ARE SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS SIMILAR FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN, EUROPEAN-AMERICAN AND HISPANIC-AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH MILD DISABILITIES IN THEIR DIPLOMA OPTION SELECTION

by

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(Under the Direction of Cecil Fore, III)

ABSTRACT

The demand for increased emphasis on self-determination has developed as persons with disabilities begin to advocate for roles and expectations for individuals with disabilities which are more consistent with adult expectations. The purpose of this study was to determine and compare the self-determination levels of African American, European American, and Hispanic American high school students with mild disabilities, in a large suburban school district in the Southeast. Participants were 75 students with mild disabilities from each of the above racial groups and 25 students without disabilities. Participants completed the Arc Self-Determination Scale and a demographic form. Results indicated no significant differences in self-determination skills based on race, diploma selection and gender. Results of the research are discussed, along with limitations, implications for practice and future research.

INDEX WORDS: Self-Determination, Self-Efficacy, Self-Realization, Self-Empowerment

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DEDICATION

This humbling task is proudly dedicated to the memory of Janice, Tony and Shiree. It is also dedicated with great appreciation to my wife Gloria, who encouraged me to begin and complete this task, and to my children, Gerald, Lamon, Tierra, LaQuita and Kelle.

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I thank my brothers, sisters, friends and professional colleagues who encouraged me to begin and complete this task. I thank my professors, who not only served on my dissertation committee, but also provided instruction and direction beyond my expectations.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study will determine and compare the self-determination levels of specific groups of high school students (African-American, European-Americans and Hispanic-Americans) with mild disabilities. For the purpose(s) of this study, mild disabilities includes the following disabilities based on federal and state definitions: Emotional/Behavioral Disorders, Other Health Impairments, Specific Learning Disabilities and Speech or Language Impairments and excludes the following disabilities based on federal and state definitions: Autism, Deaf-blindness, Hearing Impairments, Intellectual Disabilities and Mental Retardation, Multiple Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury and Visual Impairments. The results of the research literature indicate that promoting students' self-determination constitutes an important component of best practices in the education of transition-age youth with disabilities (Council for Exceptional Children, 2003; Field & Hoffman, 2002; Field, Martin, Ward & Wehmeyer, 1998).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990, emphasized self-determination during the transition from high school to adulthood for students with disabilities. IDEA requires that students' preferences and interests be taken into account when their transition services are being planned (Field & Hoffman, 2002). School districts were also required by IDEA to include students as participants in their transitional planning meetings. The demand for increased emphasis on self-determination developed as persons with disabilities began to advocate for roles and expectations for individuals with disabilities that were more consistent with adult expectations, and as educators, advocates, and policymakers searched for strategies to improve post-school outcomes for student with

disabilities. Researchers (Field, 1996; Halpern, 1994) concluded that a stronger focus on transition programming, including more emphasis on self-determination, would result in more positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.

A definition of self-determination that appears to have been accepted by many experts and cited in an article by Karyonen, Test, Wood, Browder, and Algozzine (2004), simply states that self-determination is a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of ones' strengths and limitations together with a belief in ones' self as a capable and effective individual are essential to self-determination. When acting on the basis of these skills and attitudes, individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults (Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, & Wehmeyer, 1998).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendment of 1997 (Public Law 105-17) required that students with disabilities ages 14 to 16 be invited to participate in meetings where their Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) are discussed, and that decisions be based on the students' interests and preferences (IDEA, 1997). However, despite IDEA requirements, research results, teacher perceptions, and strong encouragement from disabilities rights advocates, students with disabilities continue to be omitted from the IEP and self-determination activities. (Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1998).

Another important federal mandate which emphasized the right of individuals with disabilities to enjoy self-determination was The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 (Hoffman & Field, 2002). The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 regarded disability as a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to live independently; enjoy self-determination; make choices; contribute to society; pursue

meaningful careers; and enjoy full inclusion and integration in the economic, political, social, cultural and educational mainstream of American society. (Section 2)

Rationale

If students with disabilities are to be prepared for assuming self-determination roles, as defined by the rehabilitation legislation, they clearly must be given education in self-determination skills in secondary settings (Hoffman & Field, 2002). The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 strengthened the concept of empowerment for persons with disabilities and emphasized the need for informed choice (Sitlington, Clark, & Kolstoe, 2000).

High school students with disabilities are confronted with many obstacles in obtaining a quality education. Factors including a lack of self-determination skills, social acceptance and making friends are possible impediments to achieving academic success (Grant & Grant, 2002). Two problems concerning students with mild disabilities receiving their education in non-inclusive classrooms or graduating from high school with the special education diploma have been identified as: (1) students with disabilities either drop out (Scanlon & Mellard, 2002), or (2) face a decreased likelihood of post secondary education and more limited employment (Patton, 1998).

Findings from a majority of studies designed to investigate placement of students in special education based on race, indicate that African-American students are over-represented in special education, (Hosp and Reschly, 2004, Gardner & Miranda, 2000). It is possible that if more African-American students are placed in special education then more African-American students will either drop out of high school and are more likely to become either underemployed or unemployed.

Research studies have indicated that students with disabilities, who receive self-determination education, complete high school more often, and obtain higher levels of employment, than students with disabilities, who do not receive self-determination training (Brinckerhoff, 1994, Wehmeyer, 2002). Cokley (2003), conducted research that revealed encouraging self-determination skills, particularly among minority students, has resulted in more positive academic and psychological outcomes. A major problem is that there is a limited amount of research that examines the concept of self-determination in high school students with mild disabilities.

To address this issue more research is needed that examines the self-determination skill levels of students with mild disabilities in high school settings. For the purpose(s) of this study, mild disabilities includes: Emotional/Behavioral Disorders, Other Health Impairments, Specific Learning Disabilities and Speech or Language Impairments and excludes Autism, Deaf-blindness, Hearing Impairments, Intellectual Disabilities, Multiple Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury and Visual Impairments. Previous research has not focused on the self-determination levels of students with mild disabilities in high school settings. Wehmeyer and Schwartz (1997), in related research, concluded that individuals with high scores on measures of self-determination were more likely to be employed and earn a higher wage one year after graduation than individuals with low self-determination scores.

Therefore it is the general purpose of this study to determine and compare the level of self-determination skills of high school students with mild disabilities in their diploma options selection. A quality high school education is essential for all students if they intend to pursue higher education or obtain meaningful employment. Quality of high school education varies for many reasons: (1) school location; (2) student socio economic status, (3) student

race and (4) school curriculum. Another factor for students with disabilities is their level of involvement in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process (Wehmeyer, 2004). Previous research, covering twenty years of study, (1985-2004) indicate that students who participate in the development of their IEP or related goal setting are more likely to (a) achieve goals; (b) improve academic skills; (c) develop self-advocacy and communication skills; (d)graduate from high school; and (e) obtain better employment and quality of life as adults (Wehmeyer, 2004).

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine and compare the self-determination levels of high school students with mild disabilities in a large suburban school district in the Southeast. There appears to be a lack of research on the self-determination skills of high school students with mild disabilities and moreover, there is a lack of research comparing the self-determination skills of African-Americans, European-Americans and Hispanic-American students with mild disabilities. In this study, determining and comparing the self-determination skills of the targeted groups is intended to validate the importance of self-determination education for all high school students with mild disabilities.

Research Questions

Proceeding tin the development of effective self-determination instruction strategies requires careful examination of the research. The literature reviewed and rationale for evidence-based self-determination skill level education herein provides a foundation for an examination of questions for its use with high school students with mild disabilities. These answers will permit more detailed and future examinations to more thoroughly identify

aspects of self-determination skill education for high school students with mild disabilities. The questions that this study will answer include:

1. For students with mild disabilities in a high school setting, what are their Arc Self-Determination Scale (ASDS) total scores, and the three ASDS sub-domain scores of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization?
2. Are there significant differences in self-determination scores based on race? (African-American, European-American, Hispanic-American)
3. Are their differences in self-determination skill levels among the groups based on diploma selection? (Special Education, Technical/Career Preparatory Diploma, College Preparatory)

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This study will determine and compare the self-determination skill levels of African American, European American, and Hispanic American high school students with mild disabilities. The purpose of this review was to identify problems which may impede the academic achievement of students with mild disabilities.

This review focused on the following issues: (a) self-determination levels of students with mild disabilities, (b) overrepresentation of minority students in special education, (c) parental influence and students with mild disabilities, (d) academic achievement and students with mild disabilities, (e) social skills and students with mild disabilities, (f) self-concept and students with mild disabilities, (g) inclusion and students with mild disabilities. It concluded with a synthesis of the investigation findings. A thorough search of electronic databases (i.e., ERIC, Psychological Abstracts) and educational journals, using the terms, of the above mentioned topics were utilized in conducting this literature review. A total of sixty-seven articles were utilized in this study. Presentations, dissertations and journal articles based on empirical research were chosen. Consequently, articles, based on the opinions of the authors and not research were omitted.

History of Self-Determination

In the past several years, a number of studies have focused on the importance of self-determination education for students with disabilities. The major concern in these investigations was the self-determination level of students with disabilities as they left high school. Several of these studies are reviewed below.

Hoffman and Field (1995) concluded from an investigation that self-determination is an emerging issue in the disability field, especially in the transition from school to work and in the community living movement. Interest in self-determination is increasing as persons with disabilities, their families, educators, and service providers question the passive stereotypes and roles often assigned to persons with disabilities. Such stereotypes are in direct conflict with the typical adult expectation of having freedom to exercise the many unnoticed, but important, choices people without disabilities make on a daily basis.

Carter, Lane, Pierson and Glaeser (2006), attribute the recent paradigm shift to promoting self-determination among adolescents with disabilities to recent legislative, policy, and funding initiatives (Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act, 2004; National Council on Disability, 2004; President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, 2002; Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 and 1998) and attention gained by substantial attention in published literature such as; Algozzine, Browder, Karvonen, Test & Wood, 2001; Malian & Nevin, 2002).

Self-determination plays a significant role in improving student outcomes in regards to academic performance (Martin et al, 2003), employment status (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003), post secondary participation (Field, Sarver & Shaw, 2003), independence (Sowers & Powers, 1995), and quality of life (Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997).

Further scientific research on the impact of self-determination on the lives of students with disabilities is important and necessary. Such research would be more valuable when accompanied by comparisons between and among various groups receiving special education services.

Self-Determination and Students with Mild Disabilities

This section discusses self-determination and its' role in the education of students with disabilities. The importance of teaching self-determination has become an important component in the education of students with disabilities due to legal initiatives (Carter, Lane, Pierson & Glaeser, 2006). The ability to use self-determination revolves around education in problem solving and goal setting, which positively impacts students with disabilities' academic performance.

Research findings regarding employment of adults with learning disabilities indicate that these adults work more often on a part time basis and at entry level positions for minimum wage as compared to non LD adults (Kerka, 1998; T. M. Williams, 1998). Many LD adults lack a clear understanding of their disability which may lead to unrealistic career choices. Furthermore, LD youth studied by Kerka 1998, were found to believe that they had little control of career decision making. Research studies have shown that students with LD or other cognitive disabilities that are self-determined are more likely to be employed. Furthermore, these same studies indicate that students with LD that are self-determined also have higher earnings than their peers with similar disabilities (Field & Hoffman, 1998). Wehmeyer (2002) showed that students with disabilities that left school more self-determined were more likely to have obtained jobs that provide benefits such as health coverage, vacation, and those same students were more likely to be living somewhere other then their parent's home.

One major reason that students with disabilities have difficulty succeeding beyond high school is that the educational process has not adequately prepared them to become self-determined young people (Wehmeyer& Schalock, 2001). This is due to the possible conflict between long-held beliefs about the education of students with disabilities and standards-

based reform, with special attention to the extent to which testing based on state content and performance standards narrows the curriculum to only core academic content areas and limits the functionality of the curriculum for students with disabilities. Self-determination (Ward, 1999) is the acquisition of attitudes, abilities, and skills that lead students to define their own goals and to find the personal initiative necessary for goal acquisition.

Promoting self-determination has become best practice in the education of students with disabilities (Wehmeyer, Field, Doren, Jones & Mason, 2004).The researchers examined the role of promoting self-determination in light of federal standards-based reform initiatives. Ten years of studies in the area of self-determination were synthesized as a foundation for considering issues pertaining to self-determination. Research findings indicate that teachers working with students with cognitive disabilities value self-determination but do not necessarily incorporate learning experiences to promote this outcome into the educational programs of their students. This is due partly, according to teachers, to a lack of the knowledge and skills to do this successfully. The conclusion was school reform efforts provide an opportunity to infuse instruction in self-determination into the education programs of all students, including students with disabilities. Many state and local standards include a focus on component elements of self-determined behavior and promoting self-determination enables students to perform more effectively within other context domains.

Malian and Nevin (2002) conducted a review of the published literature on self-determination and self-advocacy to determine implications for practitioners who are interested in implementing various curricula. Eleven Articles on self-determination and self-advocacy published between 1992 and 199 were reviewed. Four were categorized as model or program evaluations. One article described the development and validation of an

assessment instrument and six reported the effectiveness or impact of self-determination instruction. The outcome of the review concluded that, with systematic-instruction, students with a wide range of disabilities, including learning disabilities, mental retardation, emotional disabilities, and developmental disabilities (autism, Down syndrome, and cerebral palsy), can acquire self-determination skills.

Mason, Field and Sawilowsky (2004) reported in a study involving five hundred twenty-three usable responses from teachers, administrators, and related services professionals were obtained. Respondents highly valued both students' involvement in Individualized Education Programs and self-determination skills, but only 8% were satisfied with the approach with the approach they were using to teach self-determination. Thirty-four percent were satisfied with the level of student involvement in IEP meetings. Implications include the need for longitudinal research and technical assistance, targeting administrators, general educators, and special educators beginning in the elementary grades, to improve the capacity of schools to deliver self-determination instruction.

The findings of a national survey (Wehmeyer, Agran & Hughes, 2000), of teachers' opinions regarding the value of self-determination and issues relating to teaching skills leading to this outcome were reported. A survey was mailed to 9,762 secondary-level educators serving students with varying types and severity of disabilities between the ages of 14 and 21.The instrument was an expanded model based on self-determination consisting of two sections. The first section requested demographic information and the second requested knowledge of self-determination. The findings indicated that a majority of respondents believed that instruction in self-determination was important, but teachers differed in their

responses regarding the strategies taught and the extent and type of instruction provided based on severity of the student's disability.

Palmer and Wehmeyer (2003) conducted a study to determine if elementary-aged students were able to set goals using self-determination skills. Fourteen teachers from Texas and Kansas received training on the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction and then implemented the model in the prescribed manner. Participants were 50 students from Kansas and Texas enrolled in kindergarten though third grade. Students were either in the assessment process to determine special education eligibility or were receiving math or reading enrichment services. The sample included 32 boys and 18 girls. The ethnicity of the students included Asian American (1), Black (20), Hispanic (6), and White (23). Results indicated that (a) involving students in setting goals; (b) helping to make students accountable for their learning through being part of the goal setting, planning, and evaluating process; and (c) providing opportunity to evaluate progress together are valuable teaching tools. The successes of teachers and students in this study indicate that young children can benefit from instruction that incorporates opportunities to regulate problem solving and to self-direct learning.

Carter, Lane, Pierson and Glaeser (2006) examined the self-determination of adolescents with emotional disturbance (ED) and learning disabilities (LD) from the perspectives of special educators, parents, and the students themselves it was concluded that adolescents with ED were found to have lower ratings of self-determination than students with LD. Eighty-five high school students with ED (n=39) or LD (n=46) was assessed by special educators, parents, and the students. Students with ED identified infrequent opportunities at school and home for engaging in self-determination behavior, and educators

and parents differed in their assessments of opportunities in each setting. The students ranged in age from 14 to 19 with 64% male. Thirty-eight students were White, thirty were Hispanic, nine were Black and eight were other ethnicities. To be included in this survey, students had to be receiving special education services under either ED or LD.

Summary

Self-determination is an emerging issue in the disability field, especially in the transition from school to work and in the community living movement (Hoffman & Field, 1995). Successful post-school transitions require that adolescents with disabilities assume more prominent roles in their education and life planning. The paradigm shift to self-determination instruction for students with disabilities has been enhanced by recent legislation (IDEAIA of 2004, President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, 2002) and published research (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003, Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997). As a result, promoting students' self-determination constitutes an important component of best practices in the education of transition-aged youth with disabilities.

Overrepresentation of African-American Students in Special Education

This section will report the research conducted on the overrepresentation of African-American students in special education. The overall academic achievement of Black students in the public school systems of the United States has long been a major source of concern for educators, government officials, legislators and parents (Marcus-Newhall & Heindl, 1998). Reasons for this societal dilemma have been studied and reforms, which were originally intended to help solve the problem, may have become a source of the problem (Grant, 1992).

One of the most controversial issues of special education is the overrepresentation of minorities particularly, Black students, placed in certain programs, specifically

Emotionally/Behaviorally Disorders (EBD) and Mildly Intellectually Disabled (MID) according to Gottlieb, Gottlieb and Wishner (1994). For example, a study by Oswald, Coutinho, Bert and Singh (1999) examined the influence of economic and educational variables on the identification of Black students as EBD and MID receiving special education services. Data were obtained from districts selected for the Fall1992 Elementary and Secondary School Civil Rights Compliance Report Survey. Odds ratios were constructed for both programs to describe the nature and extent of disproportionate representation. Regression models were tested to investigate the influence of a set of school-related demographic and fiscal variables on disproportionate representation. The results indicated that Black students were identified 2.4 times more often as MID and 1.5 times more often as EBD than other ethnic groups. Economic and demographic variables were found to be significant predictors of disproportionate representation, but influenced identification of students as EBD and MID differently. The authors concluded that as an intent to be more successful with Black students, special education has not succeeded, in that a disproportionate amount of Black students have been placed into special education.

Hosp and Reschly (2004) examined the disproportionate representation of minority students in special education based on academic, demographic and economic predictors in which the following research questions were addressed: (1) what proportion of the variance in ratios of representation rates are accounted for by blocks of academic, demographic, and economic variables both independently and incrementally? And (2) Does academic achievement account for significant proportions of that variance? The method used was to collect data from the Elementary and Secondary Schools compliance Report of 2000. Academic achievement, according to the authors, is one the most important predictors of

identification for special education services. Academic achievement is a strong predictor of referral for assessment or intervention, with approximately 55% of students referred primarily for academic problems and 33% referred for academic problems as a secondary issue. Once a student has been referred, it is likely that he or she will be found eligible for services. The authors concluded that when educators are more cognizant of the academic performance of different groups of students and take steps to improve achievement of all groups, a positive influence on the numerous variables that predict disproportionate representation can be attained.

Ethnic and gender characteristics of elementary students were the focus of a study by MacMillan and Lopez (1992) that were recommended for pre-referral interventions. Participants were 150 Black, Hispanic and White students in grades 2 through 4, from 5 southern California school districts. Fifty-nine percent were male. Racial breakdown of the study was 29% Black, 34% Hispanic, and 37% White. A major hypothesis was that the behaviors that prompt referral may differ by domain or by degree for children of different gender or ethnicity. The students were selected based on referrals to a Student Support Team (SST). The results of this study indicated that prominent achievement deficiencies characterized children of each ethnic group. On average, referred White students displayed significantly higher Verbal IQs and reading achievement scores and Black students were more likely to have higher rates of problem behaviors than were Hispanic children. Gender differences revealed problem behaviors were more typically exhibited by males, but no differences on cognitive and achievement measures. Teachers did rate females higher on overall academic competence. The authors concluded that the study failed to support the

belief that the systematic referral of children for academic and/or behavior problems was discriminatory against male or ethnic minority children.

Contradicting the results of the MacMillan and Lopez (1992) findings, Hosp and Reschly (2003) synthesized the literature on rates of referral for intervention or assessment of Black, Hispanic and White students. The purpose was to compare referral rates to population rates of students from different racial backgrounds. The authors hypothesized that referral rates of Black students are higher than White students, and Hispanic and White students are referred at similar overall rates. Studies were selected which reported the frequencies or proportions of racial groups within a sample of students referred for assessment or intervention, as well as the population from which the sample was drawn. The authors of this study concluded that referral rates of racial groups vary significantly. There were higher rates of referral for both Black and Hispanic students. For every 100 White students who were referred for assessment or intervention, there were132 Black and 106 Hispanic students referred. In contrast, for every 100 White students found to be eligible for services, 118 Black and 89 Hispanic students are found to be eligible. This indicated, according to the authors, that (a) more Black students and a similar number of Hispanic students were referred for special education, and (b) more Black students, but fewer Hispanic than White students were found to be eligible for services. In conclusion, comparisons of the rate of referral for intervention or assessment of various racial and ethnic groups are practically absent from the research literature. This meta-analysis provides preliminary data regarding referral rates as compared to population proportions. However definitive answers are precluded by the paucity of research reporting the frequency counts necessary to quantitatively synthesize

findings. Future research on bias in referred samples should include population demographics such as the frequency of the various groups being compared.

Abidin and Robinson (2002) conducted a study to identify the relative contributions of some of the variables that are thought to influence teachers' referral judgments. The primary variables identified in the literature include student demographic characteristics, academic achievement, socioeconomic and emotional and behavioral problems. This study examined another variable, teacher stress, in relation to teachers' referral decisions. Participants in this study were thirty kinder-garden, through fifth-grade, general education teachers, located in a single lower-middle-class rural county in Virginia. Twenty-two percent of the student population was Black and the remainder was White. Teachers participated on a voluntary basis. Teachers were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very likely and 10 very unlikely, the probability they would refer students for a psycho-educational assessment. Results indicated that the best predictors of teachers' referral judgments are teachers' judgments about the presence of behavioral problems and the students' academic competence. Student demographic characteristics, observed off-task behavior, and teacher stress were not considered the likelihood of referral. The findings indicated that teachers' professional judgment, not racial or socio-economic bias or teaching stress, appears to drive referral decisions.

The question of behavior differences between Black and White students as an issue for assessment and intervention was examined by Hosp and Hosp (2001). An overview of the behavioral aspects of what has been referred to as African-American Behavioral Style (AABS) was compared to examples to the behavioral style generally associated with White students. The purpose of the paper was to present a conceptualization of the behavior styles

of Black students and the related potential problems that might arise from cultural differences in behavior and behavioral expectations. Examples of behaviors associated with this style while making comparisons to the behavioral style generally associated with White students were included in this overview. Methods of assessing student behavior were examined in relation to potential problems that may arise from cultural differences in behavior and behavioral expectations. The framework for comparing Black and White behavioral styles centers around three interrelated areas: (1) orientation which refers to a preference for relating to either people or objects; (2) physicality refers to a penchant for movement and physical interaction with people or objects; and (3) communication style which refers to aspects of interpersonal interaction. The presence of differences in behavior between Black and White students does not automatically indicate those differences are problematic, but problems can arise when these differences lead to differential outcomes for one group over another, or if those differences are used by one group to justify discriminatory treatment of another group. The study concluded that differences in cultural expectations of appropriate behavior may create the potential for problems when the intent of the behavior is interpreted differently by the observer than by the person performing the behavior. These potential differences in interpretation indicate that when assessing behavior, measures that are less susceptible to rater subjectively are preferable to measures for which subjectivity can influence the results to a large degree.

Artiles, Aguirre-Munoz and Abedi (1998) conducted a study to identify placement predictors in learning disabilities (LD) programs for Black, Hispanic and White students. The participants were 25,000 eighth-graders who attended 1,052 schools, identified as LD and a comparison group of randomly selected non-disabled students. The sample was drawn from

the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS) database. The method used was to review the NELS data which provide information on family status, measures of family background such as race or ethnicity, social class, family size, gender and measures of school-related emotional, behavioral and academic outcomes. The results indicated there are specific predictors for LD placement based on race, family size, gender and academic achievement.

Peterson and Shinn (2002) examined three types of severe discrepancy approaches; (1) intra-individual achievement discrepancy, (2) absolute achievement discrepancy, and (3) relative achievement discrepancy. The participants were 48 fourth-grade, school-identified LD students from a high and low achieving school district in Minnesota. Students were tested with a short form of the WISC-III and two measures of reading, and the resulting discrepancies were matched to students' school LD classification. Results indicated that the best explanation for school-based LD practices was a relative achievement discrepancy, with between 85-95% of LD students in both districts accurately identified. The state-mandated ability-achievement discrepancy accounted for only 60% of LD students.

Gardner and Miranda (2001) examined the causes for the disproportionate representation of African American students in MID and EBD. African American students comprise 16% of the school-age population, but comprise 26% of the EBD and 34% of the MID populations. The authors offered three primary factors which contribute to the over-identification of African Americans students in special education. Those factors are academic instruction, which the researchers reported that pedagogy used in inner city schools tend to promote low rates of student engagement and conversely, active student engagement has been found to improve the academic achievement of students. The second factor is the social

and psychological barriers to success. The teachers of African American students in inner city setting are often European American middle-class women. The teachers are required to teach students who come to school less prepared to learn and the result is an atmosphere of misunderstandings, punitive interactions, and increased referrals of African Americans for special education. The third level of parental and community support for education. While parental involvement is a predictor of academic success, often poor urban parents are non-participants resulting in decreased academic achievement for their students. In conclusion, to address the issue of overrepresentation of African American students in special education, a collaborative effort is needed to bring together educators, parents, community members, and students to improve the student outcomes.

Summary

The overrepresentation of African-American students in special education has long been a problem for educators, legislators/policy-makers, parents, and for the students themselves. According to the literature, a plethora of theories suggests the causes of African-American students' disproportionate placement in special education. Factors such as: SES, academic failure, cultural/behavioral differences, racial bias, and African-American male aggression were mentioned in the reviewed studies. To seriously address the problem of overrepresentation of African-American students in certain categories of special education, educators, legislators/policy-makers, and parents must accept there is a problem and devise strategies and set realistic goals in addressing this problem. The direction of the lives of African-American students and education in this country may depend upon such action.

Parental Influence and Students with Disabilities

This section will report the results of selected research articles on the impact of parental influence on the academic achievement of their students with mild disabilities. The critical role that parents have in the academic achievement of their children has long been understood by researchers based on an article by Eccles and Harold (1993). For example, Zellman and Waterman (1998) cited the fluctuation of parental involvement in children's education in this country over the past two centuries in a study. The findings of the study indicated that parental school involvement contributes to positive school outcomes for children. Data from a study of 193 Los Angeles area 2nd and 5th-grade children and their mothers were analyzed to confirm the relationship between parent involvement and child outcomes and understand the underlying factors. Enthusiastic parents and a positive parenting method is a manifestation of such involvement.

Drummond and Stipek (2004) conducted a study which examined low-income parents' beliefs about their role in their children's academic achievement. The participants were 234 low-income Black, White, and Hispanic parents of 2nd and 3rd grade students. The children were from three geographical areas: a rural community in the northeast, a large urban northeastern city, and a large urban west coast city. The participants were 36% Black, 16% Hispanic and 41% White. Parents were asked by phone interview to rate the importance of helping their child with academic assignments. The results of the study indicated that most parents strongly value involvement in their children's learning. The authors reported the results were similar to previous research findings. Parents perceived helping with reading more important than helping with math.

In a similar study by Mau (1997), Asian immigrants (English as second language), acculturated Asian Americans (English as native language) and White American parents were involved in a study which investigated the differences in influence on academic achievement among the three groups. The study further examined both the intra-group and between-group differences in educational effort, perceived parental expectation, and parental educational involvement, educational endeavors and their effects on academic achievement. Participants in this study consisted of 13,837 White Americans, 472 Asian immigrants, and 184 Asian-American 10th-grade students. The method used was to require students to complete a 45-minute self-administered questionnaire in their classrooms. The questionnaire was designed to collect data on students' and parents' backgrounds, perceptions of self, students' educational and vocational activities, post-graduation plans, and aspirations. Results indicated that both Asian immigrant and Asian American students spent significantly more time on homework than did White American students. The study indicated that the link between parental involvement and academic achievement appeared to be a function of the type of parental involvement.

Desimone, (1999) agreed that while parental involvement is a key component of school reform, more information was needed regarding how the effects of parental involvement vary for students from disparate racial-ethnic and economic backgrounds. Data from the NELS were used to examine the relationship between 12 types of parent involvement and 8th-grade mathematics and reading scores. Ordinary least-squares regression indicated that statistically significant differences existed in the relationship between parent involvement and student achievement according to the student's race-ethnicity (i.e., Asian, Black, Hispanic, and White), and family income (i.e., low and middle). The authors

suggested more studies are needed about what types of parent involvement effectively promote student achievement in diverse family and community contexts for children placed at risk of educational failure, as well as more advantaged students.

Kenny, Gallagher, Alvarez-Salvat and Silsby (2002) conducted a dual purpose study which explored sources and patterns of resilience among academically successful inner-city high school students. Study 1 examined the relationship between parental attachment, depressive symptoms, and academic achievement among a multiethnic sample of ninth, tenth and twelfth-grade students. Study 2 was designed to provide a more in-depth examination of sources of support, life stress, and patterns of resilience for the 16 high school seniors from Study 1. Participants in the study were 32 boys and 68 girls enrolled in a high school-university collaborative program that prepares urban public school students for college admission and success. The students were selected from ethnically and culturally diverse urban high schools in the northeastern United States. There were 54 Black, 19 White, 18 Hispanic, and 9 Asian students. Students completed two subscales of the Parental Attachment Questionnaire during one of the Saturday morning sessions. The results of Study 1 added to the body of research which documented the adaptive value of parental attachment among adolescents, further indicating that parental attachment may support academic achievement and protect inner-city youth from depressive symptoms. Study 2 explored the value of parental attachments, extended family and non-kin adults to fulfill attachment functions in supporting personal and academic achievement among academically successful inner-city high school students. The participants in this study were the 16 high school seniors in Study 1. Overall, the participants, 4 males and 12 females, had performed well academically and behaviorally with excellent attendance over their high school career. The high school seniors

participated in semi-structured interviews and completed a self-inventory. Twenty-four questions pertaining to relationships with family, friends and non-family adults, including parental encouragement of education, and parental views were utilized in the study. The findings in Study 2 are consistent with past research results which highlight relational protective factors that may be important in supporting the academic achievement and psychological well-being of these youth.

The transition from the sheltered environment of the middle school to the more independent setting in high school can often have negative academic and social consequences for some students. A study reported by Newman, Myers, Newman, Lohman and Smith (2000), examined the perceptions of the transition to ninth grade of twenty-two Black students. The present study cited previous research which determined that low-income minority youth are vulnerable to declines in academic performance and motivation during the transition to ninth grade, which may not be regained in subsequent high school years. Research was also cited in this present study which determined that Black students, compared to White students during the transition to junior high school, liked school less as they got older. The participants, were from nine urban Ohio school systems, and identified as low-income, academically promising in sixth grade and selected to participate in an intervention program. The students were asked to provide their perceptions of the transition to ninth grade. Specifically, the role of motivating factors, peers, school, teachers, parents and neighborhoods were examined for these students who faced similar stresses, but were able to achieve academic success. Results of the study illustrated the impact of multiple, interacting micro-systems on students' ability to maintain academic success during the transition to ninth grade. Factors such as parental involvement, ability to control behavior,

and friends were viewed to be important for academic success. It is important for educators to recognize the role these factors play in students achieving academic success.

In a related study conducted by Gutman and Midgley (2000), the main and interactive effects of psychological family, and school factors were examined of 62 black families living in poverty. Participants were drawn from a larger longitudinal study in southeastern Michigan. The sample included 22 elementary schools and 10 middle schools in four school districts. Data were collected from students using surveys administered at the schools during the last year of elementary school and then again during the first year of middle school. The study resulted in three major findings. First, students experienced a significant decline in grade point average across the transition from elementary to middles school. Second, students who felt more academically efficacious had higher grade point averages across the transition than did their peers. Third, significant interactions were found between family and school factors. These results suggest that rather than exclusively focusing on either parental involvement or the school environment, the combination of both family and school factors may be most effective in supporting the academic achievement of poor Black students during the transition to middle school.

Thompson (2003) pointed out the need for educators and policymakers to improve their relations with Black parents and guardians. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected from African American parents and guardians who participated in a larger study. Thirty-nine variables were examined using a Likert-type, dichotomous questionnaire presented to the participants in 11 southern California School districts. The survey instrument included questions pertaining to children's elementary, middle, and high school experiences; racism at school; how parents and guardians perceived school personnel, suspension, and

expulsion; attitudes about college; literacy issues; academic problems; and specific ways in which parents and guardians assist their children academically. Regression analyses were utilized to examine variables that predicted how Black parents and students rated their children's teachers and the public school system. The results indicated that although several variables were significant, parents' satisfaction with their children's elementary school teachers was the strongest predictor of how they rated high school teachers and the public school system.

The role of the parent in school adjustment and social competence was the focus of a study conducted by Simons-Morton and Crump (2003). To identify factors associated with school adjustment and engagement, 1,267 sixth-graders in four middle schools in a suburban Maryland school district were surveyed at the beginning of sixth grade (Time 1) and assessed again at the end of sixth grade (Time 2) during the 1996-1997 through 1998-1999 school years. School adjustment was more difficult for males than females at both Time 1 and Time 2and the decline was less for girls than boys and Whites than Blacks. School engagement also declined significantly from Time 1 to Time 2, but no differences existed among subgroups. Multiple linear regression analyses revealed , female gender, school engagement, social competence, parental involvement, and depressive symptoms (negative association) assessed at Time 1 were associated with school adjustment assessed cross-sectionally at Time 1 and prospectively at Time 2. Social competence and parental involvement assessed at Time 1 were associated with school engagement assessed at Time1 and Time 2. Findings confirmed the decline in school adjustment and engagement during middle school and provide evidence that parental involvement and social competence may be protective against declines in these variables.

Summary

The importance of the roles which parents play in their children's education has long been realized by educators and researchers (Eccles & Harold, 1993). One of the major problems that educators face is developing strategies to increase the involvement of African-American parents in the educational careers of their children, especially among African-American secondary students with mild disabilities. While not all African-American parents are uninvolved, research has indicated that perhaps more African-American parents should assume a greater role to help insure a more academically successful school journey and thus an opportunity for a better future for African-American children with disabilities. This involvement may include attendance of all meetings regarding the student, parent-teacher-student conferences and insuring that students have, and complete homework assignments.

Academic Achievement and Students with Mild Disabilities

This section reports on the academic achievement of students with mild disabilities. With the advent of standards-based educational reform, educators are increasingly being held accountable for creating school contexts where all students can be academically successful (Dimmitt, 2003). The effect that educational reform will have on the education of students with disabilities

Race and ethnic differences in academic achievement based on test scores, grades, course enrollment, high school graduation rates, and college enrollments and completion were cited in research by Meece and Kurtz-Costes (2001). According to the article, achievement disparities appear early in school, widen in the elementary years and remain consistently fixed during secondary years.

Rodney, Crafter, Rodney, and Mupier (1999) concluded that there were several factors to be addressed regarding Black students in public schools. (1) Nationally, Black students score lower than any other group on standardized tests, (2) Blacks are three times more likely than their White peers to be misplaced in special education classes , (3) Blacks are retained more, suspended and expelled more often, and their dropout rate is higher than that of other ethnic groups. Variables contributing to grade retention among 243 Black males, 13-17-years-old, in a Midwestern city was investigated by the authors. The method used to administer the Children's Structured Assessment for the Genetics of Alcoholism Interview Scale, which pertains to alcohol use, discipline in the home, and conduct disorder. The primary purposes of the this study were to (a) investigate the occurrence of grade retention across all SES classes in urban and suburban populations that are underrepresented in the scientific literature and (b) determine whether alcohol abuse, school suspension, involvement in violence, and lack of school discipline in the home affect grade retention. The results indicated no positive association between alcohol abuse and grade retention, but, a positive association between lack of discipline in the home and grade retention.

According to Kaplan, Peck and Mitchell (1994), numerous studies have provided consistent support for the existence of a relationship between self-esteem and academic performance for elementary students. The authors devised a study designed to examine not only how self-esteem and academic performance are related and the direction of that relationship, but also the variables that mediate the effect of self-rejection on academic performance. A 201-item questionnaire designed to measure psycho-social characteristics and self-reports of deviant behaviors plus eight questions about social-demographic characteristics were administered to 1,756 junior high school students. The results indicated

students who are failing through lack of effort have a ready justification for their failure that does not reflect upon their intrinsic worth (they are only failing because they are not trying), and at the same time academic failure reflects the students' rejection of school achievement as an appropriate factor for others to evaluate.

Van Voorhis (1996) examined the effects of weekly interactive science homework on family involvement in homework, student achievement, and homework attitudes. Participants were 253 6th and 8th grade students who completed TIPS (Teachers Involve Students in Schoolwork) assignments with directions for family and parent involvement. Four classes completed non-interactive homework (no family involvement directions). The results indicated that interactive students reported significantly higher levels of family involvement than did non-interactive students. Students in both groups who more regularly involved family members completed more assignments; TIPS students turned in more assignments than non-TIPS students. TIPS students also earned significantly higher science report card grades. The findings of this study support the hypothesis that TIPS interactive homework affects family involvement in homework, science attitudes, and student achievement in the middle grades.

Mooney, Epstein, Reid, and Nelson (2003) examined the status of what trends in interventions were designed to improve the academic functioning of students with ED. Fifty-five studies were included in the descriptive analysis, which spanned the years 1975 to 2002. Descriptive dimensions of the research included participant demographics, setting, research designs, and dependent and independent variables. Results indicated, (a) complete demographic information, especially race and socio-economic status was difficult to ascertain for many of the participants; (b) settings were generally special education

classrooms; (c) researchers used predominantly single-subject designs; (d) treatment fidelity treatment data were often absent; (e) few studies focused on women or girls or minorities; and (f) there has been a decline in both the number and type of studies published, particularly in the areas of self-management and peer relations. According to the authors, one of the most striking findings that emerged from the analysis was how little was known about the participants in the studies. Also no studies focused solely on female populations; few studies reported discernable race and ethnicity data, with fewer still targeting minority populations; and only recently have distinguishable SES data been documented.

A comprehensive review of the literature was conducted by Trout, Nordness, Pierce and Epstein (2003) to review research on the current state of the academic status of students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). The authors examined the literature to assess (a) student characteristics, (b) placement settings, (c) academic subject areas, (d) measures used to assess academic achievement and (e) the functioning level of students and trends in the research over the past four decades were assessed. A comprehensive review of all published articles on the academic status of children with EBD was conducted. A five-step procedure was used to identify research published on the academic status of with EBD resulting in the identification of 205 articles that appeared to be related to the academic status of students with EBD. The results indicated, (a) researchers have made an important attempt to assess the academic status of students representative of the EBD population, (b) a clear understanding of the academic abilities of students with EBD served in least restrictive settings has yet to be reached, (c) a view of the academic status of students with EBD is limited due to ambiguity of academic competencies, (d) when EBD student scores were reported by grade level, EBD students were performing at average ability, and (e) a steady

and significant decline in the number of publications assessing this topic has occurred within the last 10 years.

A comparison of the academic progress of students with EBD and students with LD was conducted by Anderson, Kutash and Duchnowski (2001). Additionally, a set of factors related to academic achievement (attendance, behavior offenses, special education setting, school mobility, and early retention) were examined as to their contribution to achievement over time for these two groups of students. The method used was to gather data from a district-wide research project and from individual student files. Student records were reviewed also to gather scores on IQ and achievement tests and information concerning the type of special education setting in which students were receiving services during the years investigated. Participants were students who began kindergarten in the district in 1989 in either EBD or LD. The students were selected for inclusion in the in the study based on specific criteria. Forty-two students were EBD and 61 were LD, including 79% male, 34% Black and 66% White. The study was not limited to Black and White students, however, no Asian, Hispanic or Native American students were labeled EBD or LD in first grade. Results of the study are comparable to similar studies that have explored the relationship between school-related variables and achievement. This study surpassed previous research by comparing the academic progress of the two groups longitudinally instead of cross section ally. Findings differed from past studies in which students with EBD demonstrated significantly higher academic achievement than students with LD. This study indicated that students with LD who received lesser amounts of full-time special education services demonstrated improved academic performance; average math and reading scores for both groups remained below national averages after specialized programming; no association

existed between type of setting of special education setting and academic progress for students with EBD.

Carlisle and Chang (1996) conducted a study with the purpose to determine whether students with and without LD who attended general education science classes differed in their evaluations of their learning capabilities, whether changes in self-evaluation occurred over a three-year period, and whether over this period the teachers rating of the students with LD differed from those of students without LD. Participants were students in a suburban school district outside Chicago with a range of American. There were 8 boys and 2 girls with LD, and 8 boys and 13 girls without LD in the fourth-grade and 6 boys and 4 girls with LD and 15 boys and 15 girls without LD in the sixth-grade. The method used was to compare teachers' rating scales completed in the spring of each year. Students with LD were placed in general education science classes and teachers were asked to identify behaviors and attitudes they judged important for successful learning in science classes. The results of the study indicated that younger students with LD were less positive in rating their learning capabilities than their non-LD peers. Older students with LD differed significantly from their peers only in the first year. When students' ratings of their capabilities did not differ from those of their non-LD peers, the teachers rated their capabilities and achievement relatively negatively. For both groups in all three years, the teachers rated the students with LD as less able to function well in a science class than their non-LD peers. These results challenge the assumption that science provides a learning environment to which students with LD will adapt effectively, in terms of academic self-concept and in terms of achievement, and socio-economic backgrounds. Forty-three percent of the students were Black, forty-seven percent were

White, four percent were Hispanic, and three percent were Asian/Pacific Islander and one percent was Native-American.

Self-Brown and Mathews (2003) acknowledged the link between classroom structure and student achievement in a study. The purpose of the study was to assess how classroom structure influenced student achievement goal orientation for mathematics. Participants were students from three intact classrooms, including 2 fifth-grade classes, and 1 fourth-grade class. Each of the three classrooms was randomly assigned to one of the three classroom evaluation structure conditions (token economy, contingency contract, control). The results indicated significant differences within and across classroom structure conditions. Contingency-contract condition students set significantly more learning goals than students in the other conditions. Token-economy students set significantly more performance goals than learning goals. Control classroom students demonstrated no significant differences within the classroom for the number of learning versus performance goals however the control students did set significantly more learning goals than did students in the token-economy group. The results were consistent with the hypothesis of this study that the type of classroom evaluation structure would influence student goal orientation.

Summary

The factors which affect the lack of overall African-American student academic achievement are varied. Such factors are possibly greater in hampering the academic achievements of African-American students with disabilities. Classroom structure, lack of parental involvement, teacher attitudes, attendance, behavior offenses, special education setting, school mobility, and early retention have been identified as factors which decrease African-American students' academic achievement. To increase academic achievement of

Black students, educators should implement strategies which account for the differences and special circumstances of African-American students with disabilities. Educational leaders must provide the training necessary for teachers to understand and implement such strategies.

Social Skills and Students with Mild Disabilities

There has been an increasing interest in the social development of students with disabilities in integrated versus segregated environments (Kemp & Carter, 2002). In the context of mainstream education, the social skills of concern are the skills that the students with disabilities have in relating to both their teachers and peers. This section reports on the research of social skills and students with disabilities,

The importance of proper social skills was studied in a research by Vaughn and Hogan (1994). The authors viewed social competence as a higher order construct that, like intelligence, is difficult to define and consists of several constructs. The interaction of these constructs yield the fullest understanding of social competence.

The social functioning of children, according to Vaughn, Kim, Morris, Hughes, Elbaum, and Sridar (2003), has been a topic of increased interest over the last two decades. The authors synthesized the findings of social skills interventions conducted with 3- to 5-year-old children with disabilities between 1975 and June 1999. An extensive search of the professional literature yielded a total 23 group-design intervention studies that met criteria for inclusion in the synthesis. The synthesis provided a description of the purpose, procedures, measure, and findings of each study as well as an analysis of effect size outcomes in relation to critical features of the primary studies. A total of 699 children with disabilities and 203 children without disabilities were included in the 23 studies. The results indicated that interventions which influenced positive social skills functioning for students

with disabilities included modeling, play-related activities, rehearsal/practice, and/or prompting. This finding provides useful information on what teachers and parents should consider when they provide social skills interventions for children with disabilities. The finding also supports the importance of early identification and intervention for young children with disabilities.

Ochoa and Olivarez (1995) conducted a meta-analysis of previous research regarding the social difficulties of children with and without learning disabilities. The purposes of the meta-analysis were: (a) to provide an overview of this research, (b) to conduct a critical analysis of a previous meta-analytic study investigating the social acceptance of students with LD, and (c) to conduct a meta-analysis of peer rating socio-metric research on students with LD addressing the concerns pertaining to the aforementioned previous study. The method used was to select studies from investigations that compared peer acceptance/status between students with and without disabilities via the use of the peer rating socio-metric technique. A total of 17 studies were reviewed for this meta-analysis. Results indicated that pupils with LD have considerably lower socio-economic status compared to their non-LD peers. The results of this study were also believed to be more accurate than the effect size obtained by the critiqued study.

Children with LD were more likely to be rated as aggressive, immature, suffer personality problems, and have difficulty attending when compared to peers without LD according to the results of a study by Swanson and Malone (1992). The researchers completed a meta-analysis of studies concerning the social skills of children classified as LD. Variations in the results were found to be a function of the assessment instruments used, gender, and ethnicity. Results also indicated that social skills improve as children get older,

but the gap between children with and without LD persists. This article reviewed the published research related to the social skills deficits of students with learning disabilities to determine whether there is any empirical justification for claiming that they have lower social skills than their peers without handicaps. A total of 39 studies were analyzed for this study.

McConnell, Scott and Odom (1999), examined a performance-based approach for young children with disabilities. A performance-based approach to social competence implies that the evaluations of children's social participation single methods or classes of social agents are necessarily limited; only through a multi-method approach that draws on multiple social agents (i.e., peers, observers, teachers, parents) in the child's environment. Each measurement source provides common information and information that represents the judge's unique perspective. Participants were two hundred and twenty-two preschool-age children-173 with disabilities and 49 without identified disabilities. All children were between the ages of 3 and 5 years and recruited by classroom in school districts located in Tennessee and Minnesota. Four measures were utilized in the study: (1) Peer Socio-metric, (2) Teacher Rating of Social Competence, (3) Observational Assessment of Social Behavior and (4) Observer Rating of Quality of Social Interaction. The results indicated that children with disabilities would differ from children without disabilities on the performance-based assessment of social competence.

Kemp and Carter (2002) studied the social skills and social status of 22 students with moderate intellectual disabilities in Wales, Australia. The students had received an inclusive preschool intervention and were subsequently followed from 18 months to more than five years later in their mainstream classrooms. Measures included direct assessment of social

interaction in the playground, social status obtained by interviewing classmates and the ratings of classroom teachers, parents and school principals. Large differences were found between the students with disabilities and their typical peers for amount of time spent interacting with peers and amount of time spent in isolation, with a moderate difference found for interaction with teachers. However there were no differences found between the social status of the two groups, and the students with disabilities were continuing to spend the majority of their time on the playground interacting with typically developing peers. Parents generally rated their children as having better social skills than did principals or teachers. A moderate relationship was found between the direct measures of peer interactions and teachers' perceptions of peer interaction skills, while the relationships between the parents' and principals' perceptions of peer interaction and direct measures of the interaction were small.

Odom et al (1999) compared the effects of different intervention approaches designed to promote peer-related social competence of young children with disabilities. Preschool-age children with disabilities who were enrolled in classes in Tennessee and Minnesota participated in four intervention conventions (environmental arrangements, child specific, peer mediated, and comprehensive) and a control (no intervention) condition. A performance-based assessment of social competence, which consisted of observational, teacher rating, and peer rating measures, was collected before and after the interventions and again the following school year. Results of the analyses revealed that the peer mediated condition had the greatest effect and most sustained effect on children's participation in social interaction and on the quality of interaction, with the child-specific condition also having a strong effect. Environmental arrangements condition had the strongest effect on

peer ratings. The findings indicate that there are effective intervention approaches available for children who have needs related to social competence and that different types of interventions may be useful for addressing different goals (e.g., social skills or social acceptance) of individual children.

Summary

Students with disabilities are more likely to be rated as aggressive, immature, suffer personality problems, and have difficulty attending when compared to peers without disabilities. The academic implication for students with disabilities is that it would be more difficult for such students to achieve without learned strategies and techniques to overcome their lack of proper social skills. Educators should focus on social skills training to improve the social skills of students with disabilities that may possibly achieve as the student without disabilities.

Self-Concept and Students with Mild Disabilities

For children and adolescents, school represents the most critical context outside of the family for the development of self-perception (Elbaum & Vaughn, 2001). School experiences affect students' perceptions of their academic ability, social acceptance, popularity, behavior, self-efficacy, and physical attractiveness. In turn, students' self-perceptions of academic ability can affect their school performance. This section reports on research conducted on the self-concept of students with disabilities.

Elbaum and Vaughn completed a meta-analytic review and examined self-concept outcomes of school-based interventions for students with LD. A comprehensive search of the literature from 1975 to 1997 yielded 64 intervention studies that used a control group of students with LD and measured the effect of the intervention on students' self-concept. The

participants were 82 elementary, middle, and high school students with LD. The results indicated that overall, middle school students benefited more from interventions than did elementary or high school students. The type of intervention that was most effective differed for students at different grade levels. Whereas counseling intervention were more effective than other types of interventions for middle and high school students with LD, the most effective interventions for elementary students with LD were those that focused on improving students' academic skills. Interventions had more of an effect on students' academic self-concept than on other dimensions of self-concept.

Neal (2003) examined teachers' perceptions of Black male students' aggression and achievement and the need for special education services based on the students' cultural movement styles (i.e., walking). The participants in this study were 136 middle school teachers in a suburban school district in a southwestern state. The majority of the teachers were White females and a small percentage had taught in racially and ethnically diverse student bodies. The method used was to have the teachers view videotapes of Black students' movement styles and complete a questionnaire. Students with Black culture-related movement styles were perceived as lower in achievement, higher in aggression, and more likely to need special education services than students with "standard" movement styles. Neal concluded that the present academic and social skill status of Black students provide compelling evidence that systematic inquiry is warranted. The continued incomplete school success of Black students, particularly adolescent males, justifies culturally responsive inquiry and pedagogy to reverse the present trends toward school and social skill failure. Three questions relating to Black students' movement styles and teacher perceptions were explored. (1) Does the stroll of Black adolescent male students affect teachers' perceptions of

their achievement? (2) Does the stroll of Black adolescent male students affect teachers' perceptions of aggression? (3) Do teachers expect students who stroll to need special education assistance? The results indicated that the teachers perceived students with Black culture-related movement styles as lower in achievement, higher in aggression, and more likely to need special education services than students with standard movement styles. White students who strolled were also perceived by teachers to be lower in achievement and higher in aggression than Black and White students who walked with the "standard" style. Neal concluded that the continued incomplete success of Black students, particularly, adolescent males, justifies culturally responsive inquiry and pedagogy to reverse the present trends toward school and social skill failure.

Clever and Bear (1992) examined children with LD for self-perceptions of specific domains of competence, judgments of the importance of these domains, and perceptions of global self-worth. The study was conducted in a Mid-Atlantic suburban school district in which fifth-grade students with LD were placed into inclusive classrooms or Team Approach to Mastery (TAM) classes with low achievement (LA) and normal achievement (NA) students. The NA group consisted of 58 boys (11Black, 47 white) and 64 girls (12 Black, 52 White). The LA group consisted of 15 boys (3 Black, 12 White) and 12 girls (7 Black and 5 White). The LD group consisted of 29 boys (6Black and 23 White) and 6 girls (3 Black and 3 White).The Self-Perceptions Profile for Children (SPP-C) was administered to all the students. Results indicated that children with LD and LA held lower self-perceptions of scholastic competence than children with NA, and children with LD had lower self-perceptions of behavioral conduct than children with LA and NA. Both children with LD and children with LA had significantly larger discrepancies between perceived competence and

importance in the scholastic domain than did children with LA. No evidence existed that children with LD utilize a discounting mechanism to protect their self-worth. Also results offered little support for the use of importance ratings or discrepancy scores in understanding the relation between children's self perceptions of competence and global self-worth.

Tournaki (2003) conducted a study with 384 general education elementary and middle school teachers to determine teachers' perceptions of students with disabilities' academic and social success in general education settings. The teachers lived and worked in a middle-class community of a New York City borough. There were 349 females and 35 men and teaching experience ranged from a half a year to 29 years. The participants read a case study describing a fourth-grade student with 32 different versions. Four characteristics of the student, gender, reading achievement, attentiveness and social behavior, were manipulated experimentally. Results indicated that, in some instances, teachers used irrelevant information in their predictions (e.g., social behavior influenced academic predictions, reading achievement influenced social predictions).Teachers also demonstrated gender bias in some instances and appeared to make predictions when an ambiguous label explained students' reading problems. If teachers predictions are influenced negatively by certain student characteristics, some students, particularly those with special needs, may be at greater risk for failing in the general education classroom.

Summary

School experiences affect students' perceptions of their academic ability, social acceptance, popularity, behavior, self-efficacy, and physical attractiveness. The self-perception of students with disabilities is possibly affected even greater at school, due to teachers' and students without disabilities' attitudes and perceptions of them. Teachers

perceive should change their perceptions of the students with disabilities and include the student with disabilities equally as other students. It is important that teachers provide opportunities for success and failure for all students, but become sensitive to the special needs of the students with disabilities in regards to their self-concept.

Inclusion and Students with Mild Disabilities

This section reports research conducted on the inclusion of students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers. Increasingly, students with disabilities are receiving their education within general education classroom settings (Klinger & Vaughn, 1999). A major barrier to students with disabilities' success in the general classroom has been a lack of appropriate instruction that yields adequate progress.

Of the many issues related to the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes, according to Baker, Wang and Walberg (1994), none is more important than the effects on students' learning and social relations with regular classmates. For example, Mcleskey, Henry and Axelrod (1999) conducted a study that examined national data on placement practices for school-age students from six to seventeen years old with LD from 1988-89 to1994-95 and examined data from the 50 states and the District of Columbia to determine if differences existed in placement practices for students with LD across the United States. The method used was to examine data from Reports to Congress regarding placement practices for students with LD over the last six years. Participants were students with disabilities from the fifty states and the District of Columbia who had been placed in inclusive settings over the period studied. Independent variables were placement settings and type of disability. Dependent variable was the Cumulative Placement Rate (CPR). The results indicated that there had been a major increase in the CPR for students with disabilities

in the past six years educated in general education classrooms. The CPR for students with LD educated in general education classrooms for 80% or more of the school day increased by 151% in years investigated, reflecting a gain of approximately 614,000 students. In contrast, the CPR for students with LD educated in resource rooms for 21 to 60% of the school day, decreased by 18%. Two trends in the national data were illustrated by the results. First, there was an increase of students with disabilities identified over the period studied. Second, there had been a considerable reduction in the proportion of students with LD who were educated in separate classrooms.

Wood (1998) investigated teachers' perceptions of their educational roles and collaborative teaching efforts in the inclusion of children with severe disabilities in general education classrooms. Participants were a sample of general and special education teachers comprising the collaborative teaching teams of children with severe disabilities. The method used was to conduct semi-structured interviews to seek information about teachers' perceptions regarding collaboration, communication and team-building. The teams consisted of a general education teacher and special education teacher of an included student. The independent variable was general or special education teacher and the dependent variable was teacher attitudes towards inclusion. Results indicated that in the initial stages of inclusion, teachers maintained discrete role boundaries through a clear, albeit informal division of labor. As the school year progressed, role perceptions became less rigid as the teaming became more positive.

Cook (2001) examined whether teachers' attitudes toward their included students with disabilities differed as a function of the disabilities' severity. The method used was to analyze data collected from part of a larger investigation regarding teachers' attitudes toward

their included students with disabilities. Participants were seventy inclusive classroom teachers nominated three students to prompts corresponding with the attitudes of attachment, concern, indifference, and rejection. Chi-square analyses supported predictions, based on a theory on instructional tolerance and a model of differential expectations, that students with severe or obvious disabilities are significantly overrepresented among teachers' nominations in the rejection category. Results were interpreted to indicate that teachers tend to form different attitudes and expectations of their included students with disabilities depending on the severity or obviousness of students' disabilities. It was suggested that both included students with obvious and hidden disabilities are at risk for receiving inappropriate educational interactions, but for different reasons. Distinct recommendations for improving teachers' attitudes toward included students with disabilities with hidden and obvious disabilities were offered.

Bender, Vail and Scott (1995) examined the types of instructional strategies offered in mainstream classes. Participants were 127 general education teachers in grades 1 through 8 from 11 school districts in three different school districts in Georgia. There were 117 women and 115 White teachers involved in the study. The method used was to ask each teacher to complete a self-evaluation concerning instructional strategies used in their general education classes. Each teacher was asked also to complete questionnaires concerning their own efficacy and toward mainstreaming. ANOVAs comparing teachers with positive attitudes indicated that the teachers with less positive attitudes used effective mainstream instructional strategies less frequently. The results indicated that teachers with more students with disabilities in their classes had more positive attitudes toward mainstreaming.

Barnett and Monda-Amaya (1998) examined principals' attitudes toward and knowledge of inclusion. Participants were principals from 59 elementary, 27 middle and 29 high schools in the state of Illinois. The method used was to survey principals selected at random. A survey instrument was devised to elicit information from the principals regarding definitions, leadership styles, and effectiveness and implementation of educational practices associated with successful inclusive education. The results indicated that while no clear definition emerged, principals generally viewed inclusion as most appropriate for students with mild disabilities. Additionally, results indicated that teachers were not adequately prepared to implement inclusive practices. Significant differences between extent of use and perceived effectiveness of 13 educational practices were found. The researchers concluded that the findings raise issues related to administrators' awareness of practice that facilitate inclusion and how prepared they are to implement and support inclusive education.

Praisner (2003) completed another study of 408 elementary school principals' attitudes toward inclusion. The sample consisted of elementary school principals randomly selected from Pennsylvania. The schools were of varying sizes ranging from 250 to over 1,000 students. The Principals and Inclusion Survey (PIS) was designed to determine the extent to which variables such as training, experience, and program factors were related to principals' attitudes toward inclusion. The results indicated that 1 in 5 principals' attitudes toward inclusion are positive while most are uncertain. Positive experience with students with disabilities and exposure to special education concepts are associated with a more positive attitude toward inclusion. Further, principal with more positive attitudes and/or experiences are more likely to place students in less restrictive settings. Differences in placement and experiences were found between disability categories. Results emphasized the

importance of inclusion practices that give principals positive experiences with students of all types of disabilities as well as provide principals with more specific training.

Klinger and Vaughn (1999) conducted a synthesis of 20 studies that investigated the perceptions of 4,659 students in kindergarten through 12th grade. the following results were concluded. Findings revealed that students with high-incidence disabilities want the same activities, books, homework, grading criteria, and grouping activities as their classmates. Their peers without disabilities agreed, believing this most fair. Students with and without disabilities value teachers who slow down instruction when needed, explain concepts and assignments clearly, recognize and teach based on different learning strategies, teaching the same material in different ways so that everyone can learn.

The effects of placement versus non-placement in an inclusive classroom were determined in a study conducted by Daniel and King (1997). Four sets of dependent variables: students' academic performance, students' problem behaviors as reported by teachers and parents, self-esteem, and parental attitudes of students with disabilities were examined. A related purpose was to determine whether student placement in different types of inclusion programs would result in differences in the variables. Analysis of the results indicated (a) parents of students in the inclusion classes expressed a higher degree of concern with their children's school programs; (b) teachers and parents of the students in the inclusion classes reported more instances of behavior problems; (c) students in inclusion classes were more likely to experience gains in reading scores with no noteworthy differences for mathematics, language, and spelling; and (d) students in inclusion classes reported levels of self-esteem. The conclusion reached by the researchers is that the effects of inclusion programs are mixed and difficult to interpret. There seems to be no consistent

pattern in achievement differences. Behavior problems have a higher degree of occurrence in inclusive settings, implying that teachers must spend more time on correcting behavior than providing instruction. The behavior problems of the students with disabilities may potentially have negative effects on other students in the classroom.

Waldron and Mccleskey (1997) investigated the effects of an inclusive school program (ISP) on students with mild and severe learning disabilities. The participants were students with LD in grades 2-6 from three elementary schools which had developed ISPs consisting of 71 students. The non-inclusion group of 73 students was from resource settings. Seventy-two percent of the students were male and only one student was Black. The method used was to administer both the experimental and comparison groups the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement Brief Form (K-TEA) in September, at the beginning of the ISP. Academic progress of both groups was evaluated using a curriculum-based measure. The results indicated that students with LD in the ISP made significantly more progress in reading and compatible more progress in math when compared to the students who were provided services in resource classes. Furthermore, significantly more students with mild LD who were educated in the ISP made progress in reading that was comparable to general education peers than did students with mild LD who were educated in non-inclusive settings. Students with severe LD made comparable progress in reading and math, regardless of the setting. The researchers concluded that effective ISPs, resulting in full-time placement in a general education classroom setting and student academic progress that is as good as or better than students placed in separate settings can be achieved for elementary-aged students with LD.

Scott, Vitale and Masten (1998) concluded, after examining teachers' perceptions and use of instructional adaptations in general education classes that general educators were

found to be positive about the desirability/effectiveness and reasonability/feasibility of making instructional adaptations for students with disabilities. The primary purpose of the article was to provide a comprehensive literature review and synthesis to further an overall understanding of the key questions and issues regarding instructional adaptations for students with disabilities. The research reviewed for this study indicated that classroom teachers are very positive about the desirability and effectiveness of making adaptations for students with disabilities in inclusive settings. Teachers were also found to be less positive regarding the reasonability and feasibility of implementing adaptations in their classrooms. Research indicated also that teachers cited lack of teacher training and limited school support as the major barriers to accommodating the needs of students with disabilities in inclusive settings.

Instructional adaptations utilized by teachers in inclusive settings are extremely important to the academic achievement of students with disabilities placed in such settings. Results indicated: (a) research on inclusion in secondary education is limited and necessary; (b) many teachers have not been educated in effective methods of inclusion, (c) minorities and specifically Black males continue to be overrepresented in specific categories of special education; (d) additional research is needed on the effect of inclusion on the academic progress of students without disabilities in the inclusive setting; (e) no definitive reason was found to determine why Black students continue to fall behind other ethnic groups academically. Limitations and implications for future research are also discussed.

Summary

There are many issues related to the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classes however, none is more important than the effects on students' learning and social relations with regular classmates. To insure there are positive effects of inclusion for students

with and without disabilities, some general education teachers and administrators must change their negative perceptions of inclusion. Adaptations of classroom instruction by the general education teacher are also vital to the success of full inclusion.

Conclusions

The preceding review of literature discussed: (a) self-determination of students with disabilities, (b) overrepresentation of African American students in special education; (c) parental influence on students with disabilities; (d)academic achievement of students with disabilities; (e) social skills of students with disabilities; (f) self-concept of students with disabilities; and (g) inclusion of students with disabilities.

The review of the literature identified seven major issues involving the academic achievement of students with disabilities.

- Self-determination plays a significant role in improving student outcomes in regards to academic performance (Wehmeyer et al, 2004).
- African American students with disabilities continue to be overrepresented in EBD and MID (Gardner & Miranda, 2001).
- Low-income parents strongly value involvement in their children's learning. (Drummond & Stipek, 2004).
- Race and ethnic differences in academic achievement disparities appear early in school, widen in the elementary years and remain consistently fixed during secondary years.
- Children with disabilities were more likely to rated as aggressive, immature, suffer personality problems, and have difficulty attending when compared to their non-disabled peers (Swanson & Malone, 1992).

- School experiences affect students' perceptions of their academic ability, social acceptance, popularity, behavior, self-efficacy, and physical attractiveness (Elbaum & Vaughn, 2001).
- Regular education teachers with more students with disabilities in their classrooms had more positive attitudes toward mainstreaming (Bender, Vail & Scott, 1995).

The review of literature on self-determination suggests that an unacceptable number of students with disabilities underachieve academically in school settings and beyond secondary school, remain either underemployed or unemployed. The importance of self-determination education for students with disabilities has been suggested by Wehmeyer and Schalock (2001) and Wehmeyer et al, 2004. The research insists that self-determination skills are imperative for students with disabilities if they are to be successful in their secondary and post-secondary careers. Therefore, policy makers of students with disabilities should begin to place strong emphasis on self-determination education. The end result would be students with disabilities becoming positive, contributing members of the world.

Table 1

Self-Determination of Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Carter, Lane, Pierson & Glaeser, 2006	Examined the self-determination of adolescents with emotional disturbance and learning disabilities from the perspectives of special educators, parents, and the students	Eighty-five high school students (39 with emotional disturbance and 46 with learning disabilities)	The Air Self-Determination Scale was completed by the participants and the data was analyzed	AIR Self-Determination Scale (Wolman, Campeau, Dubois, Mithaug & Stolarski, 1994)	Adolescents with emotional disturbance were found to have lower ratings of self-determination than students with learning disabilities
Carter & Lunsford, 2005	Reviewed 4 skill areas of students with emotional/behavioral disorders, specifically self-determination, which may improve employment outcomes	Transition-age youth with emotional/behavioral disorders	Self-determination instruction and other skills taught to participants	Self-Determination curriculum	Students with emotional/behavioral disorders are better prepared and experience more success in employment

Table 1 (continued)

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Field & Hoffman, 2002	Described system of supports for implementing self-determination curriculum	Teachers of students with disabilities and students with disabilities	Self-determination curriculum was taught to a treatment group of students with disabilities and a control group of students with disabilities	Steps to Self-Determination curriculum (Field & Hoffman, 1996)	Teachers who are self-determined are better able to promote self-determination skills for their students
Malin & Nevin, 2002	Determined implications of implementing self-determination curricula	Studies of self-determination	Reviewed literature on self-determination	Articles on self-determination	Self-determination is continually developing and is important for students with disabilities

Table 1 (continued)

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Martin, Mithaug, Cox, Peterson, Van Dycke & Cash, 2003	Determine if secondary-age students could use self-determination skills to regulate academic tasks	Eight secondary-age students with emotional and behavioral disorders	Students completed daily self-determination contracts to schedule academic tasks.	Arc Self-Determination Scale	Pre and post-assessment found significant academic gains
Mason, Field & Sawilowsky, 2004	Examined instructional practices and attitudes of educators as they relate to self-determination and student involvement in the individual educational plan process	Five hundred twenty-three responses from teachers, administrators, and related services professionals	Conducted online web survey	Survey which contained four sections related to the individual educational plan process	Thirty-four percent were satisfied with the level of student involvement in the individual educational plan process

Table 1 (continued)

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Palmer & Wehmeyer, 2003	Examined whether young children with disabilities set goals for learning using Self-Determined Model of Instruction	Fourteen teachers from Texas and Kansas	Teachers in the study received training from project staff, then implemented the model to their students	The Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS)	Young children, aged 5-6, were able to set goals and use the model to achieve
Wehmeyer, Field, Doren, Jones & Mason, 2004	Examined the role of promoting self-determination in light of federal standards-based reform initiatives	Ten years of research articles on self-determination	Synthesized the studies of self-determination over a ten years period	Research articles focusing on self-determination	School reform efforts provide an opportunity to infuse instruction in self-determination into the education programs of all students, including students with disabilities

Table 1 (continued)

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Wehmeyer & Schalock, 2001	Examined self-determination and quality of life in special education services and supports for students with disabilities	Educators and students with disabilities across the United States	Analyzed previous studies on self-determination focusing on characteristics, educational outcomes and its' effect on quality of life for students with disabilities	Studies on self-determination instruction for students with disabilities	Self-determination instruction is important for improving educational outcomes and quality of life for students with disabilities.
Wehmeyer, Agran & Hughes, 2000	Examined teachers' opinions regarding the value of self-determination and issues relating to teaching skills leading to this outcome	Teachers of students with disabilities from all 50 states	Responses were analyzed and compared based on teacher of exceptionality.	Instrument developed using Agran, Snow and Swaner's (1999) survey.	Findings suggested that nationally, teachers working with secondary-age students highly valued self-determination instruction

Table 2

Overrepresentation of African American Students

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Artiles, Rueda, Salazar & Higareda, 2005	Examined the magnitude of overrepresentation of English language learners in special education	Eleven urban school districts in California for the 1998-99 school year	Reviewed the records of the participating school districts English language learners for and sped placement	English language learners placement patterns, National Research Council	Specific categories predicted English language learners placement in special education
Artiles, & Aguirre,1998	Do predictors of sped placement vary by ethnic group?	Twenty-five thousand 8th grade students	Data collected from National Educational Longitudinal Study database	Student and parent questionnaires	There are specific predictors for learning disabilities placement based on race, family size, gender, and academic achievement

Table 2 (continued)

Overrepresentation of African American Students

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Dixon-Floyd & Johnson, 1997	Variables associated with assigning students to behavioral classrooms	Eighty-five 6th, 7th, and 8th graders from two El Paso, Texas school districts	Collected data from students enrolled during 1992-93 and 1993-94 school years.	Texas Assessment of Academic Skills test scores, and basic skills scores	Socio-economic status and basic skills performance have a relationship with placing at-risk students in behavioral classrooms
Hosp & Reschly, 2004	Are economics and demographics predictors of minority sped placement?	Black and white students placed in sped	Data collected from Office of Civil Rights, Common Core of Data and district levels	Descriptive characteristics of dependent variables	Academic achievement added significantly to predictive models for various racial groups and disability categories.

Table 2 (continued)

Overrepresentation of African American Students

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Hosp & Reschly, 2003	Examined referral rates for sped services among Black, Hispanic and White students	Black, Hispanic and White students referred to sped	Literature synthesized on the rates of referral of intervention or assessment of the 3 targeted groups	Studies included racial demographics and grade levels	Black students referred for sped services more than other groups.
Hosp & Reschly, 2002	Examined racial differences in sped programming of Black and White students	Two hundred-thirty 3rd and 4th grade students identified as learning disabled	Examined data on102 variables related to sped referral, identification and placement.	ANOVA used to identify main effects for each variable and its interaction with race.	Clear pattern found in variables related to restrictiveness of placement, but pattern was similar for Black and White Students.

Table 2 (continued)

Overrepresentation of African American Students

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Hosp & Hosp, 2001	Examined behavior differences between Black and White students as issue for assessment and intervention.	Teachers of Black and white students across the United States	Surveyed teachers in various districts across the United States	African-American Behavioral Style (AABS)	Presence of differences between Black and White does not automatically indicate problems
Macmillan & Lopez, 1996	Are student referrals based on race and gender?	One hundred fifty school children grades 2-4 recommended for pre-referral	Compared students on cognitive, achievement and behavioral scales by race and gender	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-III, Wide Range Achievement Test-Revised, School Archival Record Search, Social Skills Rating System-Teacher, Connors Teachers Rating Scale-28, Critical Events Index	Failed to support the belief that the referral of children is not based on race nor gender

Table 2 (continued)

Overrepresentation of African American Students

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Oswald, Coutinho, Best & Singh,	Influence of school-related economic and demographic variables	Four thousand fifty-five school districts across the United States	Analyzed extant data on ethnicity, sped identification of Mildly Mentally Retarded and, Severely Emotionally Disturbed, and educational, demographic and educational factors	Fall 1992 Elementary and Secondary School Civil Rights Compliance Report	Blacks identified 2.4 more times than whites as Mildly Mentally Retarded and 1.5 times more as Severely Emotionally Disturbed
Peterson & Shinn, 2002	Which best explains school identification practices for learning disabilities?	Forty-eight fourth-grade students with learning disabilities	Students were tested with the and two reading measures	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-III Woodcock-Johnson Broad Reading Cluster, Reading-Curriculum-Based Measurement	Best explanation for school-identified learning disabilities practices was achievement discrepancy

Table 3

Parental Influence and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Deismone, 19999	When linking parental involvement with student achievement, do race and income matter	Black, Hispanic and White parents of school-aged children across the United States	Analyzed results of parental surveys	National Educational Longitudinal Study:88	The effectiveness of particular parent-involvement practices differ according to race/ethnicity and family income
Drummond & Stipek, 2004	Low-income parents' belief about their role in their children's academic learning	Two hundred thirty-four low-income Black, Hispanic and White parents of 2nd and 3rd grade students	Parents surveyed by phone to rate importance of helping their child with academics	Teacher questionnaires and parent interviews	Parents rated the importance of helping their child with academics very highly.

Table 3 (continued)

Parental Influence and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Eccles & Harold, 1993	Importance of parental involvement in early adolescent years	Two thousand families living in Philadelphia, PA and Prince George's County, MD	Reviewed results of studies involving participants	Parent, student and teacher questionnaires	Parental involvement is extremely important during early school years
Gutman & Midgley, 2000	Role of protective factors in supporting academic achievement of poor black American students during middle school transition	Sixty-two Black American low-income families	Examined main and interactive effects of psychological, family, and school factors on students' grade-point averages across middle school transition	Parent interviews and student surveys	Students experienced significant decline in grade-point average from elementary to middle school and students who felt more efficacious had higher grade-point averages

Table 3 (continued)

Parental Influence and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Kenny, Gallagher, Alvarez-Salat & Silsby, 2002	What are sources of support and psychological distress among academically successful inner-city youth?	One hundred students (32 boys, 68 girls) 9 Asian, 54 Black, 18 Hispanic, and 19 White enrolled in high school collaborative programs	Students completed questionnaires on stress-related issues	Parent Attachment Questionnaire, Children's Depression Inventory, student grade-point averages	Quality of relationships with fathers is important to psychological health of urban youth
Mau, 1997	Differences in parental influences on academic achievement of Asian immigrants, Asian-Americans and White-Americans	One hundred eighty-four Asian-Americans, 472 Asian immigrants and 13,387 white Americans	Students completed a 45 minute self-administered questionnaire	National Educational Longitudinal Study:88;	Both Asian groups spent more time on homework and perceived higher parental involvement than White-American students

Table 3 (continued)

Parental Influence and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Newman, Myers, Newman, Lohman & Smith, 2000	Factors that contribute to the academic success of Black students transitioning from middle to high school	Twenty-two Black American middle school students	Tape recorded student interviews, student responses to standardized measures of academic motivation, questionnaires of academic supporters	Researcher developed questionnaire	Mothers play a significant role in the success of academically successful low-income Black students
Simons-Morton, 2003	Identify factors associated with school adjustment and engagement among 6th graders	One thousand two hundred sixty-seven 6th-graders in four middle school s in one United States school district.	Students surveyed at beginning and end of school year.	Survey instrument of 166 items to assess school adjustment, parent involvement, monitoring, expectations, climate, social competence and depression	There is a decline in school adjustment/engagement during middles school and parental involvement and social competence may be protective against decline in these variables

Table 3 (continued)

Parental Influence and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Zellman & Waterman, 1998	Impact of parental involvement on children's educational outcomes	One hundred ninety-three Los Angeles area 2nd and 5th grade children and their mothers	Analyzed data from a larger study	Kaufman-Brief Intelligence Test, Teacher-Child Rating Scale	Parent school involvement contributes to positive school outcomes

Table 4

Academic Achievement and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Anderson, Kutash & Duchnowski, 2001	Comparisons of students with emotional/behavioral disorders and students with learning disabilities' academic progress over a 5 yr period	One hundred three students that began kindergarten in 1989 and were eventually identified as emotional/behavioral disordered or learning disabled based on federal and state rules	Examined changes in standardized math and reading achievement scores between K-6th grade	Kaufman-Test of Educational Achievement	Young students with learning disabilities were consistently less positively in rating their learning capabilities than non-disabled peers
Carlisle & Chang, 1996	Investigated self-evaluations of students with learning disabilities' in terms of learning capabilities in mainstream science classes over a 3 yr period	Students identified as learning disabled from suburban Chicago school district	Teachers and students completed rating scales in spring of each year	Student Rating Scale, Teacher Rating Scale, Self-Perception Profile for Children, Self-Perception Profile for Learning Disabled Children	Young students with learning disabilities were consistently less positive in rating their learning capabilities than their non-disabled peers

Table 4 (continued)

Academic Achievement and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Kaplan, Peck & Mitchell, 1994	Examined how self-esteem and academic performance are related, direction of that relationship and variables which mediate the effect of self-rejection on academic performance	One thousand seven hundred seventy-six middle-school students	Students were surveyed at two different times with questionnaire	Perceived Rejection by Teachers, Anti-Social Defenses	Academic failure is motivated behavior that may be viewed as an adaptation to previous self-devaluing experiences within a school context
Meece & Kurtz-Curtis, 2001	Described current challenges in educating ethnic minority children	Current and future ethnic minority students in United States public schools	Reviewed public school enrollments by demographics	National Assessment of Educational Progress, (1999) National Center for Educational Statistics (2000)	Population of school children will become more diverse

Table 4 (continued)

Academic Achievement and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Mooney, Epstein, Reid & Nelson, 2003	Examined status of trends in interventions designed to improve the academic functioning of students with emotional/behavioral disorders	Children/adolescents between the ages of 5-21 with emotional/behavioral disorders challenges	Analyzed 55 students conducted between 1975 to 2002	Standardized instruments, curricular measures, grades, social interactions and school behavior	Further research is needed in this area before definite conclusions can be reached
Rodney, Crafter, Rodney & Mupier, 1999	Examination of grade retention variables among Black-American males	Two hundred forty-three Black-American 13-17 year-old males	Participants interviewed for approximately one hour	Children's Structured Assessment for the Genetics of Alcoholism	Thirty-one percent of the variation in grade retention was accounted for by the variables included in the model

Table 4 (continued)

Academic Achievement and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Self-Brown & Mathews, II, 2003	Effects of classroom structure on student achievement goal orientation for mathematics	Two 5th-grade classes and one 4th-grade class totaling 61 students	Students were randomly assigned token economy, contingency contract, or control condition	Weekly grades	Students in contingency-contract condition set significantly more learning goals than did students in other structure conditions
Trout, Nordness, Pierce 7 Epstein, 2003	Examined current state of the literature on the academic status of students with emotional/behavioral disorders	One hundred one articles published between 1961-2000 on academic status of students with emotional/behavioral disorders	Comprehensive review of all published articles on the academic status of students with emotional/behavioral disorders	Demographics, sped identification, academic subjects and teacher ratings	Significant limitations existed, incomplete reporting of student data, inadequate research on academic skill sets and limited number of students compromised the study

Table 4 (continued)

Academic Achievement and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Van Vooris, 2003	Examined effects of weekly interactive science homework on family involvement in homework, student achievement and homework attitudes	Two hundred fifty-three sixth and eight- grade students with mild disabilities	Six classes of students completed Teachers Involve Parents in Homework assignments, 4 classes completed non-interactive homework	Teachers Involve Parents in Homework	Teachers Involve Parents in Homework interactive students earned significantly higher science report cards than did non-Teacher Involve parents in Homework students
Waxman, Huang, Anderson & Weinstein, 1997	Examined classroom processes in urban elementary schools identified as effective and ineffective	Large urban school district located in a major metropolitan city the south central region of the United States	Fifteen classes and six students from each school were randomly chosen to be observed during reading	Classroom Observation Scale, Classroom Environment Scale,	Effective classrooms observed more interactions between students and teachers

Table 5
Social Skills and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Kemp & Carter, 2002	Investigated social interaction and social status of mainstreamed students with disabilities in grades 1-5 in state, catholic and independent schools	Twenty-two students with moderate intellectual disabilities who received an inclusive preschool intervention	Direct assessment of social interaction on the playground, social status obtained by interviewing classmates, and ratings of teachers, parents and principals	Measure of social interaction adapted from Carter, Kemp & Iacono (1995)	Large differences were found between the students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers interacting with peers and amount of time in isolation
McConnell, Scott & Odom, 1999	Evaluated performance-based assessment of social competence in young children with disabilities	Two hundred twenty-two preschool-aged children, 173 with disabilities and 49 without identified disabilities	A multi-method of assessment of children's social competence was conducted by teachers, peers, and observers	Peer Socio-Metric, Teacher Rating of social competence, Observational Assessment of Social Behavior, Observer Rating of Quality of social Interaction	Children with disabilities differed from children without disabilities on the performance-based assessment of social competence

Table 5 (continued)

Social Skills and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Ochoa & Olivarez, Jr., 1995	Examined the peer rating socio-metric research on students with learning disabilities	Seventeen studies examined peer rating socio-metric research on students with disabilities	Thirty-seven effect sizes were calculated to determine significance	Peer-related evaluation scales	Students with learning disabilities have lower socio-metric status when compared to their non-handicapped peers
Odom et al, 1999	Compared effects of different intervention approaches designed to promote peer-related competence of young children with disabilities	Ninety-two pre-school children with disabilities, 60 boys and 32 girls	A performance-based assessment of social competence consisting of observational, teacher rating and peer rating measures was collected before and after the interventions and the following year	Direct Observations Measures, Observer Impressions Scale, Teacher Rating of Competence, peer Ratings	There are effective intervention approaches available for children with needs related to social competence and the different types of interventions may be useful for addressing different goals of individual children

Table 5 (continued)

Social Skills and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Swanson & Malone, 1992	Conducted a meta-analysis of studies concerning the social skills of children with learning disabilities	Thirty-nine studies which compared an average 9.4 effect sizes were analyzed	Results of studies were analyzed producing 366 effect sizes	Perceived Competence Scale for Children, Profile of Nonverbal Sensitivity	Children with disabilities were more likely to be rated as aggressive, immature, suffer personality problems and have difficulty attending than their non-disabled peers
Vaughn & Elbaum, 1996	Effects of inclusion on the social functioning of students with learning disabilities	Sixty-four students from an elementary school, 36 boys and 28 girls identified as learning disabilities	Student measures collected at beginning and end of school year	Peer Ratings of Liking, Self-Concept, Loneliness and Social Dissatisfaction Scale, Social Alienation Scale	Student with learning disabilities were less liked and more frequently rejected than high achieving students

Table 5 (continued)

Social Skills and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Vaughn et al, 1996	Examined social skills intervention for young children with disabilities	Three to five-year old children with disabilities between 1975-1999	Collected studies of social skills of students with learning disabilities	Direct instruction of social skills	Students with disabilities acquire proper social skills later than their non-disabled peers
Vaughn & Hogan, 1994	Examined differences in social skills of students with and without disabilities	Two hundred thirty-nine K-3 students with disabilities	Measures collected at end of school year	Peer-Rating Scale, Self-Concept Scale, Social Skills Scale	Students with disabilities have more difficulties than students without disabilities

Table 6

Self-Concept and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Clever & Bear, 1992	Do self-perceptions of children with learning disabilities differ from those of low achievement and normal achievement children in the same classroom?	Normal achievement group (23 Black, 99 White), low achievement group (10 Black, 17 White), learning disabilities group (9 Black, 26 White). All attended Team Approach to Mastery classes	Measures administered by first author to each class over several weeks in early spring.	Self-Perceptions of Competence, The Self-Perception Profile for Children	Children with learning disabilities and low achievement held lower self perceptions of scholastic competence than children with normal achievement and children with learning disabilities had lower self perceptions than both other groups
Elbaum & Vaughn, 2001	Effectiveness of self-concept outcomes of school-based interventions for students with learning disabilities	Eighty-two combined elementary, middle and high school students identified as learning disabilities	Comprehensive search of the literature(1975-1997) yielded 64 intervention studies measuring the effects of students' self-concept	Piers-Harris Children Self-Concept Scale, self-Esteem Inventory, Dimensions of Self-concept, Primary Self-Concept Inventory	Type of most effective intervention differed for students at different grade levels

Table 6 (continued)

Self-Concept and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Neal, 2003	Examined effects of Black-American movement styles on teachers' perceptions	One hundred thirty-six middle school teachers from three different schools in a suburban southwestern state	Participants viewed videotape on movement styles of Black students and completed a questionnaire	Adjective Checklist Questionnaire (ACL; Gough & Heilbrun, 1983)	Teachers perceived students with Black American cultural movement styles as lower in achievement, higher in aggression, and more likely to need special education services
Tournaki, 2003	Determined teachers' perceptions of the likelihood of students' academic and social success in general education classes	Three hundred eighty-four general education elementary and middle school teachers who lived and worked in a middle-class borough of New York City	Teachers responded to 1 of 32 possible case studies describing a student	Case studies describing students in which gender, reading achievement, social behavior and attentiveness were manipulated	Social behavior influenced teachers' academic predictions and reading achievement influenced social predictions

Table 7

Inclusion and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Baker, Wang & Walberg, 1995	What are effects of inclusion on the learning of students with disabilities?	Included students with disabilities involved in major studies	Meta-analyses of educational literature of included students	Academic and social effect sizes	To close gap between sped and regular students, inclusion and effective teaching methods for all students are needed
Barnett & Monda-Amaya, 1998	Examined principals' attitudes and knowledge of inclusion	One hundred fifteen randomly selected principals across Illinois (59 elementary, 27 middle, 29 high schools)	Surveys sent to principals designed to elicit data regarding definitions, leadership styles, effectives of inclusion education	Survey instrument divided into four sections: General background, leadership approach, principals' definition of inclusion, attitudes of inclusion	Principals viewed inclusion as most appropriate for students with mild disabilities and teachers were not adequately prepared to implement inclusive practices.

Table 7 (continued)

Inclusion and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Bender, Vail & Scott, 1995	Investigated types of instructional strategies offered in mainstream classes	One hundred twenty-seven teachers in grades 1-8 from11 school districts in Georgia	Teachers completed questionnaires and ANOVAs were utilized in analyzing the answers	Six question Likert scale on mainstreaming attitudes, Bender Classroom Structure Questionnaire, Teacher Effectiveness Scale	Teacher with less positive attitudes toward mainstreaming used effective mainstream instructional strategies less frequently
Cook, 2001	Do teachers' attitudes toward their included students with disabilities differ based on the disability's severity?	Seventy general elementary education teachers of inclusive students	Teachers completed form naming three students best representing descriptions of attachment, concern, indifference and rejection	Nominating form developed by Good & Brophy, 1972	Teachers tend to form different attitudes and expectations for included students based on the severity or obviousness of the disability

Table 7 (continued)

Inclusion and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
McLeskey, Henry & Axelrod, 1999	To what extent should students with learning disabilities be placed in general education classrooms?	Students with learning disabilities placements for school-aged students in the 50 states and the District of Columbia	Examined data form Reports to Congress regarding placement over a six year period	Cumulative Placement Rate	Student with learning disabilities are increasingly becoming educated in less restrictive settings
Praisner, 2003	Surveyed elementary principals' attitudes toward inclusion	Four hundred eight elementary school principals in Pennsylvania	Participants completed questionnaire of their attitude towards inclusion	Principals and Inclusion Survey (PIS)	One in five principals' attitude toward inclusion is positive, while most are uncertain

Table 7 (continued)

Inclusion and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Scott, Vitale & Masten, 1998	Examined teachers' perceptions and use of instructional adaptations in general education classes	General education teachers in inclusive setting across the United States	Participants completed questionnaire regarding instructional strategies used in inclusive settings	Classroom Climate Scales., direct observation, interviews	General education teachers are positive regarding effectiveness of making instructional adaptations for included students
Waldron & McLeskey, 1998	Examined effects of an Inclusive School Program on reading and math achievement of students with learning disabilities	Seventy-one students with learning disabilities in grades K-6 located in a small mid-western metropolitan city	Academic progress of both groups was evaluated using achievement test results	Kaufman-Test of Educational Achievement	Students with learning disabilities in an Inclusive School Program made significantly more progress in academics when compared to non-Inclusive School Program students in resource classes

Table 7 (continued)

Inclusion and Students with Mild Disabilities

Citation	Question	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Results
Wood, 1998	Investigated teachers' perceptions of their educational roles in collaboration of students with severe disabilities	Three elementary inclusive classrooms for students with severe disabilities in a California coastal district	General and special education teachers in collaborative settings were asked to complete individual interviews	Semi-structured interviews	Teachers' roles in inclusion and perceptions become less rigid as the school year progresses, creating more teamwork

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Participants

Description: The purpose of this study is to determine and compare the self-determination levels of African-American, European-American, and Hispanic-American high school students with mild disabilities. For the purpose(s) of this study, mild disabilities included the following disabilities based on federal and state definitions: Emotional/Behavioral Disorders, Other Health Impairments, Specific Learning Disabilities and Speech or Language Impairments and excluded the following disabilities based on federal and state definitions: Autism, Deaf-blindness, Hearing Impairments, Intellectual Disabilities, Multiple Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury and Visual Impairments. Students with disabilities, who participated in this study, were identified and receiving services in special education. Due to confidentiality concerns, all 10th grade language arts' students of the selected classes were invited to participate in the study, however the researcher only analyzed the survey results of seventy-five students with disabilities, and twenty-five students without disabilities. All participants in the study were working towards one of the following diploma options.

Diploma Options

1. Special Education Diploma is awarded only to students identified with disabilities assigned to a special education program whom have not met the state assessment requirements referenced in Rule 160-3-1-07-Student Assessment, or who have not completed all the requirements for a high school diploma, but have completed their Individualized Education Programs (IEP).

2. Technology/Career-Preparatory Diploma is awarded to students who complete a program of study requiring 22 Carnegie units as specified by the Georgia board of Education. Completion of this program is signified by a High School Diploma with a Technology/Career Preparatory Seal. (At least three technical units must be earned in a concentrated area and a fourth technical unit must be earned in the same or related area).
3. College Preparatory Diploma (CP) is awarded upon completion of a program of study with a minimum of 22 Carnegie units. Completion is signified by a High School Diploma with a College Preparatory Seal indicating that the student has satisfactorily completed a college preparatory program specified by the State board of Education.

Procedures

The students invited to participate in the study were 10th grade students with and without disabilities seeking the Special Education Diploma, Technical/Career Preparatory Diploma or College Preparatory Diploma.

One hundred 10th-grade students (75 students with mild disabilities and 25 students without disabilities) were included in the study. Each student with disabilities participant met the following criteria to be included in the study: (1) identified and receiving services for mild disabilities, as previously defined, (2) returned a signed parental form, and (3) returned a signed student consent form.

The racial composition of the study's participants with disabilities consisted of the following racial groups: African-American; European-American and Hispanic-American. There were no students from the Asian-American ethnic group due to so few Asian students

assigned to special education. Table 8 below shows the demographics of the research participants.

Prerequisites and Exclusions: Students were excluded from the study if they did not have parental permission to participate or if they chose not to participate. The settings for the study were 10th grade language arts regular and special education classrooms. If the teacher, researcher, parent or student believed that a student's time involved in this study would be best used for studying, or other methods of improving progress in that classroom environment, then that student was not included in the study. A signed informed consent form detailing all procedures was required from both the parent (Appendix C) and student (Appendix D) prior to the initiation of the study. Parents and students were given the choice to withdraw or be excluded from the study at any time.

Teacher Participants: The teachers invited to participate in the study were 10^{th} grade language arts teachers of students with and without disabilities seeking either the Special Education Diploma, Technical/Career Preparatory Diploma or College Preparatory Diploma. The teachers presented the survey as a planned lesson and instructed the students according to the scale's protocol. The researcher instructed the teacher participants on proper procedure on implementation of the survey prior to the teachers presenting the survey to the students.

Demographic Table

Table 8

Race	N	Special Diploma	Technical Diploma	College Prep	Male	Female	SLD	EBD	OHI
African American	30	12	17	1	23	7	17	6	2
European American	38	6	24	8	24	14	24	1	-
Hispanic American	28	10	17	1	17	11	23	2	-
Other	4	-	1	3	3	1	-	-	-

SLD=Specific Learning Disabilities; EBD=Emotional/Behavioral Disorders; OHI=Other Health Impaired

Setting

The study was conducted at a high school located in a large suburban school district in the Southeast. The high school included grades 9 through 12. The school district has a student population of approximately 151,000 students. The study was conducted in selected regular and special education 10th grade language arts classrooms. The average size of the language arts college preparatory classroom was 23 students. The average size of the technical language arts classroom was 35 students. The average size of the resource language arts classroom was 6 students.

Instructional Activities:

Day 1: The study commenced with the participating classroom teachers presenting new information in the form of a lecture to all students including students without disabilities. This lecture explained the purpose of the study and included the delivering of parental and student consent forms to all students assigned to the classes. The students were instructed to return signed forms within three days if they elected to participate. This process approximately required thirty minutes of class time.

Day 2: After consent forms were collected, students were given two forms to complete in class: (1) Student demographical survey and, (2) the Arc Self-Determination Scale Survey. Students who elected not to participate were given the option of remaining in the classroom involved in lesson-related assignment or to complete same assignment in other classroom. Participating students were given instructions on how to complete instrument and teachers assisted students requiring assistance when needed. Upon completion of survey, students returned both forms to teachers. Teachers then returned forms to department chairpersons, who then returned the forms to the researcher. The researcher then collected the forms, and began process of selection of participants prior to analysis. A letter of appreciation was sent to participating schools' principals, chairpersons, teachers, students and parents

Instruments

Participants were requested to complete a demographic questionnaire to glean basic background information. The demographic questionnaire was developed by the researcher. Participants will be given a copy of the Adolescent Version of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale originally created by Wehmeyer (1995). Self-report was purposely used in the design of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale (Wehmeyer, 1995). The Arc's Self-Determination Scale allows students with disabilities to voice their own ideas and opinions about themselves and their future. The term Self-Determination was defined by Field, Martin Miller, Ward and Wehmeyer (1998) as: a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of one's strengths and limitations, together with a belief of oneself as capable and effective are essential to self-determination. When acting on the basis of these skills and attitudes, individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults in our society (p. 2).

The Arc's Self-Determination scale was originally developed and normed with 500 secondary school students with and without cognitive disabilities who attended school in urban, rural, and suburban school districts of five different states (Rasheed, 2005; Wehmeyer, 1995). The Arc's Self-Determination scale was designed to be a self-report measure of self-determination. It was designed for use by adolescents with disabilities, and was especially geared for students with mild mental retardation and learning disabilities (Wehmeyer, 1995). The Arc's Self-Determination Scale is a 72 item self-report instrument with total scores ranging from 0-148, with higher scores representing higher levels of self determination (Rasheed, 2005; Wehmeyer, 1995).

The Arc's Self-Determination Scale's four primary domains are:

(1) Autonomy reflects performance in self-care and general family focused activities, such as shopping, cleaning and cooking.

(2) Self-Regulation domain requires students to identify a goal in each of three major transition areas (living, working and transportation), and list the steps they will need to take to achieve each goal. Students are asked to identify if they have planned for each of these outcomes, and if so, if they have set goals and know what it will take to achieve these goals.

(3) Psychological Empowerment refers to the related constructs of locus of control, self-efficacy and outcome expectancy. These three constructs provide an overall indicator of perceived control.

(4) Self-Realization domain provides information on several components of self-realization, including self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-confidence, self-esteem and self-actualization.

The autonomy domain was divided into the two sub-domain areas; Independence (Further divided into two areas of Independence), (a) Personal Care; (b) Family Oriented Functions and Interaction with the Environment.

(2) Choice or Acting on the Basis of Preferences, Beliefs, Interests, and Abilities, (Further divided into four areas), (a) Choice (Recreation and Leisure), (b) Community Involvement (c) Post-School Direction and (d) Personal Expression.

The self-regulation domain was divided into the two sub-domains; (a) Inter-personal cognitive problem solving, and (b) Goal setting and task performance.

Items on the instrument were generated in each of the four domain areas using two methods: adapting questions from existing measures of the essential characteristics, if possible, and author generated items (Wehmeyer, 1996). .

Reliability

In order to check for inter-rater reliability the researcher will select two raters to score questions from The Arc's Self-Determination Scale. This will take place prior to sending the scale to the entire sample population. The raters will practice scoring the Arc's Self-Determination Scale by scoring five surveys completed by randomly chosen students from the sample of students that will be participating. The data will be compared using a point-by-point comparison in agreements which will be divided by agreements and multiplied by 100 to compute a percentage. The same formula will be used to calculate inter-rater reliability during all of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale measures. To calculate the inter-rater reliability, the following equation will be used:

$$\left(\frac{\text{Number of Agreements}}{\text{Number of Agreements + Disagreements}}\right) \text{X } 100$$

After a competence level is obtained, the scorers will number the students and divide them equally between the two scorers to be scored individually. Both scorers will rate every subsequent 5^{th} participant independently in order to determine the extent to which satisfactory rater reliability will be sustained throughout the scoring process. If a discrepancy in the scoring occurs, then measures will be rescored by the researcher and observer until 100% agreement is reached and then the data will be entered.

Construct Validity

Construct validity of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale was established by factor analysis and discriminative validity. Wehmeyer factor analyzed the items for each sub-test separately except for the Self-Regulation section which cannot be factor analyzed due to the open-ended responses for each item. For each of the three factor analyses, Wehmeyer was

able to identify factors that were consistent with a sub-domain that were used in creating the sub-tests. Discriminative validity was established using three different groups: students without disabilities, students with learning disabilities, and students with mental retardation. Significant differences were found between the three groups on total Arc scores. Post-hoc analyses revealed significant differences between students without disabilities and students with mental retardation, and students with learning disabilities and students with mental retardation. There were significant differences for the Autonomy sub-test between students without disabilities and students with mental retardation, and between students with learning disabilities and students with mental retardation. For the Self-Regulation sub-test, there were significant differences between all three groups. For the Psychological Empowerment sub-test, there were significant differences between students without disabilities and students with mental retardation, and for students with learning disabilities and students with mental retardation. For the Self-Realization sub-test, there were significant differences between students without disabilities and students with mental retardation, and students with learning disabilities and students with mental retardation. The trend for all scores was that students without disabilities scored highest followed by students with learning disabilities and mental retardation respectively. The scale's internal consistency reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha for the entire measure with the exception of the Self-Regulation domain which required open-ended questions and therefore did not lend itself to such analyses. Coefficient alpha for the entire scale was .90 (actual score is .896); alpha for the Autonomy domain was .90 (actual score is .898); alpha for the Psychological Empowerment domain was .73; and alpha for the Self-Realization domain was .62.

The Self-Regulation section of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale consists of nine (9) open-ended questions that cover two sub-domains, (Interpersonal Cognitive Problem Solving & Goal-Setting and Task Performance). These questions were not be utilized in this study.

The scale's concurrent criterion-related validity was established by analyzing relationships between The Arc's Self-Determination Scale and three conceptually related measures: a global locus of control scale, a measure of academic achievement attributions, and a self-efficacy scale (Carter et al, 2006). Locus of control was measured using the Adult version of the Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Scale (ANS-IE) (Nowicki & Duke, 1974). The negative relationship between The Arc's Self-Determination Scale and the Adult version of the Norwicki-Strickland-Internal-External Scale (ANS-IE) was explained by the fact that the higher the score on the ANS-IE, the more external is the individual's locus of control orientation.

Attributions of academic achievement were measured by the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire (IARQ) (Crandall, Katkovsky, & Crandall, 1965). The I + subscale indicates the degree to which students attribute their success internally while the I - subscale indicates the degree to which students internalize their academic failure.

Self-Efficacy was measured using the Self-Efficacy Scale (SES) (Sherer, Maddox, Mercadante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, & Rogers, 1982).

Total and domain scores from The Arc's Self-Determination Scale of students were correlated with students' scores from the above described measures (Wehmeyer, 1995). The table below provided the correlation coefficients. All r-values in the table were statistically significant ($p < .0001$).

Table 9

Correlation Table for Arc Self-Determination Scale

	*ANS-IE	*IARQ 1+	*IARQ 1-	*IARQ Total	*SES
Autonomy	r= (-.16)	r=.21	r=.17	r=0.20	r=.26
Self-Regulation	r= (-.32)	r=.28	r= .29	r= .29	r= .28
Psychological Empowerment	r= (-.27)	r= .45	r= .25	r= .36	r= 0.47
Self-Realization	r= (-.27)	r= .27	r= .30	r= .27	r= .37
Total	r=(-.26)	r= .32	r= .27	r= .29	r= .39

*ANS-IE= Adult version of the Norwicki-Strickland Internal-External Scale
*IARQ= Intellectual Achievement Responsibility questionnaire
* SES= Self-Efficacy Scale

According to Wehmeyer (1995), in and of themselves, significant relationships are not particularly meaningful given the sample size. However, most of the relationships are moderate to strong (.25 to .5) and relationships are strongest in areas one would predict (p. 110). These findings provided a picture of the level of the concurrent criterion-related validity of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale.

Design

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare differences in the Arc's measures between race and diploma selection group. Respondents' surveys were analyzed using race and diploma selection as the common variable. This analysis helped ensure that the results of the survey were able to be generalized to the entire sample.

Research Questions

Research question 1: For African-American, European-American and Hispanic-American students with mild disabilities in a high school setting, what are their *Arc Self-Determination Scale (ASDS)* total scores, and the three *ASDS* sub-domain scores of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization? Descriptive statistics will be used to address research question number one using the Statistical Package and Social Science (SPSS) computer program.

Research question 2: Are there significant differences in self-determination scores of students with mild disabilities based on race? (African American, European American and Hispanic American) For this research question analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the diploma option selection using the Statistical Package and Social Science (SPSS) computer program.

Research question 3: Are there significant differences in self-determination scores of students with mild disabilities based on diploma option selection? (Special Education Diploma, Technical/Career Preparatory Diploma, and College Preparatory Diploma) Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to address this research question using the Statistical Package and Social Science (SPSS) computer program.

Research question 4: Are there differences in self-determination scores based on gender? Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to address this research question using the Statistical Package and Social Science (SPSS) computer program.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study. The purpose of this study was to determine and compare the self-determination levels of African-American, European-American and Hispanic-American high school students with mild disabilities. *The Arc's Self-Determination Scale (ASDS)* was administered to 100 high school students (75 students with mild disabilities and 25 students without disabilities). The instrument used in this study was *The Arc's Self-Determination Scale (ASDS)*. The *ASDS* provided a total score as well as three sub-domain scores of self-determination, Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization. A fourth sub-domain, Self-Regulation, was not administered in this study.

Research Questions

1. For African-American, European-American and Hispanic-American students with mild disabilities and Regular Education students in a high school setting, what are their *Arc Self-Determination Scale (ASDS)* mean total scores, and the three *ASDS* sub-domain scores of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization?
2. Are there significant differences in self-determination scores of students with mild disabilities based on race? (African-American, European-American and Hispanic-American)
3. Are there significant differences in self-determination scores of students with mild disabilities based on diploma option selection? (Special Education Diploma, Technical/Career Preparatory Diploma, and College Preparatory Diploma)

4. Are there significant differences in Total self-determination scores and the three sub-domains of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization based on gender?

Analysis of Research Questions

In the current study, four research questions were investigated based on the responses of the above described sample to the Arc's Self-Determination Scale (*ASDS)* and the three sub-domains of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self- Realization. For the purposes of this study, the sub-domain of Self-Regulation was not included.

A series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for the four measures (Total ASDS, Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization.

Research Questions One and Two

The following are the mean and standard deviation for each group's Total *ASDS* score and each sub-domain score calculated by the *Statistical Package and Social Science (SPSS)* computer program. These data are presented in Table 10

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics All Groups

	Total		Autonomy		Pyschological Empowerment		Self -Realization	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
African American	108.9	11.52	81.1	13.70	13.2	1.15	13.2	1.49
European American	106.1	11.04	80.9	11.04	12.7	.68	13.2	1.08
Hispanic American	106.7	10.84	80.3	10.51	13.0	.91	13.2	1.18
General Education	110.8	5.55	84.2	5.25	13.2	.93	13.5	1.05

Research question two addresses differences in self-determination scores based on race. (i.e. African American, European American, Hispanic American)

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for each group on Total *ASDS* scores and the three sub-domain scores of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization. Table 11 shows the results of the Total ASDS scores which indicated no significant differences among the groups based on race.

Table 11

ANOVA for Group Autonomy

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	348.360	3	116.120	1.153	.332
Within Groups	10470.880	96	100.726		
Total	10738.190	99			

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for the sub-domain Autonomy scores. The results indicated no significant differences among the groups based on race. Table 12 shows the results.

Table 12

ANOVA for Group Autonomy

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	267.310	3	89.103	.817	.488
Within Groups	10470.880	96	109.072		
Total	10738.190	99			

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for the sub-domain Psychological Empowerment scores. The results indicated no significant differences among the groups based on race. Table 13 shows the results.

Table 13

ANOVA for Group Psychological Empowerment

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	4. 240	3	1.413	1.623	.189
Within Groups	83.600	96	.871		
Total	10738.190	99			

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for the sub-domain Self-Realization scores. The results indicated no significant differences among the groups based on race. Table 14 shows the results.

Table 14

ANOVA for Group Self-Realization

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	1.550	3	.517	.352	.788
Within Groups	83.600	96	1.469		
Total	10738.190	99			

Research Question Three

Are there significant differences in self-determination scores of students with mild disabilities based on diploma option selection? The following are the mean and standard deviation for each group's Total *ASDS* score and each sub-domain score calculated by the *Statistical Package and Social Science (SPSS)* computer program. These data are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics for Diploma Options

Diploma	Total		Autonomy		Pyschological Empowerment		Self -Realization	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Special Education	105.7	13.85	78.2	15.19	13.1	1.03	13.0	1.45
Technical/ Career	108.5	8.40	82.2	8.04	12.9	.85	13.2	1.09
College Prep	111.9	16.40	84.8	10.41	13.5	1.09	13.7	1.08

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for Total ASDS diploma option scores and the three domains of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization. The ANOVA results for Total *ASDS* scores indicated no significant difference. Table 16 shows the results.

Table 16

ANOVA for Total Diploma Options

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	343.877	2	221.456	1.724	.184
Within Groups	10295.277	97	106.137		
Total	10738.190	99			

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for Autonomy scores indicated no significant difference in diploma option scores. Table 17 shows the results.

Table 17

ANOVA for Autonomy Diploma Options

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	442.913	2	221.456	2.087	.130
Within Groups	10295.277	97	106.137		
Total	10738.190	99			

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for Psychological Empowerment scores revealed no significant difference in diploma option scores. Table 18 shows the results.

Table 18

ANOVA for Psychological Empowerment Diploma Options

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	4.023	2	2.011	2.328	.103
Within Groups	83.817	97	.864		
Total	87.840	99			

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for Self-Realization scores indicated no significant difference in diploma option scores. Table 19 shows the results.

Table 19

ANOVA for Self-Realization Diploma Options

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	3.518	2	1.759	2.227	.298
Within Groups	139.072	97	1.434		
Total	142.590	99			

Research Question Four

A fourth research question was analyzed. Are there differences in Total self-determination scores and the three sub-domains of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization based on gender? The following are the mean and standard deviation for each group's Total *ASDS* score and each sub-domain score calculated by the *Statistical Package and Social Science (SPSS)* computer program. Table 20 shows the results.

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics for Gender

	Total		Autonomy		Psychological Empowerment		Self -Realization	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Male	108.1	10.06	80.1	11.66	13.1	.99	13.2	1.28
Female	110.7	.68	84.1	6.67	12.9	.84	13.5	1.00

A one-way ANOVA was conducted for Total *ASDS* gender scores and the three domains of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization. The ANOVA results for Total *ASDS* scores indicated no significant difference between males and females. Table 21 shows the results.

Table 21

ANOVA for Gender Total

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	337.472	1	337.472	3.416	.068
Within Groups	9680.568	98	98.781		
Total	10018.040	99			

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for gender Autonomy scores indicated no significant difference in diploma option scores. Table 22 shows the results.

Table 22

ANOVA for Gender Autonomy

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	346.043	1	346.043	3.263	.074
Within Groups	10392.568	98	106.042		
Total	10738.190	99			

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for gender Psychological Empowerment scores indicated no significant difference in diploma option scores. Table 23 shows the results.

Table 23

ANOVA for Gender Psychological Empowerment

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	.844	1	.844	.951	.332
Within Groups	86.996	98	.888		
Total	87.840	99			

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for gender Self-Realization scores indicated no significant difference in diploma option scores. Table 24 shows the results.

Table 24

ANOVA for Gender Self-Realization

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	2.497	1	2.497	1.747	.189
Within Groups	140.093	98	1.430		
Total	142.590	99			

Summary

The data presented above indicated no significant differences among the three targeted racial groups, among the three diploma options and between genders in Total *ASDS* and the three sub-domains (Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization) scores. The following chapter will discuss the results of the study.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The following chapter provides a summary of the study along with summative and evaluative statements regarding the data. Since there were no significant differences among the targeted groups, possible reasons will be discussed. A discussion of limitations will continue in the overall evaluation of the study. Next, implications for the classroom will be discussed. Finally, recommendations for future research regarding self-determination instruction are presented.

This study was designed to determine and compare the self-determination skill levels of African-American, European-American and Hispanic-American high school students with mild disabilities. The study also determined and compared the self-determination skill levels based on diploma option selection. All the students completed *The Arc Self-Determination Scale (ASDS,)* and a demographic scale. The scale was administered to the students within large groups. The data examiners were trained and used procedures for conducting the self-determination survey as outlined in research on the self-determination scale survey process (Wehmeyer, 1995). The participants' results for the *Arc Self-Determination Scale (ASDS)* and its' three sub-domains of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment and Self-Realization were analyzed and compared. The sub-domain of Self-Regulation was not utilized in this study.

Summary of Results

The results of this study were informative with information on the self-determination skill level resulting from the administration of the survey to high school students with mild disabilities. Also determination and comparison of the self-determination skill levels among students without disabilities were conducted. A further comparison of male and female self-determination skills was also conducted which resulted in no significant differences. The information obtained from the results can be applicable to best practices for implementing self-determination education to high school students with mild disabilities. Each research question was evaluated in order to determine if any summative statements can be made after data evaluation. The four research questions that were investigated were:

1. For African-American, European-American and Hispanic-American students with mild disabilities in a high school setting, what are their Arc Self-Determination Scale (ASDS) Total scores, and the three ASDS sub-domain scores of Autonomy, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization?
2. Are there significant differences in self-determination scores of students with mild disabilities based on race? (African-American, European-American and Hispanic-American)
3. Are there significant differences in self-determination scores of students with mild disabilities based on diploma option selection (Special Education Diploma, Technical/Career Preparatory Diploma and College Preparatory Diploma)
4. Are there significant differences in self-determination scores based on gender?

The results of the study indicated no significant differences among the groups. Therefore it is important to investigate possible causes for the non-significant results. The following are possible reasons there were no significant statistical differences among the targeted groups in this research.

First, one might want to look closer at the standardization of the *Arc Self-Determination Scale* used in this study. It could reflect population bias, even though it claims participants from five states with diverse populations. For example, the *Arc Self-Determination Scale* is a self-report measure, (Wehmeyer, 1995b; Wehmeyer & Kelchner, 1995) designed to be used with adolescents with cognitive disabilities, including mild mental retardation and learning disabilities. Through this instrument, students can evaluate their own beliefs about themselves and their self-determination, work collaboratively with educators and others to identify individual areas of strength and limitations related to self-determination goals and objectives, and self-assess progress in self-determination over time. The 72 item scale was field-tested with 500 students from the states of Texas, Virginia, Alabama, Connecticut and Colorado, resulting in norms, reliability and validity. The Scale, published by the Council for Exceptional Children, was developed to augment LCCE's assessment battery (Brolin, 1995). Once items were identified for inclusion or generated by the authors, a pilot version of the Scale was developed along with guidelines for implementation. This version of the Scale was distributed to teachers working with students with cognitive disabilities in three states, Texas, Alabama and Virginia. There were a total of 261 secondary-age students with cognitive disabilities involved in the pilot-test. Data collected from these sites were subjected to factor analysis.

All students were identified by their school district as currently receiving special education services and had completed protocols from *the Arc's Self-Determination Scale.* However, because of difficulties obtaining adequate consent to release information from schools in Texas and Alabama, information regarding student age, racial status or specific disability category was not available for all students. Students from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds were recruited as participants. Once again, data on racial characteristics were not available for all students, Age-related differences were more difficult to predict on *The Arc's Self-Determination Scale* primarily because essential elements of self-determination show differential developmental patterns. The trend for all scores, total and domain, was that students without disabilities scored highest, followed by students with learning disabilities and mental retardation, respectively. In all cases the scores from students with mental retardation were significantly different from students without disabilities, as would be predicted. However, scores from students with learning disabilities did not statistically differ from students without disabilities in a number of areas. The sample size for students without disabilities was too small (n = 58) to warrant conclusions based on these results. It is probably true that for students with learning disabilities multiple factors, including a learning disability, account for problems with self-determination. These factors include the total number of failure experiences, type of classroom setting, how much autonomy they are allowed at home, and other factors (Wehmeyer, 1995). It appears that more minority students should have been included; as well more students identified with emotional/behaviorally disorders, specific learning disabilities and mild intellectual disabilities. Perhaps the results would have been significant had a more inclusive population been utilized.

Further, the responses of students on the *Arc Self-Determination Scale* (Wehmeyer, 1995) may have been based on a belief system and not actual behavior, thus resulting in data skewing. The norms are based on responses to *the Arc's Self-Determination Scale* by 500 students (223 males, 210 females, 67 genders not known) from schools in urban, suburban and rural districts in five States (Texas, Virginia, Alabama, Connecticut, Colorado). All students were identified by their school district as currently receiving special education services and had completed protocols from *the Arc's Self-Determination Scale.* However, because of difficulties obtaining adequate consent to release information from schools in Texas and Alabama, information regarding student age, racial status or specific disability category was not available for all students. The sample consisted of students with and without disabilities, including mental retardation, learning disabilities, and emotional disorders. Age of the participants ranged from 14 to 22. Students from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds were recruited as participants. The data on racial characteristics were not available for all students.

Also, age-related differences are more difficult to predict on *The Arc's Self-Determination Scale* (Wehmeyer, 1995), primarily because essential elements of self-determination show differential developmental patterns. These will be discussed after the statistical analyses. These analyses were conducted for the group as a whole only for students between the ages of 15 and 18. Too few students were 19 or over, and since they were all students with mental retardation, age related differences were confounded with disability status. There were significant differences between groups based on age for total scores. Scores progressed generally from lower to higher, based on chronological age. Post-

hoc analysis using Scheffe's indicated differences at the .05 level between age 15 and ages 16 and 17.

Another factor the researcher did not consider was the relationship between the socioeconomic status (SES) of peers and individual academic achievement. A study by Caldas and Bankston (1997) investigated a variety of socio-demographic factors while controlling a student's own SES. Student SES was measured by using participation in the federal free/reduced lunch program as an indicator of poverty status, and parental educational and occupational background as a measure of family social status. These measures were aggregated to the school level to define the SES of the peer population. The results indicated that peer family social status does have a significant effect on individual academic achievement, only slightly less than an individual's own family status.

A further factor was the effects of disability labels on students with disabilities. Disability labels are assigned to students based on results of assessments conducted by professionals (IDEA, 2004). For Example, Margarita Bianco-Cornish (2003), investigated the effect of the disability labels; learning disabilities (LD) and emotional handicaps (EH), on general education and special education teachers' willingness to refer students to gifted programs. Referral differences between general education and special education teachers were also examined. Two hundred forty-seven teachers (195 general education teachers and 52 special education teachers) from one south Florida school district participated in this study. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions (no label, LD, EH) and asked to read a vignette describing a gifted student. All vignettes were identical except for one statement added to the LD or EH group stating the student had a disability. After reading the vignette, teachers completed a survey instrument with six questions regarding possible

referral options. One of the six questions asked if they would refer the student to their school's gifted program. Teachers indicated their responses by circling one of four choices: *strongly agree, agree, disagree* or *strongly disagree*. Responses to the gifted referral question on the survey instrument served as the dependent variable. A 2 x 3 factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to evaluate the main effects of labeled conditions (three levels), teacher certification type (two levels), and the interaction between labeled condition and teacher type. Results indicated that teachers were significantly influenced by the LD and EH label when making referrals to gifted programs. Both special education and general education teachers were much less willing to refer students with disability labels to gifted programs than identically described students with no disability label. Additionally, when compared to general education teachers, special education teachers were less likely to refer a gifted student, with or without disabilities, to a gifted program.

Rolison and Medway (1985) investigated the effects of pre-performance information on classroom teachers' expectations and attributions for students labeled as learning disabled. The study's primary objective was to examine the effects of (a) student special education label (no label, learning disabled or educable mentally retarded), (b) past performance pattern (ascending or descending), and (c) previous participation in special education (no participation, resource room, self-contained classroom) on teachers' expectations regarding future academic performance. It was expected that the more intensive the prior special education placement, the greater the stigma and lower the future expectations. Also expectations would be greater for ascending than for descending performance. Participants were 180 teachers enrolled in graduate level courses. The participants were primarily white females. The results indicated that teachers have higher expectations for the student with

ascending performance pattern and when the student was labeled learning disabled (or had no label) than when the student was labeled mildly retarded. Prior special education involvement did not influence expectancies.

Labels tend to have a negative impact on the relationship between teachers and students with disabilities. Cook (2001) examined teachers' attitudes toward their included students with disabilities. The method used was to analyze data collected from part of a larger investigation regarding teachers' attitudes toward their included students with disabilities. Participants were seventy inclusive classroom teachers who nominated three students to prompts corresponding with the attitudes of attachment, concern, indifference, and rejection. Results were interpreted to indicate that teachers tend to form negative different attitudes and expectations of their included students with disabilities. It was suggested that included students with disabilities are at risk for receiving inappropriate educational interactions. There is the possibility that if students don't experience or feel that teachers have confidence in their abilities as students, then students might develop poor concept of themselves, resulting in lesser achievement.

Pre-test contamination may possibly have been a factor in the non-significant results of this study. The research on pre-test contamination indicates that pre-testing or prior exposure to a measure may result in participants obtaining scores different than if not previously exposed (Rohs, 1999). It is difficult to ascertain what effects, if any, pre-test contamination had on the present study. For example, Behavioral Expectation Scales (BES) research has concentrated upon psychometric properties, while evidence for potential operational advantages has been largely anecdotal (Beatty, Schneier, & Beatty, 1977). This empirical study explored the operational value of BES as a technique for identifying

divergent rater-ratee perceptions of rate behavior frequency and for facilitating subsequent rate behavior change. Results indicated that ratees perceived desired behaviors as occurring more often than did raters. Behavior change was demonstrated both development and after implementation of the BES. Such operational advantages of BES are argued as a crucial factor in the choice of an organization's performance appraisal format. Training evaluation is one of the most under-researched and neglected areas of industrial/organizational psychology. This study examined and discussed the need for, and feasibility of, utilizing extended-control-group pretest designs in evaluation research; and reports a field application of such a design in an organizational training context. The effectiveness of a basic electricity training program for telephone installer-repairmen was measured, and the potential contaminating effects of pre-testing were monitored. The results indicated that the training was potentially effective, but that pre-test contaminations were present. To identify the pre-test effects, it was necessary to consider complex interactions involving numerical aptitude level, pre-testing and training. Pre-test exposure depressed the post-test performance of trained subjects of medium and low numerical aptitude, while facilitating that of medium level untrained subjects. Pre-test exposure had no effect on subjects scoring high in numerical aptitude in either the trained or untrained condition.

Hill and Betz (2005) examined a common practice in some areas of program evaluation, the retrospective pretest, and presented recommendations regarding its use. The authors reviewed literature to emphasize first, that bias is likely in both prospective and retrospective ratings, and second, that under some circumstances, retrospective pretests may introduce greater bias than traditional pretests. The authors examined data from 100 participants who attended a family program at 15 sites. Effect sizes calculated from

prospective ratings were compared with published effect sizes from research trials of the same program. Results supported the hypothesis that items on which parents were asked to endorse socially desirable parenting behaviors resulted in greater discrepancies between prospective and retrospective ratings. The authors concluded that replacing traditional with retrospective pretests does not eliminate bias. They recommended traditional pretests for examination of program effects and retrospective pretests for examination of subjective experiences of program-related change.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Self-Report Measures

There are advantages and disadvantages of using self-report report measures in research. Kaminer, Feinstein and Seifer (1995) focused on the importance of accurate and reliable assessment for proper psychiatric diagnosis, for the identification of diagnostic subtypes in epidemic, genetic, and biologic studies, and for the measurement of severity of illness and treatment response. Serious problems arise in generating reliable and valid research assessments for affective disorders in children and adolescents. The problems include: (1) Selection of the content and format, including choice of symptoms or behaviors assessed, calibration of the range of response, and the time frame being reported, and the setting in which the information is being obtained; (2) Selection of the informant(s) best suited to provide this information (i.e., child, parent, teacher, nurse, peer); (3) Determination of the technique of administration so as to obtain the highest quality of information (i.e., when, where, by whom, and both the length of time and degree of effort required by the subject). It is also important that choice and complexity of the language used to probe for the information.

An article by Taylor, Rosen, and Leiblum (1994) cited three advantages of using self-report measures. They are (1) highly cost-efficient; (2) usable with a variety of populations and experimental settings; and (3) well suited to evaluate a range of behaviors, experiences and emotions of interest. The disadvantages of self-report measures are that (1) no self-report measure encompasses the entire range of affective symptoms described in DSM-III-R; (2) issues of compliance, the avoidance of denial or depressed effect, and anxiety about revealing secrets or making mistakes compromise these assessment modalities to varying degrees for different subjects; (3) Limitations in comprehension of items and reading ability related to chronological and developmental age are difficult to make allowance for or interpret precisely; and (4) the use of forced choice categories may simply answers or distort the information obtained along particular choice sets.

Further, a study conducted by Huizinga and Elliot (1999), brought into question the reliability and validity of self-report measures. In that study it was determined that the validity of African American males self-report is lower than that for other groups, with underreporting of behavior the most serious problem. The study also concluded that overall, self-reported delinquency data are generally reliable and valid, empirical results suggest that neither reliability nor validity is overwhelmingly high and that should not be ignored when using such data.

A study conducted by Marin, Gamba and Marin (1992) examined and compared the responses of European and Hispanic students. Results were fairly consistent in showing that Hispanics prefer extreme responses to a greater extent than non-Hispanic Whites. In general, Hispanics prefer to agree with a given item more than non-Hispanic Whites. Two significant variables seem to affect the rate at which these response styles are chosen. First, the level of

acculturation among Hispanics affects the level of extreme and acquiescent responses so that as Hispanics acculturate they tend to choose these types of response less frequently. The less educated respondents (less than 12 years of formal education) tend to make more extreme choices than the more highly educated (those with at least a secondary education). This finding could have possibly affected the scores of the Hispanic students as the researcher did not factor in acculturation.

The result that African American students with disabilities scores were not significantly lower than the other students with disabilities appears to contradict the degree of relevance placed on high self-determination skills given the disproportionately high number of African Americans placed in special education (Hosp & Reschly, 2002). One would expect that African American students with disabilities would score lower than, if not both groups, then at least European American students with disabilities, based on the high number of African Americans in special education. Hosp and Reschly (2002) suggested that there may be other factors which may effect the placement of African American students in special education. There may be underlying causes more complex than simple allegations of racial discrimination. That finding coincides with earlier research findings conducted by Dixon-Floyd and Johnson (1997). That study concluded that SES and basic skills performance have a relationship with placing students in special education.

Limitations of the Study

First, the results of the study provide a need for further investigation into the self-determination skill level of African American, European American and Hispanic American high school students with mild disabilities. However, there were some limitations to the study and caution should be used when making comparisons and generalizing statements

about the results. Since all the students who participated in this study were from the same school district, generalizing the results to students with mild disabilities in other school districts should only be done with caution. Further the study only involved high school students with mild disabilities and the results may not be relevant for middle school or elementary-aged students with mild disabilities.

A second limitation of the study is the fact that not all of the 10th grade students with mild disabilities in the school district participated in the research. Non-participants may have different responses than participants, so caution should be used when generalizing the results to that specific population.

Third, the self-report nature of the study provides the possibility that that student participants may or may not truthfully respond to the questionnaire. Therefore the possibility exists that their reported behaviors may not completely correlate with how the participants actually respond in actual self-determination. The students may answer "positive" in regards to self-determination skills because it may lead to them feeling more "normal", or being perceived as more "normal".

The fourth limitation is that ethnicity in the current study was only among three groups, African American, European American and Hispanic American students with mild disabilities. This limitation was due to there being an insufficient number of participants with mild disabilities in other racial or ethnic groups to be included in the study. Therefore, any generalization based on the results from the racial/ethnic comparison in regard to self-determination skills must be limited to these three groups.

The fifth limitation was the number of females in the study. Perhaps a study which included an equal number of females and males might provide different results. Therefore

any generalization regarding male and female self-determination skill level based on the results of this study should be done with caution.

Implications for Practice

The results of this study suggested a need for further research on the importance of self-determination skills training on high school students with disabilities. The findings of a national survey (Wehmeyer, Agran & Hughes, 2000), of teachers' opinions regarding the value of self-determination and issues relating to teaching skills indicated that a majority of respondents believed that instruction in self-determination was important.

The participants in this sample of high school students with mild disabilities scored fairly well on the *ASDS*. Caution must be employed if inferring from this finding that this population has little need for further training in self-determination skills. In fact, the data suggests that there may be pockets of high school students with mild disabilities who might benefit from further training in self-determination skills. The *ASDS* could be used by administrators and teachers of high school students with mild disabilities, as a screening tool to help identify students who might experience unexplained academic problems that might be remedied by self-determination skills training. The importance of teaching self-determination has become an important component in the education of students with disabilities due to legal initiatives (Carter, Lane, Pierson & Glaeser, 2006). The ability to use self-determination revolves around education in problem solving and goal setting, which positively impacts students with disabilities' academic performance. If the level of self-determination, as measured by the *ASDS*, does not change over time, then perhaps that is an indication that school administrators and policy-makers should provide more instruction in self-determination at the secondary level. This study suggests that some high school students with

mild disabilities could perhaps benefit from teachers, counselors, and other professionals who were trained to teach self-determination skills and were able to teach these skills to the students who were identified by obtaining low scores the *ASDS*.

Implications for Future Research

This study expanded on the limited research in the area of self-determination skills. There are several implications for future research with the technical adequacy of self-determination skill levels for students with mild disabilities. More studies are clearly needed examining the validity and technical adequacy of the self-determination skill levels of high school students with disabilities. Students with mild disabilities are a heterogeneous population with a plethora of unique characteristics and family situations that may affect the validity of the measures. Having additional studies will strengthen the position that self-determination education can be utilized to accurately portray the self-determination skill levels of high school students with mild disabilities.

In future research concerning high school students with mild disabilities and self-determination skills, gender and grade point averages are two variables that should perhaps be studied (Sarver, 2000). Other possible variables for future research might include: birth order, single compared to two parent homes, and identified disability. These possible variables might result in different results for students with mild disabilities than the current study.

In future research, one might conduct a follow-up study with a sample of high school students with mild disabilities who scored high on the ASDS, and with a larger sample of high school students with mild disabilities who scored low on the ASDS to investigate if the instrument validly discriminates between these two groups. Follow-up studies could be

performed to determine if students with mild disabilities who scored either high or low on the ASDS were: 1) on track for graduation, 2) had significantly different grade point averages. Longitudinal studies could be conducted to determine if students with disabilities levels of self-determination tend to change with academic success, i.e., promotion to next grade level and then graduation.

In future research of self-determination, other secondary schools should be considered for study inclusion so that their high school students with mild disabilities may have the opportunity to participate. This would increase the researcher's ability to make generalizations that would apply to a larger population of high school students with mild disabilities. It might also allow the researchers to investigate more deeply into the minority ethnic variable if satisfactory numbers of Asian American and Native American students with mild disabilities were included as part of the larger sample.

One final recommendation is that students identified with more than one mild disability (co-morbidity) be considered for inclusion in future studies.

Conclusion

This study was designed to determine and compare the self-determination skills of African American, European American, and Hispanic American high school students with mild disabilities. The findings from this study are relatively new as the amount of research of this topic has been limited. Hoffman and Field (1995) concluded from an investigation that self-determination is an emerging issue in the disability field, especially in the transition from school to work and in the community living movement. The scores of the self-determination skill levels of high school students with mild disabilities may be useful as a source of information in regards to diploma option selection and as a means of understanding lack of

academic progress. However the results of the scores in this study leave a myriad of questions. (1)Why were the scores of the African American students with disabilities, higher than the other two groups of students with disabilities, yet more African American students with disabilities were seeking the Special Education Diploma? (2) If Self-determination plays a significant role in improving student outcomes in regards to academic performance (Martin et al, 2003), why do African American students with disabilities achieve lower than European American students with disabilities? (3) How can the data from the self-determination skill level measures be useful in determining pre-referral strategies and other curriculum instructional interventions for students with mild disabilities? (4) Why not teach self-determination skills to all students with and without disabilities, based on the fact that there were no significant differences between the scores of the two groups in this study?

It appears that more questions have been raised than answered by this research. Future research should indeed focus on these issues with the ultimate goal of developing strategies that will utilize self-determination education in a manner that will benefit all students.

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Appendix A

Arc Self-Determination Scale
Demographic Information Sheet

1. Name:_____
2. Ethnicity: African-American_____, European-American _____,

   Hispanic-American _____, Other _____
3. Gender: M____ F_____
4. Diploma Option: SPED___ Technical___ College Prep_____
5. Grade _____
6. Primary Disability: _____
7. Regular Education: _____

Appendix B

Components of *The Arc's Self-Determination Scale*

Domain 1: Autonomy	Points Possible
Sub-Domain: Independence	
Personal Care and Family Oriented Functions	18
Interactions with the Environment	12
Sub-Domain: Choice or Acting on Basis of Preferences, Beliefs, Values, and Abilities	
Choice: Recreation and Leisure	18
Choice: Community Involvement	15
Choice: Post School Direction	18
Choice: Personal Expression	15
Total Possible Points for Autonomy Domain	
Domain 2: Self-Regulation	
Sub-Domain: Interpersonal Cognitive Problem Solving	12
Sub-Domain: Goal-Setting and Task Performance	9
Total Possible Points for Self-Regulation Domain	21
Domain 3: Psychological Empowerment	16
Domain 4: Self-Realization	15
Global (Total) Self-Determination Score	148

Appendix C

PARENT CONSENT FORM

The University of Georgia
College of Education (Parent)
537 Aderhold Hall
Athens, GA 30602
706-542-4603; FAX 706-542-5348

Parental Permission Form

I agree to allow my child, _____, to participate in a research study titled, "Are Self-Determination Skills Similar for African-American, European-American, and Hispanic-American High School Students with Mild Disabilities in Their Diploma Option Selection?", which is being conducted by Earle Graham and Dr. Cecil Fore, from the Special Education Department at the University of Georgia (678-407-5185).

The following points have been explained to me:

The purpose of this study is to determine and compare the self-determination levels of African-American, European-American, and Hispanic-American high school students with mild disabilities in their diploma option selection.

Participation: Participation is voluntary. I can refuse to allow my child to participate and can withdraw my child from participation without any penalty or loss of benefits to which he or she is otherwise entitled. Even if I give permission for my child to participate, he or she can refuse to participate and quit at any time. I can request to have the results of the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as my child's, removed from the research records or destroyed.

Benefits: There is no guaranteed benefit for participation in this study.

Foreseeable Risks: The researchers do not foresee any risks to my child for participating in this study. It is possible that my child may feel uncomfortable answering some of the research questions. Participants can skip any questions that they do not wish to answer. In addition, participants can stop answering, or discontinuing participation at any time. If my child experiences any distress as a result of your participation in this research, you may contact the investigator or his advisor for other counseling referral, assistance, and resources.

Confidentiality: Any information that is obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with my child will remain confidential unless required by law. Any data containing individually identifying information will be securely kept in a locked filing cabinet or password protected computer in the researcher's office. After analysis is complete, the researcher will remove any individually identifying information from the data and will remove any of the links between my child's name and the results.

The researcher will answer any questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at: 678-478-5647. I may also contact the professor supervising the research, Dr. Cecil Fore, Special Education Department at:
(678) 407-5185.

- 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.

_____ _____ _____

Name of Parent or Guardian Signature Date

_____

Researcher's Signature

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your child's rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

Appendix D

The University of Georgia
College of Education (Student)
537 Aderhold Hall
Athens, GA 30602
706-542-4603; FAX 706-542-5348

Minor Assent Form

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in my research study titled, "Are Self-Determination Skills Similar for African-American, European-American and Hispanic-American High School Students with Mild Disabilities in Their Diploma Option Selection?" The project is intended to determine and compare the self-determination skills level of African-American, European-American and Hispanic-American high school students with mild disabilities in their diploma option selection.

In this research project, you will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire and the Adolescent Version of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale. You will be asked to allow the researchers to observe and record the results of the questionnaire and instrument. The questionnaire and survey will take approximately 40-45 minutes of your time.

Your participation in this project will not affect your grades in school. I will not use your name on any papers that I write about this project. I hope to obtain information about the effects of self-determination measurements that will help other students in the future. Finally, while you may improve your self-determination skills as a result of the self-determination measures, there is no guaranteed benefit to participation in this research study.

If you decide to stop participating in this project, you are free to do so at any time.

If you have any questions or concerns, you can always ask me or my advisor, Dr Cecil Fore at the following number: (678) 407-5185.

Sincerely,

Earle Graham

I understand the project described above. My questions have been answered and I agree to participate in this project. I have received a copy of this form.

_____

Signature of the Participant/Date

Appendix E

The Arc Self-Determination Scale (Revised)

DIRECTIONS: For each statement, please indicate your response by circling either1, 2, 3, or 4 after the statement. *THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS*.

Possible Answers:

1 = I DO NOT EVEN IF I HAVE THE CHANCE
2 = I DO SOMETIMES WHEN I HAVE THE CHANCE
3 = I DO MOST OF THE TIME I HAVE THE CHANCE
4 = I DO EVERY TIME I HAVE THE CHANCE

1. I make my own meals or snacks. I 2 3 4

2. I care for my own clothes. I 2 3 4

3. I do chores in my home. I 2 3 4

4. I keep my own personal items together. I 2 3 4

5. I do simple first-aid or medical care for myself. I 2 3 4

6. I keep good personal care and grooming. I 2 3 4

7. I make friends with others. I 2 3 4

8. I use the post office. I 2 3 4

9. I keep my appointments and meetings. I 2 3 4

10. I deal with sales people at stores and restaurants. I 2 3 4

11. I do free time activities based on my interests. I 2 3 4

12. I plan weekend activities that I like to do. I 2 3 4

13. I am involved in school-related activities. I 2 3 4

14. My friends and I choose activities that we want to do. I 2 3 4

15. I write letters, notes, or talk on the phone to friends and family. I 2 3 4

16. I listen to music that I like. I 2 3 4

17. I volunteer in things I am interested in. I 2 3 4

18. I go to restaurants that I like. I 2 3 4

Possible Answers:

1 = I DO NOT EVEN IF I HAVE THE CHANCE
2 = I DO SOMETIMES WHEN I HAVE THE CHANCE
3 = I DO MOST OF THE TIME I HAVE THE CHANCE
4 = I DO EVERY TIME I HAVE THE CHANCE

19. I go to movies, concerts, and dances. I 2 3 4

20. I go shopping or spend time at shopping centers or malls. I 2 3 4

21. I take part in group activities. I 2 3 4

22. I do school and free time activities based on my career interests. I 2 3 4

23. I work on school work that will improve my career chances. I 2 3 4

24. I make long-range career plans. I 2 3 4

25. I work or have worked to earn money. I 2 3 4

26. I am in or have been in career job classes or training. I 2 3 4

27. I have looked into job interests by visiting work sites or talking to people in that job.

I 2 3 4

28. I choose my clothes and the personal items I use every day. I 2 3 4

29. I choose my own hairstyle. I 2 3 4

30. I choose gifts to give to family and friends. I 2 3 4

31. I decorate my own room. I 2 3 4

32. I choose how to spend my personal money. I 2 3 4

DIRECTIONS: For the next section, please respond by circling either 1 or 2 of the statement with which you most agree.

Possible Answers:

First Answer = 1
Second Answer = 2

33. I usually do what others want – 1
    I tell others if they are doing something I don't want to do – 2

34. I tell others when I have new or different ideas or opinions – 1
    I usually agree with other people's opinions or ideas – 2

35. I usually agree with people when they tell me I can't do something – 1
    I tell people when I think I can do something that they tell me I can't – 2

36. I tell people when they have hurt my feelings – 1
    I am afraid to tell people when they have hurt my feelings – 2

37. I can make my own decisions – 1
    Other people make decisions for me – 2

38. Trying hard at school doesn't do me much good – 1
    Trying hard at school will help me get a good job – 2

39. I can get what I want by working hard – 1
    I need good luck to get what I want – 2

40. It is no use to keep trying because that won't change things – 1
    I keep trying even after I get something wrong – 2

42. I have the ability to do the job I want – 1
    I cannot do what it takes to do the job I want – 2

43. I don't know how to make friends – 1
    I know how to make friends – 2

44. I am able to work with others – 1
    I cannot work well with others – 2

45. I do not make good choices – 1
    I can make good choices – 2

46. If I have the ability, I will be able to get the job I want – 1
    I probably will not get the job I want even if I have the ability – 2

47. I will have a hard time making new friends – 1
    I will be able to make new friends in new situations – 2

48. I will be able to work with others if I need to – 1
I will not be able to work with others if I need to – 2

49. My choices will not be honored – 1
I will be able to make choices that are important to me – 2

DIRECTIONS: For this last section, tell which of these statements describes how you feel about yourself. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS.
Possible Answers:

Agree = 1
Disagree= 2
Circle "1" if you agree with the statement or circle "2" if you disagree with the statement.

50. I do NOT feel ashamed of any of my emotions. 1 2

51. I feel free to be angry at people I care for. 1 2

52. I can show my feelings even when people might see me. 1 2

53. I can like people even if I don't agree with them. 1 2

54. I am afraid of doing things wrong. 1 2

55. It is better to be yourself than to be popular. 1 2

56. I am loved because I give love. 1 2

57. I know what I do best. 1 2

58. I don't accept my own limitations. 1 2

59. I feel I cannot do many things. 1 2

60. I like myself. 1 2

61. I am not an important person. 1 2

62. I know how to make up for my limitations. 1 2

63. Other people like me. 1 2

64. I am confident in my own abilities. 1 2

The End. Thank You!!!

EARLE LEE GRAHAM
1755 Meadowchase Court
Snellville, GA 30078
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(770)979-5806(H)
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EDUCATION

Currently enrolled at the University of Georgia completing requirements for doctorate (PhD) in Special Education and will matriculate August 2007. Dissertation Title: *Are Self-Determination Skills Similar for African-American, European-American, and Hispanic-American High School Students with Mild Disabilities in Their Diploma Option Selection?*

ED. S., Special Education Admin.	Clark-Atlanta University, 1998
M. A., Special Education	Delaware State University, 1988
B. S., Health & Physical Education	University of Delaware, 1984

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Special Education

Gwinnett County Public Schools, Lilburn, GA,	August, 1998-Present
Atlanta Public Schools, Atlanta, GA,	August, 1990 - June, 1998
N.W. Pyscho-Educational Center, Dallas, GA,	August, 1988- June, 1989
Christina School District, Newark, DE,	August, 1986 - June, 1987
Brandywine School District, Claymont, DE,	October, 1984 - June, 1985

College/University

University of Georgia, Athens, GA	August, 2005-December, 2005
University of West Georgia, Carrollton, GA	August, 2005-December, 2005

COACHING EXPERIENCE

Berkmar High School, Head Boys' JV Basketball	August, 2000-May, 2003
Berkmar High School, Head 9th-Grade Football	August, 2000-December, 2002
Duluth High School, Head 9th Grade Football	August, 1998-December, 1999
Duluth High School, Head Girls' JV Basketball	August, 1998- April, 1999
Therrel High School, Asst Varsity Boy's Basketball	October, 1997-May, 1998
Brown High School, Head Varsity Baseball	August, 1990-May, 1992
Brown High School, Asst Varsity Football	August, 1990-May, 1992
Middletown High School, Head Varsity Basketball	August, 1987- May, 1988
Glasgow High School, Asst Varsity Basketball	August, 1986-June, 1987
Glasgow High School, Asst Varsity Track	August, 1986-June, 1987
University of Delaware, Grad Asst Men's Basketball	October, 1985-June, 1987
Burnett Jr High School, Head Boy's Basketball	October, 1984-June, 1985
Burnett Jr High School, Head Boy's Baseball	October, 1984-June, 1985
Tome School, Head Varsity Boy's Basketball	October, 1983-June, 1984

PRESENTATIONS

2005 Hawaii International Conference on Education
The Effects of Inclusion on the Academic Achievement of Black Students with Disabilities

2005 Hawaii International Conference on Education
The Effectiveness of Functional Behavioral Assessment-Based Interventions

2004 Georgia Council for Exceptional Children
Functional Behavioral Assessment: A Teacher's Guide

2004 Berkmar High School, Gwinnett County Public Schools
Surviving and Thriving in the Resource Classroom: A Paraprofessional's Guide

PUBLISHED PROCEEDINGS

Graham, E., Fore III, C., Lawson, C. Rasheed, S.A., & Voltz, D. (2007). Mild Disabilities at the Secondary Level: Is There a Need for Separation? *American Academy of Special Education Professionals,* February, 2007.

Graham, E., Jones, A., Fore III, C., Jones, Y. & Boon, R. (2006). The Involvement of Black Parents in the Education of Their Students with Mild Disabilities: Is It Enough? Published Proceedings: Hawaii International Conference on Education, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Graham, E., Jones, A., Fore III, C., & Jones, Y. (2005). The Effectiveness of Inclusion on the Academic Achievement of Black Students with Disabilities. Published Proceedings: Hawaii International Conference on Education, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Graham, E., Jones, A., Fore III, C., & Jones, Y. (2005). The Effectiveness of Functional Behavioral Assessment-Based Interventions. Published Proceedings: Hawaii International Conference on Education, Honolulu, Hawaii.

ACCOMPLISMENTS/AWARDS

2001 State Assistant Coach of the Year (Basketball) State Champions

2001 Region 5A Assistant Coach of the Year (Basketball) Region Champions

1990 Academic All-American Scholar (Clark-Atlanta University)

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

United States Army: June, 1965-May, 1968. Served in two combat theatres: ten months in the Dominican Republic; eight months in the Republic of Vietnam. Squad leader in Vietnam; Attained rank of Staff Sergeant (E-6).

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Assembler/Supervisor
General Motors Assembly Division September, 1968-January, 1982