WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT SUMMER YOUTH ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPANTS' WORK ETHIC AND CAREER MATURITY

by

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Under the direction of Helen C. Hall

ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine if the work ethic attributes and career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth in Workforce Investment Act Summer Youth Activities was affected by participation in the program. Social Cognitive Career Theory provided the theoretical framework for the study. The participants for this study included 41 students who were placed on jobs in the community and 24 students who were assigned to an occupational-based classroom program. Work ethic attributes were measured using the Occupational Work Ethic Inventory. These attributes were defined as consisting of interpersonal skills, initiative, and being dependable. Based on the mean score from the OWEI, both groups indicated their work attributes of interpersonal skills, initiative, and dependability, as usually or almost always descriptive of them. Career maturity was measured using the Career Maturity Inventory. Findings on the test administered after participation differed from pretest scores. Results for the OWEI interpersonal skills and dependability subscales indicated statistically significant differences of practical significance. A comparison of the career maturity of participants in work-based employment to the participants of classroom-based experiences as measured by the CMI Attitude scale and Competence test indicated statistically significant differences of practical importance existed between the two groups.

INDEX WORDS: Work Ethic, Career Maturity, Occupational Work Ethic Inventory Career Maturity Inventory, Disadvantaged Youth, Workforce Investment Act

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DEDICATION

I would like to take this time to dedicate this dissertation to the people in my life who have made this accomplishment possible. I never would have dreamed of pursuing my doctorate if it were not for my wonderful husband, Dan, who has stood by me and supported me along the way. His love, encouragement, and understanding have been my stronghold. His smile and laughter have given me the strength to go on when I often wanted to stop. My children, Melia and Makimsey, have had to endure many sacrifices over the years, but through it all, they always said I was the greatest mom of all. No matter how late I came in or how many hours I spent on the computer, they always said, "I love you, mom", at the end of the evening.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

First initiated as a response to the unemployment created by the recession of the early 1960s, job-training programs are designed to provide individuals with adequate preparation and qualifications to sustain employment to move toward economic self-sufficiency (Kazis & Kopp, 1997). The first job-training program, Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA), was initiated in 1962. MDTA trained and retrained employed and underemployed individuals. During the 1970s, the Comprehensive Employment Act (CETA) replaced MDTA. The CETA initiative re-routed the power of guidance and gave local administrative units greater decision-making power over the types of training provided, the nature of the individuals served, and the institutions offering training and services (Grubb, 1995). CETA decentralized planning and programming by giving local administrative units decision- making and assigning little authority to state governments (Bullock, 1985).

A resurgence of state government activity occurred in the 1980s as state legislators and governors asserted to play a larger role in the issues of education and training. Initiatives of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act had strayed from support of youth oriented programs; employers exhibited high levels of discontent over youth's lack of preparedness for the world or work, and states were threatened with economic backlash by the poor quality of K-12 education were all driving concerns for more state involvement (Kaufman & Wills, 1999). Pressured by President Regan's desire to eliminate programs, reduce federal spending, upgrade K-12 education, and the drive to retrain current employees, Congress enacted the Job Training Partnership Act (JPTA) of 1982, which replaced the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act.

JTPA gave states the authority to designate local service areas and establish priorities for use of federal grant monies in areas that promote comprehensive work ethic and career maturity skills aimed at developing necessary work place skills so that participants could acquire and maintain suitable employment. JTPA remained a federal program emphasizing local service areas to meet outcomes of specific performance standards (Grubb, 1995). JTPA existed for 17 years leading up to today with the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 (Public Law 105-220) provides the framework for a unique national workforce preparation and employment system designed to meet both the needs of the nation's businesses and the needs of potential employees who want to begin or further their career journey through life (Employment and Training Administration, 1998). WIA is divided into five Titles designed to empower the nation's jobseekers. The legislation is based on the following elements:

1. Training and employment programs must be designed and managed at the local level where the needs of businesses and individuals are best understood.
2. Customers must be able to conveniently assess the employment, education, training, and information services they need at a single location in their neighborhoods.
3. Customers should have choices in deciding the training program that best fit their needs and the organizations that will provide that service. They should control their own career development.
4. Customers have a right to information about how well training provides success in preparing people for jobs. Training providers will provide information on their success rates.
5. Businesses will provide information and leadership and play an active role in ensuring that the system prepares people for current and future jobs.

Title I of WIA authorizes the new Workforce Investment System. States will develop individual five-year strategic plans, while Governors will designate local needs and oversee local workforce investment boards. Part of WIA authorizes youth councils as a subgroup of the local boards to guide the development and operation of programs for youth (Employment and Training Administration, 1998). A summer work component is included and designed to work with youth to develop the importance of work ethic to assist them in becoming more productive employees. Naylor (1988) defined career maturity as a set of behaviors and attitudes such as honesty, dependability, and pride in one's work. The constructs of career maturity are influenced by factors such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (Kerka, 1998). Title III of WIA authorizes that customers should have choices in deciding the training program that best fit their needs and the organizations that will provide that service. They should control their own career development. The summer work component of WIA includes exploring and processing information related to careers, and subjecting participants to a realistic view of career goals that lead to a career interest pattern compatible with interest and values.

Purpose of Study

Job training programs are federally funded and have included developing work ethic and work skills in America's economically disadvantaged youth as a focal point (Grubb, 1995). However, despite the millions of dollars invested in such programs as Manpower Development Training Act, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, the Job Training Partnership Act, and the Workforce Investment Act, there is very little evidence of program effectiveness. Critics say that the program wastes federal resources on make-work jobs. They argue that federal dollars might be better spent on tax incentives for private businesses to hire more low-income teenagers who have developed a positive work ethic (Sommerfeld, 1995). Therefore, the purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to determine if the work ethic attributes and career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth participants in the WIA Summer Youth Activities

differed after participation in the program. Work ethic attributes were defined as consisting of interpersonal skills, initiative, and being dependable, and were measured using the Occupational Work Ethic Inventory (OWEI; Petty, 1993). Career maturity is fundamental to understanding career behavior and involves an assessment of an individual's level of readiness to make informed, age-appropriate career decisions (Patton & Creed, 2001). The Career Maturity Inventory (CMI; Crites, 1995) assesses career maturity. The CMI uses two sub-tests, the Attitude scale and the Competence test, to express career choice processes and career choice content.

Research Questions

The research questions of this study were as follows:

1. What are the descriptive properties of the work ethic of economically disadvantaged youth at enrollment and after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities as measured by the OWEI?
2. What are the descriptive properties of the level of career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth at enrollment and after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities according to the Attitude scale and Competence test of the CMI?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of economically disadvantaged youth on the OWEI after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities?
4. Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of economically disadvantaged youth on the CMI Attitude scale and Competence test after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities?

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical approaches that describe career development behavior and theories of learning are widely used and accepted to conceptualize purposeful career counseling, career education, career guidance, and career intervention programs such as the WIA. Career development theories used to describe disadvantaged youth in the United States have traditionally been derived from research on predominately white middle-class individuals. It has been the assumption that the factors used to predict the career development of the majority students, would apply to the minority racial, ethnic, and cultural groups as well (Fisher & Griggs, 1995). The use of the majority student criteria to establish career profiles of all students has created a jaded and limited path of the career needs of the minority student. With increasing numbers of diverse youth entering the workforce, there is a critical need to have an understanding of how minorities develop their career identity, which includes their work ethic, knowledge of occupations and options, and career decision-making strategies (Fisher & Griggs, 1995; Wentling & Waight, 1999).

Chartrand and Rose (1996) suggest that there is a tremendous need for theory-based career development interventions that take the needs and concerns of economically and occupationally disadvantaged persons into consideration. After reviewing several theories, the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) was deemed appropriate because within it's theoretical framework it provides for an understanding of the impact of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and environmental factors as they relate to career decisions and success (Hill & Rojweski, 1999).

The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) developed by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1996) introduced a view of career development from a social cognitive perspective. The authors, through this perspective, attempted to reveal complex connections between individuals and their career-related contexts, between interpersonal and cognitive factors, and between externally imposed influences and self-directed

influences on career behavior (Lent et al.). The social cognitive framework for developing this career theory derives primarily from Bandura's general social cognitive theory. This framework features the variables of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals as a means of guiding individuals to define their own career development. Additionally, aptitudes, work values (Hill & Rojewski, 1999), and the manor in which the variables of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals interrelate with other aspects of an individual such as age, gender, and environmental influences are considered in the process of career development (Lent & Brown, 1996).

Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's ability to conceptualize his or her organization and execution of courses of actions necessary to attain desired levels of performance. Self-efficacy derives from four principle sources of information: personal performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, verbal and social persuasion, and physiological states and reactions. These sources of information are instrumental in creating an individual's self-beliefs that are specific to particular performance domains that interact with other people, behavior, environmental, and contextual factors. Personal accomplishments are viewed as having the greatest influence on self-efficacy, although the effects of the informational sources depend on how they are patterned with learning and are processed cognitively (Albert & Luzzo, 1999; Lent & Brown, 1996). The authors, through this perspective, attempted to reveal complex connections between individuals and their career-related contexts, between interpersonal and cognitive factors, and between externally imposed influences and self-directed influences on career behavior (Lent et al.). The social cognitive framework for developing this career theory comes primarily from Bandura's general social cognitive theory. This framework features the variables of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals as a means of guiding individuals to define their own career development. Additionally, aptitudes, work values (Hill & Rojewski, 1999), and the manner in which the variables of

self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals interrelate with other aspects of an individual such as age, gender, and environmental influences are considered in the process of career development (Lent & Brown, 1996).

Self-efficacy was defined as people's judgment in reference to their ability to organize and carry out courses of action that will result in desired performances. These beliefs are required and persuaded by four principles of learning: performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal (Albert & Luzzo, 1999). Organization within a particular learning context and how they are processed cognitively determine the specific effects of these principles of learning on one's self-efficacy. Research has shown personal performance accomplishments as having the greatest influence on self-efficacy as it tends to rise with successful experiences (Lent et al., 1996).

Outcome expectations refer to the personal beliefs about the possible outcome of engagement in a certain behavior. These expectations are greatly influenced by imagined consequences of particular behaviors. As a result, outcome expectations play a major role in encouraging certain behaviors. These behaviors are affected by an individual's sense of personal capabilities and by their envisioned consequence of outcomes (Lent & Brown, 1996).

Personal goals may be defined as the determination to engage in a certain behavior or activity or to effect a predetermined future outcome (Albert & Luzzo, 1999). Personal goals assert themselves through an individual's desire to organize, guide, and sustain their own efforts, and become an important means through which people exercise personal agency (Lent & Brown, 1996). The social cognitive framework conceptualizes career related interests based on three interlocking, segmental models that are based on interest, choice, and performance.

Significance of Study

This study measured the influence of participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities on work ethic and career maturity for economically disadvantaged youth in Clarke County of the northeast Georgia region as measured by the OWEI and the CMI before and after participation in the four-week program. Participation in this program was designed to provide opportunities for youth to be successful in the workplace. According to the William T. Grant Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (1988) and the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS; 1991), many youth are not equipped with the foundational competencies necessary to obtain and maintain employment in our fast-paced world of work (Womble et al., 1995). As these youth employment issues have come to the forefront, Hill (1996) asserts work ethic as the theme vital to the attributes of the successful worker. Work ethic and the characteristics associated with work ethic have been categorized as the forerunner in desired employment competencies (Levin & Rosse, 1998).

It is very important for summer youth opportunities programs designed to better prepare youth for employment to be effective. To evaluate the success of such programs, research is required to learn more about how to disseminate knowledge and skills to youth. Results of research provided information and guidelines to help improve ineffective summer programs for youth. Summer employment training opportunities represent one of WIA's program elements within a local area's year-round youth service strategy. One of the desired outcomes of the program is for participants to realize the importance of developing desirable workplace skills that will enable them to secure and maintain future employment. Participants in the program should gain a greater understanding of the working definition of dependability - following regulations, following directions, being reliable, being honest, and reporting to work punctually. Participants should be able to equate the importance of developing desirable interpersonal skills with success in the workplace. Acceptable interpersonal skills include being

appreciative, patient, likeable, helpful, cooperative, hard working, devoted, courteous, considerate, friendly, loyal and modest. Participants should realize the essence of initiative including being independent, ambitious, perceptive, efficient, adaptable, conscientious, persevering, enthusiastic, productive, and resourceful; and its connection to maintaining employment.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATUE

This chapter presents a review of the literature related to the study. The review begins with an overview of career development and learning theories followed by a discussion of the development of the Workforce Investment Act as it evolved from its predecessors MDTA, CETA, and JTPA. The current status of the summer component of WIA, the characteristics of participants in the program, and benefits of participation in such programs as an intervention and prevention program will be discussed as the treatment variable. Additionally, the characteristics of economically disadvantaged youth and the educational and work-related nature and needs of this group of individuals will be discussed.

Career Development Theories

Herr and Cramer (1996) refer to career development as a speculative and researchable focus on understanding the components of having choices that are free and informed. These choices form his/her personal identity in regards to their value of work, the transition to work, the acceptance of work, and the adjustment to the responsibilities of work. Theoretical approaches that describe career development behavior and theories of learning are widely used and accepted to conceptualize purposeful career counseling, career education, career guidance, and career intervention programs such as the WIA.

Career development theories used to describe economically disadvantaged youth in the United States have traditionally derived from research on predominately white

middle-class individuals. It has been the assumption that the factors used to predict the career development of the majority students would apply to the minority racial, ethnic, and cultural groups as well (Fisher & Griggs, 1999). The use of the majority student criteria to establish career profiles of all students has created a jaded and limited path of the career needs of the minority student. With increasing numbers of diverse youth entering the workforce, there is a critical need to have an understanding of how minorities develop their career identity, which includes their work ethic, knowledge of occupations and options, and career decision-making strategies (Fisher & Griggs, 1995; Wentling & Waight, 1999).

The purpose of this proposed study was to determine if the work ethic attributes and career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth participants in the WIA Summer Youth Activities of 2001 differed after participation in the program. Following are descriptions of career and learning theories that have the potential of assisting one in understanding many of the critical issues involved in work ethic and career maturity studies.

Trait and Factor Theory

One of the first career development theories to be utilized was proposed by Frank Parson in the early 1900s. Parson's premise for wise choice selection and a systematic method of vocational assessment became the foundation for the trait and factor theory (Maduakolam, 2000). In the trait-and-factor approach, "trait" refers to a measurable characteristic of an individual that can be assessed through testing, and "factor" refers to a necessary characteristic for successful job performance. Parson's procedure consisted of three steps:

1. Having a clear understanding of the prospective employee and his/her attitudes, interests, abilities, resources, ambitions, limitations, and their causes.
2. Having knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success and the advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects in different lines of work.
3. Understanding the true reasoning of the relations of these two groups of factors (Locke & Ciechalski, 1995; Maduakolam, 2000).

The trait and factor approach relates to the proposed study because it involves students conducting a personal assessment in order to discover their attitudes, interests, ambitions, resources, and limitations. They reflect upon themselves and compare their image to the effective employee image desired by today's employers. This theory makes the assumption that individuals have unique patterns of ability or traits that can be measured and correlated with the requirements of various types of jobs. This theory has also provided the foundation for the development of many occupational assessment instruments (Gottfredson, 1988).

Holland's Theory of Career Development

John Holland's theory of career development is based on the interaction between work environment and a person's personality type. He characterized individuals according to six personality and environmental types. Holland described these types as realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional (Locke & Ciechalski, 1995).

The realistic individual may be described as conforming, practical, and thrifty. Realistic occupations include skilled trades and technical occupations. People in this category generally enjoy working with their hands. The analytical, intellectual, and precise person may be described as investigative. These individuals are idealistic, and suitable occupations may include those of a scientific and engineering nature. The artistic candidates are described as imaginative and original. They enjoy working in the arts. Suitable occupations generally involve art, music, and literature. The social individual tends to be very friendly, kind, and understanding. These individuals enjoy working with and around people. Social occupational opportunities include educational and social welfare occupations. The person who enjoys working in sales, administrative, and management positions can be described as an enterprising individual. These people are described as energetic, self-confident, and talkative. The conventional person can be described as conforming, efficient, practical, and structured. Conventional occupations include office and clerical occupations (Herr & Cramer, 1996).

Holland believed the pairing of persons and environments leads to outcomes that include vocational choice, vocational stability, achievement, educational choice, social behavior, personal competence, and susceptibility to influence (Locke & Ciechalski, 1995). The Holland classification system has been used extensively in interest inventories, personality tests, and a variety of other aids in career planning. In the proposed study, students will complete a Personal Values Inventory. This inventory will be used as a tool for self-understanding of personal traits. It will help students understand how they relate to others and how others relate to them. This will also help them as they receive career guidance and make career and technical decisions.

Super's Developmental Approach

Donald Super formulated the developmental approach that considers career development as a continuous process that covers the life span and space of individuals. His approach is an integrative one, based on 14 propositions, which stresses interaction of personal and environmental variable in career development (Herr & Cramer, 1996). Super's approach to career development consists of three major concepts; these are life span, life-space, and self-concepts (Super, Savickas, and Super, 1996).

The life-span construct encompasses the idea of developmental tasks, which reflect chronological age or unpredictable adaptive behaviors. These developmental tasks are defined by five life stages, which have a normal order of sequence, but may vary from person to person. The stages are growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. Each stage has developmental tasks, which should successfully be accomplished before moving to the next stage (Super et al., 1996).

The first stage is the growth stage from birth to 14 years of age. This stage involves psychological as well as physical growth. The theory suggests that during this stage individuals begin to take control over their lives. Self-concept is developed, while, at the same time, experiences provide knowledge of the world of work. Individuals focus on their futures, work towards higher achievement in school, and learn good work habits (Gies, 1990; Super et al., 1996).

The exploration stage spans from 14 to 21 years of age and begins the fantasy period during which an individual accepts the fact that occupation becomes a necessity of life, even though the desired occupation is often unrealistic. Students are typically in middle school grades at the onset of this phase as they begin to seek awareness, planning,

and information about themselves. Resources offered in the proposed study will be fundamental to this stage of career development. Occupational training and materials, work ethic awareness, and job placement are all parts of the WIA Summer Youth Activities that will assist in formulating, specifying, and implementing career choices. After exploring the many different avenues available to match their self-concept aptitudes, skills, and interests with a career or educational choice, individuals choose a career or secure employment, which indicates the end of the exploration stage (Super et al., 1996).

During the course of the establishment stage, the individual tries to assess whether or not decisions and choices made during the exploratory stage are realistic and workable. They begin to accept the culture of the organization as their own. They work toward developing good work ethic and attitudes and meeting the job requirements; they become more comfortable with the job, making an effort to show that they are competent in the position as they work towards advancement (Gies, 1990; Maduakolam, 2000; Super et al., 1996).

During the maintenance stage of ages 45 to 65, individuals maintain their work status and decide if they want to continue in their chosen path. This period of adjustment and improvement involves concern for holding on to a secure, desired position, updating one's knowledge and skills in the field to maintain that status, and making progress or new contributions in the profession. This phase is considered the preretirement period, and it ends when the individual leaves the workforce (Gies, 1990; Maduakolam, 2000).

The final stage, disengagement, is the time when individuals begin to plan for retirement. They may experience disengaging from work due to a lack of up-to-date knowledge and skills and/or physical or mental health, or they may simply lose interest in their work (Super et al., 1996).

The life-space concept of Super's career development theory purports the notion that individuals hold different roles and positions during their lives at any given time. Decisions that individuals make about their careers and commitments to work and organizations are relative to the circumstances of their additional roles. The interaction of core and peripheral roles surrounding one's life has a direct effect on the occupational decisions that an individual must make (Super et al., 1996).

Super's self-concept idea suggests an individual's self-concept begins to form prior to adolescence with the identification of job models. Processes such as role-playing, exploration, and reality testing can lead to the development of self-concept. Super uses vocational identity and occupational self-concept as constructs. He defines vocational identity as one having a clear objective view of his or her goals, interests, and talents. Occupational self-concept is the outcome of an individual focusing on the purpose of facts and experiences in one's life. Super considers vocational development as a process of developing and implementing self-concept. The process of continually matching one's self-concept with his or her occupational situation supports career development. How an individual perceives him or herself and interacts with others is a reflection of personality, needs, values, and interests, which change constantly over a life span. As individuals and situations change, so does the career development for that person (Maduakolam, 2000; Super et al., 1996).

Social Cognitive Career Theory

Chartrand and Rose (1996) suggested that there is a tremendous need for theory-based career development interventions that take the needs and concerns of economically and occupationally disadvantaged persons into consideration. Research has shown that sociocultural factors have a profound impact on career development and should be acknowledged in contemporary theories of career development. Lent, Brown, and Hackett's (Lent & Brown, 1996) social cognitive career theory, derived primarily from Bandura's general social cognitive theory, provides the framework for an understanding of career interest, choice and performance processes. The social cognitive career theory uses the perspective of learning and development derived from the constructivist construct to emphasize the effect new experiences or changes in responsibilities have on influencing career development (Hill & Rojewski, 1999). Using Bandura's triadic reciprocal model of causality as a basis of development, the social cognitive career theory is based on three variables to assist individuals in developing their own career behavior: self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and personal goals (Lent & Brown, 1996).

Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's ability to conceptualize his or her organization and execution of courses of actions necessary to attain desired levels of performance. Self-efficacy is derived from four principle sources of information: personal performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, verbal and social persuasion, and physiological states and reactions. These sources of information are instrumental in creating an individual's self-beliefs that are specific to particular performance domains that interact with other people, behavior, environmental, and contextual factors. Personal accomplishments are viewed as having the greatest influence on self-efficacy,

although the effects of the informational sources depend on how they are patterned with learning and are processed cognitively (Albert & Luzzo, 1999; Lent & Brown, 1996).

Outcome expectations refer to personal beliefs about the consequences or the outcomes of performing certain behaviors. They play a major role in motivating particular behaviors. These expectations can be viewed as physical, social, and self-evaluative. They are affected by beliefs about outcomes, such as beliefs about extrinsic reinforcement, self-directed consequences, and outcomes derived from the process of performing a given behavior. Banduara notes self-efficacy as the more influential determinant of behavior, but emphasizes that there are many instances where people perceive positive outcome expectations about a given course of action as the guide for their selective behavior. Personal goals are defined as an individual's intention to engage in a certain activity or to affect a particular future outcome. People set goals to organize and guide present and future behavior. Setting goals allows an individual to focus their efforts for long periods of time without external reinforcement, and as a result, increases the likelihood that their desired outcome will be attained. Goals are essential pieces of the puzzle through which people exercise agency (Albert & Luzzo, 1999; Lent & Brown, 1996).

The social cognitive career theory is very applicable in the proposed study because it supports the potential for programs to have a positive impact on disadvantaged students by allowing participants to examine their interests and outcome expectations. Aptitudes and work values are incorporated within the framework of the theory. Aptitudes can affect self-efficacy beliefs and influence interests. The concept of outcome expectations in the theory encompasses work values. Participants develop preferences

for a particular type of employment based on anticipated outcomes such as salary and status of position. The effects of aptitudes and development of work values are strongly influenced by social interaction from the participation in the educational setting and workplace settings established by parameters of the program (Hill & Rojewski, 1999). Therefore, the social cognitive career theory can provide solid foundation for intervention strategies common in programs such as the WIA to facilitate work ethic development in disadvantaged youth.

Learning Theories

There is a growing need for theory based learning interventions that address the needs of the economically and occupationally disadvantaged person. The job of program developers is to weigh all of the factors and design a program of activities, which best addresses, the nature of learning and styles of learning for the group of learners who will be affected. Learning preferences can undergo adaptations throughout the lifetime as conditions surrounding life change. Program planners must make every effort to understand the learner and specific learning conditions when planning instruction. The basic tenants of learning theories include (Scott, 1997):

1. Identification, which provides the foundation of awareness.
2. Discovery, the desire to know and understand.
3. Empathy, the affective domain of identifying with the feelings of another.
4. Cultural potential, which takes a holistic view of the learner.
5. Knowledge about learners, which can include information from on-going studies.

6. Methods of Learning Transfer, which are primarily contextual in nature.
7. Zeal for Learning, which encourages curriculum and lesson designs that hold the interest of the learner.

Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory of Bandura, also called observational learning, emphasizes the importance of observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. This theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. The social learning theory asserts that an observer's behavior changes after viewing the behavior of a model. The observer's behavior can be affected by both positive consequences, referred to as vicarious reinforcement, and negative consequences, referred to as vicarious punishment (Bandura, 1986).

There are several guiding principals behind the social learning theory, including (Bandura 1993; Bandura, 1986):

1. Attention - Observers learn by paying attention to what is happening around them. Participants in the proposed study can be influenced by the characteristics of the employer for which they will be employed. The employer will model the distinctiveness, complexity, and functional value of the job, and the program participant will exercise sensory capacities, arousal level, perception, and past reinforcement as characteristics of the observer.

2. Retention - Observers recognize the observed behavior and remember it at a later time. This process depends on the observer's ability to code or structure the information in an easy to remember form or to mentally or physical rehearse the model's actions. In the proposed study, participants will be expected to generalize knowledge learned and transfer it to an employment setting at a later time.
3. Production - Observers must be physically and intellectually capable of producing the act. In the proposed study, participants will be placed in job settings where they will have the opportunity to reproduce modeled behavior. All employment settings will involve use of motor skills and critical thinking skills where self-observation of production and accuracy of feedback will be very important.
4. Motivation - Observers will perform the act only if they have some motivation or reason to do so. According to Schwartz and Robbins (1995), motivation is very relevant for disadvantaged students. The proposed study attempts to meets the needs of disadvantaged youth by taking into consideration the individual needs and goals of the participants. The presence of reinforcement is very important. Monetary rewards as offered in the program are paramount to the motivation of youth participants.

The social learning theory is used as the theoretical foundation for the applications of many techniques, which are widely used in training programs. As in the case of the proposed study, participants have an opportunity to observe and model the

behavior that leads to positive reinforcement, as much of the learning occurs within important social and environmental contexts, and a supportive environment with incentives is provided to encourage learning.

Constructivist Learning Theory

The constructivist learning theory places the learner at the center of learning. The notion is that the learner "constructs" knowledge rather than passively absorbing it (Garmston & Wellman, 1994). Theorists such as Bruner and Piaget believe that the world is not found or discovered but rather constructed, which formulated the constructivism model of learning. In program development of interventions such as the Workforce Investment Act Summer Program, the constructivist perspective recognizes the knowledge and understanding the participants themselves bring to learning, in addition to the characteristics of the learners themselves. These characteristics greatly influence the learning potential of the participant (Semple, 2000). Specific characteristics of participants in the proposed study include their cultural and socio-economic background, their values and beliefs, and their motivation and expectations of a learning environment.

The basic principles of constructivism are formed by six different conditions of learning. First, learning is viewed as an active process where each learner is an active participant in creating meaning for external reality. Internal realities derived from prior experiences, values and attitudes vary from learner to learner, and, thus, each participant creates his or her own interpretations of external realities. Second, learning involves understanding concepts and procedures at ever increasing levels of complexity. Participants learn through the process of trial and error. To err is part of the natural

process of developing through correction of mistakes made. As participants perform more accurately, they advance their skills and learning. Third, all learners respond to external factors differently based on their prior experiences. Their background knowledge, skills, and levels of development at a particular time limit all individuals. As a result of this, perceptions of reality vary from person to person (Scott, 1997).

This study used real world contexts to convey the fourth basic principal of making learning useful. Participants are more likely to see the value of their experiences if they are transferable to real world environments and tasks. When skills are generalizable, they become more relevant to the learner for present and future use. Constructivism suggests rewards and punishments do not motivate students to do their best. Intrinsic motivation is the tenant for true learning. Participants in the proposed study will have an opportunity to develop new skills and experience the pride that results when learners perceive tasks as useful, interesting, and relating to the promotion of a better life. Finally, multiple assessments should be used to evaluate learning. The evaluation process should make a connection between the activity and its usefulness. Reflection becomes a valuable tool in the learning process. As deficiencies are identified, new objectives can be established (Scott, 1997).

Behaviorism Learning Theory

The theory of behaviorism deals largely with the investigation of relationships among stimuli, responses, and the consequences of behavior. The term is synomomous with observable aspects of behavior. It is an orientation that assumes behavior comprises

responses that can be observed and related to other observable events. The ultimate goal underlying the behavioristic tenant is to explain the relationships existing among stimuli, behavior responses, and consequent conditions.

Predominant behavioristic theorists are Edwin Guthrie, E. L. Thorndike, and B. F. Skinner. Guthrie's theory can be summarized in several major laws, the most important of which states that whenever a response follows a stimulus, there will be a resulting tendency for the same response to occur again the next time the stimulus is presented. In the proposed study, as participants display desirable workplace behavior, the behaviors will be recognized and applauded by the employer. This positive recognition will result in the positive behavior being repeated by the participant. Thus, Guthrie maintained that the learning cycle evolves around the pairing of a stimulus with a response and that further practice may or may not strengthen the response (Schwartz & Robbins, 1995).

E.L. Thorndike is credited with introducing the notion of reinforcement in contemporary learning theory through the Law of Effect, which states that learning is a consequence of the effect of behaviors. Thorndike, like Guthrie, asserts that behavior that leads to positive reinforcement tends to be repeated. Thorndike's theory suggests that learning consists of a bond between stimuli and responses as a function of the consequences of the responses. Thorndike's theory system includes a number of subsidiary laws, the most important of which is the law of multiple responses. This law supports the notion of learning through trial and error, suggesting when people are faced with problems, they tend to respond in a variety of ways until a particular response is

reinforced. Additionally, Thorndike noted that behavior is generalizable. People respond to factors in their environment; cultural background affects behavior, and the learning is continuous (Schwartz & Robbins, 1995).

B.F. Skinner believed that the study of behavior should be assessed on what individuals do and do not do. He developed the concept of operant conditioning and concentrated his works on the observation and manipulation of behavior. Skinner believed that individuals react in a given situation based on past experiences. He asserted that behavior must be systematically controlled to produce desired results for an individual (Driscoll, 1994).

Program designers who accept the behavior perspective assume that the behavior of the participant is a response of their past and present environment and that all behavior is learned. This notion results in any behavior being analyzed in terms of its reinforcement history. Since learning is a form of behavior modification, the construct of the program in the proposed study is to establish an environment in which the desired behavior of the participant is positively reinforced.

The use of applicable theory in this study was justified by its ability to suggest useful practice. Theoretical explanations of how people think, act, react, and are motivated can assist in understanding how to most usefully intervene. There is a tremendous need for theories of learning and career development to correspond with interventions that truly address the issues facing disadvantaged students.

Work Ethic

Our foundation of work ethic is based on the belief that work has an intrinsic value for its own sake and is a cultural norm based on positive moral values (Cherrington,

1980, Petty & Hill, 1994). The term work ethics refers to values, principles, and beliefs that guide the actions of an individual when interpreting and acting upon their rights and responsibilities in the context of work (Ford & Herren, 1995). Employers expect work ethic to be used as a means of commitment to work as much or more so than momentary benefits (McCracken & Falcon-Emmanuelli, 1994).

In the literature, work ethic is referred to as an obligation, beliefs, values, and principles, which produce a cultural norm (Cory, 1999). According to McCracken and Falcon-Emmanuelli (1994), work ethic follows the key ideas and meanings, which suggest: (1) work is a calling which commands dignity; (2) pride in good quality workmanship and hard work produces satisfaction from work; and (3) an adherence to the discipline of work, punctuality, diligence, and industriousness. Wells (1998) described work ethic as the guiding behavior in the workplace. Miller and Coady (1986) define work ethic as an integrated and interactive system of values, beliefs, and attitudes that enables an individual to be adaptive to change in order to sustain long-term harmony in their work environment.

The Protestant Work Ethic, which is derived from the traditional applications of Weber's philosophy, posits the view that humans have a moral duty to work diligently, regardless of their station in life, and that by doing so they can reap societal benefits and the personal reward of knowing that a job has been well done (Naylor, 1988). This Protestant work ethic, according to Wayne and Chapman (1992), is described as a collection of values that is internally consistent and places obligations on the individual to act accordingly to this ethic in the workplace.

According to Hill (1996) work ethic is an attribute that is expected of the competent worker in today's workplace. Just as work ethic is recognized as a necessary element in the contemporary workplace, many employers have a growing concern that youth of today are not adequately prepared to enter the workforce and lack an appreciation of traditional work ethic values.

Measurements of work ethic are used in variety of applied and research settings for several different purposes. Work values, work attitudes, Protestant Work Ethic, and work ethic are terms often used in interchangeably in work ethic assessment. The SCANS report (1992) emphasizes the importance of work ethic and related characteristics such as self-esteem, sociability, integrity, and self-management in the contemporary workplace, suggesting that it is an important concern when working with disadvantaged youth. Work ethic skills that lead to attaining and retaining employment are beneficial for such youth; limitations in these skills limit opportunities and inhibit them from fulfilling their potential throughout life (Hill and Rowjeski, 1999). Within this context, college and high school counseling services are the most typical providers of work ethic assessment and career counseling experiences; however, social service agents such a WIA Summer Youth Activities are able to use such assessments to analyze the level of work ethic skills in their student population.

The Affective Work Competencies Inventory (Petty, 1993) includes values, habits, and work attitudes assessment as affective work competencies. The instrument describes 15 various affective work competency clusters that utilize 95 different indicators. The 15 cluster areas are:

1. Accurate quality of work
2. Adaptable and resourceful
3. Ambitious
4. Careful, alert, and perceptive
5. Cooperative and helpful
6. Considerate and courteous
7. Dedicated, devoted, loyal, honest, and conscientious
8. Dependable, punctual, reliable and responsible
9. Efficient, quality of work, achieving, and speedy
10. Emotionally stable, judgmental, and poised
11. Follow directions, responsive
12. Independent and initiative
13. Neat, orderly, personal appearance, and manner
14. Preserving, patient, enduring, and tolerant
15. Pleasant, friendly, and cheerful (Petty, 1993).

The Becker Work Adjustment Profile assesses information about work habits, cognitive skills, broad adjustment skills, work performance skills, and attitude of individuals participating in competitive work. This instrument uses fives categories of scores. The categories are cognitive skills, interpersonal skills, work habits and attitudes, work performance skills, and broad work adjustment. This instrument is catered toward disabled persons over 15 years old (Murphy, Conoley, & Impara, 1994).

Designed for participants in grades 7-16 as well as adults, Super's Work Values Inventory is an instrument that focuses on the intrinsic and extrinsic work vales. Scoring

of this instrument is based on categories of achievement, altruism, associates, creativity, economic returns, esthetics, independence, intellectual stimulation, independence, management, prestige, security, supervisory relations, surroundings, variety, and way of life (Murphy et al, 1994).

The Survey of Work Values as developed by Wollack, Goodale, Witjting, and Smith in 1971 is widely used as a measure of Protestant Ethic attitudes. The survey consists of six sub scales measures by 54 items. The six sub scales are divided into two categories: extrinsic, which asks reward related questions; and intrinsic, which focuses on work related activities. The focus of this instrument is not job specific; instead, it is related to an individual's attitude about work in general (Herr & Cramer, 1996).

The Occupation Work Ethic Inventory (OWEI) (Petty, 1993) is used to measure work ethic attributes. The OWEI was a self-reporting inventory that contains 50 descriptors of work ethic that allow students to evaluate the affective component of their work ethic. The instrument provides scores on the basis of three sub-scales including dependability, initiative, and interpersonal skills. The sub-scales of the instrument were identified through a factor analysis conducted to identify key themes (Hill & Petty, 1995). The sub-scales used are interpersonal skills, initiative, or dependability. The descriptors for interpersonal skills include appreciative, emotionally stable, patient, likeable, helpful, pleasant, cooperative, hard working, cheerful, devoted, courteous, considerate, well groomed, friendly, loyal, and modest. The descriptors for initiative sub-scale include resourceful, productive, dedicated, persistent, enthusiastic, orderly, persevering, conscientious, accurate, adaptable, efficient, perceptive, initiating, effective, ambitious,

and independent. The dependability sub-scale descriptors include punctual, careful, honest, reliable, following directions, following regulations, and dependable.

The Work Attitudes Inventory contains five categories measuring effective work competencies based on 45 variables ranked on a five-point Likert scale. The five measures of work attitudes include ambition, conscientiousness, enthusiasm, organization, and self-control (Petty, 1993).

For the purposes of this research, the OWEI is the most applicable survey because it is acceptable for the evaluation of the affective component of work ethic as addressed by this study. Additionally, the OWEI was deemed the most appropriate for use with the age group of participants used in this study.

Career Maturity

Career maturity, also known as vocational maturity, can be defined as the set of attitudes and behaviors such as honesty, dependability, and taking pride in one's work which are traditionally expected of employees (Naylor, 1995). Super refers to career maturity as a hypothetical construct that is as difficult to define as intelligence. He defines it as a constellation of physical, psychological, and social characteristics that is determined by the degree of success in coping with the demands of earlier stages and sub stages of career development, especially with the most recent (Herr & Cramer, 1996). Super (1957) explains that career maturity could be associated with mental age in early adolescence. This placement on the continuum is described in terms of refined units of behavior which are manifested in coping with the developmental task of a given life stage. It is at this stage on the continuum of vocational development where exploration begins to decline.

In later works, Super and Overstreet (1960) hypothesized five dimensions through which career maturation occurs.

1. Orientation to Vocational Choice: This indicates the awareness of an individual of the need to chose an occupation and the factors that become part of the decision making equation.
2. Information and Planning: This dimension involves the amount of reliable information an individual avails himself or herself to assist in making decisions about occupations and then to make logical plans for the future.
3. Consistency of Vocational Preferences: On this continuum of life stages, adolescents indicate consistency for preferences for different occupations from one point in time to another.
4. Crystallization of Traits: Interest patterns and values emerge as an individual matures and increases independence.
5. Wisdom of Vocational Preference: This is reflected in an individual's career decisions as they relate to exploration, choice, and specification of needs.

An individual's career maturity can be defined by his or her standing within this framework in relation to either chronological age and anticipated life stages or similarity in the behavior of others dealing with the same developmental tasks (Crites & Savickas, 1995).

Career maturity is a construct that emerges from career theories that are developmentally oriented. Individuals go through a systematic series of stages in career development which progresses at a rate that is directly compared to where an individual

is positioned along developmental lines of expectations in terms of maturity or age (Herr & Cramer 1996). The complex interaction of these factors affects an individual's readiness and ability to be successful in mastering the tasks appropriate to various stages of career development (Kerka, 1998). Career mature adolescents are generally actively exploring and processing information related to careers. These youth can be more subjective in the view of realistic career goals that lead to a career interest pattern. Additionally, certainty of a career choice by an individual indicates a component of career maturity. This includes identifying occupational alternatives which characteristics are compatible with interest and values. An individual is considered more career mature if interest and values are consistent and well defined. Testing the feasibility, collecting relevant information, and ranking the alternatives are responsibilities of planning and making career decisions that indicate a career mature individual (Srebalus, Marinelli, & Messing, 1982).

Career maturity is influenced by factors such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, locus of control, socioeconomic status, and work salience, (Kerka, 1998). Adolescents develop their ideas of career expectations through the complex interactions of three primary factors, family background, human capital acquisition, and socialization to class. An important determinant of personal occupation goals results from an awareness of the structural features of the labor market which is directly related to family socioeconomic status and attributes such as race and gender (Conroy, 1998).

Some studies where socioeconomic status is used as a variable fail to show a significant influence on career maturity, others suggest that concepts of career exploration and planning may not apply to individuals who leave school to accept

employment for economic survival (Kerka, 1998). Rojewski (1994) found that adolescents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds score lower on career maturity measure, which may be attributed to lack of access to occupational information, role models, and the perception of lack of employment opportunities.

Additionally, age and gender play major roles in status of career maturity. The adolescent years register the widest range of maturity levels in the student population. Effects of puberty changes, differences in the rates of male and female growth, and the general differences in physical, emotional, and intellectual development within and between boys and girls contribute to the spectrum of differences. Differences in readiness, general academic progress, peer conflicts, preoccupation with boy-girl relationships, and family issues often complicate the process of making career decisions (Herr & Cramer, 1996).

Even though career maturity is not a biological construct it does increase with chronological age. It is a psychological construct that is evidenced in the form of expectations. Individuals who are more ready to make decisions about career appropriateness for his or her life stage are thought to have a higher level of career maturity. The assessment of career or vocational readiness is very important to career education and guidance (Super, 1974).

Measurements of career maturity are used in variety of applied and research settings for several different purposes. Career maturity that leads to decisions such as choosing a major and selecting a career are probably the most popular uses among adolescents (Hansen, 1995). Within this context, college and high school counseling services are the most typical providers of interest assessment and career counseling

experiences; however, social service agents such a WIA Summer Youth Activities are able to provide such assessments to analyze the level of maturity in their student population.

Assessment of career maturity has emerged from developmentally oriented career theories. Crites (1974) suggest that the measurement of career maturity has at least two uses: (1) a research function that enables the testing of theoretical aspects of career development and (2) a practical function that investigates the rate and progress of the career development of an individual and suggests the appropriate intervention strategies to cater to that development. With these two functions in mind, career maturity assessments can be utilized as both a form of needs analysis and a criterion variable in the evaluation of the effectiveness of certain types of prevention and intervention strategies.

Researchers use objective assessment to evaluate the construct of interest and to investigate variables relevant to understanding the world of work. Historically, qualitative measures were used to assist researchers in understanding how individuals make career choices by allowing individuals to describe their preparation for those decisions. Current trends in research include: analysis of the structure of interests; the relationship of interest to variables such as personality, satisfaction, and success; and the role that interests play in career development (Hansen, 1995, Super, 1974).

Super et al. (1996) suggest the use of both qualitative and quantitative research be used together to assess the most comprehensive information about an individual. Qualitative research in the form of interviews and descriptive questioning and quantitative measures in the form of surveys all have merit. The choice of appropriate

assessment to use with a particular population depends on factors such as age, purpose of the research, the amount of time available for testing and interpretation, and the funding available for materials and scoring (Hansen, 1995). .

Multiple survey instruments have been designed to assess career maturity. The available choices range from those inventories that measure a small number of broad interests which are self-administered and hand-scored to those that report hundreds of scores and are more efficiently scored by use of computer. Herr and Cramer, 1996 describe three survey measures that are acceptable for use with the population of interest for this study. These are the Career Development Inventory (CDI) developed by Super, Thompson, Lindeman, Jordan, & Meyers, the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI) developed by Crites, and the Cognitive Vocational Maturity Test (CVMT) designed by Westbrook.

CDI includes eight scales assessing knowledge and attitudes about career choice, which could be very effective in the determination of outcome measures of program evaluation. The CMI, formally called the Vocational Development Inventory, uses a true-false format in measuring five presumed attitude clusters with a total score. This measure has been used effectively in evaluations utilizing a pre-test and a post-test. The CVMT uses six subtests to evaluate fields of work, job selection, work conditions, educational requirement, attribute requirement, and duties. The normative data in this survey is for the sixth to ninth grade population; however, the reading level is below third grade. The norm groups for which scores of the CDI are based is ninth to twelfth, while for the CMI, the scores are normed for grades six through nine. For the purposes of this research the CMI is the most applicable survey because it is acceptable for evaluation by

utilizing a pretest and posttest format and the reading level according to Flesh-Kincaid Grade Level Assessment is 7.0, an average of the reading level for participants in this study.

Development of the Workforce Investment Act

Federal programs have had a long history of providing employment-training programs for the private sector. As early as the 1930s programs were available whose main purpose was to provide income support and employment to ameliorate the effects of the Depression of the 1930s (Hamermesh, 1971). The job creation strategies of the Roosevelt administration included a wide range of initiatives that were short-lived and disappeared during the war years. The National Apprenticeship Act of 1937 realized the importance of job training by increasing training requirements for craft workers and requiring the employers to pay for it (Kaufman & Wills, 1999). The GI Bill enacted for veterans after World War II continued the trend of job training by allowing individuals to choose the postsecondary education institution they wanted to attend (Kaufman & Wills, 1999). High levels of unemployment persisted after the Korean War, fueled by technological change, and the large numbers of minorities in subsistence jobs which caused the continuance and expansion of government workforce development initiatives (Kaufman & Wills, 1999).

The late 1950's were placing widespread attention on the problems of out-of-work and out-of-school youth. Disadvantaged youth became the subject of the White House Conference on Children and Youth in 1960, where it was a general consensus that only the federal government could handle the necessary diversified and broad-scale programs required to break the vicious cycle in which these youth were trapped. In May

1961, President Kennedy issued an Executive Order providing for coordinating programs for delinquency prevention administered by the Department of Justice, Labor, Health, Education, and Welfare. The war on youth poverty had begun with most programs, referred to as demonstration projects, being maintained by community-based organizations (Herman & Sadofsky, 1966; Kaufman & Wills, 1999).

The first demonstration projects incorporated a variety of services, including youth employment, education, recreation, child and family services, health services, legal services, and community development services. Four components were established by the President's Committee to assist communities in planning these projects. The components were integration of programs, broad community support, utilization of academic resources, and integration of research, action, and evaluation (Herman & Sadofsky, 1966). The first youth-work programs were planned as part of the integration component, as attention was given to not only the individual but also to social conditions such as discrimination, lack of opportunities, and low socioeconomic status. Broad community support was garnered by soliciting a wide spectrum of community groups associated with youth to generate new ideas and reinforce productive existing initiatives to attack poverty and delinquency. Special emphasis was placed on utilizing the research skills of universities and research organizations to maximize the use of academic resources. Findings from these sources were used to provide timely and accurate feedback on the effectiveness of demonstration projects (Herman & Sadofsky, 1966).

Congress implemented The Area Redevelopment Act and officially acknowledged manpower training as an instrument of social and economic policy in 1961. These enactments provided subsidies for the retraining of workers who were

unemployed in areas of substantial unemployment (Hamermesh, 1971). The year 1962 brought with it the passage of the Manpower Development and Training Act, which greatly enhanced the commitment to manpower training. Amendments to this act were made in 1963 to strengthen it even more.

In 1973, several war-on-poverty programs were consolidated with the Manpower Development Training Act in the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (Kaufman & Wills, 1999). This act decentralized planning and programming by giving local administrative units decision making power over the types of training provided, the groups of individuals identified to be served, and the institutions authorized to offer training and other services, assigning little authority to state governments (Bullock, 1985).

Pressured by President Reagan's desire to eliminate programs, reduce federal spending, upgrade K-12 education, and retrain current employees, Congress enacted the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1982, which replaced the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (Kaufman & Wills, 1999).

The purpose of the JTPA was to establish programs designed to assist in the preparation of economically disadvantaged youth and hard-to-hire and unskilled adults to become productive contributors to the world of work. JTPA granted state governments and the business community increased roles and more authority. The act recognized the need to utilize expertise from the private sector, resources, and garner public finance assistance for training programs at the local level. It also shifted responsibility for local plan approval, finances, and program activities from federal authority to the state government level. In addition, it allowed local public and private authorities to decide on

the modes of program assistance to be available with federal funds (Hassan, 1985). As part of this act, Private Industry Councils were mandated. Private Industry Councils were created to increase the effectiveness of the development of performance standards by making job-training efforts responsive to the needs of local employers (Grubb, 1995).

Building on the most successful elements of former federal legislation, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 was passed to empower all workers, young and old, with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide a better life for them. The current act amends current funding channels, target populations, systems of delivery, accountability, long-term planning, labor market information systems, and government structure (Employment and Training Administration, 1998). The key components of this act are based on extensive research and local and state input of successful training and innovations in employment over the past decade.

The Department of Labor will work with The Department of Education to rebuild the country's work force development system around several key features. These key features include:

1. Arrangement for One-Stop Centers for delivery of service. This concept will provide information and access to job training, education, and employment services at a single neighborhood location.
2. Re-alignment of existing programs and consolidation of workforce development activities. Many of the 154 programs or funding avenues designed to assist the unemployed, develop skills or create employment have been consolidated and realigned. Others have been eliminated, including the Job Training Partnership Act. The outcomes will vary based on who is being served. For youth the

expected outcome is attainment of work readiness and occupational skills and education. For adults outcomes of employment and educational and occupational credentials are expected.

3. Promote the role of employers. State and local boards will heavily promote the participation in of the encouragement of private sector of employers to participate.
4. Longer periods Adult Education Act and the National Literacy Act.
5. Emphasis on youth programs. This act focuses more on youth activities and creates a youth council. Summer training and employment services for youth is no longer a separate program, instead, it is a program that is balanced with other offered services.
6. Emphasis on customer information and choice. Provisions will promote responsibility and personal decision-making by allowing adult customers to determine what training they feel is best suited for them through the use of Individual Training Accounts.
7. New focus on program accountability. As individuals are more empowered to make choices of services, the providers of needed services will be more accountable for meeting demands.
8. Recognition of difference in individual outcomes. Expected of time allowed for planning and service. Research has indicated individuals need longer periods of time for assistance than has been previously provided (Employment and Training Administration, 1998; Kaufman & Wills, 1999).

Summer Youth Activities

The need for structured summer youth activities was realized as early as the late 1950s as out-of-school youth attracted widespread attention. Amendments to serve summer youth were included in the early demonstration projects, the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973, and the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982.

Under the Workforce Investment Act year round and summer youth training programs are consolidated. Funding emphasis is placed on long-term development providing services to eligible youth. Youth are to be prepared for postsecondary educational opportunities or employment through a variety of services grouped around four major themes. These themes are improving educational achievement, employment preparation, supportive services, and leadership development. From these four themes ten program elements evolve (Employment and Training Administration, 2000).

Youth summer training and employment opportunities represent one of the ten program elements. As part of the year-round service strategies, services will be determined and provided locally in connection with the One-Stop system under the supervision of youth councils. Summer services will be coordinated with Job Corps, School-to-Work, and Youth Opportunity Grants, which provide year-round services (Employment and Training Administration, 2000).

Purposes of the Workforce Investment Act

The essence of the Workforce Investment Act is to empower the nation's workforce. The act lays the foundation for a workforce preparation and employment

system designed to meet the needs of employers and those seeking employment and those who want to further their careers. The framework of the legislation is based on five titles.

Title I authorizes the establishment of the Workforce Investment System. Local workforce investment boards will be established to assist in the development of five-year strategic plans. Governors will provide oversight to local boards and designate local workforce investment areas. New youth councils will be established and One-Stop career centers will be instituted. It also requires that standards for success be established for organizations that provide training services under the act, and establishes the funding formulas for the system. Title II authorizes the Adult Education and Literacy programs for Fiscal Years 1999-2003.

Title III requires that Employment Service/Job Service activities become part of the One-Stop system through amendment to the Wagner-Peyser Act. Interaction between the Act's programs and Trade Adjustment Assistance and North America Free Trade Agreement Transitional Adjustment Assistance programs are required as a part of this title. The temporary establishment of the "Twenty-First Century Workforce Commission" designed to study issues relating to the workforce encourages national employment research.

Title IV reauthorizes the Rehabilitation Act programs and links them to state and local workforce development systems. Title V provides for the authority of state unified plans and makes provisions for incentive grants for states exceeding the proposed levels of performance.

The establishment of these titles within the state and local workforce systems allow for the realization of the end goals of improving the quality of the workforce,

enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of our nation, and reducing welfare dependency (Employment and Training Administration, 1998; Kaufman & Wills, 1999).

The purposes of youth participation in the Workforce Investment Act are:

1. Provide effective and comprehensive activities for improving educational and skill competencies and to provide effective connections to employers for eligible youth.
2. Ensure on-going mentoring opportunities for eligible youth.
3. Provide job-training opportunities for eligible youth.
4. Offer continued supportive services for eligible youth.
5. Offer incentives for recognition and achievement to eligible youth.
6. Provide opportunities in activities related to leadership, development, decision-making, citizenship, and community service for eligible youth (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).

Characteristics of Youth Participants for WIA Summer Activities

Eligible WIA youth must be between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one, economically disadvantaged, and have one or more of the following conditions: have deficiencies in basic literacy skills; be a school dropout; have a homeless or runaway status; be placed in foster care; be pregnant or parenting; have a criminal record; or require additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

Economically disadvantaged status is defined as having an annual income at or below the official poverty level. An income of $15,000 roughly equates to the federal income guidelines established in determining financial poverty for a family of four

(Rojewski, 1997). Eligibility for reduced-price school lunch, for Aid to Families of Dependent Children and for other federal and state assistance programs are also indicators of a economically disadvantaged status (Sarkees, West & Wircenski, 1988).

Benefits of WIA Summer Activities

As an intervention program the WIA will have many merits for the students, schools, and communities served. Youth programs will include an objective assessment of the skill levels and service needs of each youth. Preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities or for paid, unsubsidized employment, whichever is more appropriate for the individual, will be provided. Services will encourage strong links between academic and occupational learning, which will in turn develop relational links to the job market and employers. Additional required elements of the summer programs include study skills training; paid and unpaid work experiences; occupational skills training; leadership development opportunities; supportive services of comprehensive guidance and counseling; and follow-up services for no less than twelve months (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).

As a prevention program, the WIA makes an aggressive attack on the school dropout rates by offering study skills training and instruction leading to completion of secondary school. Programs will also offer services to assist in preparation of post-secondary education if that is the desire of the participant. Occupational skills training including internships and job shadowing are program services of the act. Each program must provide summer employment opportunities that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning. These components of the act serve as a prevention to unemployment and participants becoming dislocated or displaced workers as a result of

not learning the skills necessary to encourage gainful employment (Employment and Training Administration, 1998; Orr, Bloom, Bell, Doolittle, Lin, & Cave, 1996; U.S. Department of Labor, 1998). These experiences will contribute to the promotion of desirable work habits and world of work knowledge and skills. These experiences are also positively associated with employment and income after completion of high school, and these students are more likely to have lined up a job after graduation than comparative students who have not had the opportunity to participate in such programs (Charner & Faser, 1988; Orr et al.).

America continues to express great concern over its future workforce. Employers are constantly begging for the well-rounded employee who can do more than read, write, and compute arithmetic; they are searching for potential employees who possess high technical skills and good employability skills in addition to basic academic skills. Business and industry categorize these skills as working as a team, getting along with others, the ability to accept constructive criticism, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, being at work on time, and having excellent job attendance (Huguley, Ram, Sullivan, 1990).

Parameters of Economically Disadvantaged Youth

Economically disadvantaged youth are defined as those who come from a family identified as low income on the basis of uniform methods. These methods of evaluation include an annual income at or below the official poverty level. An annual income of $15,000 roughly equates to the federal income guidelines established in determining financial poverty for a family of four (Rojewski, 1997). Eligibility for reduced-price

school lunch, eligibility for Aid to Families of Dependent Children, and for other federal and state assistance programs are also indicators of a economically disadvantaged status (Sarkees et al., 1988).

Students who are reared in a low socioeconomic environment historically have a multitude of labels associated with them, including; culturally deprived, low income, alienated, marginal, disenfranchised, impoverished, underprivileged, disadvantaged, low performing, low achieving, learning disabled, remedial, urban, ghetto, language impaired, and at risk. These students are more likely to have family and social stress, characterized by a lack of control over their lives, which dictates a seemingly dim future characterized by a limited view of their own personal worth and self-esteem (Presseisen, 1988).

Educational Needs

Economically disadvantaged students often display poor academic performance in the important basic skills courses of English, mathematics, and science (Sarkees et al., 1988). Many are frequently absent from school, have short attention spans in the classroom, and may display low motivation when present in class (Scott & Lucy, 1993). Many of these students lag behind a grade level or two amongst others in their age group in class standing. Their aptitude and achievement test scores are often much lower than others in their peer group. Often economically disadvantaged students have problems that may include limited English proficiency, poor oral and/or written communication skills, poor grammar, or poor vocabulary skills, which are limiting in the educational climate (Sarkees et al.). In many instances these variables will decrease the probability that a student will possess the ability, desire, or opportunities for academic participation and intellectual development (Montgomery & Rossi, 1994).

In many situations, students from economically disadvantaged households are members of single-parent families; they may have mothers who work outside of the home and who themselves lack a formal education and who may have low educational expectations for their children. Additionally, these students generally have few study aids available to them at home, and their parents who may not know the most effective ways to help monitor their child's school activities (Presseisen, 1988). These students, therefore, have fewer opportunities than their middle-class or more affluent classmates for learning outside of school; they read less, do less homework and have more disciplinary problems, which can result in lower grades (Morris, 1992).

Critics of conventional testing and assessment methods argue that these methods pose specific problems for the economically disadvantaged youth by narrowing the scope of instructional efforts. Traditional methods of assessment have been found to be insensitive to the actual achievement and/or progress of the disadvantaged student. Even though the student may be realizing some progress, he or she still may find themselves at or near the bottom percentile of the class in comparative terms of the standards of good achievement. For this reason alternative forms of assessment are strongly encouraged for the disadvantaged youth to be more competitive in the society of the school (Legters & McDill, 1994).

Work Related Needs

Economically disadvantaged youth often experience very specific work related problems. Discrimination, lack of appropriate educational programs, lack of transportation, low self-efficacy, peer pressure, poor job networking, poor basic work skills, lack of parental involvement, cultural differences, and the unavailability of

workplace training are all barriers relating to the employability nature of this group (Wentling & Waigth, 1999). In economically disadvantaged communities, the institutions of family and community are under greater pressures of stress and are less equipped to provide youth with the knowledge based skills, guidance, role models, or experiences to pattern to get a job, keep, and make effective career advancement decisions (Kazis & Kopp, 1997).

Youth from economically disadvantaged situations often struggle with these many variables to create barriers of employment. The major barriers that can be inhibiting to the employment, development, retention, and promotion within the workplace can be divided into two categories: firstly, individual barriers that come from the student themselves; and secondly, the type of barrier that is organizational in nature and comes from the workplace environment. Inhibiting individual barriers can be categorized as inadequate skill preparation, low self-esteem, poor self-image, lack of organizational skills, lack of proper education, and poor career planning. Workplace barriers can be described as negative attitudes and discomfort toward people who are different, discrimination, prejudice, stereotyping, racism, and bias (Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1997).

Many potential employers lack an understanding of some of the characteristics of economically disadvantaged youth and their work related nature and needs. Cultural differences between this group of youth and employers cover a wide range, which includes values, beliefs, norms, and expected behaviors. These differences present tremendous problems for the students in acquiring and keeping a job (Wentling & Waight, 1999). Unfamiliarity with attitudes and behaviors of economically

disadvantaged youth may bring about cultural insensitivity, which results in employers showing very little to no empathy and tolerance of these differences (Wentling & Waight, 1999).

The United States has found itself propelled into to the midst of an employment crisis coupled with our economic prosperity and the possibility of our competitive failure. There is widespread belief among government and business leaders that the decaying quality of the workforce endangers the continued growth and development of jobs, the enhancement of living standards, and competitiveness in the global economy (Passmore, 1994).

The U.S. Department of Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) was appointed by the Secretary of Labor to examine skills required by young people to enter and succeed in the world of work. The SCANS report identified five major competencies and three foundational areas required for entry-level job performance. According to the SCANS report competent youth can allocate resources, have good interpersonal skills, can acquire, use, and communicate information; understand complex inter-relationships; and work with a variety of technologies (SCANS, 1991). With the urgency of jobs placing a high premium on employees possessing a broad range of skills of successful employees including critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, decision-making skills, and interpersonal skills (Rojewski, Lynch & Smith, 1992). From this broad range of skills, work ethic has emerged as an expected attribute of successful workers. Coupled with this expectation is the concern that many youth are entering the workplace without an understanding or appreciation of work ethic (Hill, 1996).

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This chapter describes the procedural aspects of the study including internal and external validity issues, description of population, selection of sample, instrument validity and reliability, procedures, and data analysis.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to determine if the work ethic attributes and career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth participants in the WIA Summer Activities differed after participation in the program. Work ethic attributes were defined as consisting of interpersonal skills, initiative, and being dependable, and were measured using the Occupational Work Ethic Inventory (OWEI; Petty, 1993). Career maturity is fundamental to understanding career behavior and involves and assessment of an individual's level of readiness to make informed, age-appropriate career decisions (Patton & Creed, 2001). Career maturity was assessed using the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI; Crites & Savickas, 1995).

Research Questions

Specific questions for this study include:

1. What are the descriptive properties of the work ethic of economically disadvantaged youth at enrollment and after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities as measured by the OWEI?

2. What are the descriptive properties of the level of career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth at enrollment and after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities from the Attitude scale and Competence test of the CMI?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of economically disadvantaged youth on the OWEI after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities?
4. Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of economically disadvantaged youth on the CMI Attitude scale and Competence test after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities?

Research Design

This study used a nonequivalent group quasi-experimental design. Experimental designs that lack random assignment are referred to as quasi-experimental designs (Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Elek-Fisk, Raymond, & Worthman, 2000; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996; Gall, et al., 1996, Trochim, 1999). Quasi-experimental research designs manipulate one or more independent variables to detect the effects on a dependent variable as do true experimental designs. This type of research design is commonly used in the evaluation of educational programs when random assignment is not practical or possible within the experiment (Gribbons & Herman, 1997). Campbell and Stanley (1963), suggested that there are weaknesses associated with quasi-experimental designs but deem them worthy of use when better designs are not feasible. Gall et al. supported the use of quasi-experimental design when random assignment of subjects to

experimental and control groups is not possible in field studies. Fraenkel and Wallen (1996), and Gall et al. agreed that the lack of random assignment lowers the internal validity of the experiment, but suggested quasi-experimental designs can provide very useful information if the study is carefully designed with reliance on other techniques to control, or at least reduce, threats to internal validity.

According to Bordens and Abbott (1991), the main feature of quasi-experimental research is the fact that subjects are preassigned to treatments at the onset of the research. They may belong to groups determined by subject characteristics or to pre-formed groups of subjects. Because groups naturally formed are used, subjects are not randomly assigned to treatment conditions as they are in true experiments; however, in other aspects, the quasi-experiment is identical to a true experiment.

The most used quasi-experimental design in educational research is that of the nonequivalent control-group design (Dawson, 1997; Gall et al., 1996; Herzog, 1996). This design features a pretest and posttest for both a treatment and control but no random assignment of participants. An advantage to using this design is that it is possible to use more than two groups. It is also possible for the researcher to structure the design so that all groups receive a treatment with all subjects being non-randomly assigned and a pretest and posttest can be administered to all groups. The advantage of the non-equivalent control-group design is that it is considered an experimental design and can determine a cause-effect relationship between a treatment variable and a dependent variable (Gall et al., 1996). Issues with this design may arise because there is no random assignment. There is the disadvantage of the initial differences in groups (Herzog, 1996).

An important concern for this study was the possibility of non-equivalence between groups at the onset. This can prove to be a major threat to internal validity because it is very possible that any changes in the score on the instrument may be attributed to initial differences between the participants rather than as a result of the treatment (Gall et al., 1996).

The materials Work Ethic, Work Attitudes, and Employability Skills Curriculum Materials (Hill, 1997) were used for training. The work ethic, work attitudes, and employability curriculum materials used in this study were developed by Hill (1997) as a 10-day unit of instruction and activities designed to encourage positive work attitudes and demonstrate the importance of dependability, initiative, and interpersonal skills as deemed necessary for success in the workplace. The short time frame of the WIA Summer Youth Activities made this an acceptable curriculum to be used as an inclusion component of short termed intervention programs.

A historical perspective of work ethic introduced the 10-lesson instructional materials. Throughout the course of the curriculum students were encouraged to participate in group discussions, role-playing activities, and several case studies. Realistic situations form the basis for each activity. Students focused on the work ethic characteristics of dependability, initiative, and interpersonal skills as a component of the instruction. Following is a summary of the activities that were included in the curriculum materials lessons (Hill, 1997).

Lesson	Learning Activity	Assignment
1.	Historical perspective of work ethic: *Career Development Patterns*	Interview someone about the changes of work attitudes and work ethic
2.	Discuss interviews: *Employability Skills Assessment*	Review television program for characters with good and bad work ethic
3.	Discuss television characters: Case study 1 – *The Crash*	Descriptions of a successful person's work ethic
4.	Report on successful people: Interpersonal Skills – Group Activity	Observe interpersonal skills of someone at work
5.	Observation report: Case study 2 – *The Dental Hygienist* Multicultural issues	Interpersonal skills questionnaire
6.	Questionnaire discussion Initiative and success	Comparison of jobs with and without initiative
7.	Importance of initiative: Case study 3 – *The Computer Salesperson*	Manager's influence on initiative
8.	Manager's influence report: Dependable: *Almost Infinite Circle*	Dependable job description
9.	Dependable jobs discussion: Case study 4 – *The Valet*	Most dependable person they know and why

10. Most dependable person report:

Work ethic characteristics review;

Occupational Work Ethic Inventory;

Work Ethic Assessment

The learning activities described are designed to offer circumstances that are realistic and stimulate higher order thinking. The conceptual framework of these materials was generated in a study of employed individuals (Hill, 1996). The context of information is designed to generalize and transfer learning from one work setting to another.

The OWEI was used to measure affective work ethic attributes prior to instruction as a pre-test and the CMI was used to measure career maturity prior to instruction. These measures were utilized to determine initial equivalence among groups and to support evidence that any changes in work ethic attributes and career maturity during the program occurred as the result of instruction. A post-test was administered at the end of the four week program to explain any changes in work ethic attributes and career maturity as a result of on the job training and classroom training.

Selection of the Sample

Defining the population and method of sampling is of paramount importance. The overall group to which researchers hope to generalize the results is the population, while the sample is a smaller group taken from the population of interest (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). Gall et al. (1996) outlined several steps to follow in defining the population and selecting a sampling procedure. For the purposes of this study, an accessible population of students enrolled in the summer of 2001 WIA Summer Youth

Activities was used. An accessible population includes all the individuals who can functionally be included in the sample (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996).

To insure that eligible participants had an equal opportunity to the program, announcements were posted in the two high schools and four middle schools throughout Clarke County in Northeast Georgia and included in the daily announcements for those schools. Free and reduced lunch lists and available Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) lists were examined for possible eligible participants. Conferences were held with school counselors for recommendations of possible participants. These students were contacted, interviewed, and evaluated to determine eligibility for the WIA Summer Youth Activities by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center staff. All components of the WIA Summer Youth Activities are coordinated by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, which is staffed and funded by federal funds dispersed through the Department of Labor.

Next, the researcher identified the sampling frame, which often is in the form of a published list identifying the members of the population. In this study the sampling frame was provided by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center as a list of students who qualified under strict criteria to participate in the WIA initiatives of 2001. Making a determination of the sampling procedure is the third step, which included the type of sample, sample size, gender, and age. The Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center staff also made the determination of these criteria based on budget allowances set aside for the WIA Summer Youth Activities of 2001.

The method of sample selection for this study was purposive sampling where the sample was selected based on accessibility to the researcher and previous knowledge of

their availability to participate in the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). WIA defined eligible youth as being no younger than 14 or no older than 21, with low-income status. Low-income status was equated to receiving public assistance, food stamps, certain Social Security Payments, or having an income below the poverty line. Other characteristics that served as qualifiers for the WIA Summer Activities included deficiency in basic literacy skills, being a school dropout, being homeless, being a runaway, being or a foster child, being pregnant or a parent, having a criminal record, or needing assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and retain employment (Kaufman & Wills, 1998). Assessment of applicant educational attainment was conducted by examination of school records. Interests were assessed using the Career Assessment Survey Exploration (CASE). The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) was used as a pre/post test to measure math and reading ability. These results were evaluated by Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center staff and discussed with the student. Each applicant was counseled to explain his/her eligibility or ineligibility. Information was screened by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center to confirm the subjects' representativeness of the sample.

From this selection process, 65 participants were selected for participation in the program. Students participating in this study were divided into two groups. Groups one was composed of 41 participants who were age 16 years old and above and were placed in work-based positions in the community. Group two was composed of 24 participants who were between the ages of 14 – 16 years old. This group of participants was employed at a classroom-based site housed at Clarke Central High School in Clarke County because of child labor laws, which restrict job placement and job duties.

Program of Study

Participants were determined eligible for program participation because of their needs and ability to gain from the experience. As participants in the program they had the opportunity to help in the community, learn work ethic attributes, try new jobs, make new friends, and earn money. All eligible applicants participated in a one-day Work Readiness Session. During this session all 65 participants had instruction in pre-employment/work maturity skills, including completing an application; interviewing; preparing resumes; maintaining regular attendance; being punctual, being dependable; taking initiative; working as a team member; and demonstrating positive attitudes and behavior. After the one-day session, 41 participants, age 16 and above, were placed in the community in different jobs in several public and private non-profit agencies. These agencies are called "worksites". Prior to participants beginning, each worksite was approved as valuable workplaces by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center. During this program, participants were employed under the direct supervision of the on-site supervisor. Participants earned $5.15 per hour for each hour worked each day per week. The worksite supervisor was responsible for scheduling the number of hours worked. However, a participant could not work more than 30 hours per week.

The remaining 24 participants, who were 14 or 15 years old, were assigned to an occupational-based classroom program. They received training in math and reading to assist in enhancing their skills in those areas. Additionally, they received more instruction in pre-employment/work maturity skills, including completing an application; interviewing; preparing resumes; maintaining regular attendance; being punctual, being dependable; taking initiative; working as a team member; and demonstrating positive

attitudes and behavior. Work ethic attributes were a major focus of this program. Such activities as finding and applying for a job, maintaining the job, and getting along with co-workers were accented. Participants had the opportunity to understand the importance of employees taking responsibility for their own work ethic and actions in order for a business to run in an economical and efficient manner. Participants engaged in class activity for three rotating disciplines: mathematics, reading and grammar, and work ethic skills. Three hours of each day was devoted to occupational instruction in culinary arts. Participants in the program had the opportunity to learn the value of hard work and working as a member of a team. The significance of communication skills was included, and the importance of having basic skills in education to enable competence in a highly technical society was reinforced. Participants assigned to the classroom-based activities also participated in field experiences to introduce them to positions available in the work place. Students toured the Holiday Inn, a full-service hotel and convention center, in Athens; the Blue Willow Restaurant, an antebellum home converted to a restaurant and gift shop, in Social Circle; and the Reynolds Plantation, a full-scale resort community, in Greene County. During each visit participants spoke with human resources personnel and discussed employment opportunities and employer expectations as they toured the premises. Participants received 30 hours of classroom instruction per week. Hours of participation in field experiences were included in weekly hours. Participants in this activity earned a stipend of $4.40 per hour for attending the program activities.

Instrumentation

The Occupation Work Ethic Inventory (OWEI; Petty, 1993) was used to measure work ethic attributes, and the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI; Crites, 1995) was used to

measure career maturity. The OWEI was a self-reporting inventory that contains 50 descriptors of work ethic that allow students to evaluate the affective component of their work ethic. The instrument provides scores on the basis of three sub-scales including dependability, initiative, and interpersonal skills. The sub-scales of the instrument were identified through a factor analysis conducted to identify key themes (Hill & Petty, 1995). A factor analysis is a statistical method that provides an empirical basis for a reduction of variables by combining variables that are moderately or highly correlated with each other (Gall et al., 1996).

Participants are expected to rate themselves on the items on the OWEI (Petty, 1993) using a seven-point Likert scale. The scale was labeled 1=Never, 2=Almost never, 3=Seldom, 4=Sometimes, 5=Usually, 6=Almost always, and 7=Always. The stem in this instrument was "*At work I can describe myself as."* Thirty-nine of the 50 items were stated in a positive manner while 11 were presented in a negative fashion to encourage more careful consideration of the instrument. The OWEI has been used previously in studies by Hatcher (1995), Hill (1996), Petty (1995), and Petty & Hill (1994).

The OWEI instrument evaluates on the basis of three sub-scales of scores. The sub-scales used are interpersonal skills, initiative, or dependability. The descriptors for interpersonal skills include appreciative, emotionally stable, patient, likeable, helpful, pleasant, cooperative, hard working, cheerful, devoted, courteous, considerate, well groomed, friendly, loyal, and modest. The self-rated score of each descriptor is added and divided by 16 to determine the average score for interpersonal skills divided the total of individual scores. The descriptors for initiative sub-scale include resourceful, productive, dedicated, persistent, enthusiastic, orderly, persevering, conscientious,

accurate, adaptable, efficient, perceptive, initiating, effective, ambitious, and independent. Scores for these items are totaled, and an average is determined for an initiative score. The dependability sub-scale descriptors include punctual, careful, honest, reliable, following directions, following regulations, and dependable.

The Career Maturity Inventory (CMI), which was originally developed by Crites in 1961, was used as a second instrument in this study. This instrument has been utilized in more than 500 published research projects between 1961 and 1972 (Crites & Savickas, 1996), and until 1972 was referred to as the Vocational Development Inventory, when the name was changed to The Career Maturity Inventory (CMI). Carpenter, 1993, Pavlak & Kammer, 1985, Porter, 1999 and Trebilco, 1984, have used the CMI in previous studies on program development and evaluation.

Over the years 1973, 1978, with the most recent in 1995 (Crites & Savickas, 1996), several revisions have been made to the CMI. These revisions resulted in the follow adjustments being made in the 1995 version:

1. Reduction of administration and testing time.
2. Elimination of subscales for both subtests.
3. Selection of test items that represent the former subscales.
4. Construction of the Career Developer (CDR).
5. Adaptability to postsecondary adult levels.
6. Availability of both hand and machine scoring options (Crites & Savickas, 1996).

The reduction of testing items on the CMI resulted in an automatic reduction of administration time and testing time. The testing time on the 1978 version of the CMI was approximately 2.5 hours, but the 1995 versions totals 50 items that reduces testing

time to 30-45 minutes. The second change eliminated subscales to reduce testing time. The latest version offers a score for the Attitude scale, the Competence test, and an overall score on career maturity. The third adjustment selected items to represent the former subscales without yielding a lower reliability or validity. The development of the Career Developer (CDR), which was implemented as a supplement to the CMI was the fourth adjustment. The CDR is designed for the respondent to retain for discussion. Changes to the CMI introduced items to reflect the career maturity of unemployed adults, postsecondary students, and adults. Theory suggests there are individual differences in career maturity on individuals among those age groups. The final adaptation allowed for hand or machine scoring for both the CMI and CDR (Crites & Savickas, 1996).

The revised CMI uses two 25 question sub-tests to express career choice process and career choice content. These are the Attitude scale and the Competence test. The Attitude scale is designed to measure an individual's attitudes about making career choices. Through the measures of orientation, involvement, independence, compromise, and decisiveness, the Attitude scales reveal not only if one is having difficulty in the decision making process, but it can also identify why there is difficulty (Crites & Savickas, 1996).

The Competence test is designed to measure the degree to which an individual possess career information and the planning and decision-making skills necessary to make realistic and wise career decisions (Crites & Savickas, 1996). The Competence test consists of five components that measure career choice competencies. The five areas are:

1. Knowing Yourself (Self-Apparisal)
2. Knowing About Jobs (Occupational Information)

3. Choosing a Job (Goal Selection)
4. Looking Ahead (Planning)
5. What Should They Do (Problem Solving).

All areas of the Competence test are sequential elements of the career decision-making process. Each item on both the Competence test and the Attitude scale uses standardized scores by using a school grade (6-12) or a chronological age as the norm reference (Crites and Savickas, 1996).

Procedures

The following procedure was utilized to conduct the study. Upon approval of the prospectus of this study, the instrument and procedures were submitted to the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects at the University of Georgia. Once approved, consent forms were sent home to the parents of the participants in the work-based group, classroom-based group, and pilot study group explaining the study and procedures.

The pilot study was administered to 26 high school students enrolled in summer school with the same age range as students participating in the actual study. Reliability was determined for this study by using the Kuder-Richardson-21 approach for internal consistency. The formula for this approach requires three pieces of information, the number of items in the test, the mean, and the standard deviation. The Kuder-Richardson-21 test of reliability is suitable for tests where it can be assumed that the items tested are of equal difficulty, which is the case for the OWEI and the CMI. For research purposes a Kuder-Richardson-21 of .70 or higher indicates good reliability for an instrument (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). For the pilot study scores of OWEI the Kuder-

Richardson-21 results were .65 for interpersonal skills, .68 for dependability, .72 for initiative. On the CMI instrument a Kuder-Richardson-21 of .71 was calculated on the Attitude scale and a .69 was calculated on the Competence test.

The instructors of the WIA Summer Youth Activities were teachers from the Clarke County School District who were hired by the Northeast Regional Development Center for the duration of the WIA Summer Youth Activities. Each instructor was a certified teacher in the area he or she was to teach. Each teacher was given the instrument, score sheets, and administration instructions during preplanning for the program. The procedures for administration were reviewed of the study were discussed with each of them. All instructors delivered the curriculum as prescribed in the guidelines which served in its capacity to control for threats to external validity (Gall et al., 1996).

All too often in experimental designs the experimenter fails to follow the exact procedures specified for administering the treatments, and when this occurs it is referred to as treatment infidelity (Gall et al., 1996). To maximize treatment fidelity in a study, specific instructions, with precise specifications for the treatment, must be given to the experimenter. It is suggested by Gall et al. to assess experimenters to determine if there were any irregular events occurring during the treatment. This was done so in the form of a questionnaire. On the questionnaire, teachers were asked to describe any irregularities administering the OWEI and CMI instruments. There were no pertinent events reported.

A pretest was given to both groups prior to instruction from the work ethic curriculum materials. Those participating in work-based group were administered the

pretest as a part of their first career development session conducted on the mobile unit. Participants were required to visit the mobile unit for four hours each week for career development activities. Participants from the classroom-based group were administered the pretest before beginning instruction from the Work Ethic, Work Attitudes, and Employability Skills curriculum (Hill, 1997).

The instructors administered the posttest in the same manner as the pretest at the end of the program. It is important to reduce the threat to internal validity that groups are administered the pretest and posttest in the same manner (Gall et al., 1996; Rojewski, 1999).

It is very difficult in quasi-experimental design studies to hold constant or eliminate all internal and external validity threats can affect the outcome measured by the posttest. Fraenkel and Wallen (1996), define internal validity, as any relationship observed between variables should be unambiguous to meaning rather than to the number or factors, conditions of, or type of materials used in the study. According to Gall et al. (1996) and Rojewski (1999), internal validity is the extent that extraneous variables have been controlled so the treatment effect can account for any change to a dependent variable rather than the extraneous variables. Campbell and Stanley (1963) identified the eight threats to internal validity as history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, regression, selection, mortality and selection interactions. Gall et al. included experimental treatment diffusion, compensatory rivalry by the control group, compensatory equalization of treatments, and resentful demoralization of the control group as internal validity threats also.

In regard to this study, the first threat was the selection-maturation. During the course of an intervention, physical or psychological changes in participants may occur due to factors associated with the passing of time rather than to the intervention itself (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). The maturity variable of the older participants (16- to 19-year olds) could affect the treatment, which is placement in a work-based position or a classroom-based position. This could result in changes in the dependent variable, instrument scores, which could possibly be attributed to age rather than the treatment effects. True random assignment would be the best way to combat this threat. Unfortunately, for this study this was not an available option. Therefore, a pretest was administered before any treatment to both groups to establish the initial level of work ethic skills and career maturity.

Threat from instrumentation, a learning gain that might be observed from pretest to posttest because of the nature of the use of the instrument was also a concern in this study. The way in which instruments are used may cause a threat if the nature of the instrument is changed in any way (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). Cook and Campbell (1979) suggested that if the instrumentation threat occurs it should not lower internal validity to a great degree because the threat should affect both treatment and control groups to the same degree. Fraenkel and Wallen advised researchers to control this threat by standardizing administration.

Another threat to the internal validity of this study was the interaction between selection and history which Gall et al. (1996) defined as interaction of the effect of the treatment and the effect of some other event during the time between the pretest and posttest to cause a heightened or lessened effect on the dependent variable. In the study,

a four-week interval occurred between the pretest and the final posttest administration. To address the issues of this threat, there should be an assurance that the treatment groups are as similar as possible.

In intervention studies such as this, Gall et al. (1996) suggested that testing becomes another internal validity threat. This threat exists when participants perform better on a posttest simply because of their experience taking the pretest. The students were knowledgeable of the questions in the pretest and may have put forth a greater effort to learn the material. Gall et al. (1996) and Dawson (1997) predicted that this threat would affect both groups equally.

Attrition always represents itself as a threat to experiments, which span over a period of time. Unequal loss across treatment groups might result from extraneous factors such as illness, change in address, participants' resentment about what they may perceive as the less desirable treatment conditions, or their perception that the experiment is too demanding (Gall et al., 1996). In this study, the addition and reduction of students into either group was closely monitored. Students who did not have a pretest and posttest did not have their scores included in the experiment. The scores of six students were excluded from this research, two from the classroom-based group and four from the work-based group. The students in the classroom-based group were removed because of lack of attendance and the four from the work-based group were released from their employment duties by their immediate supervisor for lack of cooperation on the job.

Another consideration for quasi-experimental designs is external validity. External validity refers to the extent that results of an experiment can be generalized and considered representative of other individuals and settings beyond those being studied

(Rojewski, 1999). When findings of an experiment can be generalized to a larger population of interest this is known as population validity. Ecological generalizability or validity refers to the degree in which the results of a study can be transferred to other settings or conditions. In order to reduce complications from these threats, generalization is more plausible if data shows that the sample is representative of the intended population and if the researcher ensures the nature of the environmental conditions is the same in all-important aspects in any situation in which the researcher generalizes the findings (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). In this study, the sample was a small percentage of the total number of students participating in like programs sponsored by the Northeast Georgia Research Development Center across a twelve county region. All possible participants were residents of Clarke County, Georgia, and met the same selection criteria; therefore, the results can only be generalized to the program participants in Clarke County of the Northeast Georgia Research Development Center region.

Treatment interaction with the pretest becomes a threat to external validity whenever the pretest sensitizes subjects to the treatment. Posttest sensitization offers a similar threat (Gall et al., 1996). Experimenter bias is yet another external threat. Bias could possibly become an issue either positively or negatively in this study depending on the teachers administering the treatment instrument. In this study students were administered a pretest and a post posttest at the end of the program. To minimize these possible threats it was important to be very specific about the delivery instructions for the instrument and all other conditions and procedures of the experiment were clearly defined. Random selection and assignment are generally considered the best and most effective method for controlling threats to external validity; however, replication and

developing new research from information provided in completed studies have proven to be an important way to determine if findings can be generalized, thereby, establishing the external validity of the findings (Rojewski, 1999).

Experimental research is very important in the educational world because it directly attempts to influence a particular variable, and when properly executed, is the best type of research for testing hypotheses about cause-and-effect relationships between variables. In experimental research, researchers are allowed to manipulate the independent variable with some form of treatment; they decide the nature of the treatment, to which it is to be applied, and to what extent (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). The results can then influence the decision for program development, program design, adoption of teaching methods, curriculum selection, and other factors directly related to the possible success of the program (Gall et al., 1996). Many summer programs have used experimental designs to evaluate outcomes of program effectiveness because they were able to compare differences among groups who participated and those who did not. Some of these programs include: Summer Works!, Bakersfield, CA; Work Appreciation for Youth, Dobbs Ferry, NY; Youth Connections of Southeast Minnesota, Rochester, MN; and Community Youth Corps, Los Angeles, CA (PEPNet, 1997).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical measures were calculated to include the means and standard deviations of the work ethic and career maturity of student participants. One-way ANOVA was used to examine the effects of participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities program on the mean scores of the OWEI and CMI.

According to Gall et al. (1996) descriptive statistics are described as techniques that are mathematically based for organizing, summarizing, and displaying a set on data in numerical form. Descriptive statistics include central tendency measures such as mean, median, and mode, in addition to measures of variation such as standard deviation and variance.

One-way ANOVA, which is often referred to as the simplest of ANOVA techniques, is a simple way to compare values to form a ratio to test whether population means for the groups are different (Turner & Thayer, 2001). According to Gall et al. (1996), ANOVA compares the amount of between-groups variance in individuals' scores with the amount of variance within groups. ANOVA procedures are applicable to quasi-experimental data, as it places no restrictions on the number of groups or conditions that can be compared, but it is acceptable for two or more groups (Rutherford, 2001).

The independent variable was participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities work-based group or classroom-based group, while the dependent variables consisted of scores from the sub-scales of the OWEI and CMI. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to analysis data. Table 1 outlines the data analysis used for each question.

Given the interest of the researcher to assess the magnitude of differences in the groups four factors should be taken into consideration as described by Olejnik (1984) including significance level (alpha), type of data analysis, statistical power, and desired effect size. An alpha level of .05 for significance was used for this study. McCall and Kagan (1986) indicate the $p < 0.05$ is commonly used in educational research. This level

of significance is widely accepted throughout the research community because it reduces the chance of a Type I error. A Type I error would occur by rejecting the null hypothesis when it is true.

Type of data analysis procedures is a determinant of sample size. According to Fraenkal and Wallen (1996), studies utilizing both a pretest and a posttest require fewer subjects than studies using just posttests. There is a direct link between the level of statistical power and sample size. Gall et al. (1996) explained that fewer participants are needed to reject the null hypothesis at the .05 level than at the .10 level, as the sample size is increased; the level of statistical power is increased. Statistical power supports the rejection of the null hypothesis when it is false.

Effect size is another factor, which will affect the likelihood of rejecting the null hypothesis when it is actually true. Effect size is an estimate of the magnitude of the differences in the populations being studied. Effect size offers explanation to the extent of the change in the dependent variable as a result of the treatment. The interactions between these factors affect the value of the statistical power. The greater the observed differences in relationship or effects of the treatment, the lower the statistical power. The level of statistical power also has a direct relationship to the sample size. The smaller the sample size used in a study, the larger the effect size will be (Cohen, 1992). Cohen (1988) suggested the following guidelines for evaluating effect size, a small effect size is .20, a medium effect size is .50, and a large effect size is .80. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) most researchers consider an effect size of .50 or above to be an important finding. A positive effect size of .33 or larger is considered to have practical significance (Gall et al., 1996).

For this study, the writer estimated a level of practical significance with an effect size set at a large level. The researcher made this estimation because of the limits of an accessible population resulting in a small sample. According to Olejnik (1984), the minimal total sample size necessary for a .05 significance and a statistical power set at the .7 level for this study was 40 participants.

Table 1

Data Analysis Summary for Research Questions for the Study

Research Question	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Data Analysis
What are the descriptive properties of the work ethic of economically disadvantaged youth participants at enrollment and after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities as measured by the OWEI?	Participation in WIA Summer Youth Activities	Scores on OWEI instrument	Mean, standard deviation
What are the descriptive properties of the level of career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth participants at enrollment and after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities from the Attitude scale and Competence test of the CMI?	Participation in WIA Summer Youth Activities	Scores on CMI Attitude Scale and Competence test	Mean, standard deviation
Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of economically disadvantaged youth on the OWEI after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities?	Participation in WIA Summer Youth Activities	Scores on the OWEI	One-way ANOVA
Is there a statistically significant difference in the scores of economically disadvantaged youth on the CMI Attitude scale and Competence test after participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities?	Participation in WIA Summer Youth Activities	Scores on the CMI Attitude scale and Competence test	One-way ANOVA

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to determine if the work ethic attributes and career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth participants in the Workforce Investment Act Summer Activities program categorized by work setting differed after participation in the program. Work ethics were defined as consisting of interpersonal skills, initiative, and being dependable as measured using the Occupational Work Ethic Inventory (OWEI; Petty, 1993). The Career Maturity Inventory (CMI; Crites, 1995) was used to assess career maturity. The independent variable was the type of participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities, while the dependent variables were scores on the OWEI and CMI.

Four research questions provide the foundation for the presentation of findings in this chapter. Descriptive measures such as means and standard deviations are presented. A series of one-way ANOVAs was completed with a priori level of significance established at .05 for each test.

Students participating in this study were divided into two groups. Group one, the work-based group, was composed of participants, 16 to 19 years old, who were placed in work-based positions around Clarke county. Agents of the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center determined the placement of participants and worksites. Worksites included governmental agencies, the Boys and Girls Clubs, summer day camps, public schools, and others. Students employed in work-based sites were required to participate

in work ethic skills training once a week by meeting a mobile unit at a designated place and time. The mobile unit was equipped with computer stations loaded with a work ethic curriculum and staffed by a certified instructor. Students were required to report to the instructional site for four hours of each week; these four hours were included in the total time of their thirty-hour work week.

Group two, the classroom-based group, of students were employed at a classroom-based site housed at Clarke Central High School in Clarke County Georgia. These participants were scheduled to report to the site for thirty work hours each week. During these hours, they attended a mathematics class, a computer-based English class, and a culinary arts class. Culinary arts' training provided the foundation of skills-based learning, incorporating work ethic and career maturity. Agents of the Northeast Georgia Development Center also determined the placement of participants to this site.

All potential employers, from both the work-based and the classroom-based groups, had an opportunity to meet with participants and conduct short interview sessions with students who were participating in the summer program. From these short interviews, potential employers had an opportunity to interact with participants and discuss employer expectations.

Research Findings

Research Question One

Research question one sought to determine the descriptive properties of the work ethic of economically disadvantaged youth participants at enrollment and after participation in the Workforce Investment Act Summer Activities program as measured by the OWEI (Petty, 1993). Participants completed the OWEI before receiving

instruction from the Work Ethic, Work Attitudes and Employability Skills curriculum (Hill, 1997) and before employment skill instruction delivered by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (NGRDC) mobile unit. The OWEI is a self-reporting inventory that containing 50 descriptors of work ethic that allowed participants to evaluate the affective component of their work ethic. Participants rated themselves on each of the items using a seven-point Likert-type scale. The scale was labeled 1=Never, 2=Almost never, 3=Seldom, 4=Sometimes, 5=Usually, 6=Almost always, and 7=Always. Pretest mean scores and standard deviations for each of the factors from the OWEI are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Pretest Occupational Work Ethic Inventory Factors of Work-based And Classroom-based Group

	Work-based (n = 37)		Classroom-based (n = 22)	
OWEI factor	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Interpersonal skills	5.88	0.88	5.69	0.82
Initiative	5.32	1.01	4.94	0.92
Dependability	5.99	1.11	5.71	0.86

The posttest mean scores and standard deviations for each of the factors from the OWEI are presented in Table 3. The mean score for both groups on the pretest ranged from a low of 4.94 to a high of 5.99; on the posttest, participants rated themselves from

5.01 to 6.09. Based on the mean score from the OWEI, both groups indicated their work attributes of interpersonal skills, initiative, and dependability, as usually or almost always descriptive of them.

Table 3

Posttest Occupational Work Ethic Inventory Factors of Work-based And Classroom-based Group

	Work-based (n = 37)		Classroom-based (n = 22)	
OWEI factor	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Interpersonal skills	6.02	0.78	5.41	0.82
Initiative	5.35	0.89	5.01	0.86
Dependability	6.09	0.79	5.47	1.03

Research Question Two

The goal of research question two was to describe the level of career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth participants at enrollment and after participation in the Workforce Investment Act Summer Activities program from the Attitude scale and Competence scale of the CMI (Crites, 1995). Career maturity is a key element in the developmental approach to understanding career behavior. It involves an assessment of an individual's level of career progress in relation to career development tasks (Patton & Creed, 2001). The CMI consists of affective and cognitive dimensions. The affective dimension includes attitudes toward the career decision-making process, while career

decision-making skills form the cognitive dimension. Means for both the Attitude scale and Competence test had a possible range of 0 to 25. The pretest mean scores and standard deviations for each of the subscales from the CMI are presented in Table 4 (see Table 4). The posttest mean scores and standard deviations for each of the subscales from the CMI are presented in Table 5.

Table 4

Pretest Career Maturity Inventory Attitude Scale and Competence Test Subscales of Work-based And Classroom-based Group

	Work-based (n = 37)		Classroom-based (n = 22)	
CMI subscale	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Attitude scale	19.18	4.33	16.90	5.78
Competence test	19.54	6.04	16.90	7.23

Research Question Three

The OWEI pretest scores were used to determine if participants of the work-based group and participants of the classroom-based groups were equivalent before participating in the WIA Summer Activities program. Participants completed the OWEI before instruction from the Work Ethic, Work Attitudes, and Employability Skills curriculum (Hill, 1997) and before employment skill instruction delivered by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (NGRDC) mobile unit. One-way ANOVA is considered one of the simplest of the ANOVA techniques (Wright, 1997).

According to Shavelson (1996), ANOVA is used as a form of analysis for data from designs with one independent variable that produces two or more groups of subjects. The test produces a value, expressed by an F-score.

Table 5

Posttest Career Maturity Inventory Attitude Scale and Competence Test Subscales of Work-based And Classroom-based Group

	Work-based (n = 37)		Classroom-based (n = 22)	
CMI subscale	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Attitude scale	20.37	4.65	17.36	5.32
Competence test	20.43	5.11	17.50	5.70

A series of one-way ANOVAs were conducted to determine any differences based on each dependent variable. The dependent variables interpersonal skills, initiative, and dependability are the sub-scales of the OWEI (Perry, 1993) instrument. The first analysis conducted was on the variable of interpersonal skills. There were no statistically significant differences found between the work-based group and the classroom-based group, in interpersonal skills on the OWEI before participation in the WIA Summer Activities program, $F(1,57) = .610$, $p < .05$.

No statistically significant differences were found on the second dependent variable of initiative of the OWEI instrument before participation in the WIA Summer Activities program, $F(1,57) = 2.015$, $p < .05$.

On the third dependent variable of dependability, no statistically significant differences were found on the OWEI instrument before participation in the WIA Summer Activities program, $F(1,57) = 1.032$, $p < .05$. Therefore, the two groups were considered initially equivalent on interpersonal skills, initiative, and dependability as measured by the OWEI.

Question three sought to determine if the work ethic of participants engaged in work-based experiences was statistically significant different from participants engaged in classroom-based activities after participation in the WIA Summer Activities. A series of ANOVA was conducted with a priori level of significance established at $p = .05$. ANOVA is a statistical procedure for comparing the amount of between-groups variance in individuals' scores with the amount of within-groups variance (Gall et al., 1996). The three sub-scales of the OWEI (Petty, 1993), interpersonal skills, initiative, and dependability were used as the dependent variables. Data were analyzed using the workgroups as the independent variable.

There was a statistically significant difference in interpersonal skills between the work-based group and the classroom-based group after participation in the WIA Summer Activities. With an alpha level of .05, the effect of participation on interpersonal skills was statistically significant $F(1,57) = 7.20$, $p < .05$. The effect size for this treatment was $d = .69$. This represented a medium effect of practical significance.

There was no statistically significant difference in initiative scores on the OWEI (Petty, 1993) after participation in the WIA Summer Activities between the work-based and the classroom-based groups based on posttest means, $F(1,57) = 2.084$, $p < .05$.

There was a statistically significant difference in OWEI (Petty, 1993) dependability scores after participation in the WIA Summer Activities between the work-based and the classroom-based groups based on the posttest means for dependability, $F(1,57) = 6.52$, $p <. 05$. The effect size was determined $d = .66$. This represents a medium effect of practical significance, which indicated the difference in dependability between groups after participation in the WIA Summer Activities.

Research Question Four

ANOVA was used to determine if the scores of work-based or classroom-based groups different on the CMI (Crites, 1995) Attitude scale and Competence test differed before participation in the WIA Summer Youth Activities. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted with a level of significance established at .05 to determine if there was a statistical significant difference in the scores.

The CMI (Crites, 1995) consists of affective and cognitive dimensions. The affective dimension includes attitudes toward the career decision-making process, while career decision-making skills reflect the cognitive dimension. Means for both the Attitude scale and Competence test had a possible range of 0 to 25. Participants completed the CMI before instruction from the Work Ethic, Work Attitudes, and Employability Skills curriculum (Hill, 1997) and before employment skill instruction delivered by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (NGRDC) mobile unit.

There was no statistical significance in pre-participation scores on the Attitude scale, F (1,57) = 1.032, p <. 05. As with the Attitude scale, there was no statistical significance difference found for the dependent variable of career maturity, F (1,57) = 2.25, p <. 05. Therefore, the two groups were considered initially equivalent on the Attitude scale and the Competence test as measured by the CMI.

Research question four sought to determine if the CMI (Crites, 1995) Attitude scale and Competence test scores of participants engaged in work-based experiences were statistically significantly different from participants engaged in classroom-based activities after participation in the WIA Summer Activities. ANOVA was used to compare the career maturity of participants in the work-based group and classroom-based instructional groups. There was a statistically significant difference in the after participation scores for Attitude scale, F (1,57) = 5.20, p <. 05. The effect size for this treatment was d = .59. This represents a medium effect of practical significance

There was a statistically significant difference in after participation Competence test scores, F(1,57) = 4.15, p < .05. The effect size for this treatment was d = .53. This represents a medium effect of practical significance.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to determine if the work ethic attributes and career maturity of economically disadvantaged youth participating in the Workforce Investment Act Summer Activities of 2001 differed after participation in the program. Work ethic attributes were defined as consisting of interpersonal skills, initiative, and being dependable; and were measured using the Occupational Work Ethic Inventory (OWEI, Petty, 1993). Career maturity is fundamental to understanding career behavior and involves an assessment of an individual's level of readiness to make informed, age-appropriate career decisions (Patton & Creed, 2001). The Career Maturity Inventory (CMI, Crites, 1995) was used to assess career maturity. The CMI, first known as the Vocational Development Inventory, used two sub-tests, the Attitude scale and the Competence test to express career choice processes and career choice content. Descriptive properties and a series of one-way ANOVA's were used for analysis. The independent variable was participation in the summer program, while the dependent variables consisted of scores from the OWEI and CMI.

For the purposes of this study, an accessible population of students enrolled in the summer of 2001 Workforce Investment Act Summer Activities was used. To insure that eligible participants had equal opportunity to the program, announcements were posted around the schools and included in the daily announcements. Free and reduced lunch lists and available Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) lists were evaluated

for possible eligible participants. Conferences were held with school counselors for recommendations of other possible participants. Students were contacted, interviewed, and evaluated to determine eligibility for the WIA Summer Activities by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center staff. The Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center staff also made the determination of these criteria based on budget allowances of the program.

From this selection process, 65 participants were elected for participation in the program. Students participating in this study were divided into two groups. Group one was composed of 41 participants who were 16 to 19 years of age and, according to labor laws are able to work in a variety of work settings with few restrictions. These participants were placed in work-based positions in the Athens, Clarke County community. Group two was composed of 24 Participants who were ages 14 and 15 years old. These participants were employed at a classroom-based instructional site housed at Clarke Central High School in Clarke County because of the many labor restraints placed on employees under the age of 16 years old.

Following approval by The University of Georgia Institutional Review Board two copies of parental consent forms and assent forms were distributed to all participants. Participants returning one set of signed forms were included as the work-based group and the classroom-based group. Through the course of the program, six students were dismissed from their employment due to lack of attendance or lack of cooperation with their employers, resulting in data from 59 participants being used in the research. There were 37 participants remaining in the work-based group and 22 participants remaining in the classroom-based work group.

Two instruments, the OWEI and the CMI, were used to collect data for this research. The OWEI, which is a self-reporting inventory, was used to evaluate the affective component of participant's work ethic. The OWEI instrument evaluated on the basis of three sub-scales of scores. The sub-scales were interpersonal skills, initiative, and dependability. The OWEI contained 50 items describing work ethic on the inventory. Participants rated themselves on each of these items using a seven-point Likert scale. Some of the 50 items were stated in a positive manner, while others were presented in a negative fashion.

The second instrument used was Crites' 1995 Career Maturity Inventory (CMI). This instrument consisted of two parts, an Attitude scale, which examined participants' attitudes about making career choices, and the Competence test, which examined the competencies of the career decision-making process. Each sub-scale was composed of 25 statements using an Agree/Disagree format.

Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations were calculated to respond to research questions one and two. Questions three through six were analyzed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Summary of Findings

Effective summer youth programs have been built on a well-organized approach asserting strategies for promoting work ethics and career maturity that include high expectations and caring relationships while emphasizing the development of skills, knowledge, and competencies that lend themselves to jobs and lasting careers (Gregson, 1994; Grubb, 1995; PEPNet, 1997). The WIA provides the framework for a unique preparation and employment system designed to meet both the needs of businesses and

the needs of potential employees by including a summer work component to work with youth to develop the importance of work ethic skills and career maturity to assist them on becoming more productive employees.

Research question one resulted in a description of the work-based group and the classroom-based group at enrollment and after participation in the program on interpersonal skills, initiative, and dependability of the OWEI. Students indicated that the mean scores of the work attributes of interpersonal skills, initiative, and dependability, from the OWEI described them as usually or almost always descriptive of them. Their pretest mean scores ranged from a low of 4.94 to a high of 5.99. On the posttest, participant mean scores ranged from 5.01 to 6.09.

The second research question resulted in a description of the career maturity of the work-based group and the classroom-based group at enrollment and after participation in the program on the Attitude scale and Competence test of the CMI instrument. Career maturity can be defined as the attitudes and behaviors of an individual, which are traditionally expected of an employee on the job. These attitudes and behaviors could include such things as honesty, dependability, taking pride in one's work, and other attributes that are desired of the employee by the employer. Pretest mean scores for both groups ranged from 16.90 to 19.18 on the Attitude scale and 16.90 to 19.54 on the Competence test. On the posttest participants rated themselves from 17.36 to 20.37 on the Attitude scale and 17.50 to 20.43 on the Competence test

To establish initial equivalence, ANOVA was used to determine if there were differences in scores on the OWEI prior to participation in the WIA Summer Activities. Data for the sub-scales of interpersonal skills, initiative, and dependability revealed no

statistically significant differences. Likewise, when career maturity of the work-based group and classroom-based group was compared, there were no statistically significant differences found. Therefore, it was concluded that the groups were initially equivalent before participation in the WIA Summer Activities.

When the work ethic of participants of the work-based group was compared to the classroom-based group on the sub-scales of the OWEI after participation, there was a statically significant difference in interpersonal skills and dependability. However, there was not a statistically significant difference in initiative.

A comparison of the career maturity of participants in the work-based group to the classroom-based group as measured by the CMI Attitude scale and Competence test after participation in the WIA Summer Activities revealed statistically significant differences for both the CMI Attitude scale and Competence test.

Discussions and Implications

Participants of the Workforce Investment Act Summer Youth Activities of 2001 who were assigned to work-based sites scored significantly higher than the classroom-based group on interpersonal skills, dependability, and career maturity after participation. These findings are consistent with research from other youth employment initiatives such as Community and Schools for Career Success, Summer Works!, Work Appreciation for Youth, and Youth Connections of Southeast Minnesota (PEPNet, 1997), which found that integration of workplace experiences into summer programs was a key component for the development of appropriate work ethics and career maturity. During the course of work experiences, participants had an opportunity to observe other employees and the merits or demerits of their work behaviors (Kraska, 1990; Sommerfield, 1995; PEPNet, 1997).

There are several possible explanations for the results of this study. Consistent with the findings from previous youth employment initiatives which integrated workplace experiences into summer program, classroom-based instruction failed to meet levels as high as those in work-based experiences because the participants did not consider the classroom-based instruction as a viable work site. Instead, they considered the instruction as an extension of traditional high school career and technical education instruction. If this is actually the case, research might point toward development of work ethic as an activity that occurs as the result of individual work experiences. Findings of this study supported earlier research (Baker & Taylor, 1998; Loughead, Liu, & Middleton, 1995; Mortimer, 1992), which suggested that the quality of the work experience, rather than the status of employment or the number of hours worked, has a greater impact on program participants. This would indicate that participants in the work-based group had an opportunity to acquire more skills on the job that strengthened their intrinsic orientations toward work.

According to Herr and Cramer (1996), participants incur the widest range of career maturity during their junior high school years. Participants of the classroom-based instruction group were 14 – 15 years old, which is concurrent with the junior high school years. The effects of pubertal changes including physical, emotional, and intellectual development contribute to maturational differences. These differences combined with variances in general academic progress, readiness, peer conflicts, and family relationships often confound the process of career development. These effects could explain why the

participants of the work-based group who were 16 years of age and older, consistently scored a higher means on the OWEI (Petty, 1993) and the CMI (Crites, 1995) than the participants of the classroom-based group.

According to Mortimer, Finch, Dennehy, Lee and Beebe (1994) at least 61 percent of 10th graders and 90 percent of 11th and 12th graders work at some time during the school year. These students, generally 16 years of age and older, typically work from 15 to 20 hours per week. It is reasonable to think this work experience would influence the formulation of work ethics and attitudes about work related behaviors, in addition to values and concepts related to career maturity. This would indicate that more individuals in the work-based group would have had an opportunity to develop a sense of competence related to work.

Hill and Rojewski, (1999), suggested the affective attributes of work ethic and career maturity are formed in the early years of human development. They asserted that the potential for shaping and influencing these attributes is through participation in intervention strategies is limited. This could explain the small increases from pretest to posttest scores for both the work-based group and the classroom-based groups on the OWEI (Petty, 1993) and the CMI (Crites, 1995).

Participants in the classroom-based instructional group received instruction from Hill's (1995) Work Ethic, Work Attitudes, and Employability Skills Curriculum Materials. This instruction provided an opportunity for participants to reflect and examine their views and values. This could possibly suggest that the work ethic instruction encouraged participants to think about interpersonal skills, initiative, dependability, thus resulting in lower scores because they were more aware of the

concepts and more honest in their posttest responses. This could also explain why there was an increase in dependability from pretest to posttest for participants of the work-based group and a decrease from pretest to posttest for participants in the classroom-based group. These findings were consistent with other studies of economically disadvantaged youth (Hill & Rojewski, 1999; Petty & Hill, 1994) where dependability was a key issue. According to Hill and Rojewski (1999), this issue can be addressed by allowing students to work through case studies and problem-solving activities based on real life circumstances to develop awareness of problem behaviors and the importance of being dependable in the workplace.

The career maturity of participants placed in work-based sites also resulted in higher means than those who were placed in the classroom-based environment. These scores suggest that participants in work-based site placement were more motivated and possessed a more positive feeling about their choice of summer employment. Effective summer youth initiatives are built on a well-conceived and implemented approach to youth development. Employers from both the work-based site and the classroom-based site made the commitment to youth development by exemplifying a conscious and professional effort to provide high expectations, caring relationships, and holistic employment strategies that build responsibility and encourage high self esteem. According to Ohler and Levinson (1994), an awareness of interests, abilities, and aptitudes is an important component of career maturity. This awareness was not evident with participants of classroom-based instruction group. They perceived their summer placement not as true employment. Instead of viewing their placement as an opportunity

to fuse school-based and work-based components, classroom-based participants viewed it as not being a real job. Other experimental research programs such as New Chance, Jobstart, and Step proved equally as disheartening (Grubb, 1995).

Findings from this study revealed statistically significant differences in interpersonal skills and dependability attributes of the OWEI (Petty, 1993) and the Attitude scale and Competence test of the CMI (Crites, 1995). An effect size using Cohen's *d* was calculated for each of these differences. The effect size for interpersonal skills was *d* = .69, for dependability d = .66, on the Attitude scale *d* = .59, and on the Competence test *d* = .53. According to Cohen's suggested guidelines for evaluating effect size, each of these findings would be considered a medium effect (Cohen, 1988). Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) suggested that any effect size above .50 be considered an important finding, however, for the findings to be correctly interpreted they must be considered within the context of the study. Participants from economically disadvantaged backgrounds traditionally have weaker institutions of family and community, are less equipped with the knowledge, skills, guidance, role models and experiences to assist them in attaining and maintaining employment (Kazis & Kopp, 1997). An economic disadvantage in life can affect an individual holistically including their values, language skills, interpersonal skills, accessibility to employment, and expectations of life (Wentling & Waigth, 1999). These same individuals sometimes lack the necessary confidence in their own capabilities to develop outcome expectations for making career related decisions (Hill & Rojewski, 1999). Any increase in mean scores for participants of the referenced population is useful in developing their awareness and understanding the attributes of developing work ethic and career maturity

and their direct relation to career opportunities and success. When considering these factors an effect size of .50 or above holds an important practical significance.

When evaluating the effectiveness of interventions programs such as WIA, one has to consider the amount of federal, state, and local dollars invested in the program's operation, in addition to the value of the effect for the intended population. When taking program cost into consideration, the lack of great gains in the mean scores on the OWEI (Petty, 1993), and the CMI (Crites, 1995) may not have been commensurate with the investment for the program. The lack of greater gains in the mean scores from pretest to posttest may indicate a deficit in program effectiveness and suggests a need for program evaluation.

Recommendations for Practice

1. Program developers should make every effort to include more work-based learning in the classroom training. Work-based learning can be incorporated in the classroom training by including such activities as job shadowing, more guided business tours, and limited apprenticeships. According to Wentling and Waight (2000), activities such as these give relevance, meaning and leverage to classroom learning as they serve as an initiation to the work place.
2. The same work ethic instructional materials should be utilized with both groups of participants, those who are placed in work-based positions and those who are placed in the classroom-based site to be able to effectively evaluate if there are differences as a result of the work site.
3. Because participation in the classroom-based site was not depicted as productive as the work-based participation, teachers in the classroom-based

site should explore the sources of students' negative attitudes toward school so that they will be better able to improve strategies used to teach specific work ethic skills and competencies.

4. To communicate the belief that youth can meet and exceed high expectations, be held accountable for their actions, establish boundaries, set reasonable limits, consistently enforce rules and regulations, and encourage a respect for diversity, the curriculum used in the classroom-based program should be enhanced to include activities that will promote good interpersonal skills, taking initiative, and dependability.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. Replication studies should be conducted to determine the influence of WIA Summer Youth Activities on sample populations in different regions in Georgia who participate in summer youth activities.
2. Wentling and Waight (1999) suggested youth from economically disadvantaged situations typically receive very little help in preparing for the transition into the world of work. Use of qualitative data could assist in determining the influence of participants' relationships with their families and cultural situations on one's work ethic and career maturity. This information could offer a more in dept understanding to work ethic and career maturity than a quantitative measures.
3. Data from work-based employers of participants can be used to assess differences in work environments and determine if those differences affect the level of work ethic and career maturity. Research indicates barriers to success in the workplace can result from negative attitudes and discomfort toward people who are

disadvantaged in the form of discrimination, prejudice, stereotyping, racism, and bias (Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1997). Loughead, Liu, and Middleton (1995) suggested the various leadership and work styles of different employers at various worksites elicit different behaviors from youth participants.

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APPENDICES

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

I agree to allow my child _____ to participate in the research titled, "The Influence of Participation in the Workforce Investment Act Summer Activities on Work Ethic and Work Maturity", which is being conducted by Debra Morris, from the Department of Occupational Studies at the University of Georgia, 706-357-5219 or 706-335-6846. I do not have to allow my child to be in this study if I do not want to. My child can stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have the information related to my child returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

- The reason for this study is to find out if there is any influence on work ethics and career maturity as a result of participation in the WIA Summer Activities Program.
- Participants who take part may become more aware of workplace expectations. Mrs. Morris also hopes to learn something that may help develop awareness in other Participants in the future.
- If I allow my child to take part, my child will be asked to complete two anonymous surveys. The survey instruments to be used are the Occupational Work Ethic Inventory and the Career Maturity Inventory and an additional survey requesting demographic information only. The surveys will be administered during class time. If I do not want my child to take part then he/she will be allowed to study as usual.
- The research is not expected to cause any harm or discomfort. My child can quit at any time. My child's ability to participate in the program will not be effected if my child decides to stop taking part.
- Any information collected about my child will be anonymous and students will not put names on the survey. All data concerning scores will be in a secured location.
- Mrs. Morris will answer any questions about the research, now or during the course of the program, and can be reached by telephone at 706-357-5219. You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Helen Hall, Occupational Studies Department, at 542-1682.
- I understand the study procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to allow my child to take part in this study. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

_____

Signature of Researcher Date

_____

Signature of Parent or Guardian Date

Questions or problems regarding your child's rights, as a participant should be addressed to Human Subjects Office, Institutional Review Board, Office of Vice President for Research: The University of Georgia; 606A Graduate Studies Research Center; Athens, GA 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-6514; E-Mail Address IRB

Assent Form

I _____ agree to take part in a study titled, "The Influence of Participation in the Workforce Investment Act Summer Activities on Work Ethic and Career Maturity", which is being conducted by Debra Morris, from the Department of Occupational Studies at the University of Georgia, 706-357-5219 or 706-335-6846. I do not have to participate in this study if I do not want to. I can stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

- The reason for this study is to find out if participation in the summer activities program has any influence on work ethics and career maturity.
- If I participate, I will be asked to complete two anonymous surveys during class time. If I do not want to participate then I will be allowed to study as usual.
- The research is not expected to cause any harm or discomfort. I can quit at any time. My participation in the program will not be effected if I decide to stop taking part.
- Any information collected about me will not have my name on it.
- Mrs. Morris will answer any questions about the research, now or during the course of the program, and can be reached by telephone at 706-357-5219. You may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Helen Hall, Occupational Studies Department, at 542-1682.
- I understand the study procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to take part in this study. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

_____

Signature of Researcher. Date

_____

Signature of Parent or Guardian Date

Questions or problems regarding your child's rights as a participant should be addressed to the Human Subjects Office, Institutional Review Board, Office of the Vice President for Research, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-6514; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu.

Demographic Questions

Information

Directions: Circle your answers for each question. Do not write your name on this page.

1. As of your last birthday, how old are you? 14 15 16 17 18 19

2. Please circle your gender. Male Female

3. Please circle your race. White African American Asian

Multi-racial Hispanic Other

Work Ethic, Work Attitudes, and Employability Skills Curriculum Learning

Activity and Assignment Checklist for Classroom Training Group

Lesson	Learning Activity	Assignment
1.	□ Historical perspective of work ethic: *Career Development Patterns*	Interview someone about the changes of work attitudes and work ethic
2.	□ Discuss interviews: *Employability Skills Assessment*	Review television program for characters with good and bad work ethic
3.	□ Discuss television characters: Case study 1 – *The Crash*	Descriptions of a successful person's work ethic
4.	□ Report on successful people: Interpersonal Skills – Group Activity	Observe interpersonal skills of someone at work
5.	□ Observation report: Case study 2 – *The Dental Hygienist* Multicultural issues	Interpersonal skills questionnaire
6.	□ Questionnaire discussion Initiative and success	Comparison of jobs with and without initiative
7.	□ Importance of initiative: Case study 3 – *The Computer Salesperson*	Manager's influence on initiative

8.	□ Manager's influence report: Dependable: *Almost Infinite Circle*	Dependable job description
9.	□ Dependable jobs discussion: Case study 4 – *The Valet*	Most dependable person they know and why
10.	□ Most dependable person report: Work ethic characteristics review; *Occupational Work Ethic Inventory;* *Work Ethic Assessment*	