, p. 58).

**Culture** - The belief, values, behavior, and material objects that constitute a people's way of life (Macionis, 1997, p. 238).

**De jure Segregation** - Segregation created by formal legal sanctions that prohibit certain groups from interacting with others or place limits on such interaction (Kornblum, 1997, p. 104).
**Educational Achievement** - How much the student actually learns, as measured by mastery in reading, writing, and mathematics (Davis & Palladino, 1997, p. 156).

**Liberal Arts Education** - In modern education, a broad area of academic subjects unrelated to the sciences or professional or vocational preparation. The liberal arts include literature, mathematics, history, philosophy, language studies, music, and the fine arts (Kindall, 1986; Westbury & Purves, 1988).

**Perception** - The process by which individuals select, organize, store, and interpret sensory stimulation into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world around us (Organ, Bateman, & Irvin, 1991).

**Predominantly Black College (PBC)** - Institutions with a majority of Black students.

**Predominantly White College (PWC)** - Institutions with a majority of White students.

**Prejudice** - A hostile attitude toward an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics.

**Racism** - The belief that race is the primary cause of human characteristics and abilities and that some races are inherently superior to others, intellectually, psychologically, and physically (Baker, 1992).

**Retention** - The enrollment of students who are enrolled for one semester, either part time or full time and who return the next semester or the following

Self-Concept - An individual's perception and evaluation of himself or herself (Beane & Lipkin, 1984; Oakes & Lipton, 1990).


Social Alienation - A sociological term used to describe the estrangement of one or more individuals from the social system. An individual or a group can become separated (alienated) from the social order voluntarily or as the result of renunciation by the social system (Besag, 1966, p. 38).

Social Isolation - The prevention of group contacts and interaction with an individual. A form of social isolation can occur when an individual is no longer accepted by a group or social organization yet is not physically removed from it (Gordon, 1976, p. 141).

Stress - The inability to cope with a perceived (real or imagined) threat to one's mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being which results in a series of physiological responses and adaptations (Seaward, 1994, p. 7).

Supportive College Community - One that offers opportunities for friendship among peers, staff, teachers; provides students with a sense of academic progress and improvement versus failure; and gives the students the opportunity to participate in campus life and feel connected to the college versus excluded from it (Fleming, 1984a, p. 109).
Vocational-Technical Education - Instruction and training in preparation for entry into crafts and trades not requiring a college degree for entry-level positions (Calhoun & Finch, 1982).

Overview of the Study

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 contains an introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the problem, limitations, overview of institutions, definitions of terms, and overview of the study. Chapter 2 contains an introduction, historical overview of African Americans in higher education, the legal and social efforts, integration and the courts, trends of African Americans in postsecondary education, perceptions of African American students on PWCs, higher education and African Americans males, higher education and African American females, persistence of African American students, and conclusion. Chapter 3 includes introduction, population, research design, panel of experts, pilot study, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter 4 provides the presentation, analysis of the data, and summary of findings. Chapter 5 contains the conclusions and recommendations.
Research Questions

1. What academic experiences do African American students on predominantly White campuses describe as being important?

2. How do African American sophomores define academic success and how do they evaluate their own academic success?

3. What factors do African American sophomores believe contribute to their success in college?

4. What support systems or programs do African Americans perceive as being available at their institutions?

5. What do African Americans say causes other African American students to drop out of college?

6. What major obstacles do African American students perceive as barriers to academic success?
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine factors that were associated with persistence and academic success among African American students at four predominantly White colleges and universities in Northeast Tennessee. This study was designed to deepen and further clarify an understanding of factors that contributed to success of African American students by addressing those areas in which research on successful African American students on White campuses has been limited.

Research on African American students in United States higher education has generally explored the quantitative indicators of enrollment and attrition. However, little information has been gathered about the qualitative experiences of these students on the nation's college campuses. Given the potential impact school experiences have on social and economic consequences throughout life, examining how African American students cope with the stresses of these environments merited serious consideration. Higher education settings provided
a useful context to examine the influence of such factors on academic outcomes, both within and beyond the bounds of school.

The view that campus environments influenced the educational experiences of college students was a consistent thread throughout research on African Americans in higher education. Specifically, research showed that environments resulted in differential educational outcomes for African American college students (Allen, Epps, & Haniff, 1991). Of particular importance was the preconception of institutional support and how it related to academic success. Although institutional support has been shown to have significant consequences for educational outcomes, little attention has been paid to the differential experiences between African American students and White students in higher education.

Research on the experience of African American students in higher education has concentrated primarily on two areas: (a) the differential experiences relative to White students, and (b) the differential experience of African American students in predominantly White institutions, as opposed to historically Black ones. Very little work has focused on the variation in the gender experiences of higher education for African American students. The existing research generally has focused on the declining participation and increased attrition rates of African American males in higher education (Greene & Wright, 1992) while paying scant attention to the qualitative aspects of these students' schooling experiences.
Historical Overview of African Americans in Higher Education

Blacks in the United States sought to be college graduates as early as the 1800s (Thompson, 1986). Until the 1964 Civil Rights Act was passed, if an African American wanted a college education in the South, the only choice was to attend a PBC (Elfin & Burke, 1993).

The Civil War was the single most important factor leading to the creation of conditions favorable for the establishment, growth, and development of institutions of higher education for Blacks in southern states. The end of this war marked the close of an era (1619-1863), during which Blacks were held in slavery, an era in which it was considered a criminal offense to instruct the Blacks in any but the most rudimentary of domestic skills (Cozzens, 1995).

After the Civil War, ex-slaves and liberal Whites worked against great odds and developed a system of education for African Americans in the South. Aided by the Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction legislatures in several states, for a brief period of time educational expenditures for White and African American children were nearly equal. The combination of private schools, supported by missionaries and other philanthropic Whites, and public education established in the South between 1867 and 1880 provided unprecedented opportunities for ex-slaves (Fleming, 1984a). According to J. Anderson (1988), the most important aspect of the Freedman's Movement for education was its members' determination:

... to control and sustain schools for themselves and their children. African Americans were not passive recipients of educational
opportunities from generous Whites. Rather, they worked hard, sometimes in spite of physical threats, to develop and maintain schools for their children. The organized efforts and ideological implications of the ex-slaves laid the foundation for universal public education in the South (J. Anderson, 1988, p.5).

However, that foundation eventually became the segregated separate and unequal system that characterized the South until the mid-1960s.

In 1862, the United States Congress passed the Morrill Act, which provided for the establishment of a land-grant institution in each state to educate citizens in the fields of agriculture, home economics, the mechanical arts, and other useful professions. In the South the Negroes were not permitted to attend the institutions first established under the Morrill Act (Campbell, 1995).

Even with enactment of the Morrill Act, the federal government was unable to gain cooperation from the southern states in the provision of land-grant support to the Negro institutions. To overcome this problem, a second Morrill Act was passed in 1890, specifically to establish and support Negro land-grant institutions. Thus, these historical land-grant institutions are referred to today as “1890 Institutions.” Those southern states that did not have Negro institutions by 1890 established one per state later under this act (Campbell, 1995). The second Morrill Act in 1890 established and supported Negro land-grant colleges in the 17 southern and border states. These colleges were also agricultural and industrial in nature, but initially were not degree granting (Bowles & DeCosta, 1971). The period from 1865 to 1890 witnessed the development of the largest number of historically Black private institutions.
Racial tensions throughout the South during the end of the 19th century led to a slow evolution of civil rights. New Orleans, which had made great strides towards total integration of Blacks, resegregated its schools (Fleming, 1984a). In 1890, the Separate Car Act was passed, opening the door to further discrimination. It was during that period that the name of Homer Plessy became forever etched into American history. In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) a Louisiana resident challenged a state law requiring railroad companies to provide separate facilities for Whites and Blacks. The Plessy decision set the precedent that separate but equal facilities for Blacks and Whites were constitutional as long as they were equal. The courts extended the definition of segregation to cover many areas of public life, such as restrooms and public schools (Ware, 1994).

In 1877, as the Reconstruction period ended, Congress enacted a law to limit the education of Blacks to vocational training (Pounds, 1987). Congress also enacted laws through court decisions to make “*separate but equal*” treatment legal.

Abraham Lincoln’s success in the Civil War and the end of slavery sparked a new era for the Black race in America. The “Black Codes” passed following the Civil War gave Blacks equal rights in the United States. Although Blacks were guaranteed their freedom from slavery, the law segregated them from Whites. This segregation of Blacks and Whites sparked many questions about the rights guaranteed in the Fourteenth Amendment. These questions
would later become a significant factor in a lawsuit 28 years after the amendment was adopted, in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (Finkelman, 1993).

In 1890, Louisiana passed a statute providing:

"that all railway companies carrying passengers in their coach in this state shall provide equal but separate accommodations for the White and Colored races, by providing two or more passenger coaches for each passenger train or by dividing the passenger coaches by a partition so as to secure separate accommodation" (Finkelman, 1993, p.38).

The penalty for sitting in the wrong compartment was either a fine of $25.00 or 20 days in jail. Authorities jailed Homer Plessy, a 30-year old shoemaker, for sitting in the "White's" car of the East Louisiana Railroad. Plessy was a mix of seven-eighths White and one-eighth Black. The Louisiana law still considered him Black, and therefore required him to sit in the "Colored's" car. Plessy went to court and argued that the *Separate Car Act* violated the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution. The judge, a Massachusetts lawyer, was John Howard Ferguson. Ferguson had previously declared the Separate Car Act "unconstitutional on trains that traveled through several states" (Finkelman, 1993). Ferguson stated that Louisiana could regulate railroad companies that operated only within the state, resulting in Ferguson finding Plessy guilty of refusing to leave the White's car. Plessy appealed all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States (Finkelman, 1993).

Briefly canvassing this country's history of educational discrimination was important in framing the issue of race-based classification in higher education.
In 1896, the Supreme Court upheld the *separate but equal* theory in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. For the next five decades, Black and White children attended separate schools. In the Plessy case it was clear that Justice John Harlan, the sole dissenter, claimed that the Constitution was "color-blind to matters of race," argued in favor of Plessy (Ramirez, 1995). The decision on the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case sparked many conflicts regarding the actual equality of Blacks compared to Whites in our society, and became a significant historical decision (Finkelman, 1993).

*Plessy v. Ferguson* ushered in an era of increased discrimination toward Blacks. The "separate but equal" decision provided justification for segregation in public facilities across the country including schools (Knappman, 1994), Black education in the South was almost nonexistent before the Civil War and very limited in northern states. About four million slaves were liberated by President Lincoln, almost all of them illiterate. The Fourteenth Amendment (ratified 1868) specified that states should not deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. Nevertheless, they remained second-class citizens. Jim Crow laws of the 1880s were passed to "keep the Colored in their place" and discrimination was universally practiced. Private Black colleges and those created by the Second Morrill Act helped to improve the quality of teachers, but Black schools lacked funds, and the extreme poverty of the people made progress slow (Medley, 1994). This doctrine emphasized industrial education rather than liberal arts education for African Americans and was later called by
some a "campaign to instill a belief in black intellectual inferiority" (Fleming, 1984b, p. 143).

In addition, the states generally gave more money to Black institutions with vocational orientations than to those predominantly Black colleges that offered liberal arts education (Fleming, 1984b). The states' legislatures also chose to give the PBCs less money than they did the PWCs, because the former were viewed as providing lower levels of education. Thus, the PBCs often had facilities inferior to PWCs and were not able to pay teachers as much as their PWC counterparts.

The debate about African Americans' liberal arts education versus vocational training resurfaced between 1900 and 1954. Booker T. Washington, the founder of Tuskegee Institute, was an advocate of segregation for African Americans and for offering African Americans training in vocational education, agriculture, mechanics, commerce, and domestic services (Fleming, 1981a; 1984a). His goal was to increase African Americans' self sufficiency in the rural areas (Ballard, 1973). In his speech Atlanta Compromise at the Atlanta Cotton Exposition in 1898, he stated that separate institutions would "increase peace and harmony in the South" (Fleming, 1981a, p.12). The South, Washington believed, would not tolerate liberally educated Blacks, because they would be perceived as agitators to the system.

In contrast, an 1895 Harvard graduate, W. E. B. DuBois, argued for more intellectual and liberal arts education for African Americans (Ballard, 1973).
DuBois proposed a rigorous curriculum that would include African and African American history, economics, and sociology, and would give students the opportunity to develop a broad and cultivated outlook on the world. He stated that in the theory of the *talented tenth*; if given the proper education, black people with potential would blossom into leaders. Those leaders would then use their intellectual tools to achieve political, economic, and social advancement for all African Americans.

After the death of Booker T. Washington in 1916, many African Americans began to demand liberal arts education for themselves. They began to see that a vocational education was inadequate because of the decreased demand for agriculture and an increase in new jobs in manufacturing, trade, and industry. After 1916, the predominantly Black land-grant colleges had begun to offer liberal arts educations as well (Fleming, 1981a). Despite the very difficult circumstances under which PBCs were forced to operate, they made great strides in their educational programs (Fleming, 1984a). Of the current 117 PBCs, more than half of them were established between 1865 and 1890 (Fleming, 1981c; Pounds, 1987).

By 1928, many of the PBCs were able to eliminate most of their elementary and secondary education departments and were then able to concentrate on college-level curricula. By 1930, Black educators had persuaded the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools to include Black colleges in its accreditation process; but because of segregation, Black colleges
could not achieve full membership. In 1933, Black educators formed the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes. This was done to promote the upgrading and improvement of predominantly Black colleges by establishing criteria for accreditation (Fleming, 1981c).

**Legal and Social Integration**

The stage was set for a good deal of misunderstanding and conflict between the expectations of the Whites who opened up their institutions and the African Americans who came through legal/social integration efforts. Whereas African American students were eager for the benefits of a college education and for their share of campus resources, they wanted them on terms that did not threaten their own psychological and cultural roots. Culturally and socially, most of them indicated they were on alien territory. Past research had characterized the fit between African American students and White colleges as a poor one (Allen, 1987).

J. Anderson, (1984) noted that "both schooling for democratic citizenship and schooling for second-class citizenship have been basic traditions in American education" (p. 128). The provision of education for all as a human right had dominated discussion in the United States since 1945, when it was included in the United Nations Declaration of Universal Rights. Of course, the debate over equality in education began long before 1945. Educators like Horace Mann believed in equal opportunity for all classes of people so that the moral
consciousness of society could be raised (Pulliam & Patten, 1994). According to Powers (1984), the initial seeds of second-class citizenship in our educational system were planted before the turn of the nineteenth century. In 1870, many native White Americans could read and write; however, the majority of the nation’s six million illiterates at that time were either Black or recent immigrants (Powers, 1984). So part of the fault may lie outside the educational system, within the realm of society. African Americans posed an educational dilemma for White Americans almost from the beginning of this nation. The dilemma occurred because Africans enslaved in America before the Civil War greatly valued education and literacy. Opposition of slave masters to the idea of providing literacy instruction in reading and writing to slaves was very strong. In 1850, Frederick Douglass stated that “there is the greatest unanimity of opinion among the White population of the South in favor of the policy of keeping slaves in ignorance” (cited in Weinberg, 1977, p. 1). Teaching slaves to read and write could lead to severe punishment to the slave. This punishment often resulted in the death of a slave, who was caught by the slave master. “But desire for literacy was often stronger than the prohibition and persecutions associated with the slave regime, and as a result, in many different and diverse fashions, enslaved Afro-Americans learned to read and write” (Franklin, 1984, pp. 161-162).

By 1930, 19,000 African Americans were enrolled in predominantly Black colleges (PBC) (Allen, 1987), and the literacy rate for African Americans rose
from 68.2% to 81.0% during this time. Predominantly White colleges awarded doctoral degrees to 119 African Americans by 1939, many of whom received their undergraduate training from PBCs. Among African American scholars, 90% holding higher education degrees had received their initial undergraduate education in predominantly Black colleges in the 1930s.

Many governmental decisions had a collectively profound impact on African Americans' ability to choose between PBC or PWC. For example, Sweatt v. Painter (1950) and McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (1950) made great strides towards abolishing segregation in colleges and universities, but the vast majority of American public, elementary and secondary schools were still segregated, either by law or because of housing patterns. The legalized color line in public schools would not break down until the landmark Supreme Court Case, Brown v. Board of Education (1955), decided in 1954 (Boorstin & Brooks, 1992).

Linda Brown and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) appealed to the Supreme Court on October 1, 1951, and their case was combined with other cases that challenged school segregation in South Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware. The Supreme Court first heard the case on December 9, 1952, but failed to reach a decision. In the re-argument, heard December 7-8, 1953, the Court requested that both sides discuss "the circumstances surrounding the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868" (Ware, 1994). The re-argument shed very little additional
light on the issue. The Court had to make its decision based not on whether the authors of the Fourteenth Amendment had in mind to desegregate schools when they wrote the amendment in 1866, but on whether or not desegregated schools deprived Black children of equal protection under the law when the case was decided in 1954 (Faragher, 1994).

On May 17, 1954, Chief Justice Earl Warren read the decision of the unanimous court:

We come then to the question presented: Does segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race even though the physical facilities and other "tangible" factors may be equal, deprive the children of the minority group of equal educational opportunities? We believe that it does . . . . We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate education facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment (Faragher, 1994, p. 148).

This case stated that separate but equal was unconstitutional because it violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Brown formed the underpinning for the legal abolition of de jure segregation. Federal law enforcement action focused toward improving the quality of higher education for African Americans and toward expanding educational opportunities for African Americans.
Integration and the Courts

Many other judicial decisions have had profound impacts on African Americans' ability to choose between PBCs or PWCs. The Brown v. Board of Education (1954) case was similar to cases in Delaware, Virginia, and South Carolina. In South Carolina, Briggs v Elliott (1952), plaintiffs were Negro children of both elementary and high school age residing in Clarendon County. They brought this action in the United States District Court. The three-judge District Court found that the Negro schools were inferior to the White schools and ordered the defendants to begin immediately to equalize the facilities (Wyatt, 1955).

In Virginia the plaintiffs in Davis, et al., v. County School Board of Prince Edward County Virginia, et al., (1955) were Negro children of high school age residing in Prince Edward County. The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia ruled on action to enjoin enforcement of provisions in the state constitutions and statutory code that required the segregation of Negroes and Whites in public schools. The Court found the Negro schools inferior in physical plant, curricula, and transportation and ordered the defendants to provide substantially equal curricula and transportation and to proceed with all reasonable diligence and dispatch to remove the inequality in the physical plants (Wyatt, 1955).

In Delaware, Gebhart, et al. v. Belton, et al., (1952), the plaintiffs were Negro children of elementary and high school age residing in New Castle.
County. The Delaware Court of Chancery ruled to enjoin enforcement of provision in the state constitution and statutory code which required the segregation of Negroes and Whites in public schools. The chancellor rendered judgement for the plaintiffs and ordered Blacks immediate admission to schools previously attended only by White children, on the grounds that the Negro schools were inferior with respect to teachers' training, pupil-teacher ratio, extracurricular activities, physical plant, and time and distance involved in travel (Wyatt, 1955). These cases stated that separate but equal was unconstitutional because it violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The cases have implications for elementary, secondary, and higher education. The Higher Education Act of 1965 provided for the Basic Educational Opportunities Grant (BEOG) and many other financial aid packages. The Adams v. Richardson (1973) case mandated that states dismantle dual systems of higher education for Blacks and Whites (Fleming, 1981b). The Federal Court decision of 1973 in the case of Adams v. Richardson held that segregation in public education was unconstitutional, which resulted in compelling institutions for higher education to develop numerical goals for levels of Black enrollment in White institutions.

More recently emerging in contemporary literature is a deepening concern about affirmative action in higher education. This theme reports widespread discomfort among students, faculty, administrators, and politicians with current policies that are perceived as proffering preference to members of minority
groups and women in student admission. Four campuses emerged as loci of concern: (a) The University of California at Berkeley, that had witnessed much debate and demonstration about affirmative action (Justus, 1987; Browne-Miller, 1996), (b) The University of Maryland, which witnessed a desegregation case involving a successful challenge to a scholarship program for African American students (The Benjamin Banneker Scholarship Program) (Cooper, 1994), (c) The University of Texas, where a court challenge produced a ruling later upheld by the Supreme Court, that determined that public universities may not justify affirmative action programs based on the benefits of racial diversity (Biskupic, 1996), and (d) the University of Texas Law School which reexamined its admissions policies regarding minority students (Peckham, 1997).

In Podberesky v. Kirwan (1994), Daniel Podberesky sued the University of Maryland at College Park in the U.S. District Court on the grounds that its Benjamin Banneker scholarship, which gave preference to African Americans, discriminated against non-African Americans. The District Court upheld the scholarship program, but Podberesky appealed. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, which included Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina, struck the program down. The university appealed to the Supreme Court, which declined to review the case on the grounds that it would not establish a clear precedent for future cases (Peckham, 1997).

Again in 1994, Hopwood v. Texas, Cheryl Hopwood, along with three other applicants, charged the University of Texas Law School with reverse
discrimination in its admissions policies. The District Court found that the admissions program was unconstitutional. The university appealed, but the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit upheld the district court’s decision. The three-judge panel of the circuit court cited Podberesky as support for its decision. Two of the judges went further, stating the view that Justice Powell’s Bakke opinion was no longer good law, based on recent Supreme Court decisions in other areas of affirmative action, such as redistricting (Peckham, 1997). The University of Michigan recently changed the way it considers race and ethnicity in undergraduate admissions and admissions to the law school. Under the new policy, a prospective student received points for such factors as grades, test scores, residency, race, economic status, and athletic ability. A student could receive a maximum of 110 points for academic factors and 40 points for non-academic factors. The new point system allows students who receive 100 points or more to be admitted, students who received from 90 to 99 points to be put on the wait list, and students who received 89 points or less to be rejected, although the university could also delay consideration of applicants with scores as low as 75 or place them in remedial education (Selingo, 1998). Two law suits, filed late last year, challenged the public university’s use of race in admitting undergraduates and law students. Last October, Jennifer Gratz and Patrick Hamacher sued the university, challenging the use of race in undergraduate admissions to the University of Michigan. In December, Barbara
Grutter, who was denied admission to the law school, filed suit challenging the use of race in admissions in the law school (McQueen, 1999).

The NAACP spearheaded many federal court battles that fought against separate but equal policies (Fleming, 1981b). Several legal decisions ruled that if states did not provide educational facilities for Blacks that were equal to those provided for Whites, African Americans had to be admitted to PWGs. For example, the cases of *Donald Murray v. University of Maryland Law School* (1936), *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938), *Sipuel v. Board of Regents* (1948), and *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) all made it illegal to deny Black Americans the same education that White Americans received. In 1950, an African American student was admitted to graduate school at Oklahoma State University but had to eat and sit apart from his White classmates. The *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Board of Regents* case (1950) that resulted from this incident entitled Blacks to the same treatment as Whites within graduate schools (Fleming, 1981b).

Admitting the problem was only half the battle. The Court could have ordered immediate admission of all Black students to the white schools; however, the Court anticipated hostile reaction and, instead, ordered desegregation “with all deliberate speed” in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1955). The public resisted court-mandated desegregation decisions, consequently, the process of desegregation took decades to achieve.
In the 1970s the issue of busing students to other schools in order to promote diversity garnered much public interest. Young school children were often bused from homes near neighborhood schools to schools several miles away in order to create diverse student bodies. The case Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education (1971) first addressed this issue and approved a reasonable amount of busing when needed to remedy past discrimination, but the court did not go so far as to condone busing for purposes of diversifying the student population. Although busing was a source of irritation and concern for many students and parents, for many larger school districts busing was the only way to effect Brown's goal.

In 1978 the court took its first look at higher education's affirmative action practices in Regents of University of California v. Bakke (1979). The university set aside a specific number of places in its medical school class for disadvantaged minority students. The court upheld the type of admission programs used by most colleges and universities. Allen Bakke applied to the medical school of the University of California at Davis in 1973 and 1974. The university refused admission to Bakke while admitting some students with lower academic qualifications. After mapping out the votes, the court ordered Allen Bakke admitted to the University of California. The court ruled that race could be a factor in a properly devised admissions program, but overruled the University system because of its rigid quota system. Although Bakke was concerned only with admissions, many educational institutions had extended Powell's
reasoning—race could be considered as one factor among many—to apply to financial aid programs (Peckham, 1997).

In **Hopwood v. Texas** (1994), four white plaintiffs sued the University of Texas in 1992 for using a law school admissions program that favored African Americans and Mexican American applicants, which resulted in the admission of many minority students with lower academic qualifications than those of the four plaintiffs. The Texas law school used a dual admissions process that allowed a separate committee to consider only the minority candidates, apart from the general pool of applicants. From that separate pool, the law school would attempt to meet its goal of admitting into its entering class 10% Mexican American students and 5% African American students (Kilpatrick, 1995). On August 19, 1994, the Court entered its memorandum opinion consisting of its findings of fact and conclusions of law.

It is Ordered, Adjudged, and Decreed, by declaratory judgement that 1992 admissions procedure of the law school at the University of Texas at Austin, as administered, was in violation of the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution.

It is Further Ordered, Adjudged, and Decreed that Cheryl J. Hopwood, Douglas W. Carvell, Kenneth R. Elliott, and David A. Rogers shall be entitled to reapply for admission to the law school at the University of Texas for the 1995-96 school year without further administrative expense of fees and that their application shall be reviewed by the admissions committee of the law school at the University of Texas at Austin along with all other applications for that school year (West's Education Law Reporter 1996, p. 968).

Judy Politz of the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit stated that the recent Hopwood decision had “changed the face of public educational
Institutions throughout Texas, the other states of this circuit, and the nation" (Kilpatrick, 1995, p. 27).

The Hopwood decision was issued on March 18, 1996. In Hopwood, a panel of the Fifth Circuit ruled that the defendants had shown no compelling state interest for an affirmative program at the University of Texas School of Law, that granted preferences to African American and Mexican American applicants. Specifically, the Hopwood panel ruled that; (a) diversity was not a compelling state interest; and (b) the defendants have not presented sufficient evidence of a remedial need for affirmative action programs. The Fifth Circuit concluded:

In sum, the use of race to achieve a diverse student body, whether as a proxy for permissible characteristics, simply cannot be a state interest compelling enough to meet the steep standard of strict scrutiny. These latter factors may, in fact, turn out to be substantially correlated with race, but the key is that race itself not be taken into account. Thus, that portion of the district court's opinion upholding the diversity rationales is reversibly flawed (Peckham, 1997, p.40).

The ruling on March 18th in Hopwood v. Texas sent a chain reaction throughout Texas. Not only did the University of Texas at Austin change its admissions policy, but Texas A & M and other major schools in Texas followed, showing the immediate impact of the ruling. The ruling stated that admissions requirements would no longer be lowered in favor of minorities. The case attacked the Bakke decision of 1978 and could change the way other states' schools viewed affirmative action. Other circuits would consider the Fifth Circuit and the racial factors for admittance in those regions could be changed as well.
The decision severely altered the goal of diversity that many colleges strived for, as well as the admission process. The ruling handed down by the Fifth Circuit affected more than the discarding of race as a factor at the University of Texas.

On April 4, 1996, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals declined to reconsider the Hopwood decision. On June 1, 1996, the Supreme Court declined to grant the State's Petition for Writ of Certiorari. As a result, the Hopwood decision is the law of the Fifth Circuit. Education diversity cannot be used to justify an affirmative action program within the jurisdiction of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, which includes Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi, because educational diversity is not recognized as a compelling state interest.

Most of these legal cases provided a means of increasing the number of African Americans in higher education and improving their experiences while there. Opportunities were provided for African Americans to go to predominantly White colleges because the legal barriers that barred access into African Americans' colleges of choice were eliminated (Orfield, 1996).

Recently, affirmative action in higher education has been under attack. Affirmative action remains a volatile issue, both inside and outside the courts. In the political realm, former Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole of Kansas expressed strong opposition to such programs. By contrast, President Bill Clinton proclaimed that affirmative action has been "good for America" and recommended mending it as opposed to ending it. Voters in California passed Proposition 209 that prohibited using racial, ethnic, or gender preferences in
state contracting, hiring and admissions program. Prior to passage, under pressure from the governor, the state’s colleges and universities had already banned racial, ethnic, or gender consideration in their admissions programs (Wilson, 1996).

In defense of affirmative action, Gose (1998) reported the findings of Bowen and Bok, former presidents of Princeton and Harvard Universities, respectively. Bowen and Bok disputed the claim by opponents that Black students with low scores would benefit from attending less-selective institutions where their scores would be average. According to Bowen and Bok’s study, race-sensitive admissions policies had achieved the goals of providing promising careers for African American students and promoting interracial interactions on elite campuses. In The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions, Bowen and Bok (1998) studied 45,184 students who had entered 28 selective colleges in the fall of 1976 or the fall of 1989. Among their findings:

1. About 75% of the Black students who entered the 28 colleges in 1989 graduated within six years. Black students with low SAT scores had a better chance of graduating if they attended the most selective schools.
2. Compared to White graduates, Black graduates earn more graduate degrees.
3. Leaders of community, social-service, and professional organizations are more likely to be Black graduates than White graduates. Black graduates tend to want to give back to their community.
4. The salary gap among Black and White graduates of the 28 colleges was much smaller as a whole. Black female graduates who entered college in 1976 earned an average of $64,700 in 1996, two percent less than their White female classmates (Gose, 1998, p.A48).
Trends of African Americans in Postsecondary Education

Increased racial integration of American postsecondary education has not been accomplished without certain negative side effects for African American students. Evidence suggested that African American students who attended predominantly White colleges and universities experienced significantly greater levels of social isolation, alienation, personal dissatisfaction, and overt racism than did their counterparts at historically Black institutions (Allen, 1987; Allen, Bobo, & Fleuranges, 1984).

Thomas (1987) documented the enormous increase in African Americans who attended college during the 1960s and 1970s. Thomas observed that in 1975, 21% of African Americans (or 665,000 students) between the ages of 18 and 24 were enrolled in college, compared to only 13% (or 134,000 students) in 1960. Blacks represented 6% of college and university enrollment in 1960 but 9.6% in 1975 (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1987).

As reported by National Center for Education Statistics (1996), between 1992 and 1994 White high school graduates ages 18-24 were more likely to be enrolled in college than were Blacks or Hispanics. For these years, the average enrollment rate for Whites was nine percentage points higher than that of Blacks and eight percentage points higher than that of Hispanics.

The percentage of high school graduates ages 18-24 enrolled in college was higher in 1994 than in 1972. Enrollment rates for Blacks of ages 18-24 grew moderately over the same period. African American Census Facts (1997)
reported in 1995 that thirteen percent of African Americans had at least a bachelor's degree, up eight percent from 1990.

According to the Office of Minorities in Higher Education of the American Council on Education (1996), African Americans recorded a 7.1% gain in total enrollment in higher education from 1990 to 1991. African American men played a major role in this increase, as their 6.5% gain was nearly equal to the 7.3% gain recorded by women (see Table 1). In 1991, 517,000 African American men enrolled in institutions of higher education, topping the previous high of 485,000 in 1990 (Carter & Wilson, 1993). In January 1997 a report (Condition of Education 1996: Minorities in Higher Education) compared the number of bachelor's degrees earned in 1993 to the number earned in 1981. Both males and females earned more degrees during these years, but the increase was greater for African American females than for African American males.

Three political and social phenomena contributed to the overall growth of all students attending higher education: (a) the veterans of the U. S. military who utilized their allotment of educational benefits; (b) the Great Society programs initiated by President Lyndon B. Johnson, which encouraged and supported all American citizens who desired to pursue higher education to do so; and (c) the post-World War II baby boom, which provided the greatest population increase of any period in the history of the United States. Thomas (1987), however, attributed African American enrollment to five different political and social phenomena: (a) the successful Civil Rights Act of 1964, which abolished
segregation; (b) the Supreme Court decision in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which ended *de jure* racial segregation in public elementary and secondary schools; (c) the federal government's report entitled *Equality of Education Opportunity Report* (Coleman, et al. 1966), which pointed out numerous racial inequalities in American educational institutions; (d) the expanded financial aid programs for economically disadvantaged citizens; and

(e) the Federal Court decision of 1973 in the case of *Adams v. Richardson* (1973), which compelled institutions of higher education with histories of *de jure* racial segregation and continuing discrimination against African Americans to develop desegregation plans.

### Table 1. Number of Bachelor's Degrees Conferred (in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Male 1981</th>
<th>Male 1993</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>Female 1981</th>
<th>Female 1993</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<td>435.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>401.1</td>
<td>512.2</td>
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<td>17.6</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
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<td>11.0</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>131.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>150.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>201.1</td>
</tr>
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Astin (1982) pointed out that in the 1970s a higher percentage of minority students were the beneficiaries of financial aid than was the case of White students. Astin included Pell Grants, Work Study, Guaranteed Student Loans, National Direct Student Loans, and other smaller programs in the financial aid category. These financial aid programs, coupled with progressive and innovative admissions and recruitment efforts of colleges and universities during the 1960s and 1970s, represented the greatest initiatives ever enacted to achieve racial equality in higher education.

Despite the financial assistance programs and the political and social phenomena, African Americans had always been under-represented at all levels of higher education. During the 1960s African American enrollment had been declining in tandem with declining financial aid and increasing admission standards for higher educational institutions. From the 1960s to the 1980s, the United States experienced sweeping social changes. In regard to African Americans, the U.S. saw a complex mixture of overt repression, as exemplified by segregation, and a long march toward civil rights.

The impact of segregation and forced integration upon the Black population was accompanied by changes crucial to the functioning of the African American community. During this period, the majority of predominantly Black public schools vanished; they appeared to close without regard to quality, in order to integrate their students into existing White institutions. Integration resulted in the loss of the community role models and opportunities to build self-
pride, features that were common to Black schools. Social conscience, therefore, may have suffered. Legal changes and backlashes, such as the Brown Case of 1954-1955, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Regents of the University of California v Bakke case of 1979, all had an impact on African American education, just as the Swann case of 1971 changed the way many African Americans looked at educational access. In Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education (1971), the Supreme Court ruled that school boards had to take into consideration the racial make-up of whole cities, and not just neighborhood schools. School districts were allowed to use mandatory transportation to bring about a “unitary” system, which equated with an integrated system that provided an alternative to busing. The unitary system utilized stand-alone schools in racially balanced neighborhoods. Midpoint schools located between predominantly Black and predominantly White neighborhoods resulted in shorter bus rides. Following this ruling, desegregation in the South proceeded rapidly, with the result that about 90% of African American children were attending desegregated schools by 1975 (Willie, 1989). However, Black institutions such as Fisk University and Wilberforce University maintained their strong heritage of providing quality education for Negroes. The origins of Fisk University may be traced to the days immediately following the abolition of slavery in the United States. Historians have richly documented the zeal with which the freed slaves of those days took to the books, which had been forbidden them in their time of bondage. Learning was to be the bridge that
would carry them from emancipation onward to real freedom and dignity. Wilberforce University, the nation’s oldest private African American university, had a deep commitment to provide academically excellent and relevant higher education, particularly for African American men and women. Wilberforce University has a strong African America heritage and traditions that have been transferred from 140 years of African American history and experience (Adams, 1995).

The great Civil Rights events of the early 1960s, such as the March on Washington in 1963, the Selma March of 1965, and the Meredith March in 1966, buoyed African American spirits and helped many African American youths transform their negative identities into positive ones, despite societal rejection. The participation in public equal education for African American students had been either legislated or otherwise politically determined. Poussaint (1985) alluded to the politically determined reality that the style of apartheid practiced in the United States weighed heavily on the lives of African Americans. Apartheid practices included such crucial sociopolitical variables as economic status, unemployment, decreased availability of financial aid, reduction of support programs, and the new “get tough” policies. Poussaint described the “get tough” policies as how African Americans coped with oppression in a successful passive-resistance non-violent movement rather than passive-aggressive. The “get tough” policies resulted in the younger generation of African Americans having new expectations; they were more vocal in their rejection of second-class
citizenship. They were a more confident generation. Poussaint identified the "get tough" policies as young African Americans began to join the ranks of the Civil Rights Movement and form their own organizations. The new breed of African Americans were more militant, outspoken, and willing to take risks. The courage of these young people, who worked beside their White allies in the South under the fear of death, helped to make more African Americans aggressive in their demands for justice.

The Condition of Education (1996) reported that from 1973 until 1994 African American enrollment increased in two year colleges by 5.9% (see Table 2). In the same time frame, African American enrollment increased 12.6% in four year colleges (see Table 3). However, other reports gave scant information about what enables African Americans to experience personal and academic success. This study seeks to supply that missing ingredient by addressing this question: What factors are associated with academic success among African American students, both male and female, on PWCs?

Sedlacek and Brooks (1976) hypothesized that there were seven noncognitive variables that were critical to academic success in the lives of minority students. How students adjusted to these factors and how faculty and staff encouraged this adjustment determined the success or failure of the minority student. Tracey and Sedlacek (1984, 1985, 1987) demonstrated the validity of these seven variables plus an eighth by using a non-cognitive questionnaire (NCQ). The results of this questionnaire predicted grades as well
Table 2. Percentage of High School Graduates Enrolled in College, by age, race/ethnicity, and type of institution: October 1973—94

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Table 3. Percentage of High School Graduates Enrolled in College by age, race/ethnicity, and type of institution: October 1973—94

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as retention and graduation rates for African American students for up to six years after initial matriculation. White and Sedlacek (1986, p.485) demonstrated the validity of the NCQ for African Americans in special programs. The non-cognitive variables of the NCQ were:


2. **Realistic self-appraisal.** Recognizes and accepts any deficiencies and works hard at self-development. Recognizes need to broaden his or her individuality; especially important in academic areas (Tracey and Sedlacek, 1984, 1985, 1987 p, 410)

3. **Understands and deals with racism.** A realist, based on personal experiences of racism. Committed to fighting to improve the existing system. Not submissive to existing wrongs, nor hostile to society, nor a "cop-out." Able to handle racist systems. Asserts school role to fight racism (Tracey and Sedlacek, 1984, 1985, 1987 p, 410).

4. **Demonstrated community service.** Is involved in his or her cultural community (Tracey and Sedlacek, 1984, 1985, 1987 p, 410).

5. **Prefers long-range goals to short-term or immediate needs.** Able to respond to deferred gratification (Tracey and Sedlacek, 1984, 1985, 1987 p, 410).

6. **Availability of strong support person.** Individual has someone to whom to turn in crises (Tracey and Sedlacek, 1984, 1985, 1987 p, 410).

7. **Successful leadership experience.** Has successful leadership experience in any area pertinent to his or her African American background (e.g., gangs, sports, noneducational groups)(Tracey and Sedlacek, 1984, 1985, 1987 p, 410).

8. **Knowledge acquired in a field.** Has universal or culturally related ways of obtaining information and demonstrating knowledge. The field itself may be nontraditional (Tracey and Sedlacek, 1984, 1985, 1987 p, 410).
The number of African American students seems to mirror a similar pattern among African American faculty. It is important, since increases in minority faculty are not likely to occur during an era of cutbacks, that those minority faculty members must seek out and provide helpful assistance to the minority student population. "Researchers believe African Americans now constitute only about one percent of all faculty at predominantly White colleges" (Staples, 1986, p.46). A typical university response is that the pool of eligible candidates is extremely limited. Staples (1986) questioned whether this supposed scarcity is indicative of the total picture, because "at no time since school desegregation has the number of African American faculty members at White universities come close to the number of African Americans with Ph. Ds"

Evans (1985) stated that there were five explanations for the declining enrollment of African American students:

1. **Federal aid cutbacks and changes.**
   The earning power for African Americans is 56% compared to that of Whites; thus, the capability of African Americans to finance higher education is reduced correspondingly. Historically, African Americans and Hispanics have been awarded more financial aid than have Whites. Today, the difference in financial aid usage between African Americans and Whites is significantly reduced as middle-class groups gain access to this financial pool. White students met 13.3% more of their costs using governmental aid in 1983 than in 1978. The odds of sending students to college increased for higher income families and decreased for lower income families, including a disproportionate number of Blacks. Blacks lost money in terms of both family income and access to student financial aid between 1978 and 1983. During the same period, African Americans met 6.4% more of their college expenses through financial aid than in 1978 (Lee, Rotemund, & Bertschman, 1985, p.128).

   Astin's (1982) longitudinal study demonstrated that "the lower the family income, the poorer a minority student's prospects in higher
education” and, among Blacks, “parental income is positively related to undergraduate GPA, undergraduate persistence, and satisfaction” (p. 94).

2. **Cutbacks in support services** (Jaschik, 1985).

   Universities received federal and state funds after the civil rights legislative era to develop programs to recruit and retain minorities in higher education. When the federal government pulled back in its efforts, so did the colleges (Evans, 1985). This absence of substantive support services, according to Evans, had contributed to the declining enrollment and retention of African American students (p. 28).

3. **Affirmative action.**

   Most institutions have developed affirmative action policies that adhere to federal guidelines. Affirmative action procedures, not policies, became the only guarantee that Black students, faculty, and staff could gain and maintain equal access to higher education. Institutional commitment is particularly important at a time when the presence of Black students, faculty and staff is diminishing on campuses. Both institutional commitment and legislative enforcement are suspect when statistics (Evans 1985a; Jaschik, 1985) indicate a decreasing number of Blacks in higher education (Evans, p. 14). Proctor (1985) stated:

   If you want to beef up the number of Blacks on your campus, you can not wait for the normal process of social evolution, because it's going in the wrong direction. You've got to intervene and turn that spiral the other way because that spiral has been given momentum to move in the other direction (Jaschik, 1985, p. 43).

4. **Colleges' efforts to institute tighter standards.**

   Universities and colleges may be projecting a double message to potential African American students through their aggressive recruitment, which is juxtaposed with so-called get-tough policies. Such get-tough policies have included higher admission test scores and higher grade-point averages from high school. Astin (1982) predicted a reduction of college enrollment by minorities with the introduction of a meritocratic system. The meritocratic criteria frequently found in institutional curriculum plans and criteria tended to link institutional and program quality with student attributes (e.g., grades and test scores) and serve to restrict access, particularly among minorities (p. 138).

5. **African American students' declining enrollment and lack of interest.**

   The resignation of African American students to societal norms of human inequity begins at an early stage in education. To understand the African American students' adjustment to the college environment, several
approaches are relevant. The first approach examines the politics of education for African Americans by identifying possible causal correlations that are either legislated or otherwise politically determined. (Allen, 1988, p.178).

Pervin's (1967) environmental paradigm suggested an interactive relationship between students and their campus environments. The unanswered question was whether the interactions between African American students and their environments optimized learning and growth. There was evidence that African American students found PWCs alienating, and that PWCs negatively affected their performance (Oliver, Rodriguez, & Mickelson, 1985). Oliver et al. found that social class for African Americans, unlike social class for Chicanos, did not mitigate the level of alienation experienced. Loo and Rolison (1986) found significantly greater sociocultural alienation among African American students than among non-minorities, and asserted that fewer minority students than White students felt the university reflected their values.

Harper (1969) described the trauma of being African American and feeling alone on a PWC. Taylor (1986), reintroduced Harper's perception in the urgency of building African American identity in environments where African Americans were present, whether in the form of African American students or other programming. She concluded that, while African American colleges positively influenced cognitive, intellectual, and interpersonal development, White colleges had not succeeded in addressing feelings of social isolation, perceptions of classroom bias, and hostile interpersonal climates.
Most studies indicate different adjustment patterns on campus for African American women than for African American men. Payton (1985) reinforced Fleming's (1984a) finding that African American women become more assertive and self-reliant at predominantly White universities. This finding did not hold true for African American males. In another study, Fleming (1986) hypothesized a need for special programs for African American men because of their dwindling presence in higher education. Students were asked to indicate the student services (counseling, mentoring, tutoring) they had used on campus. Consistent with other findings in other studies, Fleming found that African American women took greater advantage of student services on campus than did African American men.

Researchers traditionally have cited male socialization as the cause for less frequent use of student services by men than by women (Goldberg, 1976). African American men may be even more guarded than other ethnic groups because of the low status ascribed to African Americans by all ethnic groups. This ascription was believed to be based on skin color and visibility, but the psychological and sociological impact could be devastating. Of all college participants, African American men may well be the most oppressed ethnic group. Their infrequent use of services is probably an indication of their vulnerability. In an article on male socialization, Fleming (1984b) argued, Black males reported that they experienced more negative feelings and unhappiness about college life, felt they were often mistreated, experienced academic
demoralization, and thought less of their academic ability. In a related study, academic interaction while attending a predominantly White college was found to have a negative effect on the academic self-concept of African American males (Pascarella, Smart, Etherington, & Nettle, 1987).

A 1992 study conducted at San Jose City College (SJCC) and Evergreen Valley College (EVC) examined the fourth semester persistence rates of Black male students and investigated the effect of SJCC athletic and athlete academic support programs on persistence. Study findings included the following: (1) new full time (NFT) Black males had the highest fourth semester persistence rate of any group; (2) only 25% of full 1988 new part-time (NPT) Black males at SJCC persisted four semesters, while 50% did not persist beyond the first semester (Carr, 1992).

Fleming (1984b) reported that retention among African American men seemed in greater jeopardy than for African American females, and that African American men needed student services more than do all other campus groups. The statistics on African American men's extremely low use of services should serve as a signal that Black men do not perceive student service environments as relevant and accessible. Fleming cautioned that African American male development suffered the most in college, particularly on PWCs.

African American male and female students at both PBCs and PWCs share the goal of pursuing college degrees to improve their future. Beyond that commonality, African Americans who attend PBCs have different expectations
and experiences than do African Americans who attend PWCs. African American students at PWCs are preoccupied with basic issues of intellectual survival. They realize that social, personal, emotional, and cultural development will be delayed or postponed while on these campuses because of the unpreparedness of the PWCs environment to plan for and respond to their social and developmental needs.

Perceptions of African American Students on Predominantly White Campuses

Henderson (1988), in his article, "The Invisible Minority: Black Students at a Southern White University," examined individual perceptions of African American students on a PWC. This study explained the perceptions of 13 Black students in areas of needs, coping strategies, and experiences in an all-White institution.

The findings indicated that informal patterns of racial interaction might be developing that could impede the assimilation of African American students into the broad cultural framework of this university in spite of affirmative action. Henderson maintained that student affairs officials and other administrators should be aware of patterns of interracial interaction that had developed during periods of increasing African American student enrollment. Such awareness among administration would ensure that these students, with their greater need for assistance in the predominantly White environment, were provided ample opportunities to develop socially as well as academically. This awareness would

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also ensure that students were not made to feel victimized by thoughtlessness on the part of students or administrators.

African American students on PWCs said that they often felt left out. Social events usually catered to the interests of the majority. The selection of music at social events provided insight into what the majority wanted to hear—that might be country/western music. On some PWCs administrators needed to provide a more inclusive atmosphere where African American as well as White students were valued and diversity was a plus (Henderson, 1988).

Boyd (1982), in his article, “The Secret of Minority Retention,” took an in-depth view of how Black college students at PWCs really felt about their educational environment and experiences. The Educational Policy Center (EPC) analyzed a nationwide sample of the African American students themselves, as well as the faculty members and administrators who worked with them. The EPC concluded that a large number of shortcomings existed among recruitment practices, racial harmony, and interpersonal perceptions that threatened the likelihood of African American students’ developing a comfort zone at these institutions.

Boyd (1982) stated that much of the controversy about African American students in PWCs involved the commitment to African American students: they did not involve a majority of Black students. There was a need to encourage people to build on more reliable foundations as attempts were made to provide equal opportunities for Blacks in higher education.
Boyd contended that separation was the balloon in which the largest amount of hot air had collected. Boyd stated that it was quite common for Whites and African Americans to assert that African Americans wanted to withdraw from contact with Whites and should be allowed or encouraged to do so while remaining in PWCs.

Again, according to Boyd, there was strong linkage between family income and college attendance. Several characteristics of Black students were related to family income. Students from families with higher income were less likely to have parents who did not attend college, fair or poor preparation, special admission status, or financial aid as a primary source of funds. The poorest and the richest students were most likely to be found at colleges distant from their homes. They also tended to be more dissatisfied with their overall college experiences, more likely to feel that faculty members had discriminated against them, and therefore, more likely to participate in Black student organizations.

Finally, Boyd (1982) dealt with the race of staff members. He suggested that African Americans and White members watched African American students from different vantage points. More often than not, they disagreed about what they saw, which could result from the tendency of African American students to be more inclined to discuss freely, or even to exaggerate their problems when talking with African American staff members. Very few staff members said that
there was no racial discrimination at their colleges, but more than four times as many Whites as Blacks saw no discrimination.

In the twentieth century, education of African American students on predominantly White campuses has been increasingly caught up in the necessity to re-enter old battles. African American students found themselves fighting anew for gains fought for in the past but never solidified over time, as old, and perhaps some new versions of segregation, desegregation, and resegregation continued to surface throughout the educational pipeline and the nation as well.

African Americans and Whites must also recognize that some amount of conflict and turmoil may be inevitable and essential to achieving positive change. As a nation, all must strive to be respectful of individuals and their differences to work toward developing responsible linkage and irrevocable commitments to those beyond the walls of education.

Richardson and de los Santos (1988) presented a comprehensive approach to helping minority students graduate from college. According to Richardson and de los Santos' statistics, African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians were less likely to graduate from college than were other American students. The low graduation rates of these minority groups had a rippling effect on society, the national work force, and the ability of colleges to respond to demographic changes.
Richardson and de los Santos concluded that to successfully remove race and ethnicity as factors in college completion, the following principles must be embraced by institutions of higher learning. The principles were supported by a three-year national study of ten PWCs that have achieved success in graduating minorities over ten or more years.

The first principle, according to Richardson and de los Santos (1988), was to announce priorities. Universities and colleges that publicly announced their goals of eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in degree achievement should make their commitment to educational opportunity firm and clear. Florida State University provided an example of announcing priorities. The improved participation and graduation rate for African American students at Florida State University was top priority. The improvement and graduation rate was publicized in the Annual President's Report and was demonstrated by appointments of affirmative action supporters to strategic posts. In addition, annual plans and progress reports on minority student admissions, employment opportunities, and support programs were published according to academic units.

Second, employing minorities in senior leadership positions sends a clear message about the value of cultural diversity among professional staff. In the past decade, the University of Texas at El Paso has increased its enrollment substantially of Hispanics, who had been a slight majority of the student body. The University of Texas’ dean of students, its dean of the College of Science,
and its directors of financial aid and admissions are all minority leaders (Richardson & de los Santos, 1988).

Third, tracking the matriculation of African Americans, which allowed an institution to focus on strategies that involved the collection of detailed information on minority and non-minority undergraduate achievement patterns, was suggested. Florida International University collected information on enrollment and retention by race, ethnicity, and transfer status for a ten-year period. By applying these data, Florida International University could put resources where most needed and obtain high graduation rates for its urban, largely commuting population.

Fourth, institutions should provide comprehensive support services. Institutions committed to equality provide integrated and comprehensive support services and often take a proactive role in providing financial aid. California State University at Dominiquez Hills has a diverse student population. Affirmative action and equal opportunity programs show improved retention and graduation rates. Additional support from faculty in the areas of recruiting and admitting and referring students was available.

The fifth principle is to emphasize quality. Educational quality has often been defined as a function of those excluded, while selective institutions have too often excluded a disproportionate number of minorities. Bowen (1986) described Brooklyn College as "fast rising and ambitious... providing a first class education at fourth class prices" (p.30). Brooklyn College has a student
body including graduate students that is almost one-third African American and Hispanic, proportionately. All students must complete ten rigorous core courses aimed at "cultivating the intellect and imagination and at developing general mental rather than vocational skills" (Richardson & de los Santos, 1988, p. 23).

Sixth, institutions should reach out to community schools, agencies, and businesses. A community-wide effort can raise minority students' aspirations and academic preparation. Churches and businesses in minority communities could offer motivation and economic support. Temple University's "Temple Mile" program includes high schools, grade schools, community groups, and nonprofit agencies within a one-mile radius of the campus. Because of the outreach to schools, agencies, and businesses, Temple has seen a dramatic rise in enrollment of African American students in fields not traditionally selected by minority students.

Seventh, institutions should bridge the educational gaps. Bridge programs provide extended classes that include tutoring, learning laboratories, collaborative study groups, and instructive advising. The extended classes were generally affordable for the under-prepared student—the most vulnerable to academic failure. Wayne State University offered an outreach program for students who were ineligible for regular admission. These students were required to complete 24 to 30 university credits. After completion, students transferred to other colleges within the university. Wayne State University also admitted 350 marginally-prepared students yearly and provided support for three
years through the Summer Bridge Program. Graduation rates of these students exceeded those of many regularly admitted students (Richardson & de los Santos, 1988).

Eighth, institutions should reward good teaching and diversify the faculty. Effective institutions cultivate minority tracking by mentoring graduate students or junior faculty. Rewards, tenure, and promotions should be awarded for good teaching—characterized by caring, mentoring, and sensitivity to cultural differences, with high expectations for all students. For example, the University of Memphis had a significant gap between the proportion of African American students to other students and the proportion of African American faculty members to other faculty members. The University of Memphis created a position for any department recruiting a qualified African American candidate. In addition, the University of Memphis' recruitment program paid moving expenses, gave release time from teaching, and paid a salary differential. Exceptional African American doctoral candidates at the University of Memphis were offered support with the stipulation that they accepted faculty appointments at the university (Richardson & de los Santos, 1988).

Finally, Richardson and de los Santos (1988) concluded that institutions must construct a non-threatening social environment. Incidents of racism can hamper the progress of minority students, even for those who are best prepared academically. If needed, proportional representation should be supplemented by special programs, services, and facilities. Hispanic and American Indian
graduates at the University of New Mexico described campus friendships as a function of location or discipline rather than race or ethnicity. The University of New Mexico had successfully educated and graduated minority students who were respected and well accepted within a multi-cultural state and university.

**Higher Education and African American Males**

Given the social and economic problems faced by African American males in the United States, their experiences in college become major sources of concern and challenge for many institutions in higher education. Increased opportunities for African American males accounted for 3.5% in the total enrollment in United States colleges and universities; however, they were disproportionately represented among students who were forced to withdraw, those with relatively lower academic performance, and those who had more negative college experiences (Allen, Epps, & Haniff, 1991; Fleming, 1984a). Interestingly, an increase in the college enrollments of African American males occurred at the end of the 1980s. From fall 1980 through fall 1990, the college enrollment rate of African American males actually increased by 7%; however, more recent data show that the proportion of African American male high school graduates who actually enrolled in college dropped almost 5% from 1990 to 1992 (American Council on Education [ACE], 1994). Specifically, only 29.7% of African American males who graduated from high school in 1992 enrolled in an institution of higher education that fall, compared to 32.2% in 1991 and 34.4% in
the fall of 1990. While these data are informative, they often mask variations in
the quality of the college educational experience for African American males.

Since the mid-1980s, African Americans have posted consistent
increases in the percentage of 25-to-29 year olds with four years of high
school, or more. The rate increased from 82.9 percent to 88.1 percent in
1993. By 1995, nearly 74 percent of African Americans ages 25 and
older completed four years of high school or more, compared with 66.2

Increased educational opportunities for African Americans have occurred
since desegregation policies changed the demographics of most higher
education institutions. However, only four decades after these corrective reforms
began, the nation was witnessing a positive ebb in the tide of increased
education for African Americans. Paradoxically, this was occurring at a time
when progress toward desegregation had wrought progressively sharper
increases in the number of African American students attending PWCs; in fact
these 1991 numbers surpassed Black enrollment at PBCs (American Council on
Education, 1994; E. Anderson, 1984). Notwithstanding, many differences
remained between the experiences of African American college students on
PWCs and the experiences of African American college students enrolled in
PBCs. For instance, African American students at PWCs have lower grade-
point-averages than their peers at historically Black colleges (Allen, 1987;
Thomas, 1987); however, while the latter performed better academically, they
were often dissatisfied with the facilities and organizational structure of their
colleges (Allen, 1987; Nettles, 1988).
Additionally, a number of studies have suggested that two salient factors differentially affect African American college students' performance vis-a-vis that of White college students: (a) a perceived lack of positive social support; and (b) perceived discrimination by professors, administrators, and peers (Allen, 1992; Hughes, 1987; Oliver, Smith, & Wilson, 1989; Sedlacek, 1987). Comparative analyses of the experiences of African American students attending PBCs and PWCs revealed that students on PWCs reported that racial discrimination had occurred with much greater frequency than was reported on PBCs (Allen, 1992). Similarly, academic achievement, social integration, and campus race relations are usually negative for this group of college students. Here, again, a positive relationship has been demonstrated among perceived social support, lack of discrimination, and academic achievement (Nettles, 1991). Moreover, academic success had been significantly related to student satisfaction with and engagement in college life (Allen, 1992). While several studies noted that some African American students were doing well academically on PWCs, they also reported marked decreases in these students' performance; a slippage that far exceeds that which is typically expected of students as they adjust to college-level work (Allen, 1988).

A national study of perceptions of African American males regarding factors supporting doctoral completion of education (Respress, 1997), found that institutional type affected persistence, institution's geographical location significantly affected persistence, and the number of other African American
scholars in the department affected persistence. The study concluded that race relations, institutional climate and social adjustment were important. Mentoring was crucial to successful doctoral experiences, and being in an accepting climate was pivotal to persistence (Respress, 1997).

Many African American students at PWCs of higher education reported that their relationships with faculty members and peers were negative and that they avoided interaction with them outside of the classroom. These students reported that they rarely attended campus events sponsored by Black organizations and were generally not socially active on campus (Allen, 1988; Fleming, 1984a; Nettles, 1988). Other findings suggested that African American students on PWCs who were better off academically were also on better terms with faculty members, that they found their institutions to be generally supportive of their educational endeavors and consequently, they seemed to make a greater effort to interact with their professors (Nettles, 1988; Tracey & Sedlacek, 1985). Allen (1987) suggested that a reciprocal relationship existed between African American students and African American faculty members at PWCs. That is, African American students who perceived they were being supported by their university were less reluctant to avoid informal contact with faculty and administrators than those African American students who did not perceive this support. Thus, professors responded more positively to students who had fostered informal contact with them outside of the classroom setting, and such relationships had positive effects on academic performance.
The student-faculty relationship has long been noted as a significant indicator of academic achievement, as have a number of other outcome variables, such as educational aspirations, attitudes toward college, academic success/achievement, personal development, and persistence (Tinto, 1987; Tracey & Sedlacek, 1985). Pascarella's (1980) review of the literature on student-faculty contact and college outcomes suggested that the quality of the contact between student and faculty should be examined in greater detail to determine its impact on the academic outcomes of students.

According to an article, "Graduation Rates Fall for Athletes," in the Chronicle of Higher Education the graduation rate of African American male athletes declined from 39% in 1996 to 37% in 1997 (Haworth, 1998). Despite the decline, Black players graduated at a rate higher than that for all Black male students at 307 colleges in Division I. African American female athletes outperformed their peers in the general student population by the largest margin, graduating at a rate of 56%, 11% higher than for other Black female students. Black male athletes graduated at a rate of 41%, compared with a general rate for Black male students of 34%. Since 1960, the impact of race on achievement and attainment of minority students has been a continuing source of study. Much of the information garnered has been inconclusive, some of it contradictory.

Despite the work on differential effects of the college environment on African American students, surprisingly little is known about how, or even whether, gender affects African American student college outcomes. While
Fleming (1984b) noted the potential importance of the context of a college's social and academic environments, investigation of the effects of these campus characteristics, particularly for African American males, required much more focused attention.

**Higher Education and African American Females**

Researchers had identified persistence differences in the college experiences of African American men and women (Fleming, 1984a). The U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics reported the number of bachelor degrees conferred for African American men in 1995-1996 was 6.3 percent compared to 9.1 percent women for the same period for one of the earlier, more comprehensive comparisons of African American male and female college students, Gurin and Epps (1975) challenged the conventional views of an African American female advantage. In both relative and absolute terms, they found the female disadvantage to be consistent. However, they reported that women had lower goals on all measures of educational and occupational aspirations, and more often aspired to jobs in the "female sector" of the economy — jobs disproportionately occupied by women that provided lower prestige, power and pay. The colleges they attended did not influence the goals and aspirations of the males. African American males were three times as likely to pursue doctoral degrees as were African American females. For these reasons, Gurin and Epps concluded that African American women gained less

The enrollment of women generally—and African American women in particular—in postsecondary institutions rose dramatically from 1976 to 1996. In fact, African American women now outnumber African American men in college by roughly two to one (American Council on Education, 1994). It is important to note, however, that this discrepancy owes more to declines in rates of African American male college attendance than to African American female gains. There is still reason to question rosy portrayals of African American women’s college experiences.

According to Carter (1988), African American women reported that women are tougher, more calloused, and more resistant to negative stimuli in their environment than are African American men. In comparison to the African American male student, the African American female student expresses greater inner strength, a view of self as capable and confident, and the capacity to withstand negative external stimuli. They, too, seek support from parents and significant others, but they seem not to depend on it for survival in college. It seems the Black women have developed a more internal locus of control than have Black men, and they have a clearer sense of identity despite external barriers.

Gurin and Epps (1975) studied over 5,000 African American students enrolled in ten traditionally Black institutions from 1964 to 1970. Fleming (1984a)
later studied a sample of 3,000 Black and White college students, including students attending PWCs. Fleming’s basic research question—"Who gets the most out of college?" yielded answers that echoed Gurin and Epp’s (1975) findings.

Persistence of African American Students

Students were considered successful in college if they persisted without dropping out or stopping; i.e., interrupting their education for a semester or more but later returning to continue their pursuit of a degree. Equally important, but less frequently examined, was students’ socialization in the college environment, which had also been found to be highly correlated with retention, progress, and grades (Astin & Kent, 1983; Nettles, Thoeny & Gosman, 1986; Pascarella, 1985).

Theoretical models developed and empirically tested during the 1970s and 1980s for explaining student retention and performance in college (Bean, 1982; Spady, 1971; Tinto, 1975) could be adapted to examine socialization. These models suggested that if students had superior pre-college experience and achievement, attended college and universities with superior faculties, services and programs, and had high aspirations, they were likely to achieve high levels of performance in college. Empirical research confirmed that these factors were valid in predicting student persistence in college (Aitken, 1982; Bean, 1982).
African American men were more at risk in their adjustment to college than any other group, including Black women. Lack of status places additional demands on Black men at a time when they have greater fears, less security, more dependence on others for support, and greater rigidity (Fleming, 1984b).

African American men seem to have more resistance to adopting compensatory coping skills than do Black women. It is likely that they are more aligned with masculine ("macho") principles and are extremely busy defending themselves against real and perceived racism. This response to the external stimuli of racial prejudice may drain their coping capacities in the majority culture (Fleming, 1984b).

African American men seem especially traumatized on the predominantly White college campuses. It is not unusual for this trauma to produce increased guardedness and rigidity, which further alienates the African American men from their environment and exacerbates the problems. Thus, the trend of African American men to retreat, withdraw, or drop out of college is predictable (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1979).

Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend (1979) identified three factors that contribute to general levels of stress:

1. Stressful stimuli or events that disrupt or threaten to disrupt an individual's activities,

2. External mediating forces or environmental stressors such as money and family support, and

3. Internal mediating forces or the individual's psychological disposition. (p. 135)
Based on Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend's 1979 findings, Smith (1985) in another study examined life stress, social support, and mental health and concluded that stressful stimuli for African Americans and other ethnic minorities included prejudice, discrimination, and hostility encountered from the social environment as a result of their ethnic identity. According to Smith (1985), external mediators included social support available to those from an ethnic minority group.

Kanter's (1977) distinction between dominants and tokens highlighted problems experienced by minorities when they are tokens, treated as symbols instead of persons. They are (a) over-observed and too visible, (b) polarized, (c) isolated, (d) tested for loyalties, and (e) entrapped in their roles. According to Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend (1979), Blacks are subject to greater stressors than Whites because of differentials in internal and external mediators. It is not surprising that African American students report more stress and alienation on PWCs than on PBCs unless deliberate policies on the PWCs dictate programs of education and remediation. This stress and alienation would be particularly true of freshmen, who are more vulnerable than returning students. Thompson (1991) found higher scores of alienation, powerlessness, and isolation among African American freshmen than among other groups. Economic resources often shielded people from external mediators that are stressful (Smith, 1985).

Some of the most commonly observed characteristics of students' backgrounds that are related to college experiences and outcomes are family
socioeconomic status (SES) (i.e., social class and parental education) and academic preparedness (i.e., high school grades, type of high school attended, and aptitude). According to Feldman and Newcomb (1969), students are generally expected to experience greater socialization in their college environment if their college experiences are simple or extensions of their pre-collegiate background and experience.

Astin (1982) found that parents’ income and students’ living accommodations while attending college predicted African American students’ satisfaction more than that of the satisfaction of students of other races. African American students who have higher incomes and live at home while attending college have greater socialization skills than those with lower income who live on campus. Much of the variation in student socialization seems to be attributable to socioeconomic status and is believed to be mediated by students’ high school preparation. For example, Pantages and Creedon (1978) discovered that the negative effects of low SES on students’ persistence in college often disappeared when the high school grades of students were controlled.

According to Astin (1982) one of the many socialization problems of under-prepared college students was the reluctance on the part of faculty to deal with the under-prepared students, preferring instead to work with outstanding students. Astin pointed out that greater interaction by the faculty with all students led to more positive experiences and greater successes for a broad range of college students.
The institutional variables most frequently analyzed in relation to students' college persistence were (a) predominant race of students at the institution, (b) prestige and selectivity of the institution, and (c) size and governance of the institution (Pascarella, 1985). The relationship of institutional structure to student outcomes must be viewed with caution, however, because the institutional effects are mediated by student and faculty behavior (Hayes, 1974; Lacy, 1978; Pascarella, 1985).

Other studies indicated the positive impact of supportive contact on the academic success of African American students at historically Black institutions. This impact had been described by many observers and researchers as being factors to academic success among African American students (Anderson & Hrabowski, 1977; Fleming, 1981a; 1981b; 1984a; 1990; Jordan-Cox, 1987). In contrast were PWCs where problems of cultural adjustment, isolation from other African Americans, and problems of racism compromise the academic careers of African American undergraduates (Allen, 1988). However, the complex factors at work in these settings that had a measurable impact on African American students' academic lives are not clear (Allen 1985; Guloyan, 1986; Gunnings 1982; Hershberger & D'Augelli, 1992; Jay & D'Augelli, 1991). African American students must make significant personal family and social adjustment to attend PWCs, especially if the campus is geographically distant from their homes. Many come from communities and high schools in which they were in the majority; on the college campus, however, they are a distinct minority. Ehrlick
(1990), reporting on campus ethnoviolence, found persuasive reports of discrimination, most of which were verbal; even African Americans who escaped harassment themselves, knew of other African Americans who were harassed on campus. Thus, African American students' personal experience with racism on campus and their perceptions of the campus environment can be viewed as mediating the relationship between their academic potential and their performance (Mallinckrodt, 1988). Some researchers had argued that pre-college academic preparation and the negative environment of campuses were the most powerful factors influencing higher education achievement in African American youth (Mannan, Charleston, & Saghafi, 1986).

Tinto (1975) theorized that student satisfaction with faculty and positive and frequent student-faculty interaction significantly influenced the academic and social integration of college students. In studies by Terenzini and Pascarella (1976), Pascarella (1980), Pascarella and Chapman (1983), Pascarella and Wolfe (1985), and Endo and Harpel (1983), the amount of informal interaction with faculty outside the classroom was one factor that distinguished students who persisted from those who dropped out of college.

An African American student's cultural heritage provides continued support and encouragement from the immediate family, the extended family, and friends from the home community while the student develops a sense of independence. The strength of the support from family and friends plays a vital role in the student's college retention. A typical student's remark was that
college success was attributed to “family support, thoughts of success, thoughts of making family and community proud, and thoughts of close friends in the home community” (Fleming, 1984b, p.70).

The close relationships that African Americans maintained with their families suggested patterns of individualization unique to Black students. The fact that their parents and friends were their source of strength and survival was not perceived by them as a delay in their development of independence. It merely suggests that individualization for African Americans represented an interdependent dimension that ensured contact with family, respect for parental authority, respect for aging persons, and respect for the African American community. It was likely that African American individuals helped to integrate Afrocentric cultural values commonly referred to as the “extended family” (Fleming, 1984b).

**Conclusion**

Race has been one of the most studied phenomena in the history of the U.S. since early 1800. Typical of these studies, E. Anderson (1984) concluded that there were perceptions of racial differences in the effects of college characteristics on educational attainment. High school, race, and academic preparation all affected college selection by African American students, while SES and goals were more important to Whites. Differences in effects on grades, faculty contact, satisfaction and attainment variables were perceived and
emerged in the studies. African American students attending predominantly Black colleges were found to receive significantly higher average grades and were more likely to persist for a second year and to obtain a bachelor's degree. Attainment of African American students was higher in predominantly Black colleges that were privately controlled, smaller, less vocational, more cohesive, and with low SES students. For E. Anderson (1984), contact with faculty was highly important for African American students.

Arbona, Sedlacek, and Carstens (1987) followed up on these findings by focusing on what many researchers term the non-cognitive factors that affect student progression, such as utilization of counseling services. Arbona, Sedlacek, and Carstens (1987) maintained that African American students are more likely to seek assistance from the counseling center if non-cognitive variables are in place. These included the counselor's perceived ability to understand and deal with racism, the student's previous community service experiences, low self-confidence, and lack of long-term goals. Whites, according to Arbona, Sedlacek, and Carstens were most likely to seek counseling services if they do not have a strong support person, had not formed long-range goals, had a negative self-concept, or were approaching trouble with course work.

Davis and Nettles (1987) typified those studies that compared public and private college students. Typically, these revealed that students at public African American colleges were more likely to be married while attending college and were more likely to receive scholarships and grants. African American private
college students were more likely than African American public college students to have degree aspirations beyond the baccalaureate degree and to come from families with higher SES. Both sectors revealed that young students with higher grade-point-averages progressed faster and displayed greater progression characteristics. High school grade-point-average (GPA), student satisfaction, and academic integration were significantly related to academic progression at black public colleges but not at black private colleges. SES related to progression at black private colleges but not at public colleges.

Finally, whether the setting is public or private, same race or other race, it appears there may be multiple non-cognitive factors that correlated positively in enrollment and graduation among African American students in higher education. These non-cognitive factors were societal, cultural, and/or institutional in nature and tended to decline with academic success, adjustment, attainment, and achievement in the academic freshman/sophomore years of college attendance.
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study investigated the perceptions of the academic success of African American students at predominantly White community colleges and universities. However, the major focus was on aspects of successful African American students' adaptation to college. Student adaptation was measured by levels of involvement in campus life, academic achievement levels, and graduation rates. However, the study's objective addressed African American students' experience within higher educational institutions. The research question was "What are the dynamics present when African American students are successful in a predominantly White college or university?"

Population

The targeted population of this study consisted of undergraduate African American students attending the following college/university campuses in Northeast Tennessee: Northeast State Technical Community College, Pellissippi State Technical Community College, East Tennessee State University, and The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. These colleges and universities were
chosen to provide regional diversity in student population, diversity in the proportion of African American student enrollment, and ease of access for the researcher.

Pellissippi State Technical Community College, founded in 1974, is a two-year community college located approximately midway between Knoxville, Tennessee, and Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Pellissippi State had a 1997 fall enrollment of approximately 8,000 students. There were 480 African Americans, who represented 6% of total enrollment. Pellissippi State offers programs of study leading to technical certificates and associate of applied science degrees for those who intend direct entry into the work force. Additionally, the college offers associate of science and associate of arts degrees for university-parallel transfer students, i.e., for those students intending to seek four-year degrees (Pellissippi State Catalog 1998-1999).

As a technical community college, Northeast State Technical Community College has much in common with Pellissippi State. Northeast State, founded in 1966 as a vocational technical school, was converted to a community college in 1990. Northeast State, located in Blountville, serves the five most northeastern counties in Tennessee: Carter, Sullivan, Johnson, Unicoi, and Washington. Northeast's 1998 current headcount was approximately 3,200 with an enrollment of 64 African Americans, who represented 2.4% of total enrollment (Northeast State Catalog, 1997-98).
East Tennessee State University is located in Johnson City in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Founded in 1911 as a teacher-training normal school, East Tennessee State University’s instructional program has expanded to include the colleges of arts and science, business, education, medicine, applied science and technology and the school of graduate studies. East Tennessee State University enrolled approximately 11,000 graduate and undergraduate students in the fall of 1997 (ETSU News University Relations, October 1997), including 440 African Americans, who represented 4.6% of total enrollment.

Founded in 1794, The University of Tennessee is one of the largest regional research and federal land-grant institutions. The University of Tennessee has a presence in every Tennessee county, including its four primary campuses-Knoxville, Memphis, Martin, and Chattanooga-and three satellite institutions-agriculture, extension service/continuing education, and the Space Institute at Tullahoma. African Americans comprised a typical fraction-1,150, out of 25,000 students who represented 4.6% of full-time undergraduate students. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is the original and largest campus of The University of Tennessee. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville campus' degree programs include the bachelor's, master's, educational specialist and doctoral programs in many fields (Office of The University of Tennessee Historian, 1997).
Participants in the study were African American male and female students who were classified as sophomores. The Tennessee Board of Regents defines a sophomore as a student who has earned a total of 30 credit hours or more in college-level courses, but fewer than 45 credit hours. Five female and five male African American sophomores at each of the participating institutions, Pellissippi State Community College, Northeast Technical Community College, East Tennessee State University, and The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, were selected for this study. The data obtained were used to determine the subjective perceptions of the subjects regarding academic success and the factors influencing the success of African American students on each campus.

**Research Design**

The study utilized the purposive sampling research design. The purposive sample intended was to achieve an in-depth understanding of selected individuals (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Purposive sampling provided a deeper understanding of the relationship between African American students, their adjustment to a predominantly White college/university, and their academic success.

Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used in this study to determine perceptions of academic success of African American students on predominantly White community college/university campuses. Quantitative research allowed for the collection and statistical analysis of the characteristics
of the population (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996). Quantitative research also led to
discovery of themes and relationships (Gall et al., 1996).

The role of the researcher as the primary data collector for the study
necessitated a statement of values, assumptions, and biases at the onset of the
study (Creswell, 1994). As the researcher, I submitted the following statement:

My perceptions of being an African American student on a
predominantly White campus were shaped by my personal experiences
as a member of this minority group. I believe my experiences enhanced
my role as the primary researcher of this study. My awareness,
knowledge, and sensitivity to the experiences of African American
students on predominantly White colleges were valuable in the many
challenges and issues encountered while undertaking this research
project. Because of my ethnicity and gender, I brought certain biases to
this study. Although every effort was made to remain objective these
biases shaped the way I viewed, understood, and analyzed data.

To reduce the biases of any preconceived ideas and to safeguard
the interest of those who have a stake in this study, I solicited the
assistance of a panel of experts. I began this research project with the
perception that this study was immense and challenging but necessary
from both personal and professional perspectives.

Panel of Experts

A panel of experts is defined as a group who is qualified to make
judgements and render a professional opinion about a program that is being
evaluated (Dressel, 1976; Ewell, 1983; Guba, & Lincoln, 1981; Rossi et al.,
1979; and Worthen & Sanders, 1973). A panel of five experts was used in this
study to minimize researcher biases; the African American and Caucasian panel
included student services officials who are professionally involved with African
American students at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The panel of
experts work with the retention of African American students. Services include programming activities, counseling, and retention.

This study represents the opinions and the impressions of several administrators, faculty, and staff at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, who are genuinely concerned about and involved in retaining African American students. To further validate this study, the researcher consulted professional educators who have been involved in some aspect of retention at the university. To gather fresh insights drawn from the first hand experiences and observations of African American students indepth interviews were conducted. The central question addressed was, "What factors do you feel have contributed to your success on a predominantly White campus?"

The panel of experts was asked by letter to review the criteria and interview guide for content validity. The panel of experts was asked to make recommendations for any modifications to either document that would assist the researcher in examining factors contributing to academic success of African American students on PWCs. The panel of experts offered no recommendations for modifications and agreed that the evaluation criteria and interview questions were appropriate to measure factors contributing to the success of African American students on PWCs.
Pilot Study

In the fall of 1996, a pilot study was conducted at Walters State Community College. The study included ten African American sophomore students. This evidence, though small, provided an opportunity for students to share their own perspectives. The advantages were further confirmed when participants were free to discuss their feelings. Participants provided data collected through a mail survey. Students received copies of a questionnaire, and one follow-up letter (one week after the questionnaires were mailed). The 10-item questionnaire required approximately 10 minutes to complete and gathered information about students’ concerns. Then, interviews were scheduled and each student was asked to respond to four questions. Each interview lasted approximately 20 minutes. Several comments emerged from the interviews resulting in identification of ten areas of concern of African American students. These same concerns were validated in an earlier study of African American students on predominantly White campuses conducted by Jay & D’Augelli (1991).

Instrumentation

Students classified as sophomores and who were considered successful were scheduled for interviews. Purposive sampling identified five females and five males who were interviewed on each of the four campuses. All interviews were tape recorded.
Seven questions were asked in each interview. Each student was provided an informed consent form to sign explaining the importance of the study. Students were encouraged to qualify answers according to the time the event occurred. Each student was asked the following questions:

1. Describe your academic experiences as an African American on a predominantly White campus.

2. How do you define academic success?

3. Based on your definition of academic success, what perceptions do you have of your academic success?

4. What are the most significant factors contributing to your college success?

5. What support systems (programs) are available to African American students at your institution?

6. Why do you believe African American students drop out of your institution?

7. What do you see as major road blocks for African American students at your institution?

Data Collection Procedures

In the fall of 1998, selected student affairs practitioners at Pellissippi State Community College, Northeast Sate Community College, East Tennessee State University, and The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, were asked to provide names of African American students who were classified as sophomores at their respective institutions. Letters were mailed to minority students explaining the purpose of the study. Dates were finalized to begin the interviews.
at each campus. Student personnel arranged the room location. Participants received an Informed Consent Form describing the nature of the study, and the questions that were to be asked during the interview. Prior to the interview students completed a demographic questionnaire.

**Data Analysis**

Comparative data analysis was used to identify similar and dissimilar elements of respondents' responses. The information gathered from the interviews provided insight into what respondents perceived and how they interpreted their perception of academic success. The information obtained from interviews allowed for the researcher to search for patterns in coding and building new codes, clarifying ideas, and discovering themes (Weiss, 1994). An auditor was used to validate the study by reviewing the interview tapes and examining the demographic information. Validation of data was achieved by triangulation. Triangulation utilizes the process of using multiple data sources, multiple groups to collaborate evidence of case study findings; therefore, eliminating biases that might result by relying exclusively on a one data—collection source (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996).
CHAPTER 4
PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Introduction

In search of a better understanding of the dynamics of minority participation in higher education, scholars and administrators have struggled with the question of what effective strategies can be employed to increase and encourage successful minority participation in higher education. Too often it appears that institutions failed to listen closely to the students themselves. Students’ perceptions about their problem of minority participation in higher education can provide additional insight and may suggest new lines of inquiry that could lead to an increased number of African American students experiencing success on predominantly White campuses (Greene and Wright, 1992).

This study examined perceptions of the college climate among African American students in predominantly White colleges and universities. The assumption was that a minority student’s decision to attend a college and to remain there through graduation is influenced by his or her perceptions of the institution’s cultural and racial environment. Many factors affected college participation rates, some of which may be out of the control of a single higher
education institution. Colleges and universities need to ask this important question: "What are we doing to encourage or discourage minority participation — perhaps without even being aware of it?" Educators and policymakers must be concerned about student attitudes and perceptions, and they must be knowledgeable about the academic and social factors determining those attitudes and perceptions.

**Demographics**

Demographic data obtained from each participant made it possible to generate a profile of the four survey groups, permitting additional understanding of differences or similarities that might exist among groups. Based on average response of all students, the typical survey participant was between the ages of 19 and 40, had parents who graduated from high school, attended college full-time, lived in dormitories or lived at home, as opposed to living in apartments had a self-reported grade-point-average (GPA) in the 2.5 to 4.0 grade range, graduated from a predominantly White high school, and financed his or her education through a combination of loans, scholarships, and parents. The survey respondents were 50% male and 50% female.

**Age Level**

Out of a total of 40 minority students, 6 females and 7 males, were in the 18-19 age range, while 11 females and 5 males were in the 20-21 age range.
There were 3 females and 5 males in 22 - 29 range, and 2 females and 3 males in the 30 to 40 age level (see Table 4 and Figure 1).

Table 4. Age By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency and Percent</th>
<th>18 - 19</th>
<th>20 - 21</th>
<th>22 - 29</th>
<th>30 - 40</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>9 (45%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Age By Gender

College GPA Level

Out of 40 minority students, 8 females' and 5 males' GPAs were in the 2.5 - 3.0 range, while 7 females and 12 males had GPAs in the 3.01 - 3.5 range.
There were 5 females and 3 males in the 3.52-4.0 GPA range (see Table 5 and Figure 2).

Table 5. Grade Point Average By Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>GPA Level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.5-3.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.01-3.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.51-4.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.5-3.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.01-3.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>(60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.51-4.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Grade Point Average By Gender.

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**High School Area**

Out of a total of 40 minority students, 7 females and 3 males graduated from high schools in rural areas, while 6 females and 7 males graduated from suburban high schools. There were 7 females and 10 males who graduated from an urban area (see Table 6 and Figure 3).

**Table 6. High School Location By Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
<td>10 (50%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3. High School Location By Gender**

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Educational Level of Mother

Out of a total of 40 minority students whose there were no females and 2 males, whose mothers had completed less than high school, while in the category of high school education there were 3 males and 3 females. In the category of less than a bachelor's degree, there were 9 females and 7 males, while there were 2 females and 6 males whose mothers had bachelor degrees. Six females and 2 males had mothers with advanced degrees (see Table 7 and Figure 4).

Educational Level of Father

Out of a total of 40 minority students there were 1 female and 1 male, whose fathers had completed less than high school, while in the category of high school education there were 8 females and 7 males. In the category of less than a bachelor's degree, there were 3 females and 3 males, while there were 4 females and 4 males whose fathers had bachelor degree. Four females and 5 males had fathers with advanced degrees (see Table 8 and Figure 5).

Table 7. Gender By Mother’s Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency and Percentage</th>
<th>Mother’s educational level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;HS</td>
<td>HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4. Gender By Mother’s Education

Table 8. Gender By Father’s Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>&lt;HS</th>
<th>HS</th>
<th>&lt;Bach</th>
<th>Bachelor</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5. Gender By Father's Education

Parental Income

Out of a total of 40 minority students 3 females' and 1 male's parents' incomes were in the 20-40 thousand dollar range, while 8 females' and 8 males' parental incomes were in the 40-60 thousand range. There were 9 females and 11 males in the 60 thousand or above range (see Table 9 and Figure 6).

Encouragement

Out of a total of 40 minority students, 20 females' and 18 males' parents encouraged them to attend college, while siblings encouraged no females and 2 males (see Table 10 and Figure 7).
Table 9. Family Income By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>20k - 40k</th>
<th>40k - 60k</th>
<th>&gt;60k</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>8 (15%)</td>
<td>9 (45%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
<td>11 (55%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Family Income By Gender.

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Table 10. Encouragement By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Encouraged by Parents</th>
<th>Encouraged by Sibling</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>18 (90%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. Encouragement By Gender

Living Accommodation

Out of a total of 40 minority students, 4 females and 6 males lived at home, while 13 females and 8 males lived in dormitories. There were 3 females and 6 males who lived in apartments (see Table 11 and Figure 8).
Table 11. Living Accommodation By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Dorm</th>
<th>Apartment</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>13 (65%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8. Living Accommodation By Gender

Reason For Selection of School.

Out of a total of 40 students, 3 females and 5 males were in the category labeled "close to home," while 3 females and 1 male were in the category labeled "could live at home and commute," and 9 females and 7 males selected...
“tuition affordable.” In the category of “financial assistance” there were 2 females and 1 male. There were 3 females and 4 males who chose the institution because of an “academic scholarship.” No females and 2 males selected the institution because of an “athletic scholarship” (see Table 12 and Figure 9).

Table 12. Institutional Selection By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Reason for Selecting School</th>
<th>Close to Home</th>
<th>Commute from Home</th>
<th>Affordable Tuition</th>
<th>Financial Assistance</th>
<th>Academic Scholarship</th>
<th>Athletic Scholarship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>9 (45%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9. Institutional Selection By Gender
**Employment Status.**

Out of the 40 minority students, 6 females and 6 males were not employed, while there were 14 females and 14 males who were employed (see Table 13 and Figure 10).

**Table 13. Employment By Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 10. Employment By Gender**

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Faculty Members at the Institution Care About African American Students.

Out of 40 minority students, no females and no males strongly disagreed that faculty members at their institution cared about African American students, while there were 6 females and 4 males disagreed. Ten females and 9 males were undecided. Four females and 5 males agreed. There were no females and 2 males who strongly agreed (see Table 14 and Figure 11).

Table 14. Answers to Question 1 by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>10 (50%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>20(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>9 (45%)</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>20(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11. Answers to Question 1 by Gender

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There is a faculty member who has been very helpful to me.

Out of the 40 minority students, 1 female and no males strongly disagreed, while there were 1 female and 2 males who disagreed. In the category of undecided there were 2 females and no males, while there were 6 females and 7 in the category of agreed. There were 10 females and 11 males in the category of strongly agreed (see Table 15 and Figure 12).

Table 15. Answer to Question 2 By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>10 (50%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
<td>11 (55%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12. Answer to Question 2 By Gender

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I Feel Comfortable With The Friendships I have Established At This Institution

Out of 40 minority students, no females and 1 male strongly disagreed, while there were 1 female and no males who disagreed. In the category of undecided there were 3 females and 2 males. There were 6 females and 9 males who strongly agreed (see Table 16 and Figure 13).

Table 16. Answer to Question 3 By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>10 (50%)</td>
<td>6 (30%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
<td>9 (45%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13. Answer to Question 3 By Gender

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I Am Involved In Campus Activities

Out of 40 minority students, 3 females and 1 male strongly disagreed, while there were 5 females and 4 males who disagreed. No females and no males were undecided. Five females and 10 males agreed, while there were 7 females and 5 males who strongly agreed (see Table 17 and Figure 14).

Table 17. Question 4 By Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>7 (35%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>4 (20%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>10 (50%)</td>
<td>5 (25%)</td>
<td>20 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14. Answer to Question 4 By Gender

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African American students attending four predominantly White campuses in northeast Tennessee were asked to share their opinions/perceptions of academic success possibilities on their campus. The questions asked uncovered issues relating to their actual experience; their own definitions of success and how they are performing in relation to their success standards; those factors that have contributed to success; as well as those services, attitudes or programs that serve to deter or enhance success at their respective institutions. The institutions represented two two-year and two four-year programs. Each question was examined individually.

**Interview Responses**

**QUESTION #1**

"Describe your academic experiences as an African American on a predominantly White campus?"

Ninety-eight percent of students who were interviewed came from predominantly White high schools. Many indicated that that aspect of college was not really a foreign experience.

"Like high school, but on a larger scale with more people."

"...[N]ot many people treat me differently in white schools than in black schools."

Other feelings varied between positive and negative with most of them being positive. On the positive side the reactions were best summed up in the phrases:

"...[T]hey've gone very well."

"...[W]henever I needed help...I wouldn't have to wait, being that I was the only black in my class."
"[A]nd to tell you the truth, shockingly, my experiences have been alright."

"I feel like I'm equal. If I have any problems, they (the instructors) look at you as an equal... they take extra time out to help me."

"I think black students have pretty much the same opportunity as whites here on this campus."

"[A]cademic experiences here for me have been varied... but overall I feel that it is a good one and a diverse one, which I need."

"I think just as a student here, not just as an African American student. I am happy with the friendships I've made and a lot of the experiences that I have had."

"I've felt welcome. I've met some nice white people in classes and we've gotten together and studied for tests and stuff."

On the negative side:

"It's sort of a belonging and not belonging situation here... it's not that sense of ownership as you sort of pick up from you white counterparts here."

"It has been a challenging experience... to get used to being in a predominantly white campus because it's a predominantly white world."

"[W]hat I dealt with most on campus is the stereotyping."

"I found that my first semester was my hardest because I did not have anyone to show me the things that I needed to do."

**QUESTION #2**

"How do you define academic success?"

These responses centered around normal responses, grades, GPA, gaining useful knowledge, accomplishing goals, working and performing to the best of their ability.

"Accomplishing my goals!"
“Trying to do the best you can do.”

“...actually setting a goal and then sit down and make yourself do it.”

“...doing well in your classes, being a responsible student, being a mentor to younger students...just being a well-rounded person.”

“Personal growth and that's measured in many kinds of ways. If I feel that I have mastered some information, then that's academic success to me.”

“Getting what you want out of college.”

“...doing the best that you can.”

“By getting good grades.”

**QUESTION #3**

“Based on your definition of academic success, what perceptions do you have of your academic success”

Again, many positive attitudes exist. They seem to indicate that they are working hard and it is making a difference for them. Some, however, admitted that they may not be working to their full potential.

“I'm very pleased... I'm working hard... I'm doing the best that I can do. I don't have any big disappointments.”

“I have to prioritize, keep everything in perspective, keep everything in order. It all goes back to hard work and determination.”

“I'm proud of myself... I'm comfortable and I'm staying focused and on track with my goals.”

“To myself, I'll never be satisfied but I'm always striving for that end of the road.”

“...going very well right now. I know I can do better, but...”

“I've just learned an abundance of information.”

“Knowledge.”
"The courses I am studying are working toward that goal to better myself."

"I think I'm doing great!"

"Yes, I feel like I've been successful because I have a strong mind and a positive attitude that I want to (succeed)."

QUESTION #4

"What are the most significant factors that have contributed to your academic success?"

There were common themes across all responses. Those themes centered on:

- Faith;
- Family (Mother, Father, Siblings, Spouse);
- Friends;
- Faculty;
- Staff;
- Self;
- Peers; and
- Seeing others with struggles work hard and succeed.

Whatever the motivator, all seemed to be pushing that envelope for success.

"...[M]y mother."

"...[D]esire to want to achieve and to want to be better for myself."

"Praying, my husband, and Dr. Barrows."

"...people around me and teachers."

"I am determined... to finish college no matter what, no matter how many years it takes me."

"...[K]nowing that my parents didn't, weren't able to have the same experiences, that I have the opportunity to do something that they weren't able to do."

"...[M]y willingness to succeed."

"Parental pressure, our culture (heritage to succeed)."
"...[E]ncouraging parents...with the help of God."

"God, to pray, studying."

"Self-motivated."

"I guess self-drive."

"My parents and my family are very supportive...my advisor...and one (special) professor."

"My own sense of stick-to-it-tiveness, my vision for the future, and self-motivation...and the support system I have at home."

"...[M]y parents just instilled in me to have drive and determination and just strive for your goals."

**QUESTION #5.**

"What support systems or programs are available to African American students at your institution?"

The reactions ran along school size lines. The four-year institutions seemed to have more support than the two-year schools. However, it appears that none of the schools has a significant support system in place.

**Four-year institution responses:**

"If you look you can find them."

"But you have to make the initiative to go and get involved in order to know what's on campus."

"I think that we've got a lot of stuff that can be done."

"I feel there are none at all. There are some, but there need to be a lot more."

"African American students are given opportunities where there are some special tutorial programs that are mainly geared towards helping the African American student."
Two-year institution responses:

"None, except for financial aid and academic tutoring."

"I know there are some."

"Everything that's available to the white students...if we just know where they are."

"Not that I know of."

"Not that I'm aware of."

"Minority grant, single homemaker programs, financial aid."

"...(just ) [T]he staff."

"Not much."

"As far as I know, none."

QUESTION #6

"Why do you believe African American students drop out of your institution?"

These responses ran the range from possible racism to financial issues, lack of self-discipline to location, lack of maturity to lack of desire.

"I think we are the underdogs because the professor knows your background."

"...[R]acism and white supremacy..."

"...[S]ome teachers around here are in-the-closet racists."

"...[W]e're different than the rest of them."

"They didn't feel like they belonged."

"A sense of feeling isolated...they feel they are not wanted."

"...[F]inancial – with the increase in the tuition."

"Money would be a big factor."
“Financial...transportation and need for childcare.”

“Curriculum is not for kids.”

“The work here was just a little too hard...”

“Academics...they had a hard time.”

“...[T]hey just weren’t ready to come.”

“African American students are just not ready for that commitment to college and being on time to class, doing your work, and getting good grades.”

“...[D]on’t find it very stimulating.”

“...[L]ack of effort and they didn’t have the right motives for coming to school.”

“...[B]ecause they were, like, drug dealers.”

“Most of them just give up and take the easy road.”

“As an academic challenge...they may have a fear.”

“Not used to the responsibility...”

**QUESTION #7**

“What do you see as major roadblocks for African American students at your institution?”

Responses were split almost evenly between seeing roadblocks and not seeing them. Again, it followed similar patterns associated with the previous question.

“Racism, if you let it get to you.”

“I haven’t really seen any major roadblocks. I get the same opportunities as the white students get.”

“There could be more African American professors.”
"Not really because, to me, going to school is what you make you make out of it."

"I find that this campus is diverse and it's not for everybody."

"Once you become overwhelmed, not doing anything about it, trying to use that as an excuse."

"One roadblock I see is having to keep up with other students."

"Finances."

"African American students don't take advantage of the opportunities that they do have, and they limit themselves or they don't live up to their personal potential."

"I wouldn't really say that I see roadblocks..."

"...[P]eople who have a negative thought about black individuals."

"Not getting the help that is needed."

"Old-line prejudices that have existed forever."

"I think it's a lack of diversity."

"They don't have any support."

"No, I think it's a great opportunity."

"Transportation."

"It kind of begins with yourself."

"I don't see any. Based on my experiences, I don't see any."

"Some teachers don't really care."

"..[C]ould be more groups to help build up self-esteem."

"[M]ental preparation for college."

"Needs to be more African American faculty."

"Needs to be more activities geared toward the black people."
"I don't see any roadblocks if the students are willing to apply
themselves...help is available all over the campus ."

Summary of Findings

Question 1 on the interview asked respondents to "Describe your
academic experiences as an African American on a predominantly White
campus." All 39 respondents (98%) had come from predominantly White high
schools. Respondents, therefore, did not perceive being on a predominantly
White college campus as a foreign experience. Typical responses included the
following:

— I feel like I'm equal -- institutions look at you as an equal
— A good experience and a diverse one
— I feel welcome
— Stereotyping
— Challenge experience
— First semester was my hardest, there was no one to show me the
things I needed to know

Indications are that most of the experiences of the student respondents
fell into the range of "expected" perceptions. Two perceptions, however, were
unexpected: (1) perceptions of being stereotyped so strongly, and (2) the
feeling that there was a lack of persons available upon arrival on campus to
direct students toward the activities that they needed to do initially. African
American students in predominantly White institutions consciously gauged and
postponed the level and intensity of their social, personal, emotional and cultural
development. It appears that these respondents realized that it was beneficial to
matriculate at their institutions. On the other hand, these respondents
experienced some personal frustration with the lack of preparedness of their
colleges and universities to provide services and programs in response to their
diverse needs.

For Question 2, student respondents were asked to “Define academic
success.” Typical responses as summarize, included:

— Accomplishing goals
— Trying to do the best you can
— Being a responsible student
— Being a mentor to a younger student
— Getting good grades

Each of the above responses represent an expected perception, with the
exception of being a mentor to a younger student.

Question 3 sought to identify respondents’ personal perceptions of
reasons for academic success. Typical responses were along the lines of
expected perception and included:

— Prioritize
— I’ll never be satisfied
— Strong mind and a positive attitude

Question 4 sought to identify “Factors contributing to these academic
successes.” This question generated the widest range of responses, yet all fell
into the range of "expected" perceptions, as suggested by the literature. These responses included:

- Faith
- Family
- Friends
- Staff
- Self
- Peers
- Seeing others struggle, work hard and succeed

The questions about factors contributing to their success evoked responses that indicated the importance of spirituality. Examples of statements that indicated that spiritual beliefs contributed to their success are:

- Praying
- With the help of God
- God, to pray

These respondents were aware that faith in God and family were strong factors and also realized that these two factors alone did not sustain them. They reported that the need for good study habits, self-discipline, motivation, prior knowledge and experience, good orientation, positive attitude, belief in self, desire to learn, ambition, and time management were significant factors.

Additional responses included:

- Support systems I have at home
— Determined to finish regardless of the number of years it takes
— Knowing that my parents didn’t, I have the opportunity to do something they were not able to do.
— Friends
— Self-motivated
— One special professor
— Parents instilled in me to have drive, determination and to set goals
— Strong heritage to succeed

The African American student's cultural heritage includes continued support and encouragement from the immediate family, the extended family, and friends from the home community. These respondents clearly indicated that the strength of this support from family and friends played a vital role in their college success. These feelings were reflected in the respondents' comments about factors that college success was attributed to “family support,” “thoughts of success,” “thoughts of making my family and community proud,” and “thoughts of close friends in the home community.”

Grade point averages reported by the respondents included a number of students who placed themselves in the 3.0 - 4.0 range. Of this number 7 (35%) of females reported GPAs in the 3.01-3.5 range, while 12 (60%) of the males reported the same. Five (25%) of the females reported a GPA range of 3.51-4.0, while 3 (15%) of the males reported GPAs in this range.
As it relates to factors that were perceived to contribute to the respondents' success, family played a significant role. In summary the following findings were recorded:

- Mothers of nine females' (45%) had less than a bachelor's degree
- Mothers of seven males' (35%) had less than a bachelor's degree
- Mothers of two females' (10%) had bachelor's degree
- Mothers of six males' (30%) had advanced degrees
- Mothers of six females' (30%) had advanced degrees
- Mothers of two males' (10%) had advanced degrees
- Fathers of three females' (15%) had less than a bachelor's degree
- Fathers of three males' (15%) had less than a bachelor's degree
- Fathers of four females' (20%) had bachelor's degrees
- Fathers of four males' (20%) had bachelor's degrees
- Fathers of four females' (20%) had advanced degrees
- Fathers of five males' (25%) had advanced degrees

Twenty-four (60%) of the respondents' mothers held bachelor's or advanced degrees, indicating that respondents were at least second generation college students. Thirty-four (85%) of the respondents' fathers had earned bachelor's or advanced degrees. The largest majority of the respondents were second-generation college students. All twenty (100%) of the female respondents said they had been encouraged by their families to attend college, while 90% of the male respondents reported they had been encouraged to do so. It can be inferred, in part, that family had been the primary factor in
encouragement to attend, in that none (0%) of the respondents reported teachers or counselors as having encouraged them to attend college. Since family income was high, books and other educational incentives and opportunities were made available to these respondents.

Family socioeconomic status (SES) also offers some insight into encouragement towards academic success. Indications are that 9 (45%) of the females had a family income of $60,000 or more, and 11 (55%) of the males came from families within this range. Eight (40%) of the females and 8 (40%) of the males came from families in the income range of $40,000 - $60,000 dollars per year. Sixty percent (14/14) of both male and female respondents said they were employed while attending school.

For Question 5, on support systems or programs, the study sought to assess the availability of support systems and programs, both inside and outside respondents' respective institutions. These responses were typical of the four-year institutions:

— If you look, you can find them.
— I feel there are none at all
— There are some, but there needs to be a lot more
— Special tutorial programs geared toward African American students

There seems to be an indication that students at the four-year institution believed that support mechanisms were in place, but are few in number. Some respondents felt that none were in place.
At two-year institutions, the response ranges were similar. However, there seemed to be more of a lack of awareness of the availability of such support. These responses represent two-year schools:

— None, except for financial aid and academic tutoring
— None that I know of
— Not much
— As far as I know, none.

In the area of perceived faculty support, none (0%) of the females strongly agreed that faculty members at their institutions cared about African American students. While 10 (50%) were undecided, 10 (50%) did strongly agree that at least one faculty member had been very helpful (see Table 15). This compares with 2 (10%) of the males who strongly agreed that faculty members cared about African American students, and 11 (55%) of the males who strongly agreed that at least one faculty member had been helpful.

Perceived friendships and involvement in campus activities were equally distributed between males and females. Ten females (50%) agreed they felt comfortable with friendships established at their institutions, as opposed to 8 (40%) of the males. While no females reported feeling uncomfortable with their friendships, they had established at their institutions, 1 (5%) male strongly disagreed that he felt uncomfortable with friendships at his institution (see Table 16). As it relates to involvement in campus activities 5 (25%) of males were involved in campus activities, and 7 (35%) of the females were involved (see Table 17).
For Question 6, "Why do African American students drop out?", a range of responses was recorded that included the following:

- We are the underdogs, because the professor knows our background
- Racism and White supremacy
- Some teachers are in-the-closet racists
- Feeling isolated and unwanted
- Fear
- Increased Tuition
- Not used to the responsibility
- The work here was just a little too hard.

Of these responses, seven were expected from the literature. These responses go to perceived prejudicial mind-sets, of instructors, and to other forms of subtle racism that resulted in feelings of persecution and isolation. The two unexpected responses were the perceived difficulty level of the work and the rigors of responsibility. These respondents were preoccupied with basic issues of intellectual survival. These respondents discussed feelings of alienation, sensed hostility, some racial discrimination and a lack of total integration.

Consistent with accumulated evidence on human development, African American students, like most human beings, develop best in environments where they feel valued, protected, accepted, and socially connected, and a sense that “This is our campus.”

Examples of this realization appear in statements of loneliness and isolation:
— They didn’t feel like they belonged
— A sense of being isolated . . . they feel like they are not wanted
— We’re different than the rest of them
— As an academic challenge . . . they may have a fear.

Question 7 dealt with other perceived roadblocks to academic success on predominantly White campuses. These responses were recorded:
— Racism
— I haven’t seen any roadblocks
— Same opportunities as White students
— More African American professors
— Keeping up with other students
— Finances
— Not getting the help that is needed
— Old-line prejudices
— I don’t see any
— Some teachers really don’t care
— Mental preparation for college
— More activities geared toward the Black people

Help is available all over the campus. These responses represent a normal range that could be expected from the literature. The only response that might not be expected was “Not getting the help that is needed.”
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions drawn from the literature and from the findings of the study are as follows:

1. The selection of students who were deemed "successful" for participants in this study predetermined that they would not be typical of African American students on the four institutional campuses. Thirty-six of the 40 participants (90%) responded their family incomes as $40,000 or higher. Twenty-four (60%) reported that their mothers had earned at least bachelor's degrees, and 34 (85%) reported that their fathers had earned bachelor's or higher degrees. Thirty-eight (95%) of the participating students reported that they had been encouraged by family members to attend college.

Clearly the majority of African American students who participated in the study were above average — for both Black and White students — in terms of parental income and educational levels. To the degree that colleges and universities can develop polices and procedures that provide off-setting advantages for other less fortunate African American students, those institutions are likely to increase recruitment and retention of African American students.
2. Participants reported that their own perceptions of campus racial climate were mixed, but more positive than would have been expected for a more representative cross-section of African American students. Participating students also reported their own perceptions that African American students who dropped out had experienced more isolation and increased fear of a lack of belonging than was true of the participating successful students.

3. The role of religion and spiritual development are two related dimensions that were important to African American students in their studies. For these respondents, religion not only remained an important activity throughout their college years, but the church had been an important support system for these students away from home.

4. The respondents in this study related how historical, cultural, social, and psychological factors were a part of their success. Further they related how their academic integration and social integration were highly correlated predictors of their attrition rate. Seven (35%) of the females and 5 (25%) of the males reported involvement in campus activities. As reported in the literature, high social integration was a precondition for high academic performance, and the combination of these factors assured student retention. Participants in this study were able to maintain high academic performance despite experiencing some degree of social alienation or disconnection.

5. Some predominantly White colleges and universities have established support systems and/or programs for African American students. Respondents
in this study reported that systems and/or programs existed but felt the need for predominantly White colleges to increase services. The nature of support programs of these campuses exacerbates their fear of segregation and prejudice and their perceptions of double standards and quality. Respondents in this sample reported perceived poor organization, university apathy, and superficial programming as typical of some support programs. Respondents in this study suggested that Blacks who attend predominantly White colleges and universities must be self-starters who are fully independent persons with strong defenses to combat stereotyping, fears, alienation, and loneliness.

6. Respondents in this study concluded that they would like to see increased numbers African American faculty and administrators, as also was indicated in the literature. It has been suggested that the student-faculty relationship, which is the core of academic integration, is a mutually reciprocal and dynamic one. In this study, according to the respondents, the relationship between academic integration and college achievement was not strong at all among the four institutions. These respondents reported that academic integration was required for their success, and suggested a need for predominantly White institutions to provide greater integration of African American students into the academic mainstream of college life.

7. Male respondents presented concerns that dealt with emotional reliance, coping resources, and negative experiences from life events. Their academic success seemed to require greater emotional self-reliance and coping
skills than was the case for female respondents. The literature recognizes that the reluctance of African American male students to seek campus counseling services, as well as a need for peer/mentor support, can lead to the development of emotional self-reliance.

8. The female respondents in this study reported that coping with the educational requirements was essential for academic success. This conclusion suggests that high levels of motivation (attitudes towards academic goals, course work, and educational purpose), efforts (hard work, diligent effort) and satisfaction with the academic environment were related to high levels of academic success. In this study Black women had developed greater internality than was the case for Black men. The respondents in this study were resilient and strong, yet flexible and adaptable. At the same time, these respondents had no illusion about society's willingness to afford them equal status. They recognized prejudices and stereotypes, but they were also able to develop coping strategies to overcome those obstacles.

**Recommendations for Improved Practice**

1. College and university administrators and faculty must recognize campus climate as an issue and set the tone and pace for efforts to recruit and retain minority students and recognize that these issues concern everyone on campus.
2. Cultural awareness training or staff development should be available to administrators and faculty. Training should also be provided to staff and para professionals who frequently are the students' first contacts with an institution and who initially have more contact with students than faculty.

3. Administrators, faculty, and student services personnel need to develop more ways of determining which African American students do not feel they "belong" on their campuses, to permit timely and corrective intervention.

4. Based on the African American students' feelings of "not belonging," corrective interventions should be developed to foster an inclusive atmosphere rather than an exclusive one.

5. Tutoring should be offered to all African American and White students.

6. Both White and African American faculty members should be recruited to attempt to provide mentoring to African American students.

7. More and better financial aid programs should be developed that address the needs of African American students, whose income, unlike the students in this study, would result in increased black participation in higher education, particularly by Black males.

8. African American and White faculty members should be involved more extensively in the processes of African American student recruitment and retention.
Recommendations for Further Research

1. Annual surveys should be conducted nationally regarding African American students on predominantly White campuses to determine their beliefs and attitudes about succeeding on predominantly White campuses.

2. A national study of the matriculation of African American students on predominantly White campuses should be conducted to allow predominantly White institutions to develop strategies for increasing African American students' achievement and retention.
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APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Letter to Panel of Experts
2559 Brooks Road  
Knoxville, TN 37914  
November 2, 1998  

Dear  

As a part of my research for the Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the College of Education at East Tennessee State University, I am preparing to conduct a study of perceptions of factors associated with academic success among African American students on four predominantly white campuses in Northeast Tennessee. I am requesting that you serve on the panel based on your expertise and experience in working with African American students on your campus.  

Enclosed is a copy of the instrument for your convenience. Changes in the instrument will be made in accordance with your recommendations.  

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this study. I will appreciate receiving your responses as soon as possible.  

Sincerely,  

Jean Morgan Harper  

Enclosure
APPENDIX B
Letter to Student Service Personnel
Dear Colleague;

You have been identified by your institution as having direct contact and responsibility for African American students on your campus. Your institution recognizes the work you have done with these students and for this reason I am asking for your assistance.

I am conducting a study of factors associated with academic success among successful African American students on predominantly White campuses in Northeast Tennessee as a part of the requirement of a Doctor of Education degree. To gain a better understanding of the African American students' perceptions, I am requesting that you identify five male and five female students from your institution to participate in a personal interview. The interview will provide an opportunity for successful participants to share their impressions about factors that have contributed to their success. Information collected from the interviews will be analyzed and presented in my dissertation. Total confidentiality is assured no names or other information will be used that might jeopardize a participant's privacy. Each interview should take approximately one hours.

This study has been approved by East Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board of Projects Involving Human Subjects. Thank you for reviewing my request. I will greatly appreciate your assistance and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Jean Morgan Harper
Doctoral Student
East Tennessee State University
APPENDIX C

Informed Consent
INFORMED CONSENT

This is to certify that I agree to participate as a volunteer in a scientific investigation conducted by Jean Morgan Harper, under the direction of Dr. Terry Tollefson, in the department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, at East Tennessee State University.

The investigation and my participation in the study have been described to me. I understand that the basic nature of this research involves my answering questions concerning factors associated with my success on my campus. I am aware that I must have earned a total of 30 hours or more college credit hours to participate in this study.

I understand that a code rather than my name or the name of my institution will be associated with my responses. The anonymous information I provide will not be conveyed to the others in any manner that reveals my personal identify or my institution. Data captured from the interviews will be kept only as long as necessary to complete any dissertation requirement. I have been given the opportunity to ask further questions and know that I can do so during the course of the interview.

I am aware that I am under no obligation to participate in the study. I am also aware that I may withdraw my participation at any time without penalty or prejudice.

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Terry Tollefson, ELPA

A copy of this consent form has been offered to me.

Date ____________________________  Participant Signature ____________________________
APPENDIX D

Demographic Questionnaire
In an effort to better understand factors which have contributed to your college success and your perceptions of your academic success, please complete the following questionnaire. Do not add your own answer. Please limit your responses to answer choices available.

Part I. Personal Data
Female_______ Male_______
Age_______
Check the area in which your school is located
Urban (population 100,000+)_______
Suburban (population 10,000-100,000)_____
Rural (population less than 10,000)________

Part II. Parental Information
Please check the appropriate line.
Highest educational level of mother.
_______ less than high school
_______ high school graduate
_______ some college
_______ bachelor's degree
_______ advanced degree

Highest educational level of father.
_______ less than high school
_______ high school graduate
_______ some college
_______ bachelor's degree
_______ advanced degree

Approximate parental income last year.
_______ $0——$19,999
_______ $20,000——$39,999
_______ $40,000——$59,999
_______ $60,000—or above.

Part III. Person(s) who encouraged you to attend college. Rank the top 3 choices with 1 being most significant and three being least significant.
_______ My parent(s) encouraged me to go to college.
_______ My brother(s) and/or sister(s) encouraged me to go to college.
_______ My friend(s) encouraged me to go to college.
_______ My high school teacher(s) encouraged me to pursue a college education.
_______ My high school counselor(s) encouraged me to pursue a college education.
_______ My high school principal or assistant principal(s) encouraged me to pursue a college education.
_______ My teachers encouraged me to pursue a college degree.
Part IV. Living Accommodations.

________ live at home with parents.
________ live in a college dorm.
________ rent an apartment.
________ rent a room.

Part V. Selection of This Institution
Please check (✓) the appropriate line(s) that best describe your reason(s) for selecting this school. Rank on a scale from 1 - 6, with 1 being the most significant and 6 being the least significant.

________ close to home
________ could live at home and commute
________ tuition was affordable
________ financial assistant was available (grants, loans, work study)
________ received an academic scholarship
________ received an athletic scholarship
________ parents attended this school

Part VI. Employment Status
Are you currently employed for pay?

_____yes  _____no

Part VII. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Indicate the number to which you agree or disagree.

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

________ Faculty members at this institution care about African American students
________ There is a faculty member who has been very helpful to me.
________ I feel comfortable with the friendships I have established at this institution.
________ I am involved in campus activities.
APPENDIX E

Interview Questions
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe your academic experiences as an African American on a predominantly White campus.

2. How do you define academic success?

3. Based on your definition of academic success, what perceptions do you have of your academic success?

4. What are the most significant factors contributing to your college success?

5. What support systems (programs) are available to African American students at your institution?

6. Why do you believe African American students drop out of your institution?

7. What do you see as major roadblocks for African American students at your institution?
Address: 2559 Brooks Road SE
Knoxville, TN 37914

Education: Knoxville College, Knoxville, TN; B.S. in Sociology/Psychology, 1967
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
M.S. Educational Psychology Guidance & Counseling, 1976
East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN
Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, 1999

Professional Experience:
Counselor Knox County Community Action Committee; 1967 -1976
Guidance Counselor, Knox County Board of Education; 1976 - 1979
Guidance Counselor In-Industry; Knoxville TN Chamber of Commerce (Internship) 1979
EEO/AA Trainer, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA); Knoxville, TN, 1979 - 1980
Personnel Staff Officer, TVA; Knoxville, TN, 1980 - 1982
EOC Investigator, TVA, Knoxville, TN, 1982 - 1982
Program Director/Parent Involvement, Knoxville Community Development Corporation; Knoxville, TN, 1982 - 1983
Counselor, Knoxville Area Urban League, Knoxville, TN, 1983 - 1983
Counselor, Youth Service — USA/Knoxville, Knoxville, TN, 1983 - 1985
Adjunct Faculty, State Technical Institute, Knoxville, TN, 1985 - 1986
Instructor/Police Recruit, Walters State Community College; Morristown, TN, 1986 - 1991
Coordinator Assessment/Counselor, Walters State Community College Morristown, TN, 1985 - 1992
Director Minority Development, Walters State Community College, Morristown, TN, 1992 - Present

Consultant Experience:
Knox County Schools — Conducted workshop on Self-Concept
TVA Federal Women's Program, Future Woman Assertiveness
Mid-Appalachian Women's Development Center Program Manager for Multiple Roles
Volunteer Service
Tutor math and reading for elementary schools and neighboring schools
Provide emotional support for terminally ill patients and their families at local hospitals

Honorarium:
Received Outstanding Service Award from the Mayor of Knoxville in 1984.
Member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society