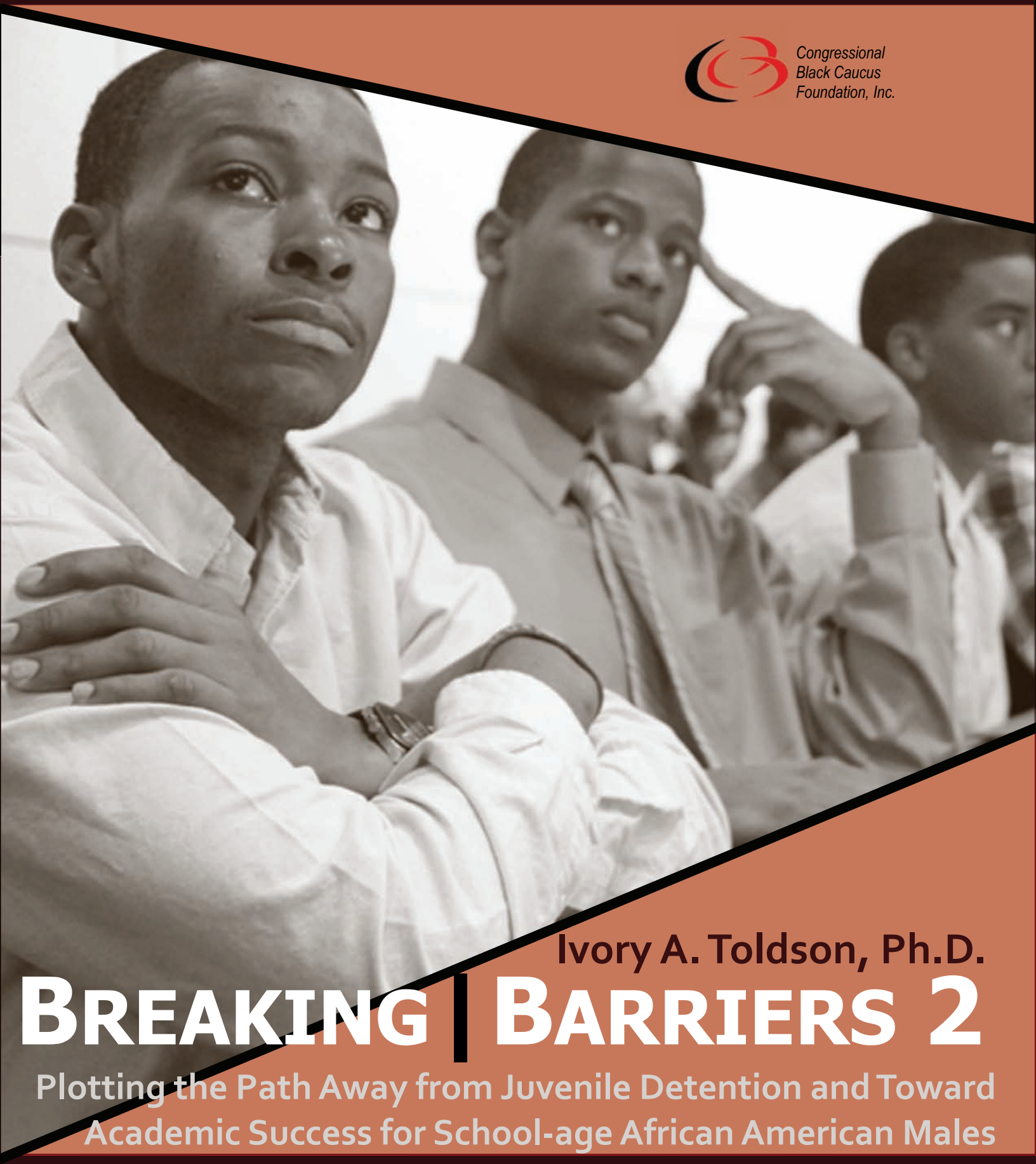

Congressional
Black Caucus
Foundation, Inc.

Ivory A. Toldson, Ph.D.

Breaking | Barriers 2

Plotting the Path Away from Juvenile Detention and Toward Academic Success for School-age African American Males

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OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

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Ivory A. Toldson, Ph.D.

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation 2011

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This report was made possible by funds from the Open Society Institute Campaign for Black Male Achievement and is available for download at www.cbcfinc.org.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD

In 2008, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF) released *Breaking Barriers: Plotting the Path to Academic Success for School-age African-American Males*, which is widely regarded as one of the most important scholarly contributions for promoting academic achievement among black males. With support from the Open Society Institute's Campaign for Black Male Achievement, over the last two years we have educated relevant groups on the findings of *Breaking Barriers*. Specifically, we have hosted five policy forums in four different U.S. regions, including the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West, and presented the findings of *Breaking Barriers* at 12 conferences, programs, and symposia, including the National Urban League Convention, the Council of the Great City Schools, and the 103rd conference of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

Through our dissemination efforts, we have interacted with thousands of school board members, school administrators, parents, students, and key policymakers at the national and local levels in an effort to reform education in high-need areas. Two important events were a panel on academic achievement among black males at the CBCF Annual Legislative Conference (ALC) and the dissemination of *Breaking Barriers* on Capitol Hill.

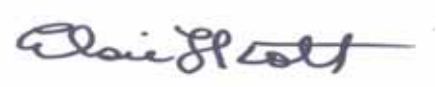
The 2008 *ALC Emerging Leaders Series* featured a panel entitled *75 Years After the Miseducation of the Negro: New Imperatives for the Education of Black Males*. The panelists discussed the need to reform the educational system by redirecting attention from test scores and meeting annual yearly progress. Specifically, they urged teachers and school officials to receive extensive training on cultural competence and teachers to be equipped with the knowledge and resources to actively engage in civic affairs and activism. The panel further discussed the need to shift more control of the educational system to the community by closely linking the school with community organizations and the home.

The dissemination of *Breaking Barriers* in the United States Senate Russell Building put forth a similar effort that united various stakeholders on educational reform to promote black male educational achievement. At the forum entitled *Breaking Barriers: The Obama Administration, the 111th Congress & the Future of School-Age Black Males,* various education bills and acts were discussed to bridge the gap between school officials, parent and community advocates, experts, and policymakers. School teachers, principals, and administrators were able to offer information on their struggles and concerns to aid policymakers in drafting bills that were more aligned with educational reform for black males. Policymakers were supportive in efforts to assist school officials in understanding how to become more efficient and effective when advocating for their students.

Overall, we learned that education is most effective for black males when it promotes positive school-related growth experiences, with particular emphasis on teacher–student relationships, didactic learning, and emotional support. Cooperative parenting arrangements, and positive parent–child communication, including parents expressing praise and helping with homework, also promote academic success among Black male students. In addition, through civic engagement, volunteerism and sports, academic functioning and peer relations can be improved. Finally, educators must advocate for policies that reduce racial disparities in income, and increase equity and inclusion in education.

Above any other lesson, we learned that our work is far from complete. Recent trends in the juvenile justice system and school disciplinary practices threaten the foundation of the school experience and are contributing to schools taking on the appearance of correctional facilities. We applaud the work of the *American Civil Liberties Union* and the *NAACP Legal Defense Fund* for alerting the nation to a systemic problem, aptly called the *school-to-prison pipeline*. Reports on the school-to-prison pipeline demonstrate that zero tolerance and the use of law enforcement to address minor disciplinary problems at school ultimately lead to a rise in the number of juvenile inmates, as well as racial disparities in juvenile detention and academic attainment. The next step is to research specific strategies to create an environment that is consistent with lower levels of delinquency and higher levels of academic success for black males.

Breaking Barriers 2: Plotting the Path Away from Juvenile Detention and Toward Academic Success for School-age African-American Males analyzes the responses of a spectrum of black males: high achievers and low achievers; those with arrest records and those without; those who have participated in delinquent activities and those who have not; those who go to safe schools and those who do not; and those who live in safe communities and those who do not. In total, 4,470 school-age black males from across the nation have responded to the surveys analyzed in this report, giving us a complete picture of the life and circumstances of black males who choose to do the right thing, avoid criminal justice involvement, and enjoy higher levels of academic success. We hope that school administrators, teachers, families, legislators, community leaders, and policymakers will use the research findings in our second Breaking Barriers report to create an academic and social environment that is consistent with the most positive youth experiences for black males, ultimately to plot their paths away from the juvenile justice system and toward higher levels of academic success.



Elsie L. Scott, Ph.D., President & CEO

The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.

Pictured above: Adolescent male being lifted by men who participated in the CBCF District Level Forum in Atlanta, GA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past decade, a number of policy organizations have called for reversing a trend commonly known as "the school-to-prison pipeline." The school-to-prison pipeline argument highlights the following:

- Zero-tolerance disciplinary policies at school often precede youth involvement with the juvenile justice system;
- Schools that rely on law enforcement to handle minor offenses are tracking students into the juvenile justice system;
- Not having adequate educational accommodations for students with special needs and unique life circumstances leads to greater involvement of youth in the juvenile justice system;
- Current juvenile justice system and educational policies fail to meet the basic educational and remedial needs of socially disadvantaged children;
- Many schools have problems with real and perceived threats of violence, which compromise educational priorities and contribute to schools taking on the appearance of a correctional facility;
- More aggressive drug enforcement over the last 30 years is directly linked to a spike in the number of juvenile inmates and pervasively disproportionate minority contact with the criminal justice system;
- Many misconceptions exist about the nature, circumstances and disposition of students in unsafe schools, or who may have been involved with the juvenile justice system, which lead to policies that focus too much attention on law enforcement and too little attention on social resources; and
- All of the problems related to the school-to-prison pipeline disproportionately affect black males.

> "Being a young black male is a blessing that people have tried to make a curse."
>
> - Demeterious Doctor - 11th Grade

The specific aims of the studies featured in this report are to (1) develop strategies to reduce exclusionary disciplinary practices that disproportionately impede the academic progress of black males; (2) establish culturally-relevant priorities for school-based, social-skills training programs targeting school-age black males by exploring delinquency-related factors that are related to educational outcomes; (3) establish priorities and best practices to control gang-related activity in schools, specifically highlighting strategies to cultivate an environment to help black males overcome violence-related stress and enjoy higher levels of academic success; (4) explore the academic potential of black males in juvenile detention centers to establish priorities for detention-based education and programs designed to reintegrate former youth detainees into mainstream schools; and (5) examine the youth experiences of school-age black males who sell drugs, to reveal information necessary to construct family, community, and school-based programs to reduce involvement in the juvenile justice system and promote higher participation in school.

The research studies presented in this report use ecological approaches to develop hypotheses to describe the behaviors and conditions associated with reducing delinquent behaviors and juvenile justice system involvement, and improving academic functioning among black males. In addition, the study seeks to understand academic potential by using a "participant inquiry" and strength-based approach to research. The research realizes the social and historical context and failures of educational and juvenile justice policies and practices, and appreciates the resilience of the participants. Like the first *Breaking Barriers* report, the statistical findings presented in this report employ strengths-based approaches and avoid having a narrow focus on risks factors; eschew negative assumptions about African-American youth and their families; and acknowledge the presence of institutional racism and cultural bias, and its contributions to the achievement gap.

In adherence to the standards for *scientifically-based research*, which are mandatory for application to federal educational policy and academic instruction, this research applies systematic and objective procedures; uses empirical and experimental methods; involves robust data analyses that have the statistical power to test hypotheses and justify conclusions; uses valid data and corroborates findings across multiple measurements; and has been subject to peer review by independent experts. Research methodology and data sources are described in detail to allow for greater transparency in the research design and to enhance opportunities for other researchers to replicate and expound on statistical findings.

Following are the key findings and related policy implications of the five studies featured in this report.

REDUCING SUSPENSIONS AND DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS

The study included 4,164 black, white, and Hispanic males (black male N = 703) who completed Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth (Johnston, Bachman, O'Malley, & Schulenberg, 2008).

- Fifty-nine percent of black male students reported that they had been suspended or expelled from school, compared to 42 percent of Hispanic males, and 26 percent of white males.
- Females were generally less likely to be suspended from school than males. However, at 43 percent, black females were more likely to be suspended from school than white males, and about as likely to be suspended as Hispanic males.
- At 41 percent, students attending school in the South were more than twice as likely to be suspended as students in any other region, including the Northeast, Midwest, and West.
- At school, black males receiving less disciplinary referrals had higher grades, more positive attitudes about school, more school engagement, lower levels of delinquency at school, and less truancy.
- Outside of school, black males receiving less disciplinary referrals exhibited less hopelessness, more positive self-worth, less thrill-seeking behaviors, less aggression and delinquency, and more parental involvement.
- When compared to white students, black and Hispanic students reported more positive attitudes about school, but also indicated less school engagement, as measured by their responses to specific school related behaviors, such as being on time for school.
- For each racial group, disengagement was the strongest predictor of disciplinary referrals. However, for black males, disengagement was also a strong predictor of truancy. No such relationship manifested for white males, indicating that black males and, to a lesser extent, Hispanic males, are more likely to abandon school in response to feeling disengaged.
- The study found evidence that disciplinary referrals are more associated with negative attitudes and dispositions about school than delinquency at school.

Policy Implications: *Educational policy should recognize the contribution of school engagement to school disciplinary outcomes by implementing strategies for improving student experiences and connections with school. Policymakers should also recognize the impact of disengagement on truancy and the subsequent impact of truancy on achievement outcomes such as school grades. Since black males who are more likely to be suspended exhibit higher levels of hopelessness and lower positive self-worth, counseling and mental health services at the school should be strengthened to mitigate disciplinary referrals. Educational policy is needed that addresses and corrects unfair applications of zero tolerance disciplinary policies, racial-biases in instruction, and racial inequities in enforcing school disciplinary measures. Finally, policies are needed to expand school- and community-based delinquency prevention programs that promote high academic achievement, positive attitudes toward school, pro-social skills, character building, and school engagement. In light of previous research findings related to the association between students with lower reading skills and school disciplinary referrals, it is also important to emphasize and promote reading achievement in these programs.*

PREVENTING DELINQUENCY

The study included 6,490 black, Latino, and white males (black male N =1,351) who completed the Health Behavior in School-age Children Survey (United States Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, & Maternal and Child Health Bureau, 2008).

- Across all races, good academic performance was associated with fewer experiences with bullying, fighting, weapons use, and with an overall feeling that the school is safe.
- Black males were less likely than white and Latino males to report being bullied or carrying a weapon to school; however they were more likely to report participating in fights and feeling unsafe at school.
- Black males were the only racial group in which high achievers experience bullying at the same rate as low achievers. Middle-achieving black males were the least likely to be bullied.
- Feeling unsafe at school was more strongly associated with diminished academic performance than being bullied, fighting, or using weapons.
- Black male students were less likely to report drinking beer and other alcoholic beverages, or using drugs other than marijuana. Black males were as likely as white and Latino males to smoke cigarettes and use marijuana.
- Among all psychoactive substances analyzed, marijuana had the strongest relationship with underachievement.
- Black male students were more likely than white students to feel unsafe in their neighborhood and have difficulty trusting and relying upon neighbors.
- High achieving black males were more likely than lower achieving black males to report feeling safe in the area in which they live and being able to trust people in their neighborhood.

Policy Implications: *School-based social skills strategies should consider the nature and role of peer relationships and safety on academic success. Educational policy that emphasizes the role of peer education and mediation, as well as character development, would support the findings that students learn best when they perceive their classmates to be supportive, accepting, and agreeable. School policies should view safety as an internal state that is sensitive to a nurturing environment. The National Education Association's Safe School strategies are consistent with the findings of this study. School-based drug prevention programs should encourage peer participation, focusing on the dangers of drug use and its psycho-physiological effects. Federal Legislators should increase investments in Promise Neighborhoods, an approach to providing children and youths with academic and developmental support, and ensuring that they are fully engaged, both in the classroom and through activities designed to foster resilience and deepen their appreciation for their environment. In addition, legislators should consider ways to encourage and support schools and school districts, in partnership with students in developing policies and practices designed to ensure student safety. The U.S. Department of Education can play a key role in helping states develop systems, strategies and policies to ensure that school leaders and teachers understand the importance of, and have the resources and support to, create positive learning environments for students. Specifically, school and community leaders can focus on the assistant deputy secretary for safe and drug-free schools' work around state indicators to ensure that the major findings on delinquency prevention at school are fully accounted for in the lowest performing schools.*

ELIMINATING GANG ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

The study participants included 12,532 students (black male N = 836) who completed the National Crime Victimization Survey: School Crime Supplement (United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, & Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007).

- Five factors were found to be strongly associated with schools that had less problems with gang activity: (1) students' perceptions that the school is fair and school rules are clear, understood by all, and equitably enforced; (2) students' feelings that there are peers and adults who are available to talk to them about problems; (3) students' feelings that the teachers are caring, respectful, and avoid putting students down; (4) students having classrooms that are free from distractions from other students misbehaving and teachers disciplining students; and (5) students' academic performance.
- Black (47.2 percent) and Latino (43.2 percent) students were more than twice as likely to report that gangs were present at their school as white (18.7 percent) students.
- When comparing geographic regions, students residing in the West (33.7 percent) and South (66.3 percent) were significantly more likely to report gangs at their schools than students residing in the Northeast (16.7 percent) and the Midwest (20.5 percent).
- Among students who reported choosing a school, 31 percent reported gangs present at their schools, compared to 28.3 percent of students who had been assigned a school.
- Findings revealed that 35.2 percent of students who walked to and from school reported gangs at the school. This percentage was significantly higher than for students who took public transportation, rode an automobile, or rode a school bus.
- Less than one percent of students admitted bringing a gun to school (no difference between races). Less than two percent said they saw a student with a gun at school (4.4 percent black and 1.2 percent white). Seven percent said they could get a gun without adult supervision if they wanted to (no differences between races).
- Twenty-six percent of black students, 14.3 percent of Latino students, and 5.4 percent of white students reported passing through metal detectors when entering school.
- Black students with the most gang activity at school experienced significantly more distractions from peers misbehaving and teachers responding to the misbehavior.
- Black students were generally less likely to perceive support in their school environment and more likely to experience unfairness from teachers.
- School restrooms are more likely to be avoided by students in schools that report a higher rate of gang activity.
- Metal detectors, security guards, and a requirement that students wear badges were associated with greater odds that gangs were present at school.
- Spirit groups, performing arts, and academic clubs decreased the odds that gangs were present at school.

Policy Implications: *Elevating academic standards in schools can be viewed as a strategy for reducing school violence, due to the significant difference between the average GPA of students in schools with more violent activity compared to those in schools with no gang activity. Additional resources should be offered to teachers who work in tough learning environments in order to reduce burnout, increase motivation, and improve teacher-student interaction. Teacher education programs and alternative certification programs like Teach for American also play a role in ensuring that teachers and leaders understand and are able to respond to the needs of diverse classrooms, including implementing programs to recruit more black male teachers. School administrators who find such measures as metal detectors and security officers necessary should carefully examine whether these strategies are adding to a culture of violence that increases overall anxiety among teachers and students. From a legislative standpoint, provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) should be amended to provide specific guidelines for implementing metal detectors, which include a requirement of in-service trainings for teachers and administrators on cultural sensitivity before purchasing metal detectors. School administrators should take specific measures to secure restrooms, secure routes to school, and determine whether any truancy or lack of participation in school activity is connected to threats of violence. Policies should emphasize the role of*

extracurricular activities in reducing school violence and improving academic success. Students in schools with less gang activity are more likely to participate in extracurricular activity. The Department of Education has recently allocated funds to award grants to develop community-wide approaches to create safe and drug-free schools. Eligible programs must be designed to prevent violence and illegal drug use and promote safety and discipline, while coordinating with community-based organizations. Through coordinated efforts to align the provisions of ESEA to accommodate schools vulnerable to gang activity, The Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement can spur the development of healthy schools designs through public and private partnerships.

Returning to School from Juvenile Detention

Participants were 1,576 adolescents (black male N = 407) who were detained at a juvenile detention center in the southeastern region of the United States and had been attending school immediately prior to detention (Braithwaite & Conerly, 2000).

- Among black male detainees, 89.9 percent expressed a desire to return to school once they were released.
- For black males, 45 percent, and for white males, 36 percent planned to attend college. For both black and white females, 59 percent responded that they planned to attend college.
- When assessing future aspirations of youth detainees, the top five career choices for black males were: (1) athlete; (2) undecided; (3) construction; (4) computer analyst or programmer; and (5) military. In comparison, for black females the top five choices were: (1) medical profession, including doctors and nurses; (2) beauty industry; (3) lawyer; (4) undecided; and (5) teacher.
- High levels of self-esteem, future orientation, and family and community involvement, and low levels of depression, childhood trauma, and delinquent activity were associated with higher levels of academic potential for black male juvenile detainees.
- Family interaction and community activity improved grades for black youth detainees, while no such relationship was found among white youth detainees.
- Compared to black females, black males scored lower on measures of self-efficacy, depression, and trauma, and higher on the measure of delinquency.

Policy Implications: *Policies that increase funding for detention counselors and social workers could help to improve the emotional well-being of youth detainees. Since community involvement and family are significantly linked to black detainees' academic potential, greater emphasis should be placed on family counseling, loss and bereavement, and community empowerment. Practices that emphasize mentoring programs and other means to develop realistic career goals, particularly among black males, are also likely to improve academic potential. College-access programs should be increased for black male detainees, as well as policies that increase opportunities for detainees to obtain Pell Grants and other financial assistance for college. Programs like GEAR UP and TRIO, or rites of passage programs designed to support positive development should be expanded and further developed in schools with high concentrations of African-American male youth. Overall, juvenile justice policies should be examined to reduce the frequency and burden of jail and detention center involvement among black students. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandates for educational standards in juvenile detention centers should be followed to minimize academic distractions. Beyond minimizing distractions, with reauthorizations of ESEA we have an opportunity to ensure that young detainees have meaningful transition plans that will enable them to move back to and successfully graduate from high school. In addition, the over-representation of black males in the juvenile justice system needs to be addressed by targeting biases in arrests and sentencing. The Youth PROMISE Act represents pending legislation that would plan and evaluate evidence-based practices for gang prevention and intervention and reducing juvenile delinquency, specifically for youth in impoverished communities.*

REDUCING DRUG-RELATED ARRESTS

Participants of this study included 5,525 adolescent males between the ages of 12 and 17 (black male N = 1,173) who completed the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, & Office of Applied Studies, 2009).

- Of the adolescent males who participated in this study, 5.6 percent admitted to selling drugs at least once. The racial breakdown of those who had sold drugs was 6.9 percent black, 4.5 percent Latino, and 4.3 percent white.
- Regardless of race, youth were less likely to sell drugs when they (1) had fewer drug users in their social circle and higher disapprovals of peer drug use; (2) had parents who strongly disapprove of drugs, and who interact with them positively and place restrictions on their behavior; (3) demonstrated a positive regard for school and better academic functioning; and (4) were involved with less fighting and delinquent behaviors.
- Although small differences appeared between poverty levels of youths who sold drugs and youths who never sold drugs, a higher percentage of black (34 percent) and Latino (28 percent) adolescent male drug sellers lived in poverty compared to white drug sellers (9 percent).
- Across all races, a higher percentage of adolescent male drug sellers (35.6 percent) came from households with no father compared to adolescent males who did not sell drugs (26 percent). Black males were the least likely to have a father in the home, regardless of drug selling.
- Adolescent male drug sellers, when compared to their non-drug selling counterparts, were more likely to have been incarcerated and have used illicit drugs. For black youth, 43 percent of drug sellers had been to jail or detention center, compared to 11 percent who had never sold drugs.
- Ninety-six percent of white, 84.1 percent of black, and 91.1 percent of Latinos who have sold drugs also reported using drugs. When excluding marijuana, 76.6 percent of white, 31.7 percent of black, and 70.4 percent of Latinos who had sold drugs reported using drugs.
- Parents with stronger disapprovals of alcohol and other drugs, more positive relationships with their children, and more restrictions placed on their children's behaviors were less likely to have sons who sold drugs.
- Regardless of race, youths who had a positive regard for school, higher grades, and less fighting and delinquent behaviors were less likely to sell drugs.

Policy Implications: *Comprehensive peer and parent education programs, school reform, and social skills training should focus on the dangers of selling drugs and the vital role friends play in promoting character and success. A community improvement focus should be included, specifically for black and Latino males who are more likely to sell to adult addicts in their neighborhoods. Workforce programs and youth employment opportunities should be increased. Intervention programs involving families should emphasize the role that parental disapproval of drugs has on adolescents' selection of friends and ultimately the decision not to sell drugs. Educational programs should include character building, social skills training, and delinquency prevention.*

CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings point to a cluster of school, family, social experiences, and life circumstances that are associated with black males who do not engage in delinquent activities, and who avoid arrest and perform exceptionally in school. The insights gathered can help interventionists and community leaders to restructure society, family, and schools to prevent delinquent behavior among youths and accommodate youths being released from prison so that they make a successful reentry to their school and communities. Reducing reliance upon the criminal justice system to address youth problems and improving economic conditions, schools, and social services in communities will ultimately lead to a more equitable and functional society.

BACKGROUND

Breaking Barriers 2 explores ways to divert young black males away from the juvenile justice system and onto the path toward academic success. After releasing the first Breaking Barriers report in 2008, we found that one of the greatest barriers to academic success among black males is their overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system. Numerous studies yield evidence that academic achievement and juvenile justice system prevention are inextricably linked, particularly for black males (Benhorin & McMahon, 2008; Burns-Stowers, 1994; Rozie-Battle, 2002; W. A. Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007). The primary objective of this report is to analyze personal characteristics, life circumstances, and school experiences of black males who successfully elude the juvenile justice system and enjoy higher levels of academic success, to inform better educational and juvenile justice policy and practices.

Over the past decade a number of policy organizations have called for reversing a trend commonly known as "the school-to-prison pipeline." The school-to-prison pipeline argument typically highlights the following: (1) Zero-tolerance disciplinary policies at school often precipitate youth involvement with the juvenile justice system. (2) Schools that rely on law enforcement to handle minor offenses are tracking students into the juvenile justice system. (3) Not having adequate educational accommodations for students with special needs and unique life circumstances lead to greater involvement of youth in the juvenile justice system..(4) All of the problems related to the school-to-prison pipeline disproportionately affect African American[1] males.

"What about to be seen as a person with a name,

Then, POOF! A statistic, a memory and, to many, a shame."

- Asa Fludd- 11th Grade

Other problems related to the intersection of juvenile justice and educational systems are related to the following:

First, longstanding and persistent disproportional rates of suspension among races have led to what many researchers refer to as the "discipline gap" (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008), and have resulted in the disproportional representation of Black males in juvenile detention centers (Nicholson-Crotty, Birchmeier, & Valentine, 2009; Sprague, et al., 2001). Black students are currently about 2.3 times more likely to be suspended than White students (Hinojosa, 2008). Early research on school discipline and race debated the merits of suspensions in general (Nielsen, 1979), and the disproportionate rate of suspensions among Black males (Taylor & Foster, 1986). However, out-of-school suspensions continue to be the most widely used form of school discipline in the United States, contrary to mounting evidence that suspensions are ineffective in correcting behavior, and commonly precede dropping out (Dupper, 1994; Dupper, Theriot, & Craun, 2009).

Second, current juvenile justice system and educational policies fail to meet the basic educational and remedial needs of socially disadvantaged African American children (Painter, 2008). Gehring (2005), for example, found that nationwide most juvenile correctional facilities offer substandard educational accommodations to youth detainees. Consequently, African American adolescent detainees incarcerated for even minor offenses can exit the juvenile justice system with severe educational deficits (H. R. Morrison & Epps, 2002).

Third, many schools that educate young black males have problems with real and perceived threats of violence, which compromise educational priorities and contribute to schools taking on the appearance of correctional facilities. Youth violence, including school violence incident rates have declined nationwide. In 1994, there were 13 violent incidents per 1,000 students. By 2001 the rate dropped to 6 per 1,000 (U.S. Department of Justice

[1] African-American and black are used interchangeable throughout this report.

Bureau of Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), Indicators of School Crime and Safety, National Center for Education Statistics, & Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2003). However, a 2003 national survey performed by Grunbaum and colleagues (2003), found 17 percent of students reported carrying a weapon (e.g., gun, knife, or club) on one or more days preceding the survey. In addition, 33 percent of the students reported being in a physical fight one or more times in the 12 months preceding the survey (Grunbaum, et al., 2003). In the 2007–08 school year, 23 percent of students reported gangs at their school, and there were 43 school-related violent deaths and 1.5 million victims of nonfatal crimes at school (Dinkes, Kemp, & Baum, 2009).

Fourth, more aggressive drug enforcement over the last 30 years is directly linked to a spike in the number of juvenile inmates and pervasively disproportionate minority contact with the criminal justice system (Brownsberger, 2000; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2009; Sickmund, Sladky, & Kang, 2010). In 1980, the juvenile arrest rate[2] for drug related offenses for whites was 386.2 compared to 375.1 for blacks. By 1995, the arrest rate for blacks for drug violations more than quadrupled to 1672.1 --more than triple the corresponding rate for white juveniles of 513.8. By 2008, the drug-related arrest rate for black youths declined to 921.4 and for white youths to 502.6, marking some progress in reducing racial disparities in arrests (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2009). However, considerable evidence suggests that racial disparities persist beyond arrest, through detention, conviction, and incarceration. For example, in 2007 the total number of juveniles referred to the courts for drug offenses who were detained was 16,615 white and 15,166 black. In the same year, juvenile court referrals for drug offenders who were not detained were 91,468 white and 28,122 black (Sickmund, et al., 2010).

Finally, many misconceptions exist about the nature, circumstances, and disposition of black males in violent schools, or who have been involved with the juvenile justice system. However, some studies suggests that poverty, coercion, and addiction contribute more to youth drug selling than criminal proclivities or the lure of money (Friedman, et al., 2003; Little & Steinberg, 2006). Another study used critical race theory to explain the role of institutional racism on the disproportionate levels of violence at predominately black and Latino schools (Watts & Erevelles, 2004).

Overall, current racial disparities in education and juvenile justice system involvement indicate that deficiencies in the educational system are likely contributing to delinquent behaviors and unwarranted juvenile justice system involvement among young black males. Therefore, resources to provide social skills training at primary and secondary schools, specifically targeting behaviors that are associated with delinquency, could prevent criminal activities among youth and reduce subsequent involvement with the juvenile justice system.

Conceptual framework and aims

The research studies presented in this report use ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) to develop hypotheses to describe the behaviors and conditions associated with reducing delinquent behaviors and juvenile justice system involvement, and improving academic functioning among black males. In addition, the study seeks to understand academic potential by using a "participant inquiry" and strength-based approach to research (Toldson, 2008b; Wiggan, 2007). The research realizes the social and historical context and failures of educational and juvenile justice policies and practices, and appreciates the resilience of the participants. Exploring characteristics that vary on the spectrum of ability provides a greater level of depth and insight into factors that are associated with achievement and positive social behaviors among school-age black males.

Like the first *Breaking Barriers* report, the statistical findings presented in this report adhere to an edict among contemporary educational scholars to expand the scope and relevancy of research on African-American

[2] Rates are arrests of persons ages 10-17 per 100,000 persons ages 10-17 in the resident population. Persons of Hispanic ethnicity may be of any race, because they were not reported separately.

students (Jackson & Moore, 2008; Spencer, 2005). Notably, Margaret Beale Spencer (2005) indicated that informed research strategies should (a) expand the theoretical assumptions implicit in the work by employing strengths-based approaches and avoid having a narrow focus on risks factors; (b) eschew negative assumptions about African-American youth and their families; and (c) acknowledge the presence of white privilege and its contribution to the achievement gap.

The specific aims of these studies are to (1) develop strategies to reduce exclusionary disciplinary practices that disproportionately impede the academic progress of black males; (2) establish culturally-relevant priorities for school-based, social-skills training programs targeting school-age black males by exploring delinquency-related factors that have a relationship with educational outcomes; (3) establish priorities and best practices to control gang-related activity in schools, specifically highlighting strategies to cultivate an environment to help black males overcome violence-related stress and enjoy higher levels of academic success; (4) explore the academic potential of black males in juvenile detention centers to establish priorities for detention-based education and programs designed to reintegrate former youth detainees into mainstream schools; and (5) examine the youth experiences of school-age black males who sell drugs, to reveal information necessary to construct family, community, and school-based programs to reduce involvement in the juvenile justice system and promote higher participation in school.

Plotting the Path

The present study explores factors that are statistically related to noninvolvement with the juvenile justice system and improved educational outcomes for black males by analyzing academic success indicators from four national surveys and one local survey of a juvenile detention center in Georgia:

1. Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth (Johnston, et al., 2008)
2. Health Behavior in School-age Children Survey (United States Department of Health and Human Services, et al., 2008)
3. National Crime Victimization Survey: School Crime Supplement (United States Department of Justice, et al., 2007)
4. Project SHARP (Stop HIV and Alcohol-Related Problems) (Braithwaite & Conerly, 2000)
5. National Survey on Drug Use and Health (United States Department of Health and Human Services, et al., 2009)

The report uses linear relationships and path trajectories to understand a range of indicators of students' functioning. Across the five studies represented in the report, the primary variables are (1) the frequency of suspension and disciplinary referrals among male students, (2) academic achievement among male students, (3) the presence of gang activity at schools, (4) predetention grades among juvenile detainees, and (5) the decision to sell drugs among male students.

External factors that are empirically associated with these outcomes include: (1) personal and emotional factors, including emotional well-being and self-esteem, future aspirations, peer relationships and substance use; (2) family factors, including household composition, parents' education and parents' relationships with children; (3) social and environmental factors, including economic standing, population density, the juvenile justice system, and civic, community, school-based and extracurricular activities; and (4) school factors, including perceptions of school, relationships with teachers. and school safety.

The report is designed to accommodate lay readers, as well as researchers. Each section includes background literature, a method section, statistical findings, a summary, and implications for policy and practice. The method section and statistical findings represent the technical aspects of the report and may contain some language that is unfamiliar to the lay reader. However, these sections are important for researchers who want to conduct further analysis or further validate the findings. The summary and implications sections are free of technical jargon and are easily comprehensible to people without formal research training.

Readers should consider several limitations within the context of the findings. First, since data were collected about socially desirable attributes and some delinquent behaviors, some participants may have used impression management during self-report procedures. Although all surveys were confidential, it is likely that some respondents may have embellished grades and other desirable attributes, and denied suspensions, criminal activity, and other negative attributes. In addition, the survey was lengthy and solicited information beyond this study's scope. The length may have created some fatigue and led to "Yea-Saying" or "Nay-Saying", whereby respondents tend to select only the positive or negative answers on the survey.

With a composite of surveys reaching over 4,400 school-age African-American males from across the United States, the report is a comprehensive examination of success factors for young black men. In adherence to the standards for scientifically-based research, which are mandatory for application to federal educational policy and academic instruction, this research (1) applies systematic and objective procedures; (2) uses empirical and experimental methods; (3) involves robust data analyses that has the statistical power to test hypotheses and justify conclusions; (4) uses valid data and corroborates findings across multiple measurements; and (5) has been subject to peer review by independent experts. The findings will assist policymakers, educators, school advocates and families to plot the path away from the juvenile justice system and toward academic success for school-age African-American males.

REDUCING SUSPENSIONS AND DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS

The study explored racial differences in factors associated with suspensions and school disciplinary referrals among black, white, and Latino males in the 8th and 10th grades. The results found that 59 percent of black male students reported being suspended compared to 42 percent of Latino males, and 26 percent of white males. Racial differences in suspension rates were generally starker than the differences in associated factors. Among all races, being disengaged from school exhibited the strongest association with disciplinary referrals. Overall, findings suggest a number of factors that directly and indirectly impact disciplinary referrals at school; however, racial differences in the frequency of referrals could not be fully explained. Implications and recommendations for school administrators and advocates are related to improving academic supports, building school-community links, and promoting cultural awareness and school equity.

Relevant Literature

Elevated public awareness and perceptions of violence have increased schools' reliance on suspensions, zero tolerance and other exclusionary disciplinary policies (Christle, Nelson, & Jolivette, 2004; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). One study found that black students with a history of disciplinary referrals were more likely to receive negative perceptions and less deference from teachers (Gregory & Thompson, 2010). There are also general concerns about the reliability and subjectivity in disciplinary referrals (Vavrus & Cole, 2002; Wright & Dusek, 1998). Through ethnographic research, Vavrus and Cole (2002) found that many suspensions resulted from a buildup of nonviolent events, where one student often carries the brunt of many students' misbehaviors. However, some studies suggest that school culture and administrative leaders can mitigate high suspension rates (Mukuria, 2002). For example, regular monitoring and analysis of narrative disciplinary referrals have been recommended to improve precision and application of disciplinary measures that are consistent with the students' infractions (G. M. Morrison, Peterson, O'Farrell, & Redding, 2004; Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000).

Antecedents to suspensions. Some studies found unique characteristics of the students that were associated with greater chances they would be suspended (McConville & Cornell, 2003; Mendez, 2003). McConville & Cornell (2003), for example, found that students' self-reports of aggressive behavior significantly correlated with suspensions. Another study noted that academic challenges are significant, yet often overlooked, antecedents to disciplinary referrals (Tyler-wood, Cereijo, & Pemberton, 2004). Students with disabilities and behavioral disorders were also more likely to be suspended (Krezmien, Leone, & Achilles, 2006). Similarly, studies indicated that students with lower reading skills are more likely to receive disciplinary referrals (McIntosh, Horner, Chard, Dickey, & Braun, 2008). A longitudinal study found lower academic achievement levels among students prior to suspension, but also found siginficantly lower levels of academic gains throughout the three years post-suspension (Arcia, 2006).

With respect to disproportionate suspension rates among black students, many studies have noted the influence of ecological variables beyond the school (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005). Eitle and Eitle (2004) found that black students were more likely to be suspended in majority black grade schools. Cultural expressions of certain behaviors, such as movement and speech, may be misinterpreted as threatening to

"One day I got into an altercation with one of my teachers. He wanted me to come in class. I told him no. So, he came towards me and he put his finger in my face, and I called him a name I shouldn't have called him. And it was serious to the fact that it got me a superintendent suspension for 10 days. Afterwards, when I came back to school, I was failing all my class. It wasn't no way for me to bring that grade up, so I just said forget it, and just stopped."

- Erick Graham- 19-years-old, Beyond the Bricks Documentary

teachers who lack cultural awareness (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005). Another study revealed that natural adaptations to life in some impoverished areas indirectly influence the students' chances of being suspended from school (Kirk, 2009). Few studies have examined suspensions and disciplinary referrals among Hispanic students. One study noted Hispanic students' rates of suspensions and number of referrals were generally greater than whites, but less than Blacks (Kaushal & Nepomnyaschy, 2009).

Successful interventions. Some studies have revealed successful strategies for reducing suspensions and disciplinary referrals. Defensive Management training for teachers has demonstrated effectiveness with training teachers to better manage noncompliance among students to prevent unnecessary disciplinary referrals. Mukuria (2002) found that principals of predominantly black urban middle schools with low rates of suspension were more effective in promoting parental involvement, creating a structured environment, implementing school wide discipline programs, and cultivating mutual respect among students and teachers. Another study found that improving school engagement through mentoring improved behavior control at an urban school (Holt, Bry, & Johnson, 2008).

Improving teacher efficacy and teacher-student dialogue and aligning their mutual understanding of school rules also demonstrated effectiveness (Pas, Bradshaw, Hershfeldt, & Leaf, 2010; Thompson & Webber, 2010). "Whole-school" and schoolwide interventions that focus on schoolwide improvements in instructional methods, positive reinforcement, such as teacher "praise notes" (J. A. P. Nelson, Young, Young, & Cox, 2010), behavioral modeling, and data-based evaluation, have also demonstrated effectiveness (Bohanon, et al., 2006; Lassen, Steele, & Sailor, 2006; Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, & Feinberg, 2005). Resilience and skill building among students also reduced behavioral problems and subsequent disciplinary referrals among students (Wyman, et al., 2010). Attention to students' mental health may also reduce suspensions and disciplinary referrals (Caldwell, Sewell, Parks, & Toldson, 2009).

Gaps in the Literature. The literature clearly demonstrates that school and nonschool related factors can independently influence the frequency of suspensions and disciplinary referrals at school. What is less clear is the relationship among the various influences. For example, the literature establishes that aggression and delinquency are associated with higher rates of disciplinary referrals. However, it is unclear whether these two behaviors manifest as a direct delinquency in the school or an attitude that disrupts the class. The literature also establishes a link between disciplinary referrals and low performance in class. However, the literature is less clear about the indirect relationships between the endogenous factors associated with disciplinary referrals. The literature also clearly establishes racial differences in suspensions and disciplinary referrals between black and white students. However, the literature rarely examines differences in the paths black and white students take to receive suspensions and disciplinary referrals. There is also a noticeable void in studies that include Hispanic participants.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature, the first hypothesis of this study was that school-age males with better grades, more school engagement, less classroom distractions, less delinquency at school, and less truancy would have less disciplinary referrals. The second hypothesis was that students with no disciplinary referrals would be more likely to have supportive parents, a positive life outlook, and less thrill-seeking, aggressive, and delinquent behaviors. The third hypothesis was that a unique path toward disciplinary referrals would emerge that included significant direct effects from school-related factors and significant indirect effects from nonschool related factors. The fourth hypothesis was that disciplinary referrals would have a direct effect on grades in school. Fifth, this study hypothesized that distinct racial differences in suspensions and disciplinary referrals would be revealed through (a) main and interaction effects with school and nonschool-related variables and (b) structural invariance in the path models toward disciplinary referrals.

Method

Participants

The study participants included students who completed *Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth* (Johnston, et al., 2008). The racial distribution was 1,235 black, 4,640 white, and 920 Hispanic. The dataset was selected because it had a clear indicator of suspensions and disciplinary referrals; had an adequate sample of black, Latino and white participants; was a national survey that included multiple states and geographic areas; and had adequate measures of contributing factors, such as grades, school involvement, self-concept, and parental relationships. The database is indexed for public analysis at the *Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)*.

Procedure

This study used secondary data analysis from University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research that used nationally representative samples of eighth and tenth graders in public and private schools in a multistage research design. In Stage 1, researchers selected particular geographic areas; in Stage 2 they selected one or more schools in each area; and in Stage 3, they selected students within each school. The geographic areas used in this study are the primary sampling units (PSUs) developed by the researchers for nationwide interview studies. Selections of schools were made to ensure that the probability of drawing a school was proportionate to the size of its eighth or tenth grade class. Within each school, about 350 students were included in the data collection.

Trained local research representatives administered questionnaires in each school, following standardized procedures detailed in a project instruction manual. The questionnaires were administered in classrooms during normal class periods. Students were given a descriptive flyer stressing confidentiality, and apprised of the voluntary nature of the study at the start of the questionnaire administration. Each participating student was instructed to read a confidentiality statement that read: "If there is any question you or your parents would find objectionable for any reason, just leave it blank." In order to protect the confidentiality of responses and the identity of respondents, a number of alterations were made in the original dataset to prepare it for public release, including describing the respondents' general environment without identifying school or state, and omitting the respondents' birthdays and other specific identifiers.

Measures

Suspension and Disciplinary Referrals. Two items were used to measure the student's experience with suspensions and disciplinary referrals. The first question asked, "Have you ever been suspended or expelled from school?" with responses options of "yes" and "no." The second question read, "Now thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you get sent to the office, or have to stay after school, because you misbehaved?" The response options were: 1="never," 2="seldom," 3="sometimes," 4="often," and 5="almost always." To normalize the range of responses, "often" and "almost always" were combined in this analysis.

Contributing factors

Select interval items (listed in categories below) from the *Monitoring the Future* questionnaire were used to measure school and nonschool-related factors with a hypothesized relationship with disciplinary referrals. To reduce data, Likert scale items from the survey questionnaire were clustered with principle component analysis (PCA). Factor structure was explored with varimax rotation and Kaiser Normalization. Ten factors were accepted based on their eigenvalues that exceeded 1, and the logical arrangement of items. The ten-factor solution explained 61.9 percent of the total variance. With the exception of "grades" and "truancy," which were measured with single items, all of the factors below were derived through PCA.

Grades. *Monitoring the Future* recorded grades with responses to the question, "Which one of the following best describes your average grade in this school year?" Respondents selected one of the following options: (1) "an

A+, A or A-minus average"; (2) "a B+, B or B-minus average"; (3) "a C+, C or C-minus average"; or (4) "a D or less than a D average".

Drugs/delinquency at school. Participants rated the frequency in which they engaged in drug, alcohol, and weapons use at school. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "During the last four weeks, on how many days (if any) were you (1) under the influence of marijuana or some other illegal drug while you were at school?" (.74); "(2) under the influence of alcohol while you were at school?" (.73); "(3) smoking cigarettes or using chewing tobacco while you were at school?" (.73); and "(4) carrying a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club to school?" (.56). The response choice for each item was: 1="none," 2="one day," 3="two days," 4="3-5 days," 5="6-9 days," and 6="10 or more days." The range for the sum of the items was 4, indicating the respondent did not engage in any of the behaviors during the past four weeks, and 24, indicating that for 10 or more days, the respondent engaged in all behaviors.

Attitudes/feelings toward school. Students rated the frequency in which they had positive feelings about school over the previous year. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "Now thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you (1) enjoy being in school?" (.84); "(2) hate being in school?" (-.80); and "(3) find your school work interesting?" (.70). The response choice for each item was: 1="never," 2="seldom," 3="sometimes," 4="often," and 5="almost always." The range for the sum of the items was 3, indicating the respondent had no positive feelings about school over the last year, and 15, indicating the student almost always felt good about participating in school.

Disengagement from school. Participants rated the frequency in which they exhibited behaviors that indicated that they were disobedient and insubordinate at school. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "Now thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you (1) fail to complete or turn in your assignments? "(.73); "(2) try to do your best work in school?" (-.60); "(3) feel that the school work was too hard to understand?" (.46); and "(4) during an average school week, about how many times do you come to class late (after class has begun) without an approved excuse?" (.59). The range for the sum of the items was 4, indicating the respondent was fully engaged in the school process, and 20, indicating the student "almost always" disengaged from school.

Classroom interruptions. Two items measured participants' experiences with interruptions and disruptions during class. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "During an average school week, about how many times (1) does misbehavior or goofing off by other students in your class interfere with your own learning?" (.83); and "(2) do your teachers interrupt the class to deal with student misbehavior or goofing off?" (.81). The response choice for each item was: 1="never," 2="less than once a week," 3="1-2 times a week," 4="3-5 times a week," 5="6-9 times a week," 6="10-19 times a week," and 7="20 or more." The range for the sum of the items was 2, indicating the respondent never experiences classroom disruptions, and 14, indicating that during the average week, the student experiences disruptions 20 or more times.

Hopelessness. Six interval items were used that allowed students to rate the extent to which their lives were hopeless and meaningless. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "(1) I feel that my life is not very useful" (.78); (2) "The future often seems hopeless" (78.); "(3) Sometimes I think that I am no good at all" (.77); "(4) Life often seems meaningless" (.76); "(5) I feel I do not have much to be proud of" (.73); and :(6) I feel that I can't do anything right" (.73). The response choice for each item was: 1="disagree" 2="mostly disagree" 3="neither" 4="mostly agree" and 5="agree," and the range for the sum of the items was between 6 and 30, with 6 indicating hopeful feelings about life, and 30 indicating feelings of hopelessness and a lack of meaning in life.

Positive self-worth. Students rated the extent to which they agreed with statements that asked whether they were a person of worth. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "(1) I enjoy life as much as anyone" (.77); "(2) On the whole, I'm satisfied with myself" (.77); "(3) I take a positive attitude toward myself" (.76); "(4) I feel I am a person of worth, on an equal plane with others" (.73); "(5) It feels

good to be alive" (.73); and "(6) I am able to do things as well as most people" (.71). The response choice for each item was: 1="disagree" 2="mostly disagree" 3="neither" 4="mostly agree" and 5="agree," and the range for the sum of the items was between 6 and 30, with 6 indicating feelings of negative self-worth, and 30 indicating feelings of positive self-worth.

Thrill Seeking Behaviors. Participants rated the extent to which they agreed with statements that indicated a penchant for risky behaviors. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "(1) I like to do frightening things" (.82); "(2) I like new and exciting experiences, even if I have to break the rules" (.79); "(3) I get a real kick out of doing things that are a little dangerous" (.78); "(4) I like to test myself every now and then by doing something a little risky" (.77); "(5) I prefer friends who are exciting and unpredictable" (.65); and "(6) I would like to explore strange places" (.61). The response choice for each item was: 1="disagree" 2="mostly disagree" 3="neither" 4="mostly agree" and 5="agree," and the range for the sum of the items was between 6 and 30, with 6 indicating low levels of engagement in thrills seeking behaviors, and 30 indicating high levels of engagement in thrill seeking behaviors.

Aggressive Behaviors. Participants rated the frequency in which they exhibited aggressive behaviors. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "During the last 12 months, how often have you (1) gotten into a serious fight in school or at work?" (.80); "(2) taken part in a fight where a group of your friends were against another group?" (.77); "(3) hurt someone badly enough to need bandages or a doctor?" (.74) and "(4) you run away from home (for more than 24 hours)?" (.48). The response choice for each item was: 1="not at all," 2="once," 3="twice," 4="3 or 4 times," and 5="5 or more times." The range for the sum of the items was 4, indicating the respondent never engaged in the specified aggressive behaviors over the last 12 months, and 20, indicating that during the past year, the student participated in each of the behaviors 5 times or more.

Delinquent Behaviors. Participants rated the frequency in which they exhibited aggressive behaviors. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "During the last 12 months, how often have you (1) taken something not belonging to you worth under $50?" (.78); "(2) taken something not belonging to you worth over $50?" (.68); "(3) damaged school property on purpose?" (.64) and "(4) gone into some house or building when you weren't supposed to be there?" (.62). The response choice for each item was: 1="not at all," 2="once," 3="twice," 4="3 or 4 times," and 5="5 or more times." The range for the sum of the items was 4, indicating the respondent never engaged in the specified delinquent behaviors over the last 12 months, and 20, indicating that during the past year, the student participated in each of the behaviors 5 times or more.

Parents' involvement with school. Four interval items were use to gauge specific aspects of participants' relationship with their parents that were posited to have a relationship with academic success. The following items, with corresponding factor loadings, were derived from PCA: "How often do your parents (or stepparents or guardians) (1) check on whether you have done your homework?" (.75); "(2) provide help with your homework when it's needed?" (.68); "(3) limit the amount of time you can spend watching TV?" (.68); and "(4) require you to do work or chores around the home?" (.58). The response choice for each item was: 1="never," 2="rarely," 3="sometimes," and 4="often." The range for the sum of the items was 4, indicating the respondents' parents never assisted with school work or placed any restrictions on his behavior, and 16, indicating the students' parents were "often" involved with their education and learning.

Analysis Plan

This study was completed in four phases. First, descriptive information about the research participants and rates of suspension and disciplinary referrals was calculated and compared using Chi-square analysis. Second, multivariate analysis of the variance (MANOVA) was used as an exploratory technique to test main effects for race and frequency of receiving disciplinary referrals for associated variables. Because of the large sample size, this study did not consider any finding with a p value above .01 as significant. Third, using information gathered from MANOVA, the researcher selected variables for a path model to confirm their relationship with frequency

of disciplinary referrals and subsequent academic performance. AMOS 17 was used to test model fitness and calculate regression estimates of direct and indirect effects. Fourth, invariance between races was estimated for the overall model and the path estimates by imposing a series of model constraints through nested model comparisons.

Statistical Findings

Descriptive and Preliminary Analysis

Participants of this study included 703 black males (6.7 percent), 709 black females (6.7 percent), 2,757 white males (26.1 percent), 2,886 white females (27.3 percent), 704 Hispanic males (6.7 percent), and 736 Hispanic females (7 percent) for a total of 8,495 participants. Females were included in preliminary analyses only, and all participants with missing data were excluded from SEM. Fifty-one percent of the participants were in the 8th grade, and 49 percent were in the 10th grade. The majority (67.8 percent) of the participants attended school in large metropolitan statistical areas (MSA). The regional distribution of participants included: northeast (22.1 percent), north central (22.1 percent), south (35.2 percent), and west (20.5 percent). Twenty-six percent of the total sample reported being suspended at least once, with no significant differences between grade levels and size of MSA. However, significant regional differences were found ($\chi 2(3) = 53.3$, $p < .001$), with 41 percent of students in the south reporting being suspended compared to 20 percent to 18 percent for the other three regions.

Findings revealed significant differences in rates of suspensions between black, white, and Hispanic male students ($\chi 2(5) = 873.5$, $p < .01$). Fifty-nine percent of black male students reported that they had been suspended or expelled from school, compared to 42 percent of Hispanic males, and 26 percent of white males. Females were generally less likely to be suspended from school than males. However, at 43 percent, black females were more likely to be suspended from school than white males, and about as likely to be suspended as Hispanic males. Twenty-six percent of Hispanic females reported being suspended, and only 11 percent of white females reported being suspended.

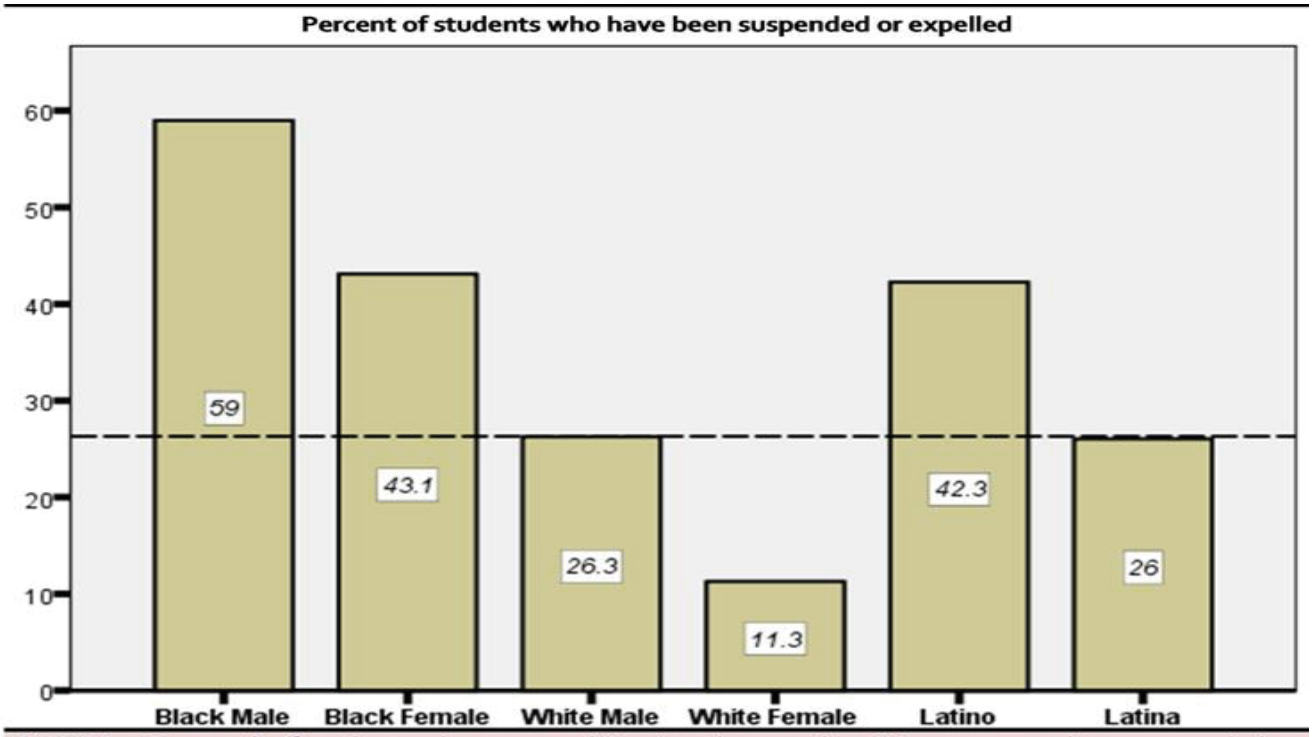


FIGURE 1: Bar graph of students who answered "yes" to the question, "Have you ever been suspended or expelled?" among black, Hispanic, and white 8th and 10th grade males and females. Note: The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the all students who have been suspended or expelled (26 percent).

Since this study used frequency of disciplinary referrals as a continuous indicator of rates of suspension, it was important to first establish a link between the two incidents. Using cross-tabulations, we found that only 15 percent of students who reported never receiving a disciplinary referral in the year prior had ever been suspended or expelled from school. Further, univariate analysis with general linear modeling revealed that being suspended accounted for 12 percent of the variance in disciplinary referrals ($F = 1,098.1$, $df = 1$, $p < .001$). However, racial differences in the frequency of disciplinary referrals were not as stark as the differences in suspension rates. Although a statistically significant difference ($F = 19.4$, $df = 5$, $p < .001$), the race/gender category explained only 1 percent of the variance in disciplinary referrals.

School-related Factors and Disciplinary Referrals

MANOVA was used to test the hypothesis that students who report less disciplinary referrals will have less involvement with delinquency at school, truancy and classroom interruptions, and more positive attitudes about school, higher grades and levels of engagement in school. Table 1.1 displays the means, standard deviations and F-ratios of the factors that have a hypothesized relationship with disciplinary referrals among black, white, and Hispanic male students. The table marks variables that are significant by race and reported frequency of receiving disciplinary referrals.

TABLE 1.1: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F-RATIOS OF SCHOOL-RELATED FACTORS THAT ARE RELATED TO THE FREQUENCY OF DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS AMONG BLACK, WHITE, AND LATINO SCHOOL-AGE MALES

	Race	Frequency of Disciplinary Referrals					F-Ratio	
		Never M (SD)	Seldom M (SD)	Sometimes M (SD)	Often M (SD)	Total M (SD)	Referrals	Race
Drugs/Delinquency at school 4 Least - 24 Most	Black	4.2 (1.5)	4.6 (1.8)	5.0 (2.6)	5.2 (3.3)	4.6 (2.1)	29.7**	3.9
	White	4.2 (1.2)	4.7 (2.2)	4.9 (2.0)	6.3 (3.9)	4.5 (1.9)		
	Latino	4.6 (2.2)	4.7 (1.9)	4.7 (2.0)	5.5 (2.8)	4.7 (2.2)		
	Total	4.3 (1.4)	4.7 (2.1)	4.9 (2.2)	5.8 (3.5)	4.6 (2.0)		
Attitudes/Feelings Toward School 3 Least - 15 Most	Black	9.2 (2.7)	9.3 (2.5)	8.8 (2.5)	7.4 (3.2)	8.9 (2.8)	53.5**	17.6**
	White	9.1 (2.5)	8.1 (2.5)	7.6 (2.5)	6.5 (2.7)	8.6 (2.6)		
	Latino	9.4 (2.7)	8.7 (2.5)	8.3 (2.4)	7.0 (2.6)	8.8 (2.7)		
	Total	9.2 (2.5)	8.4 (2.5)	8.0 (2.5)	6.8 (2.8)	8.7 (2.6)		
Disengagement from School 4 Least - 20 Most	Black	9.2 (2.1)	9.9 (2.1)	10.5 (2.1)	11.0 (3.0)	9.9 (2.3)	88.6**	13.7**
	White	8.8 (1.7)	9.5 (2.0)	10.2 (2.1)	11.0 (2.6)	9.2 (2.0)		
	Latino	9.4 (2.0)	10.3 (2.0)	10.7 (1.9)	11.4 (2.6)	10.1 (2.2)		
	Total	8.9 (1.8)	9.7 (2.1)	10.4 (2.1)	11.1 (2.7)	9.4 (2.1)		
Grades 1 Lowest - 4 Highest	Black	2.9 (0.9)	2.8 (0.8)	2.6 (0.8)	2.4 (0.9)	2.7 (0.9)	69.1**	11.8**
	White	3.3 (0.8)	2.9 (0.9)	2.7 (0.9)	2.2 (0.9)	3.1 (0.9)		
	Latino	2.9 (0.9)	2.7 (0.9)	2.4 (1.0)	2.0 (0.9)	2.7 (1.0)		
	Total	3.2 (0.8)	2.8 (0.9)	2.6 (0.9)	2.2 (0.9)	3.0 (0.9)		
Truancy (Last month) 1 None - 4 Four days or more	Black	1.1 (0.4)	1.1 (0.5)	1.4 (0.8)	1.5 (1.0)	1.2 (0.6)	62.7**	11.0**
	White	1.1 (0.3)	1.3 (0.6)	1.3 (0.7)	1.7 (1.0)	1.2 (0.5)		
	Latino	1.2 (0.5)	1.4 (0.8)	1.5 (1.0)	1.8 (1.0)	1.3 (0.8)		
	Total	1.1 (0.4)	1.3 (0.6)	1.3 (0.8)	1.7 (1.0)	1.2 (0.6)		
Classroom Interruptions 2 Least - 14 Most	Black	7.3 (3.0)	7.7 (2.9)	7.2 (2.7)	8.1 (3.4)	7.5 (3.0)	2.9	5.4
	White	7.0 (3.0)	6.8 (2.7)	7.1 (2.9)	7.6 (2.8)	7.0 (2.9)		
	Latino	6.8 (3.1)	6.8 (2.9)	6.9 (2.6)	7.3 (3.3)	6.8 (3.0)		
	Total	7.0 (3.0)	6.9 (2.8)	7.1 (2.8)	7.6 (3.1)	7.0 (2.9)		

Note. M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation;*p < .01; **p < .001. Data retrieved from Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth (Johnston, Bachman, O'Malley, & Schulenberg, 2008).

Higher grades, more positive attitudes about school, lower levels of delinquency at school, more school engagement, and less truancy had a significant inverse relationship with the frequency in which students received disciplinary referrals. Of the six variables analyzed, "classroom interruptions" was the only variable that did not have a significant relationship with disciplinary referrals. On Table 1.1, mean scores with a negative relationship with disciplinary referrals, such as grades, get smaller when reading from left to right as frequency of disciplinary referrals increases. The opposite is true for the variables, such as delinquency at school, with a positive relationship with disciplinary referrals.

Four of the six variables were significant for race. When compared to white students, black and Hispanic students reported more positive attitudes about school, but also indicated less school engagement, as measured by their response to specific school related behaviors, such as coming to school on time. Black and Hispanic students also reported lower grades than white students. Hispanic students were more likely to report being truant than black and white students.

Figures 1.1a, 1.1b, 1.2a, and 1.2b illustrate the linear relationship between the four school-related factors that evinced a significant relationship with disciplinary referrals for black, white and Hispanic students. Both grades, represented by Figure 1.1a, and attitudes about school, represented by Figure 1.1b, had inverse relationships with disciplinary referrals, and also had significant main effects for race, and significant interactions between race and disciplinary referrals. The means plots suggest that the interaction effects for grades ($F = 3.2$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$) and attitudes about school ($F = 3.1$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$) are both related to the factors having a more robust linear relationship with disciplinary referrals for white students than for black and Hispanic students. Delinquency at school, plotted in Figure 1.2a, and disengagement from school, plotted in Figure 1.2b, both demonstrated positive relationships with disciplinary referrals. Of all factors measured, disengagement from school had the strongest relationship with disciplinary referrals. Delinquency at school had an interaction effect ($F = 3.7$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$), whereby the behavior exhibited a much stronger association with disciplinary referrals for white students than for black and Hispanic students.

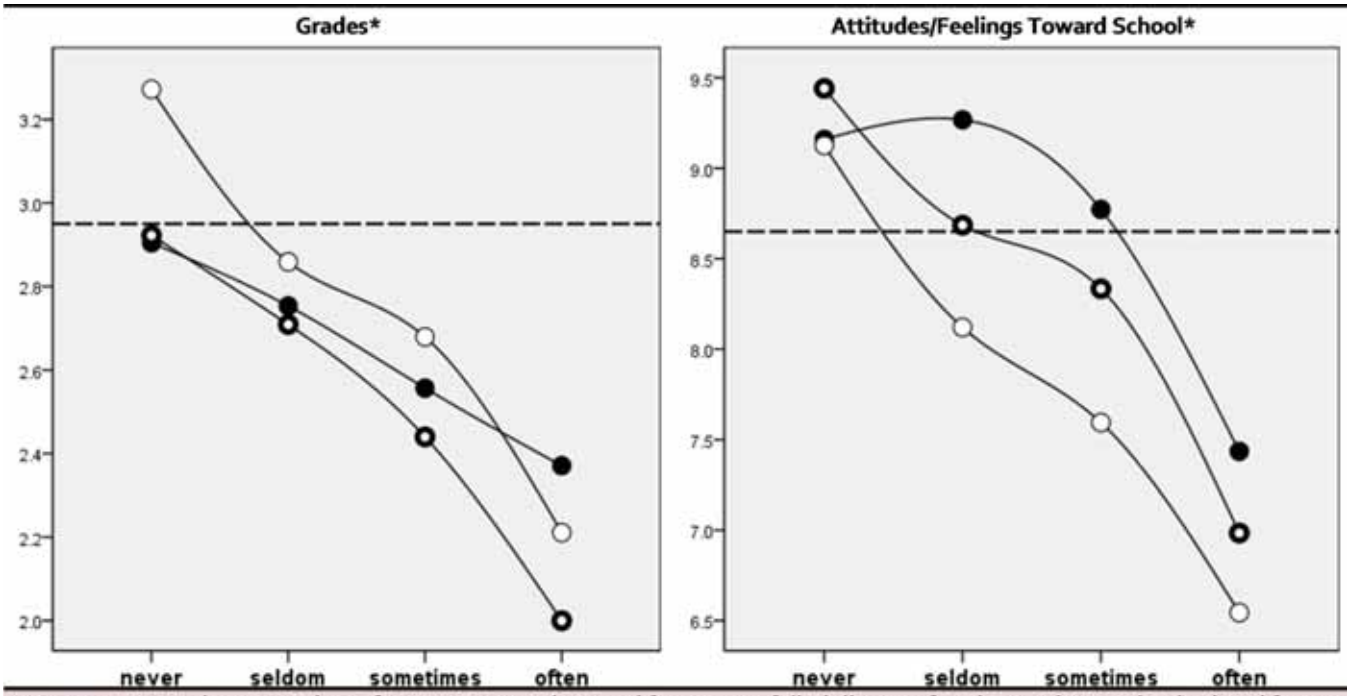


FIGURE 1.1a & 1.1b: Means plots of race (separate plots) and frequency of disciplinary referrals (X Axis) on school-related factors (Y Axes) among Black, Hispanic, and White 8th and 10th graders. Note: ● = Black students; ✪ = Hispanic students; and ○ = White students. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable. *Main and interaction effects for disciplinary referrals and race.

Nonschool-related Factors and Disciplinary Referrals

A second MANOVA was completed to test the hypothesis that nonschool-related factors, including hopelessness, positive self-worth, thrill-seeking behaviors, aggression, delinquency, and parental involvement, have a statistical relationship with disciplinary referrals among black, white, and Hispanic male students. Table 1.2 displays the means, standard deviations, and F-ratios of factors that had a hypothesized relationship with disciplinary referrals among the students participating in this study. When computing F-ratios, all six measures tested demonstrated a significant relationship with the frequency in which students reported disciplinary referrals. Aggressive behavior and delinquent behavior had the largest F-ratios for disciplinary referrals. Significant differences surfaced between races for three of the six measures. Compared to white male students, black and Hispanic males scored lower on measures of thrill seeking and parent involvement, and higher on measures of aggressive behavior.

Structural Equation Modeling

Six school and nonschool-related factors that had very high F-ratios were selected for a path model to test their direct and indirect effects on the frequency in which students received disciplinary referrals. In the model, events or attributes hypothesized to occur earlier were placed further to the left of the model. In this model, aggressive and delinquent behaviors were treated as correlated exogenous variables, and grades were represented as the outcome variable. In other words, the model tested the hypothesis that male middle and high school students have varying levels of aggressive and delinquent behaviors prior to experiencing school. These behaviors will have direct and indirect effects on students' engagement in school and lead them to engage in delinquent behaviors at school, thus increasing the number of disciplinary referrals they receive and number of days truant. Ultimately, higher numbers of disciplinary referrals and days truant, will negatively impact students' grades. Figures 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5 display the path model tested for black, white and Hispanic male students, respectively. The initial maximum likelihood test of the model resulted in a good overall fit, $\chi 2(21) = 126.4$, $p < .01$, $\chi 2/df = 6.2$, comparative fit index (CFI) = .95, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .05, and normed fit index (NFI) = .94.

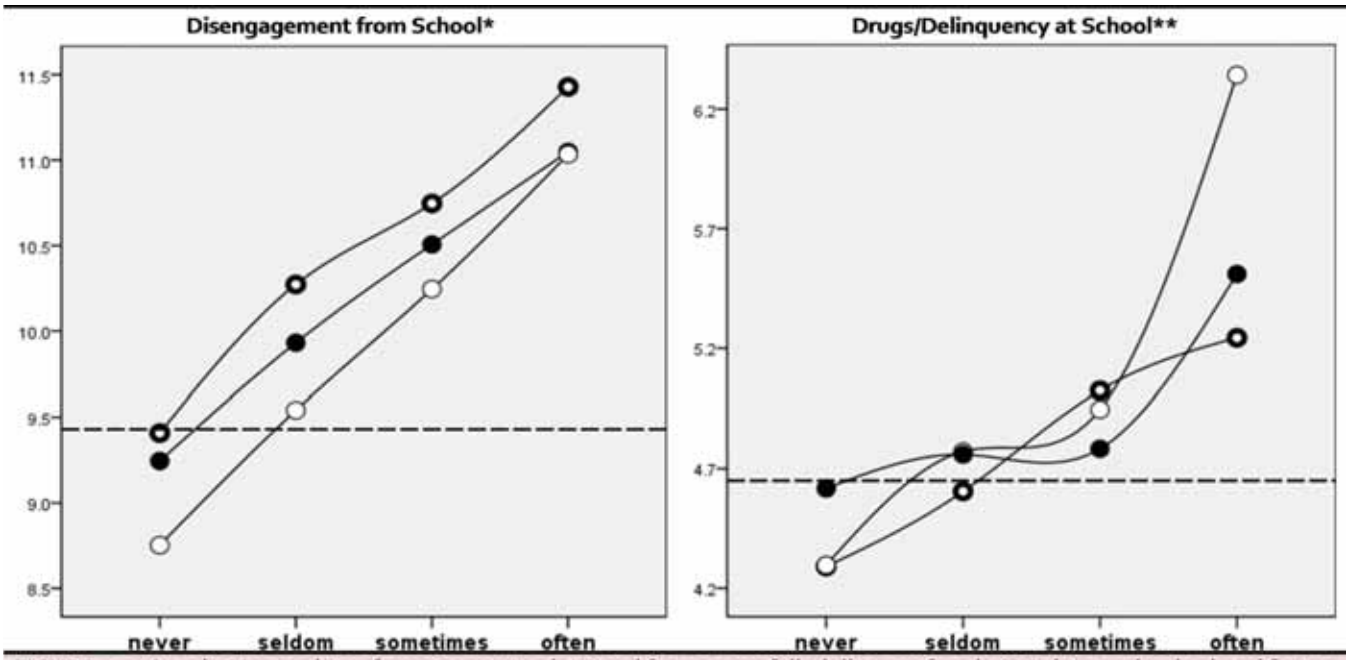


FIGURE 1.2a & 1.2b: Means plots of race (separate plots) and frequency of disciplinary referrals (X Axis) on school-related factors (Y Axes) among Black, Hispanic, and White 8th and 10th graders. Note: ● = Black students; ✪ = Hispanic students; and ○ = White students. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable. Main effects for disciplinary referrals and race; **Main for disciplinary referrals and interaction effects for disciplinary referrals and race.

Invariance between races. Given the large number of variables that had significant main effects for race when analyzing with MANOVA, race differences between the path models and coefficients were further examined through SEM. The invariance of the path models across races was tested in three steps. First, the goodness of fit was calculated separately for black, white, and Hispanic males. These preliminary evaluations confirmed an adequate fit of the data for all groups: for black males, $\chi 2(7) = 26.6$, $p < .01$, $\chi 2/df = 3.8$, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .08, and NFI = .96; for white males, $\chi 2(7) = 59.3$, $p < .01$, $\chi 2/df = 8.5$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .10, and NFI = .93; and for Hispanic males, $\chi 2(7) = 43.5$, $p < .01$, $\chi 2/df = 6.2$, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .10, and NFI = .93. For RMSEA, data for black students fit the data best; however the other fit indices were similar across groups.

Second, all regression weights in the initial models with all races combined were constrained to be equal across race. The constrained model differed significantly from the unrestricted model, $\Delta\chi 2(26) = 62.72$, $p < .01$, indicating that the regression weights were invariant across race. The third was to constrain the structural covariance, while allowing the regression weights the freedom to vary across races. Again, results indicated a significant attrition in model fit, $\Delta\chi 2(2) = 99.28$, $p < .01$, indicating that the covariances between aggressive and delinquent behaviors were different between black, white, and Hispanic males.

TABLE 1.2: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F-RATIOS OF NONSCHOOL FACTORS THAT ARE RELATED TO THE FREQUENCY OF DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS AMONG BLACK, WHITE, AND LATINO SCHOOL-AGE MALES

	Race	Frequency of Disciplinary Referrals					F-Ratio	
		Never M (SD)	Seldom M (SD)	Sometimes M (SD)	Often M (SD)	Total M (SD)	Referrals	Race
Hopelessness	Black	11.9 (6.5)	11.8 (6.0)	12.1 (7.0)	13.2 (7.4)	12.1 (6.5)	6.1**	2.8
6 Least - 30 Most	White	11.1 (5.8)	12.6 (6.3)	13.2 (6.1)	15.1 (6.9)	11.8 (6.1)		
	Latino	12.9 (5.4)	13.5 (6.3)	13.1 (6.5)	14.4 (6.7)	13.3 (6.0)		
	Total	11.3 (5.8)	12.6 (6.3)	12.9 (6.3)	14.5 (7.0)	12.1 (6.2)		
Positive Self-worth	Black	25.7 (5.8)	25.2 (6.2)	25.1 (6.7)	24.3 (7.1)	25.3 (6.2)	7.9**	2.7
6 Least - 30 Most	White	25.9 (5.1)	24.9 (5.4)	24.8 (5.4)	23.0 (5.9)	25.4 (5.3)		
	Latino	24.8 (5.7)	25.1 (5.2)	23.6 (6.1)	22.5 (6.5)	24.4 (5.8)		
	Total	25.8 (5.3)	25.0 (5.5)	24.6 (5.8)	23.2 (6.3)	25.3 (5.5)		
Thrill Seeking	Black	18.6 (6.3)	19.5 (6.5)	19.9 (7.2)	20.9 (7.4)	19.3 (6.7)	17.4**	28.8**
Behaviors	White	20.4 (6.2)	23.2 (5.4)	24.4 (5.7)	23.6 (6.2)	21.6 (6.2)		
6 Least - 30 Most	Latino	20.1 (6.4)	22.7 (5.3)	22.8 (5.9)	22.7 (6.3)	21.6 (6.1)		
	Total	20.2 (6.3)	22.5 (5.7)	23.2 (6.3)	22.7 (6.6)	21.3 (6.3)		
Aggressive Behaviors	Black	5.4 (2.8)	6.2 (3.6)	7.1 (3.6)	8.1 (4.6)	6.2 (3.5)	79.1**	22.4**
4 Least - 20 Most	White	4.6 (1.7)	5.3 (2.3)	5.8 (2.7)	7.2 (3.6)	5.0 (2.2)		
	Latino	5.1 (2.6)	5.7 (2.7)	6.3 (3.1)	9.3 (4.9)	6.0 (3.4)		
	Total	4.7 (2.0)	5.5 (2.7)	6.2 (3.0)	7.9 (4.3)	5.3 (2.7)		
Delinquent Behaviors	Black	5.6 (3.0)	6.1 (3.7)	7.6 (4.6)	8.5 (5.6)	6.4 (4.0)	62.2**	5.2
4 Least - 20 Most	White	5.1 (2.2)	6.1 (3.2)	6.9 (3.4)	7.7 (4.0)	5.6 (2.8)		
	Latino	5.0 (1.7)	6.5 (3.7)	7.1 (4.0)	9.3 (5.5)	6.4 (3.7)		
	Total	5.1 (2.3)	6.1 (3.4)	7.1 (3.8)	8.3 (4.8)	5.8 (3.2)		
Parents' involvement	Black	10.7 (3.0)	11.2 (3.0)	9.7 (3.0)	9.2 (3.4)	10.5 (3.1)	12.1**	10.6**
with school and	White	11.3 (2.9)	10.9 (2.9)	10.4 (3.1)	10.6 (3.0)	11.1 (2.9)		
learning	Latino	10.3 (2.9)	10.7 (3.2)	9.7 (3.5)	9.0 (3.3)	10.2 (3.1)		
4 lowest–16 highest	Total	11.2 (2.9)	10.9 (3.0)	10.1 (3.1)	9.9 (3.2)	10.9 (3.0)		

Note. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; *p < .01; **p < .001. Data retrieved from Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth (Johnston, Bachman, O'Malley, & Schulenberg, 2008).

Direct and indirect effects on disciplinary referrals and grades. Since nested group comparisons confirmed structural invariance between races, in the final analysis the researchers reviewed racial differences in the direct and indirect effects that independent variables have on disciplinary referrals and grades. Table 1.3 displays the five variables in the model that were expressed as exogenous variables in the column, paired with the six variables that were expressed as endogenous variables. Aggressive behaviors had the strongest total effects on disciplinary referrals for all races. Disengagement from school had the strongest direct effect on disciplinary referrals for black and white males. When expressed as an endogenous variable, disciplinary referrals exhibited the strongest direct and total negative effects on grades for all races. The final model for black male students is depicted in Figure 1.3. The model demonstrates similarities and invariance in the path toward more school participation and higher levels of academic success for black, white, and Hispanic male students.

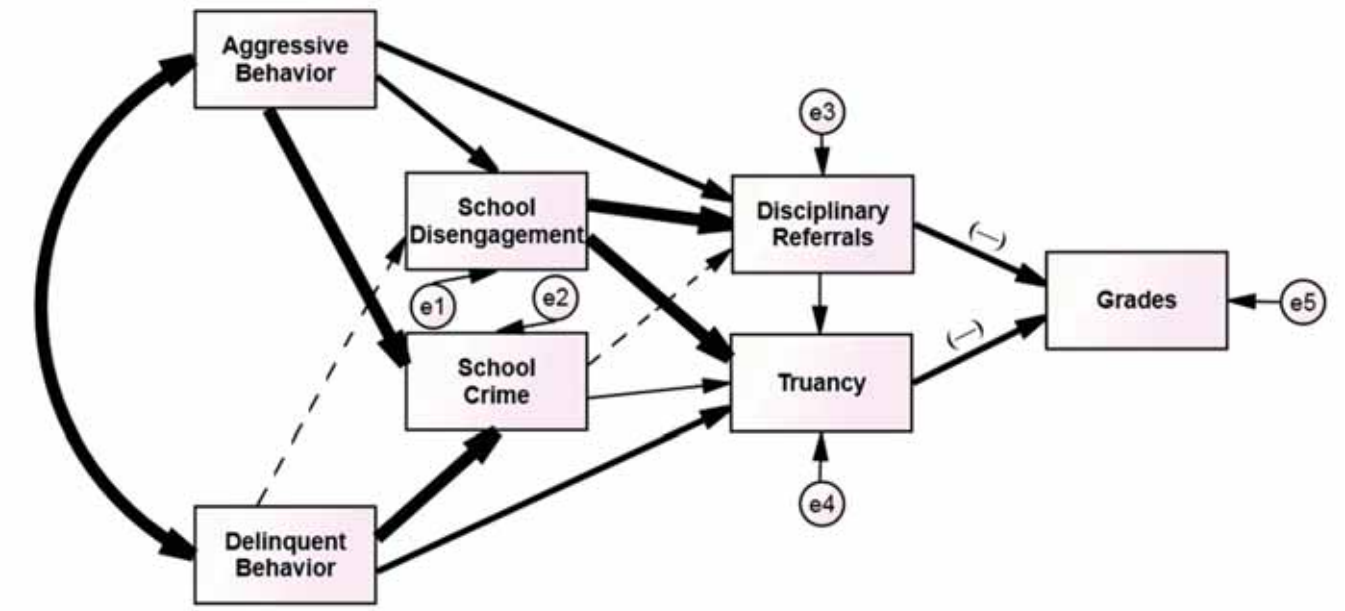


FIGURE 1.3: The relationship between factors associated with disciplinary referrals and subsequent grades among Black male 8th and 10th grade students (N=458). Note: The thickest lines represent standardized path estimates that are greater than .20, the medium lines represent estimates that are between .15 and .19, and the thinnest lines represent estimates that are less than .15. Curved lines with two way arrows represent covariance and straight lines with one way arrow represent paths. The minus sign (-) indicates an inverse relationship. All path coefficients are significant ($p < .01$), except for the parameter represented by the dashed line. Data retrieved from Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth (Johnston, Bachman, O'Malley, & Schulenberg, 2008).

Summary of Findings

Consistent with the literature on racial disparities in suspension and disciplinary referrals (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005; Eitle & Eitle, 2004; Kaushal & Nepomnyaschy, 2009; Kirk, 2009), this study found stark racial differences in the reported number of suspensions between black, Hispanic, and white males. At fifty-nine percent, black males were more than twice as likely to report being suspended as white males. When comparing genders within races, the findings are clear that males are more likely to be suspended than their female counterparts. However, black females are far more likely to report being suspended than white males.

The associated school-related and nonschool factors examined were unsuccessful in fully accounting for the variance in suspensions rates and disciplinary referrals among the racial groups. The current literature suggests that racial disparities in suspension and disciplinary referrals may be explained by the influence of associated school-related and nonschool-related factors such as cultural mismatches and a lack of cultural awareness among teachers (Day-Vines & Day-Hairston, 2005) and racial composition of schools (Eitle & Eitle, 2004).

The existing literature suggests that several school-related factors and student characteristics are antecedents to school suspension and disciplinary referrals, such as having a history of disciplinary referrals (Gregory & Thompson, 2010), self-reported aggressive behaviors (McConville & Cornell, 2003), academic challenges (Tyler-wood, et al., 2004), and lower reading (McIntosh, et al., 2008) and academic achievement levels (Arcia, 2006). In this study, black and Hispanic males generally reported more positive attitudes toward school and were less likely to report satisfaction from "thrill-seeking" behaviors; both factors had significant relationships with less disciplinary referrals. However, black and Hispanic males reported more aggressive behavior, lower grades, and more disengagement from school.

TABLE 1.3: STANDARDIZED ESTIMATES OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH RECEIVING DISCIPLINARY REFERRALS AMONG BLACK, WHITE, AND LATINO SCHOOL-AGE MALES

	Delinquent Behaviors	Aggressive Behaviors	Drugs/Delinquency at School	Disengagement from School	Disciplinary Referrals	Truancy
Disciplinary Referrals						
Black	(.02)	.19** (.05)	.01	.22**		
White	(.07**)	.24** (.04)	.10**	.28**		
Latino	(.03)	.32** (.00)	.01	.25**		
Grades						
Black	(.-04**)	(-06**)	(-.02)	(-.09**)	-.19** (-.02*)	-.16**
White	(-.04**)	(-.09**)	(-.05**)	(-.10**)	-.31** (-.02**)	-.05**
Latino	(-.02)	(-.11**)	(-.02)	(-.09**)	-.31** (-.01)	-.05
Truancy						
Black	.15* (.06*)	(.11)	.13* (.00)	.22** (.03**)	.12*	
White	.14** (.06**)	(.09**)	.15** (.01**)	.11** (.04**)	.15**	
Latino	.16** (.09)	(.11)	.18** (.01)	.17** (.03**)	.14**	
Disengagement from School						
Black	.08	.17**				
White	.19**	.03				
Latino	.23**	.11				
Drugs/Delinquency at School						
Black	.32**	.30**				
White	.19**	.29**				
Latino	.26**	.27**				

Note: Exogenous variables are represented on the rows. Estimates in parenthesis are indirect effects. *p < .01; **p < .001

For each racial group, disengagement was a strong predictor of disciplinary referrals. However, for black males, disengagement was also a strong predictor of truancy. No such relationship manifested for white males, indicating that black males, and to a lesser extent Hispanic males, are more likely to abandon school in response to feeling disengaged. In this study, highly disengaged students reported frequently failing to complete or turn in their assignments, not trying to do the best work in school, coming to class late without an approved excuse, and finding schoolwork difficult to understand. The final model suggests that the direct effect of disengagement from school on truancy, and the subsequent direct effect of truancy on grades, accounted for a significant portion of racial differences in grades. A more in-depth examination of the role of truancy and school disengagement in suspensions and disciplinary referrals is warranted.

Overall, the purpose of the study was to determine whether strategies are possible to reduce the frequency of disciplinary referrals and subsequent suspension, particularly among students who are disproportionally impacted by these disciplinary measures. The study found evidence that disciplinary referrals are more associated with negative attitudes and dispositions about school than delinquency at school. This implies that disciplinary referrals could be mitigated by improving the structure and culture of the school to promote more

positive attitudes about learning, more resources to help students learn appropriate school and class etiquette, and extra assistance with school work. Like previous studies, this study found an "attitude-achievement paradox" (Mickelson, 1990) among black male students, whereby their positive attitudes about school did not translate to successful academic outcomes. The findings suggest that school engagement is a possible mediator between attitudes and grades. Educational programs also should include character building, pro-social skills training and delinquency prevention.

Although this study revealed racial differences in disciplinary referrals and suspension, the racial differences revealed in the factors associated with disciplinary referrals do not reasonably account for the significant differences in suspension rates among black students. The high suspension rates among black girls suggest that school culture and climate might account for much of the racial differences. The smaller effect size for disciplinary referrals when compared to the large difference in suspension suggests that black students are being referred for more serious violations. However, this study found no direct effect of delinquency at school on disciplinary referrals for black males, but a significant link for white males. Therefore, it is more likely that black students are being more harshly penalized for similar, or even less serious infractions.

Collectively, the results of this study suggest that a number of school and nonschool related factors have a significant impact on suspensions and disciplinary referrals. The most significant among them are aggressive behaviors and disengagement from school. However, in addition to individual factors, the findings also suggest a combination of variables that create a specific path that leads black and Latino males to disproportionately receive school suspensions and disciplinary referrals. In the final model, delinquency and aggressive behaviors were found to precede school disengagement and school crime. Once black and Latino males became disengaged and involved in school crime, this in turn led to disciplinary referrals and truancy, which negatively impacted their achievement outcomes as measured by school grades. The findings of this study suggest the need for policymakers to consider crafting legislation that addresses the path to school suspensions and disciplinary referrals. Rather than attending to issues of disciplinary problems and truancy alone, this study supports educational policies and school-based intervention strategies that seek to reduce disciplinary referrals and suspensions by targeting the antisocial behaviors that precede school disengagement and school crime, thereby preventing the type of disciplinary action that deleteriously affects achievement.

Implications for Policy and Practice

- Educational policy should recognize the significant contribution of school engagement to school disciplinary outcomes by implementing strategies for improving student experiences and connections with school. This study found school engagement to be the strongest predictor of suspension and disciplinary referrals across racial groups, and disciplinary referrals were found to be associated most with negative attitudes and dispositions toward school. Implementing school-based programs that are designed to promote positive schooling experiences and school connectedness may promote higher levels of student engagement, which will in turn reduce suspensions and disciplinary referrals. In addition, strategies for improving school engagement and decreasing the number of disciplinary actions taken against males of color should seek to promote parental involvement, creation of a structured environment, school-wide discipline programs, and the cultivation of mutual respect between teachers and students.
- Policymakers should recognize the impact of disengagement on truancy and the subsequent impact of truancy on achievement outcomes such as school grades. While school disengagement was found to predict disciplinary referrals for all racial groups, black males were the only group where disengagement was also found to predict truancy. This study supports implementing school-based truancy prevention programs that target disengaged students. The areas of engagement that are particularly important to address in these programs are related to increasing student effort and motivation to participate in the educational process by coming to class on time and completing assignments. Raising levels of engagement can potentially prevent problems of truancy, which can in turn prevent low achievement outcomes. The findings of this study also suggest that in order to prevent

truancy and low levels of academic achievement, schools, administrators, and policymakers must consider the underlying factors that contribute to school disengagement such as negative school culture and perceived unfairness in school disciplinary practices.

- Since black males who are more likely to be suspended exhibit higher levels of hopelessness and lower positive self-worth, counseling and mental health services at the school to mitigate disciplinary referrals should be strengthened. Students often misbehave because of treatable mental health and adjustment problems, including depression, attention deficits, and acute stress and trauma reactions. Coping resources at the school, including counselors, social workers, and recreational therapists, can improve student behavior and reduce suspensions and disciplinary referrals.
- Educational policy is needed that emphasizes, addresses and corrects unfair applications of zero tolerance disciplinary policies, racial-biases in instruction, and racial inequities in enforcing school disciplinary measures. Stark racial differences were found in suspensions and disciplinary referrals among the racial groups in this study. Consistent with the findings of Morrison, Peterson, O'Farrell, & Redding (2004), policymakers should consider implementing systems of regular and consistent monitoring and analysis of disciplinary referrals to improve upon precision, accuracy, fairness, and equity in the application of disciplinary measures.
- Policies are needed to expand school- and community-based delinquency prevention programs that promote high academic achievement, positive attitudes toward school, pro-social skills, character building and school engagement. The results of this study suggest a significant relationship between delinquency, aggressive behaviors, and the frequency with which students received disciplinary referrals. In light of previous research findings related to the association between students with lower reading skills and school disciplinary referrals (McIntosh, Horner, Chard, Dickey, & Braun, 2008), it is also important to emphasize and promote reading achievement in these programs.

PREVENTING DELINQUENCY

The goal of this study was to establish culturally relevant priorities for school-based delinquency prevention programs, by exploring delinquency related factors that have a relationship with educational outcomes for black males. The domain areas explored included bullying and fighting, use of alcohol and other drugs, and neighborhood safety. Findings suggest that reducing behaviors associated with delinquency improves academic performance across all races. Black males were significantly more likely to report feeling unsafe at school, and black and Latino males reported problems with feeling safe and trusting others in their neighborhood. Policy solutions emphasize the role of peer education and mediation, safe communities and schools, drug prevention and school-neighborhood connections.

Relevant Literature

Early in the twentieth century, articles appeared that linked school success to delinquency prevention (Clarke & Gray, 1950; Lenroot, 1943; Peyser, 1932). Many of the earlier studies noted that schools had a substantial role in contributing to the moral development of children. For example, in a study of adolescents in Harlem, Clarke & Grey (1950) concluded that schools should be in tune with children's lives outside of the classroom to compensate for possible deficiencies in their homes and communities. In many ways, the spirit and tone of earlier works reflected optimism in schools' ability to resolve social problems and mold students into productive members of society.

In the 1970s, studies began to explore race as a central variable in delinquency prevention research. A seminal prevention study of black seventh and eighth graders in poor neighborhoods in San Francisco evaluated a program that focused on tutoring, counseling or "rap sessions," and cultural enrichment programs. The project was successful in reducing the number of participants on probation and improving teachers' assessments of students' attitudes and behavior (Bradfield, et al., 1975). Another study found that, compared to white children, black students who participated in delinquency prevention programs had more positive participation from their parents (Hackler & Linden, 1970).

> "I don't have many role models but the few that I do look up to have made an impact on my life. These people help and mold me into a stand up, young man who will not take no for an answer."
>
> - Dyquan Caldwell - 11th Grade

Studies on delinquency prevention that appeared later in the century focused on the cognitive development of delinquent teens. Lower scores on tests of intellectual functioning and deficiencies in learning abilities were attributed to delinquent behaviors (Rizzo, 1981; Zinkus & Gottlieb, 1979). However, other studies that further explored the connection between school experiences and social behavior laid the foundation for many of the current scholarship on school-based delinquency prevention programs (Famiglietti, Fraser, & Newland, 1984; Gottfredson, 1986). Contemporary studies on the role of the school in reducing juvenile delinquency have focused on the role of school bonding (Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterle, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004), drug free schools (Dembo, et al., 1998), school-community connection (Forster & Rehner, 2003; Reese, Vera, Simon, & Ikeda, 2004), and school coordination with allied mental health services (Greenberg, et al., 2003).

Within the last ten years, several studies have emerged that inform the research presented in this study. In a sample of 778 students of which 24 percent were African Americans, Battin-Pearson, et al. (2000) found a relationship between dropout prevention programs and the prevention of deviant behavior among adolescents. The study recommended that prevention methods focus on increasing the academic success of children at risk of dropping out, with a specific emphasis on children who come from families in poverty and who have deviant peer affiliations (Battin-Pearson, et al., 2000).

Other important studies clarify the role of environmental enhancements, such as prevention programs, in shaping school behavior and moral judgment. For example, one study found that African American adolescents who reside in dangerous areas were particularly vulnerable to depression and delinquency at school (Bohnert, Richards, Kohl, & Randall, 2009). Munson & Estes (2002) found that the strength of adolescents' bond to society reduces the probability of them performing criminal acts. The study further explained that extracurricular activities promote skills and values that foster a sense of attachment, commitment, and responsibility (Munson & Estes, 2002). Similarly, another study found that violence prevention programs cultivate stronger moral judgment, conflict resolution skills, and a more profound sense of responsibility (Larden, Melin, Holst, & Langstrom, 2006). The same is held true for youth who are already involved in the delinquent system. Bullis & Yovanoff (2002) found that the effects of work and school engagement are significantly more likely to refrain youth from committing further crime or escalating their criminal behaviors. The earlier youth are connected with a positive activity, the more likely they will remain out of trouble (Bullis & Yovanoff, 2006).

One study indicated that community service significantly reduces juvenile delinquency due to the strong moral structure and increased cognitive ability to engage in less egocentric activities (Hoffmann & Xu, 2002). Another study found that programs that accentuate social skills instruction and application reduce delinquent behaviors and substance use (Gottfredson, Gerstenblith, Soulé, Womer, & Lu, 2004). More structured programs, smaller program size, an educated staff, and more male staff were needed to enhance the possibility that the program produced positive behavior outcomes and decrease delinquency (Gottfredson, et al., 2004).

Recent studies have found a link between school experiences and delinquency prevention. A study investigating the impact of risk and protective factors on youth violence found that more perceived social support from teachers (as reported by students) predicted lower levels of aggressive behavior (Benhorin & McMahon, 2008). Another study found that classmate fighting impacted negatively on African American students' belief in their ability to avoid violence (Jagers, Sydnor, Mouttapa, & Flay, 2007).

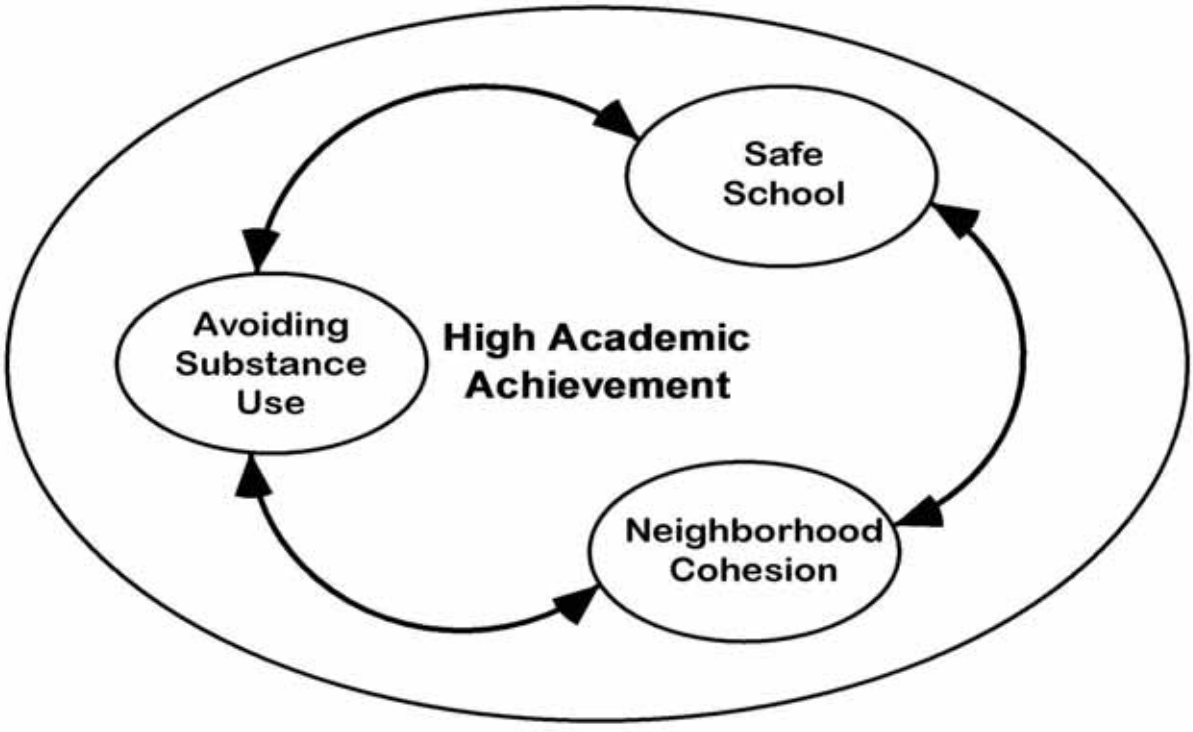


FIGURE 2.1: Conceptual model of the study illustrating the hypothesized relationship between the dependent variables to academic achievement.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature, this study posited that reducing behaviors that are associated with delinquency, such as bullying, weapons use, drug use, and community disunity, lead to higher performance levels at school among all males. Further, higher performing students will be less likely to drop out of school and more likely to be productive members of society. However, some research evidence suggests that some racial disparities will exist for black and Latino males. The research that emphasized the importance of the environment in cultivating positive social behavior led us to the hypothesis that youth with more neighborhood cohesion would evince higher levels of academic potential. In addition, studies cited that linked academic success to more harmonious school experiences, informed our hypothesis that school safety was vital to academic potential. Finally, studies cited that demonstrated the importance of drug abstinence suggest that students with less drug involvement have enhanced academic potential. Figure 2.1 visually depicts the constructs of central interest to this study.

Method

Participants

The study population included all black, Latino, and white males who completed the 2002 Health Behavior in School-age Children (HBSC: N= 6,490). The database was selected because it had a clear indicator of academic achievement; had adequate African-American adolescent male representation; was a national survey that included multiple states and geographic areas; and had adequate measures of contributing factors. The database is indexed for public analysis at the *Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research*.

Procedures

The World Health Organization (WHO) collected data for the HBSC survey between 2001 and 2002. The survey employed a three-stage cluster design in which the school's county was the first stage, the school was the second stage, and the classroom was the third stage. The U.S. sample included 340 schools in a stratified, three-stage cluster sample of classes. Schools were stratified by racial/ethnic status and geographic region using data from the National Center for Educational Statistics' website.

The HBSC surveyed 11-, 13- and 15-year-old children's attitudes and experiences concerning a range of health-related behaviors. The survey seeks to inform health promotion and educational policy aimed at school-age children nationally. Participating school representatives (i.e., teacher, nurse, school counselor, etc.) administered the HBSC survey in school settings. The school representatives read scripts that explained the survey procedures. The questionnaire took approximately 45 minutes to complete and was administered in a regular classroom setting.

The sample was comprised of 15,245 middle and high school students at public and private schools in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The WHO reported that of the sample, 57 cases were dropped from the database because they were missing a significant number of key variables from the HBSC protocol. In addition, the WHO dropped 365 cases due to the respondents' ages or grades being out of range or unknown. The WHO oversaw procedures to protect the anonymity of respondents. Public files made available for secondary analysis omitted variables that could be used to personally identify individuals.

Measures

Academic achievement

HBSC participants responded to the question, "In your opinion, what does your class teacher(s) think about your school performance compared to your classmates?" Response options were: (1) very good, (2) good, (3) average and (4) below average.

Contributing factors

Causal factors explored were divided into three domain areas: (1) bullying, fighting, and school safety; (2) illicit substance use; and (3) neighborhood safety factors. To improve the clarity of the findings, specific questions and indexes that measured various aspects of each causal determinant are listed in the result tables. The following are general descriptions of the three domain areas that were posited to have a relationship with academic achievement among African-American males.

Bullying, fighting, and school safety consisted of self-report variables that measured the extent of violent behaviors and conditions in the students' environment. Specific questions gauged the frequency that the student participated in, or fell victim to, bullying and fighting. Bullying was described to the participants as saying or doing nasty or unpleasant things to another. Bullying was specifically distinguished from fighting which involves two students of the same power and size in a physical conflict. Students also revealed how often they carried a weapon to school and the extent to which they feel safe at school.

Substance-related factors measured the frequency that the students used tobacco products, alcohol, marijuana, and other street drugs. Present, past 30 days, and lifetime use were measured for different substances.

Neighborhood safety factors explored the amount of volatility and disunity in the students' neighborhood communities. Specific questions asked participants the extent to which they felt safe in their neighborhood and believed people in their neighborhood could be trusted.

Analysis plan

The principle analytic technique used in this study was a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) in academic achievement among black males, with white and Latino males serving as a comparison group. General linear modeling approaches were used to reveal differences in the relationship between academic achievement and associated variables along race lines. The hypothesized relationships between academic achievement and external measures were tested and accepted or rejected based on the p-value. Where the p is less than .01, the likelihood that the reported result is due to random chance factors is only 1 percent. Means plots are used for select variables to display the linear relationship between various indicators of academic achievement and hypothesized covariates, across races. The plots include a dashed reference line on the Y-axis that mark the estimated mean of the variable of interest. The reference line is useful for determining the distribution of scores around the mean for various levels of academic achievement. Finally, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the relationship between the three causal factors and the equivalence between models that were constructed for black, white and Latino male students.

Statistical Findings

Descriptive information

Participants were 1,351 (20.8 percent) black, 3,766 white (58 percent), and 1373 (21.2 percent) Latino male students who were currently attending middle or high school. Most of the students participating in the study were in middle school (63.7 percent). The national sample covered urban (40.3 percent), suburban (29.7 percent) and rural (28.5 percent) areas. With respect to academic achievement, 22 percent described their performance to be "very good," 36.6 percent "good," 28.6 percent "average", and 8.3 percent "below average".

Bullying, fighting and school safety factors

Table 2.1 displays the means, standard deviations, and F-ratios of bullying, fighting and school safety variables that have a hypothesized relationship with academic achievement among black, Latino, and white male students. The table marks variables that are significant by race and academic achievement. All six of the variables analyzed had a significant relationship with academic achievement. Mean scores with a negative relationship with academic achievement get smaller when reading from left to right as academic performance increases. The opposite is true for the one variable with a positive relationship with academic achievement (feeling safe at school). Four of the six variables were significant for race. When compared to white and Latino

males, black students were less likely to report being bullied or carrying a weapon, and more likely to report fighting and feeling unsafe at school.

TABLE 2.1: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F RATIOS OF BULLYING, FIGHTING AND SCHOOL SAFETY FACTORS THAT IMPACT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG BLACK, LATINO, AND WHITE SCHOOL-AGE MALES

		Academic Achievement				F Ratio	
	Race	Below Avg. (M, SD)	Avg. (M, SD)	Good (M, SD)	Very Good (M, SD)	Race	Grades
How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months? [A]	Black	1.56 (1.11)	1.44 (0.96)	1.41 (0.85)	1.52 (1.04)	15.84*	12.43*
	White	2.11 (1.54)	1.69 (1.16)	1.58 (1.02)	1.67 (1.20)		
	Latino	2.04 (1.41)	1.69 (1.12)	1.48 (0.93)	1.63 (1.14)		
How often have you taken part in bullying another student(s) at school in the past couple of months? [A]	Black	2.35 (1.61)	1.67 (1.11)	1.61 (1.06)	1.64 (1.15)	1.38	30.28*
	White	2.15 (1.43)	1.74 (1.03)	1.66 (0.97)	1.59 (1.03)		
	Latino	2.25 (1.50)	1.84 (1.18)	1.63 (1.03)	1.71 (1.12)		
I hit, kicked, pushed, shoved around, or locked him or her indoors. [A]	Black	1.90 (1.47)	1.42 (0.97)	1.51 (1.11)	1.61 (1.22)	8.25*	21.54*
	White	1.79 (1.34)	1.39 (0.93)	1.29 (0.81)	1.29 (0.87)		
	Latino	1.90 (1.41)	1.45 (0.98)	1.34 (0.89)	1.46 (1.05)		
During the past 12 months, how many times were you in a physical fight? [B]	Black	2.88 (1.71)	2.16 (1.40)	2.14 (1.42)	2.13 (1.53)	4.27	25.17*
	White	2.64 (1.57)	2.14 (1.39)	1.94 (1.31)	1.85 (1.35)		
	Latino	2.65 (1.64)	2.12 (1.41)	1.96 (1.33)	2.01 (1.43)		
During the past 30 days, on how many days did you carry a weapon, such as a gun, knife, or club? [B]	Black	1.96 (1.62)	1.40 (1.07)	1.49 (1.11)	1.50 (1.20)	8.79*	26.25*
	White	2.34 (1.73)	1.85 (1.51)	1.67 (1.39)	1.51 (1.20)		
	Latino	2.50 (1.79)	1.58 (1.29)	1.53 (1.25)	1.58 (1.32)		
I feel safe at this school. [C]	Black	2.90 (1.52)	3.20 (1.35)	3.48 (1.27)	3.52 (1.40)	26.62*	48.67*
	White	3.06 (1.50)	3.57 (1.20)	3.91 (1.07)	4.00 (1.18)		
	Latino	2.80 (1.64)	3.40 (1.23)	3.67 (1.12)	3.71 (1.33)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; *p < .01; [A] 1 = I have not – 5 = Several times a week; [B] 1 = I have not been in a fight this year – 5 = Four or more; and [C] 1= strongly disagree – 5 strongly agree.

The analyses of academic achievement revealed the largest effect size for feeling safe at school and taking part in bullying. Black students were significantly less prone to feel safe at school when compared to white students. As indicated in Figure 2.1, although there is a relationship between feeling safe at school and academic achievement for all students, black students' feelings of safety at school was below the mean, regardless of academic standing. The relationship between bullying and academic achievement was similar across racial groups, with low achieving students participating in the most bullying activity.

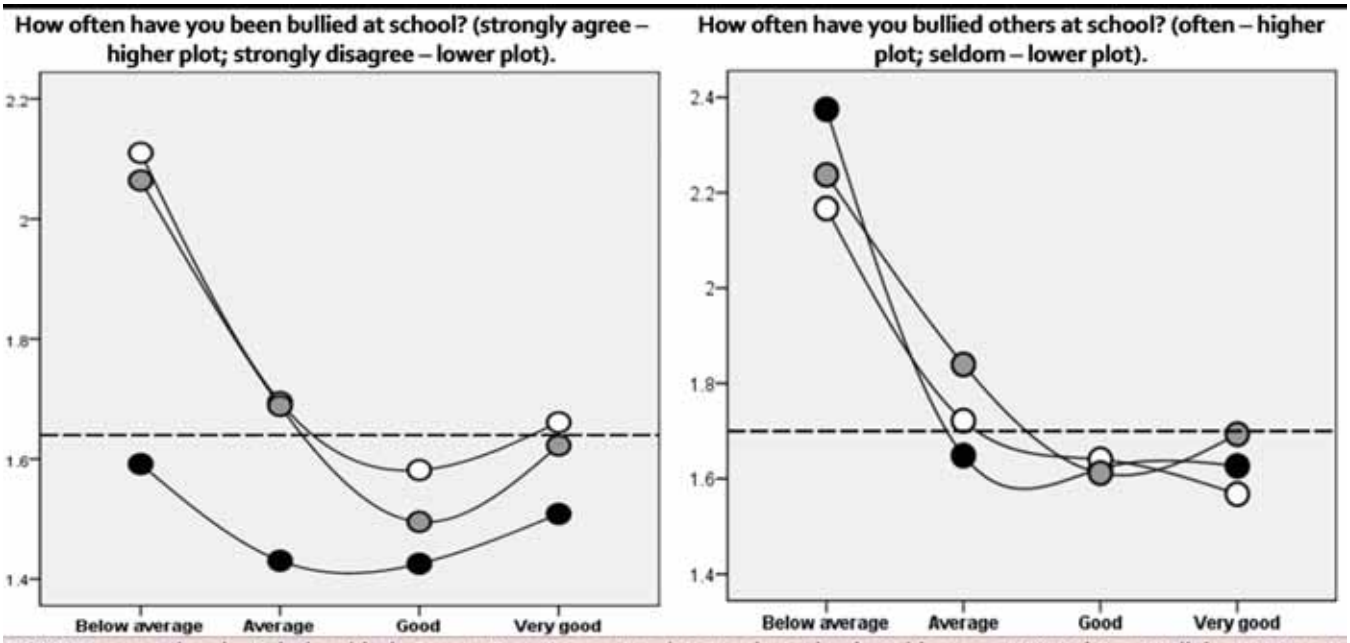


FIGURE 2.2a and 2.2b: Relationship between Race (separate plots) and Academic Achievement (X Axis) on Bullying (Y Axes). Note. ● = black Male Students; ● = Latino Male Students; ○ = white Male Students. Data Retrieved From Health Behavior In School-Age Children (2007). The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable.

Substance-related factors

All substance-related variables had a negative relationship with academic achievement. When reading the mean scores for substance-use behaviors in Table 2.2 from right to left, the numbers get smaller as academic performance improves. Four of the six variables measured were also significant across races; however the effects sizes were smaller than those for academic achievement. Across all variables that were significant for race, black male students reported the least involvement with the associated behavior.

Neighborhood Safety factors

The five variables measured that were associated with neighborhood safety were significantly different across races and academic achievement. Unlike other factors explored in the current study, the effect sizes for race were greater than the effect size for academic achievement. As shown in Table 2.3, when reading the mean scores for each variable across races, black males students are more likely than white students to feel unsafe in their neighborhood and have difficulty trusting and relying upon neighbors.

When responding to the question, "Generally speaking, I feel safe in the area where I live", black students who were reported high achievers were more likely to respond, "Always." However, black students across levels of academic achievement generally felt less safe than white students. As Figure 2.3a illustrates, high achieving black students are the only group of black students that are not below the total average of feeling safe. Black and Latino students were similar in their feelings of safety and its relationship to their academic achievement. When comparing races, the ability to trust neighbors yielded the strongest effect size. As illustrated by the second graph in Figure 2.3b, no group of black or Latino male students reported a level of trust that met or exceeded the total mean score. By contrast, only white students in the "below average" academic achievement group had a mean score for trusting others that was below the total mean.

TABLE 2.2: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F RATIOS OF SUBSTANCE-RELATED FACTORS THAT IMPACT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG BLACK, LATINO, AND WHITE SCHOOL-AGE MALES

		Academic Achievement				F Ratio	
	Race	Below Avg. (M, SD)	Avg. (M, SD)	Good (M, SD)	Very Good (M, SD)	Race	Grades
How often do you smoke tobacco at present? [A]	Black	1.50 (1.04)	1.42 (0.91)	1.38 (0.85)	1.36 (0.82)	5.23	10.69*
	White	2.15 (1.31)	1.70 (1.14)	1.36 (0.80)	1.31 (0.80)		
	Latino	1.94 (1.31)	1.35 (0.78)	1.24 (0.67)	1.50 (1.07)		
At present, how often do you drink beer? [B]	Black	1.67 (1.14)	1.50 (1.01)	1.48 (1.06)	1.56 (1.19)	13.54*	9.38*
	White	2.46 (1.45)	2.03 (1.22)	1.76 (1.01)	1.76 (1.20)		
	Latino	2.79 (1.61)	1.80 (1.09)	1.70 (1.12)	1.95 (1.38)		
At present, how often do you drink liquor? [B]	Black	1.83 (1.20)	1.46 (0.92)	1.51 (0.96)	1.61 (1.14)	6.75*	11.92*
	White	2.45 (1.52)	1.87 (1.14)	1.67 (1.01)	1.70 (1.18)		
	Latino	2.64 (1.58)	1.77 (1.13)	1.58 (1.07)	1.74 (1.33)		
During the past 30 days, how many times did you have five or more drinks on the same occasion? [C]	Black	2.22 (1.63)	1.68 (1.15)	1.81 (1.33)	1.89 (1.66)	6.50*	9.65*
	White	2.86 (2.00)	2.31 (1.71)	1.96 (1.45)	1.82 (1.49)		
	Latino	3.26 (2.12)	2.24 (1.59)	1.89 (1.47)	2.28 (1.81)		
In your lifetime, how often have you smoked marijuana? [D]	Black	2.89 (2.32)	2.30 (2.00)	2.06 (1.87)	1.92 (1.72)	4.35	20.14*
	White	3.71 (2.63)	2.61 (2.29)	2.07 (1.89)	1.74 (1.70)		
	Latino	4.34 (2.64)	2.50 (2.21)	2.12 (2.03)	2.35 (2.31)		
In your lifetime, how often have you used any other drug? [D]	Black	1.44 (1.46)	1.20 (0.96)	1.37 (1.17)	1.30 (0.99)	9.64*	10.82*
	White	2.40 (2.32)	1.61 (1.53)	1.33 (1.08)	1.43 (1.38)		
	Latino	2.94 (2.65)	1.50 (1.31)	1.52 (1.57)	1.65 (1.70)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; *p < .01; [A]1 = I do not smoke – 4 = Everyday; [B]1 = Never – 5 = Everyday; [C]1 = Never – 6 = 4 or more times; and [D]1 = Never – 7 = 40 or more times

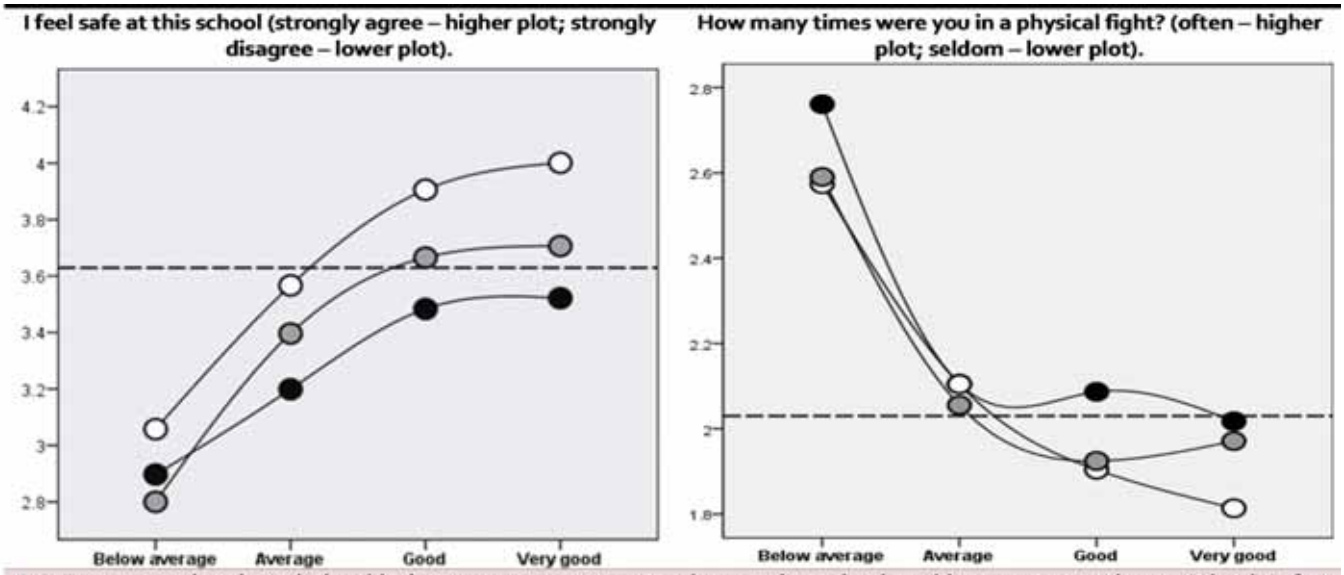


FIGURE 2.3a and 2.3b: Relationship between Race (separate plots) and Academic Achievement (X Axis) on School Safety Variables (Y Axes). Note. ● = black Male Students; ● = Latino Male Students; ○ = white Male Students. Data Retrieved From Health Behavior In School-Age Children (2007). The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable.

TABLE 2.3: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F RATIOS OF NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY FACTORS THAT IMPACT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG BLACK, LATINO, AND WHITE SCHOOL-AGE MALES

		Academic Achievement				F Ratio	
	Race	Below Avg. (M, SD)	Avg. (M, SD)	Good (M, SD)	Very Good (M, SD)	Race	Grades
Generally speaking, I feel safe in the area where I live.[A]	Black	3.05 (1.12)	3.15 (0.93)	3.22 (0.87)	3.36 (0.91)	26.72*	24.11*
	White	3.18 (0.96)	3.33 (0.81)	3.48 (0.67)	3.57 (0.70)		
	Latino	2.87 (1.04)	3.20 (0.86)	3.31 (0.83)	3.38 (0.86)		
It is safe for younger children to play outside during the day.[B]	Black	3.58 (1.41)	4.05 (1.14)	3.96 (1.07)	4.01 (1.26)	31.10*	11.20*
	White	3.94 (1.28)	4.10 (1.09)	4.27 (0.93)	4.34 (1.02)		
	Latino	3.66 (1.32)	3.86 (1.09)	3.89 (1.14)	4.04 (1.14)		
You can trust people around here.[B]	Black	3.02 (1.50)	3.21 (1.35)	3.34 (1.25)	3.47 (1.45)	76.12*	19.63*
	White	3.54 (1.43)	3.74 (1.18)	3.98 (1.05)	4.07 (1.12)		
	Latino	3.02 (1.45)	3.41 (1.24)	3.52 (1.21)	3.63 (1.27)		
I could ask for help or a favor from neighbors.[B]	Black	3.62 (1.59)	3.78 (1.26)	3.88 (1.15)	3.86 (1.30)	21.89*	14.95*
	White	3.70 (1.43)	3.92 (1.13)	4.13 (0.98)	4.19 (1.13)		
	Latino	3.33 (1.49)	3.70 (1.21)	3.85 (1.12)	3.90 (1.24)		
Most people around here would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance.[B]	Black	3.15 (1.68)	2.95 (1.50)	2.94 (1.46)	2.89 (1.56)	41.22*	7.75*
	White	2.73 (1.51)	2.53 (1.36)	2.33 (1.30)	2.26 (1.42)		
	Latino	3.07 (1.54)	2.77 (1.35)	2.55 (1.35)	2.75 (1.52)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; *p < .01; [A] 1 = Rarely or never – 4 = Always; and [B] 1= strongly disagree – 5 strongly agree.

SEM was used to test the relationship between the three factors and the equivalence between models that were constructed between black, white and Latino male students. When leaving the model unconstrained, the chi square was 669.86, df = 237, and p < .001. When testing models with constrained measurement weights, the Chi square worsened, indicating the models were significantly different across races. The chi-square difference for the nested models was 49.3, with df = 28. Although chi square tests indicated a poor fit to the data, other fit indices indicated that the model was adequately constructed. Specifically, The Bentler-Bonett (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) normed fit index was .94, and the comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990) was .96 in the unconstrained model. For the models with constrained weights, all parameters were significant when analyzing the critical ratios (C.R. were greater than 1.96). For the model tested only for black male students, covariates were significant between school volatility and substance use (C.R. = 6.46) and school volatility and neighborhood volatility (C.R. = 3.46).

Summary of Findings

The results of this study present a clear relationship between factors that are associated with delinquency and academic performance. Across all racial groups, good academic performance is related to fewer experiences with bullying, fighting, weapons, and with an overall sense that the school is a safe environment. Higher achieving black male students also report less overall involvement with smoking tobacco, drinking alcohol, and using illicit drugs. Neighborhood characteristics that contribute to feelings of unity and safety also evinced a positive impact on academic performance.

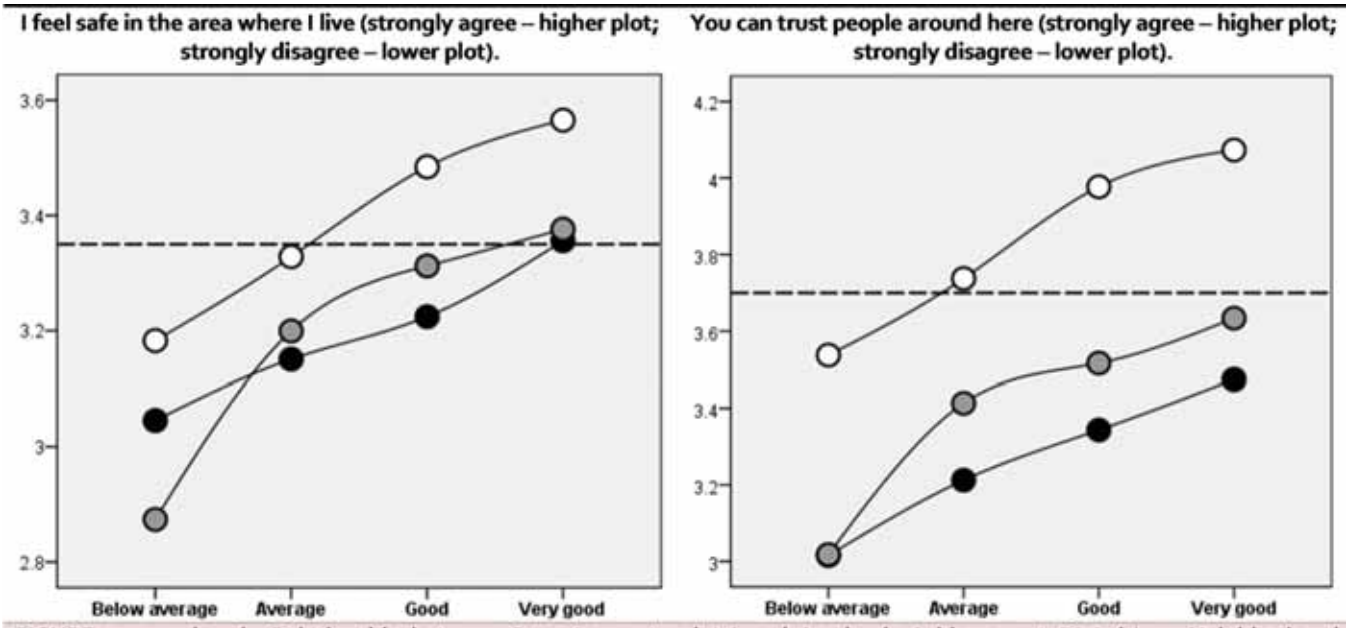


FIGURE 2.4a and 2.4b: Relationship between Race (separate plots) and Academic Achievement (X Axis) on Neighborhood Security Variables (Y Axes). Note. ● = black Male Students; ● = Latino Male Students; ○ = white Male Students. Data Retrieved From Health Behavior In School-Age Children (2007). The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable.

Racial differences in delinquency related variables provide some insight into factors that can uniquely impact academic achievement across races. Although black male students reported the lowest overall level of bullying, when compared to white and Latino males, black males were the only racial group where high achievers experience bullying at the same rate as the lowest achievers. Latino and white high achievers experience bullying much less than their low achieving counterparts. Low achievers in all races report most frequently bullying others. Black male students reported more experiences with physical fights. The findings also indicate that black and Latino males are more likely to report feeling unsafe in their school environment. With students across all races, feeling safe at school is associated with improved academic functioning. However, black male students, regardless of academic standing, rate school safety below the average of their peers in other races.

Relative to Latino and white males, black male students report less involvement with drugs and alcohol. However, black males used marijuana at a rate that was similar to their Latino and white peers. Incidentally, marijuana use evinced the most negative impact on academic achievement, when compared to other drug related behaviors. In addition, black male students' reported tobacco use was not significantly different from white and Latino students. When considering previous research that indicates black student smoke less cigarettes, this finding might suggest that smoking is increasing among black students, or decreasing among white students.

Variables associated with neighborhood safety revealed the starkest racial differences. Generally, black male students live in neighborhoods that they feel are unsafe and around neighbors that they cannot trust. The findings suggest that these experiences weaken academic performance in a manner that is comparable to bullying, fighting, and drug use. The final model indicated that substance use and neighborhood volatility could contribute to disruptive behaviors at school. All of the factors explored appear to be related and should not be isolated when establishing priorities for social skills training.

Implications for Policy and Practice

- Educational policy that emphasizes the role of peer education and mediation, as well as character development, would support the findings that students learn best when they have fewer experiences with bullying and fighting. School-based social skills training programs should consider the nature and

role of peer relationships on the academic success. Overall, peer support networks can be an integral component of the learning environment and supplement the important role of teachers in the classroom. Conversations at the federal level about these needs often center on encouraging states and districts to be more thoughtful about designing systems that are responsive to the academic and developmental needs of children and youth (personal communication, D. Johns). Federal and state policymakers need to develop frameworks within which these conversations can take place or communicate about how districts can include specific approaches to meeting the developmental needs of all students.

- Safety is a factor that is uniquely related to academic success among school age black males, therefore school and social policy should emphasize security when devising strategies to promote academic success. Findings suggest that black male students are more likely to feel unsafe at school than white or Latino males; and all students who feel safer at school achieve better grades. School policies should view safety as an internal state that is central to a nurturing environment. The National Education Association's Safe Schools strategies are consistent with the findings of this study, which include: (1) eliminating bullying and harassment; (2) expanding access to counseling, anger management and peer mediation; (3) Providing ways for students to communicate with adults about rumors and threats; and (4) developing instruction that teaches values like respect and responsibility and expand opportunities for students to work with adult role models. In addition, legislators should consider ways to encourage and support schools and school districts in developing policies and practices designed to ensure student safety, developed in partnership with students.
- The findings support school-based drug prevention programs that encourage peer participation. The dangers of smoking among underage children should be emphasized, with attention to the psycho-physiological effects of nicotine abuse and withdrawal, which could increase nervousness and fatigue at school.
- Schools and neighborhoods should enact policies that build connections between schools and communities to improve feelings of security and reduce difficulties with trust among school-age black males. Black males are far more likely to feel unsafe in their neighborhoods and have difficulty trusting their neighbors, which ultimately affect their academic performance. Increasing funding for community centers and providing incentive for community based organizations to monitor students' grades, visit the school and mentor children can reduce delinquency and improve academic success. Federal Legislators should increase investments in Promise Neighborhoods, an approach to providing children and youth with academic and developmental support and ensuring that they are fully engaged, both in the classroom and through activities designed to foster resilience and deepen their appreciation for their environment.
- The U.S. Department of Education can play a key role in helping states develop systems, strategies and policies to ensure that school leaders and teachers understand the importance of, and have the resources and support to, create positive learning environments for students. Specifically, school and community leaders can focus on the assistant deputy secretary for safe and drug-free schools' work around state indicators to ensure that the major findings on delinquency prevention at school are fully accounted for in the lowest performing schools.

ELIMINATING GANG ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

The goal of this study was to establish priorities and best practices to control gang-related activity in schools. Results revealed that more than one third of all students experience gang activity at their schools. Students who reported gang activity at their school were more likely to walk to school, pass through metal detectors when entering school, have major distractions from school work, have fewer opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, and more likely to report that their teachers say and do things to make students feel bad about themselves. Implications for policy and practice emphasize raising academic standards, allocating coping resources for teachers, modifying the school environment, using noninvasive security measures, and strengthening extracurricular activities.

Relevant Literature

A wide range of factors have played a role in school violence rates, among them economics (Crouch, Hanson, Saunders, Kilpatrick, & Resnick, 2000), gender (Earls, 1994; Farrington, 1998), media (Dorfman, Woodruff, Chavez, & Wallack, 1997), drugs and weapons (Cohen, Gorr, & Singh, 1999), and gang violence (Hunt & Laidler, 2001; Vigil, 2003). Gang violence in particular accounts for a large portion of the school violence rates by, not only being a noticeable part of schools, (e.g., graffiti, gang territories) but also amplifying the effects of school crimes (e.g., drugs, weapons, physical fights) (Hill, Lui, & Hawkins, 2001; Huff, 1998; Thornberry & Burch, 1997). Few studies (Akiba, 2008; Davis, 2007; McGloin, 2009; Struyk, 2006) have explored the impact that gangs and violence have on students' academic achievement and teachers' attitudes and behaviors.

The relationship between gangs and crime has been reported in virtually all studies of gang behavior in the United States, regardless of historical period, methodology or sample (Howell, 1997). Research in schools, public health, and criminal justice systems demonstrate that adolescents involved in gangs are more likely to engage in health risk behaviors and violent acts, and have poor academic achievement and high drop-out rates than youth who are not involved in gangs (Knox & Tromanhauser, 1999; Spergle, 1990). Three national studies, Rochester Youth Developmental Study (Thornberry & Burch, 1997), the Denver Study (Huff, 1998), and the Seattle Social Developmental Study (Hill, et al., 2001), have been successful in examining the relationship between gangs and violence among youth. While these studies were effective in identifying the relationship between gangs and violence, they did not explore the impact that schools' interventions are having on gang membership and students' academic performance.

With respect to interventions, one of the biggest challenges facing school systems is identifying perpetrators of violence and gangs. A recent study revealed that teachers have difficulty identifying gang members because they are becoming subtle in their display of signs and paraphernalia (Struyk, 2006). Corresponding policies to deal with the gang and violence problems facing U.S. schools focus on better detection, preemptive intervention, closer supervision, zero tolerance, and peer mediation. This narrow framing of the issue fails to consider the interconnected role of teachers, school administrators, and educational practices (Henry, 2009).

Notwithstanding, there is evidence that some school interventions are effective. Three-year longitudinal data showed significant reductions in the school's out-of-school suspensions after implementation of the peer mediation program (Cantrell, Parks-Savage, & Rehfuss, 2007). However, more research is needed to determine if the schools' security measures (i.e., random searches, metal detectors, and presence of resource officers or security officers) are effective at not only deterring gang violence but also improving students' academic success.

It is also important to explore the cultural aspects (i.e., race, gender, demographics) that contribute to school crime and disciplinary actions (suspensions). In the early part of the 19th century, youth gangs in the United States were primarily Irish, Jewish, and Italian (Haskins, 1974; Sante, 1991). However, researchers in a recent national law enforcement survey found the ethnicity of gang members is 48 percent African American, 43

percent Hispanic, and 5 percent white (Hill, et al., 2001). In terms of gender, official records indicate that fewer than 10 percent of gang members are females (Curry, Ball, & Decker, 1996). This disparity in the number of female to male gang members may be the result of females' unwillingness to disclose their membership to gangs. In addition, many police departments/jurisdictions and school districts do not count or track females as gang members.

A recent study by Nickerson and Martens (2008) explored the relationship between demographic characteristics and school crime and disruptions (i.e., suspensions). Researchers used a hierarchical regression analysis using 440 students to explore these relationships. The results revealed that demographic characteristics (e.g., enrollment, neighborhood crime) were associated with school crime, school disruption, or both. After accounting for demographic influences, security/enforcement (e.g., law enforcement, suspensions) was significantly associated with school crime and disruption (Nickerson & Martens, 2008). Bullying behaviors, which in another study have been associated with gang membership (Lemus & Johnson, 2008), were significant negative predictors of the psychosocial environment of the school. This study provides further support for the hypothesis that the psychosocial environments of the school are significant and negative predictor of carrying a weapon for protection and avoidance behaviors to bullying (Meyer-Adams & Conner, 2008).

Explanations about the causes of school violence tended toward psychological and developmental explanations about why school-age children become violent, and social control theory about the lack of attachment and involvement by youth in conventional culture. At the psychological level, perceived school support has a direct effect on exposure to school violence, subjective well-being, and professional disengagement, while the effect of school violence on disengagement is mediated by well-being (Galand, Lecocq, & Philippot, 2007). In the literature, several findings seem apparent. For example, verbal victimization, student misbehavior, and perceived violence at schools impair teacher emotional well-being. In addition, support from principals and colleagues reduce the incidences of difficulties and foster well-being.

Other studies show that schools with less violence tend to have students who are aware of school rules and believe they are fair, have positive relationships with their teachers, feel that they have ownership in their school, feel that they are in a classroom and school environment that is positive and focused on learning, and in an environment that is orderly (S. L. Johnson, 2009). Johnson's study (2009) found that exposure to violence was positively associated with internalizing and externalizing symptoms. Additionally, identification with school and teacher support were related to higher hope and lower psychosocial distress. Adolescents who reported higher identification with school and higher teacher support reported higher hope, regardless of the level of violence exposure. Results emphasize the importance of school factors, particularly feeling connected to and supported in school, in promoting hope and minimizing psychosocial distress for youth exposed to community violence (Ludwig & Warren, 2009).

Historically, administrators have been given the responsibility to enforce school safety rules (I. Johnson, 1999). However, the raising security needs of schools have helped increase the demand for resource officers, who are sworn law enforcement officers (S. L. Johnson, 2009). Law enforcement agencies have also contributed greatly to the investigation of violence and gangs on different levels including prevention, intervention, and deterrence alternatives.

In terms of prevention for instance, law enforcement is responsible for teaching the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) Program (Esbensen & Osgood, 1999), a school-based law enforcement officer-instructed classroom curriculum for middle schools. There has been some success with the G.R.E.A.T program. For example, a national study of 6,000 8th graders revealed that of the 45 percent of the youth who completed the G.R.E.A.T. program, there were significant reductions in the levels of delinquency and gang affiliation (Esbensen & Osgood, 1999). Moreover participants' positive attitudes toward police, involvement in pro-social activities, and commitment to peers had all increased significantly (Esbensen & Osgood, 1999).

More recently, schools have started installing metal detectors and security officers in mostly predominately black public schools (Toldson, 2008a; Watts & Erevelles, 2004). At present, there are no longitudinal studies in

the literature that have attempted find whether these security changes have improved some of the security issues present in school systems. Law enforcement is also fully involved with deterring gang violence, mainly through suppression, which is a method that involves incarceration, deportation and tougher sentences for juvenile gang offenses (Archbold & Meyer, 1999; U.S. Department of Justice, 2009). Furthermore, law enforcement is continuously involved with some aspects of gang research (Knox, 2000). For instance, recently officials have been tasked with the development of a database that can further track evolving gang membership crimes. Therefore, law enforcement plays a pivotal role in the annual collection of data for the National Youth Gang Survey (NYGS) (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009).

Research Hypotheses

The literature on gangs and violence indicates that (a) there is a strong relationship between gangs, school crime, poor academic performance, and high dropout rates at schools, (b) the presence of gangs and violence adversely affects schools' academic climate (i.e., teachers' attitudes and support), and (c) students' behavioral, academic, and emotional experiences (i.e., victimized) in academic settings. The literature also emphasizes the importance of exploring school factors, including school support, as a way to identify factors that minimize psychosocial distress for youth exposed to community violence. Based on the literature, this study posited that students who are in schools with less gang activity would exhibit higher grades, better relationships with teachers, and more positive perceptions of school in general. While the literature also indicates that there are some successful student-based interventions (e.g., G.R.E.A.T.) to combat the gang problems, there is little information on the impact that security measures (i.e., metal detectors, presence of resource or security officers) are having on student academic performance.

Method

Participants

The study participants included all students who completed the National Crime Victimization Survey: School Crime Supplement (NCVS-SCS). The database was selected for this study because it had a clear indicator of gang activity at school; had adequate African-American and Latino adolescent representation; was a national survey that included multiple states and geographic areas; and had adequate measures of contributing factors, such as school environment and school safety measures. The database is indexed for public analysis at the *Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research*.

Procedure

Using data from the Bureau of the Census, the Bureau of Justice gathered data for the SCS as a supplement to the NCVS. The NCVS-SCS used a stratified multi-stage cluster sample design. The Bureau of Justice described their selection of respondents as a "rotating panel design," in which households were randomly selected and all age-eligible individuals became members of a panel. Those selected in the panel were interviewed every six months for a total of seven interviews over a three-year period. The Bureau of Justice designated the first interview as the incoming rotation and the second through the seventh interview were in the continuing rotations. After the seventh interview, the household leaves the panel and a new household is rotated into the sample.

The NCVS-SCS surveyed 12- to 18-year-old adolescents who attended school in 2007. The survey population responded to questions regarding crime prevention measures employed by their schools, their participation in after-school activities, their perception of school rules, the presence of weapons, drugs, alcohol and gangs in their schools, and their fear of victimization at school. The NCVS-SCS used paper and pencil interviewing and computer-assisted telephone interviewing. Initial interviews were conducted in respondents' households; subsequent computer-assisted interviews were conducted by an interviewer calling from a centralized telephone facility using an automated version of the paper instrument to administer the questions. Generally, interviews were conducted directly with the 12- to 18-year-old target. In unique situations, the Bureau of Justice conducted "proxy interviews" whereby one household member answered the questions for another.

The Census Bureau's Disclosure Review Board (DRB) vetted data collected for the NCVS-SCS. For confidentiality and anonymity, recoding procedures and a control number scrambling routine were performed before the file was released for public use. In addition, personally identifying information, such as respondents' schools and city, was omitted from the final dataset. Responses to the NCVS-SCS are confidential by law under BJS Title 42, United States Code, Sections 3735 and 3789g and by the Census Bureau under Title 13, United States Code, Section 9.

Measures

Gang activity

Gang activity was measured with two questions. The first question was a dichotomous yes or no question asking, "Are there any gangs at your school?" The second was a continuous variable that asked, "During this school year, how often have gangs been involved in fights, attacks, or other violence at your school?" The response choices were: "(a) Never, (b) Once or twice this school year, (c) Once or twice a month, (d) Once or twice a week, or (e) Almost every day". To normalize distribution of responses, these two questions were reconfigured to create the following categories for this study: (1) No gangs - those responding "no" to question one; (2) No gang activity - those responding "no" to question one, and "never" for question two; (3) Some gang activity - those responding "once or twice this school year" or "once or twice a month" to question two; and (4) A lot of gang activity - those responding "once or twice a week or "almost every day" to question two. With most of the factors explored, researchers assumed a linear relationship with the four categories, whereby protective factors were hypothesized to evince a stronger association with "No gangs" when compared to other categories.

Contributing factors

Select items from the "environment questions" were used to measure causal determinants of gang activity. To improve the clarity of the findings, specific questions and indexes that measured various aspects of each causal determinant are listed and explained in the results section. The following are general descriptions of the factors that were posited to have a relationship with gang activity in schools.

School environment. Fourteen continuous items were used that allowed students to rate various aspects of their school environment. The first group of questions measured the level of distractions the students experienced from other students' misbehavior and teachers' disciplinary practices. The second group of questions measured students' knowledge, understanding and perception of school rules. The third group of questions asked students whether they believed their teachers were caring, respectful, and nice. The last two groups of questions measured whether students had adults and peers at school to whom they could talk about problems.

School measures. Seventeen dichotomous yes or no items, in two sections, were used to gauge specific aspects of the school that were posited to have a relationship with gang activity at school. The first section included items that measured whether students had access to popular activities. The second section measured school safety measures such as metal detectors and security guards.

Avoidance behaviors. Eleven dichotomous yes or no questions were used to determine if students altered behaviors in response to violent threats at the school. Examples included staying away from hallways or stairs, cafeteria, school restrooms, activities, or avoiding school all together.

Grades. NCVS-SCS recorded academic achievement with the item, "During this school year, across all subjects have you gotten mostly…" Students who participated in this survey responded by indicating the letter grade, A through F, which they were most likely to achieve during the school year. Codes for the categories were modified so that students who reported mostly A's received scores closer to 4.0, and those reporting mostly F's received scores closer to zero.

Analysis Plan

Initial analytic procedures involved exploratory techniques to reveal the underlying distributions of each response variable. For continuous items used from the "school environment" questionnaire, principle components analysis was used to reduce the data before using multivariate techniques. Multivariate analysis of the variance (MANOVA) was used to test main effects for race and levels of gang activity for associated variables. The hypothesized relationships between gang activity at school and external measures were accepted or rejected based on the p-value. Means plots were used for continuous measures to display the linear relationship between various indicators of gang activity at school and hypothesized dependent variables. Plots also included a dashed reference line on the Y-axis that marked the estimated mean of the variable of interest. The reference line is useful for determining the distribution of scores around the mean for various levels of gang activity.

Stepwise logistic regression analyses were used for dichotomous variables that measured "school measures" and "avoidance behaviors." Logistics procedures were set to predict the “yes” category of the question, "Are there any gangs at your school?" The resulting model was evaluated using likelihood-ratio (LR) tests. Hosmer and Lemeshow chi-square test of goodness of fit was used to test the overall fit of the logistic regression model. The Hosmer and Lemeshow chi-square test was selected because it is considered more robust than the traditional chi-square test.

Statistical Findings

Descriptive information

Of the 12,532 students who participated in this study, black (47.2 percent) and Latino (43.2) students were more than twice as likely to report that gangs were present at their schools as white (18.7 percent) students. When comparing geographic regions, students residing in the West (33.7 percent) and South (66.3 percent) were significantly more likely to report gangs at their schools than students residing in the Northeast (16.7 percent) and the Midwest (20.5 percent). With respect to school type, 28.6 percent of students attending public school reported gangs present at school, compared to 6 percent of private school students. Notably, more than 90 percent of the participants attended public schools.

Twelve percent of the participants reported choosing their school, rather than being assigned a school. Among students who reported choosing a school, 31 percent reported gangs present at their schools, compared to 28.3 percent of students who had been assigned a school. Findings also revealed that 35.2 percent of students who walked to and from school reported gangs at the school. This percentage was significantly higher than for students who took public transportation (29.3 percent), rode in an automobile(25.5 percent), or rode a school bus (25 percent).

Less than one percent of students admitted to bringing a gun to school (no difference between races). Less than two percent said they saw a student with a gun at school (4.4 percent black and 1.2 percent white). Seven percent said they could get a gun without adult supervision if they wanted to (no differences between races). Twenty-six percent of black students, 14.3 percent of Latino students, and 5.4 percent of white students reported passing through metal detectors when entering school. The within race percent of students who reported having security officers at the school was 81.6 percent for black student, 62.8 for white students, and 82.2 for Latino students.

Dimensions of the school environment

To reduce data, principal components analysis (PCA) was used to examine the underlying dimensions of the 14 continuous items on the survey questionnaire that measured the school environment. Factor structure was explored with principal components analysis with varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization. All four factors were accepted based on their eigenvalue that exceeded 1, and the logical arrangement of items. The four-factor solution explained 61 percent of the total variance. Based on the arrangement of items, as presented in

Table 3.1, the names given to the four factors were: (1) School Fairness, (2) School Support, (3) Relationship with Teachers, and (4) Classroom Distractions.

TABLE 3.1: ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX OF STUDENTS' RATINGS OF SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

	Factor			
Statement	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow.	.74			
2. The school rules are strictly enforced.	.72			
3. The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are.	.68			
4. Everyone knows what the school rules are.	.62			
5. The school rules are fair.	.60			
6. At school, I have a friend I can talk to, who cares about my feelings and what happens to me.		.86		
7. At school, I have a friend who helps me with practical problems, who gives good suggestions and advice about my problems.		.86		
8. At school, there is an adult who helps me with practical problems, who gives good suggestions and advice about my problems.		.65		
9. At school, there is an adult I can talk to, who cares about my feelings and what happens to me.		.64		
10. Teachers do or say things that make students feel bad about themselves.			-.78	
11. Teachers treat students with respect.	.35		.71	
12. Teachers care about students.	.35		.69	
13. How often do teachers punish students during your classes?				.86
14. In your classes, how often are you distracted from doing your schoolwork because other students are misbehaving, for example, talking or fighting?				.81
Eigenvalue	2.7	2.6	2.0	1.5
percent total variance	19	18	14	10

Note. Only loadings higher than .35 are presented.

To further confirm the factor structure of the four components derived from (PCA), SEM was used to test the relationship between the four factors for black students. When leaving the model unconstrained, the chi square was 680.57, df = 207, and $p < .001$. Most measures indicated that the model was adequately constructed. Specifically, The Bentler-Bonett (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) normed fit index was .97, the comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990) was .98 in the unconstrained model and the root mean square error of approximation was .02. For the model tested only for black students, paths and covariates were significant between all parameters tested, as indicated by a critical ratio greater than 1.97. Figure 3.1 displays the standardized regression weights for all parameters, indicating that for black students a meaningful relationship exists between (1) School Fairness, (2) School Support, (3) Relationship with Teachers, and (4) Classroom Distractions.

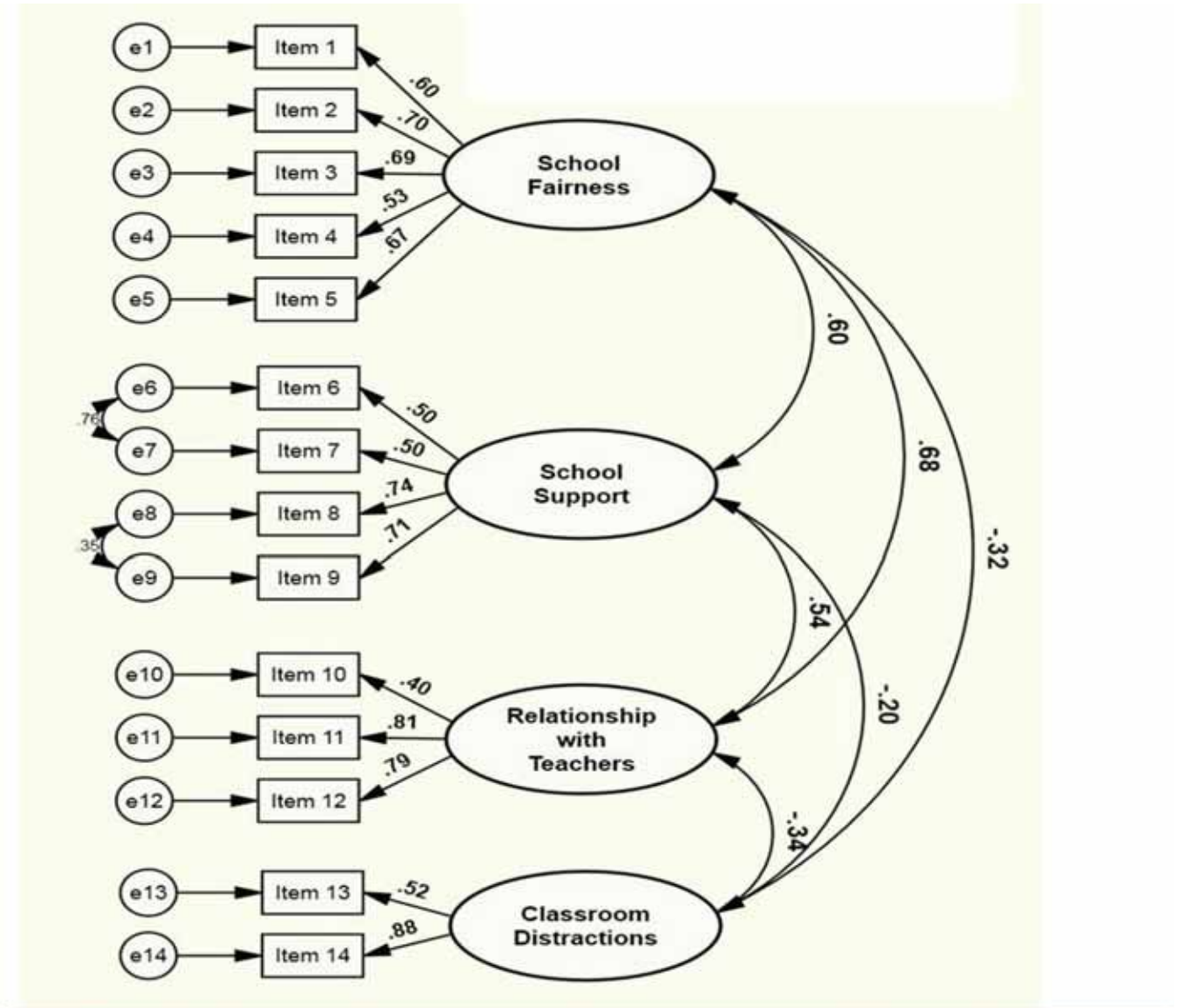


FIGURE 3.1: Confirmatory factor analysis of four components and fourteen items used to measure the school environment. Numbers are standardized estimates of factor loadings and

School-related factors associated with gang activity at schools

Table 3.2 displays the means, standard deviations and F-ratios of school-related factors with a hypothesized relationship with gang activity among black, Latino, and white male students. The table marks variables that are significant by race and level of gang activity across four levels: those students reporting (1) No gangs; (2) No gang activity; (3) Some gang activity; and (4) A lot of gang activity. The sum score of the items comprising the four factors generated through exploratory factor analysis and grade point average were used as dependent factors.

All five of the variables analyzed had a significant relationship with gang activity. Mean scores with a negative relationship with gang activity get smaller when reading the table from left to right as gang activity increases. The opposite is true for the one variable with a positive relationship with gang activity (Classroom Distractions). Classroom Distractions demonstrated the strongest relationship with gang activity. Across races, students at schools with the most gang activity experienced significantly more distractions from peers misbehaving and teachers responding to the misbehavior.

TABLE 3.2: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F-RATIOS OF SCHOOL EXPERIENCES THAT ARE RELATED TO GANG ACTIVITY AT SCHOOL AMONG BLACK, LATINO, AND WHITE SCHOOL-AGE MALES

		Gang Activity					F-Ratio	
	Race	No gangs (M, SD)	None (M, SD)	Some (M, SD)	A lot (M, SD)	Total (M, SD)	Race	Gang activity
School Fairness	Black	12.85 (1.83)	12.30 (2.22)	12.03 (1.87)	11.55 (1.98)	12.45 (1.98)	2.84	43.21**
	White	12.62 (1.77)	12.43 (1.69)	11.93 (1.64)	11.64 (1.92)	12.50 (1.78)		
	Latino	12.73 (1.83)	12.55 (1.66)	12.29 (1.59)	11.88 (1.92)	12.51 (1.81)		
	Total	12.66 (1.79)	12.44 (1.79)	12.05 (1.67)	11.69 (1.94)	12.49 (1.82)		
School Support	Black	13.20 (1.93)	13.04 (2.02)	13.09 (1.73)	12.43 (2.26)	13.03 (2.00)	8.53**	7.89**
	White	13.44 (1.82)	13.22 (1.75)	13.21 (1.86)	13.16 (2.05)	13.39 (1.83)		
	Latino	13.11 (1.90)	13.01 (1.94)	12.86 (1.80)	12.70 (1.88)	13.00 (1.89)		
	Total	13.37 (1.85)	13.14 (1.84)	13.09 (1.82)	12.81 (2.08)	13.27 (1.87)		
Relationship with Teachers	Black	9.29 (1.49)	8.88 (1.76)	8.92 (1.46)	8.24 (1.84)	9.00 (1.63)	18.97**	41.63**
	White	9.76 (1.47)	9.51 (1.39)	9.18 (1.27)	8.84 (1.53)	9.64 (1.47)		
	Latino	9.59 (1.44)	9.50 (1.56)	9.26 (1.39)	8.91 (1.63)	9.42 (1.50)		
	Total	9.68 (1.48)	9.40 (1.52)	9.16 (1.34)	8.69 (1.67)	9.51 (1.52)		
Classroom Distractions	Black	5.03 (1.58)	5.86 (1.50)	5.53 (1.31)	6.02 (1.31)	5.37 (1.55)	2.46	53.14**
	White	5.09 (1.47)	5.28 (1.46)	5.55 (1.32)	5.88 (1.34)	5.18 (1.47)		
	Latino	4.95 (1.51)	5.08 (1.50)	5.61 (1.25)	6.02 (1.45)	5.24 (1.51)		
	Total	5.06 (1.49)	5.33 (1.49)	5.56 (1.30)	5.96 (1.36)	5.22 (1.49)		
Grades	Black	2.92 (0.86)	2.92 (0.91)	2.86 (0.69)	2.61 (0.89)	2.86 (0.86)	42.22**	31.13**
	White	3.25 (0.80)	3.18 (0.77)	3.09 (0.83)	2.93 (0.95)	3.21 (0.81)		
	Latino	3.04 (0.84)	2.73 (0.89)	2.90 (0.78)	2.38 (0.98)	2.88 (0.89)		
	Total	3.18 (0.82)	3.03 (0.85)	3.00 (0.80)	2.67 (0.97)	3.10 (0.85)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; *p < .01; **p < .001

Post hoc analyses of main effects across races and levels of gang activity demonstrated a consistent linear relationship between School Fairness and levels of gang activity among black, Latino, and white students, as illustrated in Figure 3.1a. Figure 3.1b illustrates that, compared to white students, black and Latino students were less likely to perceive support in their school environment. Black students with the most gang activity at school were the least likely to report peer or adult support at school. Figure 2a reveals that compared to white and Latino students, black students were significantly more likely to experience unfairness from teachers.

"In the future, I hope to overcome all of this poverty. I hope to help my community by remodeling all the apartments and giving every family air conditions and heaters. I would also like to get rid of the criminals and gangs."

- Zaniriusz Chambers - 8th Grade

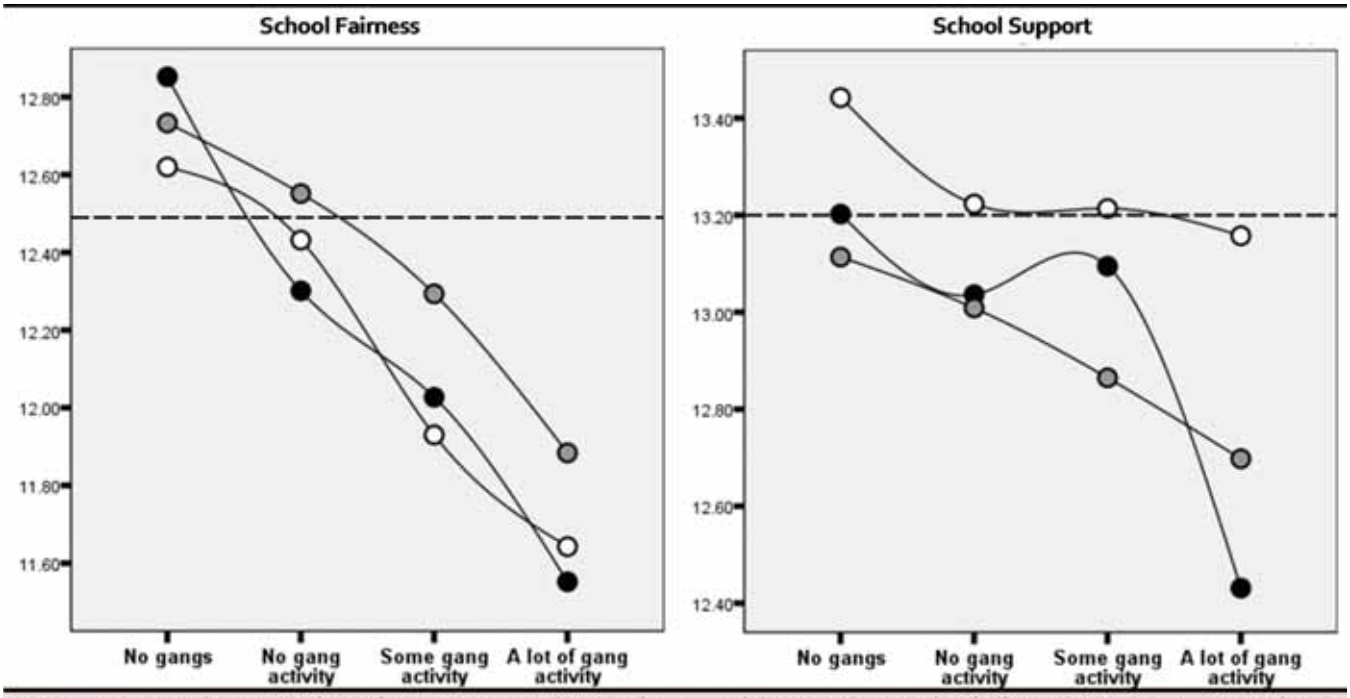


FIGURE 3.2a & 3.2b: Means plots of race (separate plots) and gang activity (X Axis) on school climate (Y Axes) among students. Note. ● = black students; ● = Latino students; and ○ = white students. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable.

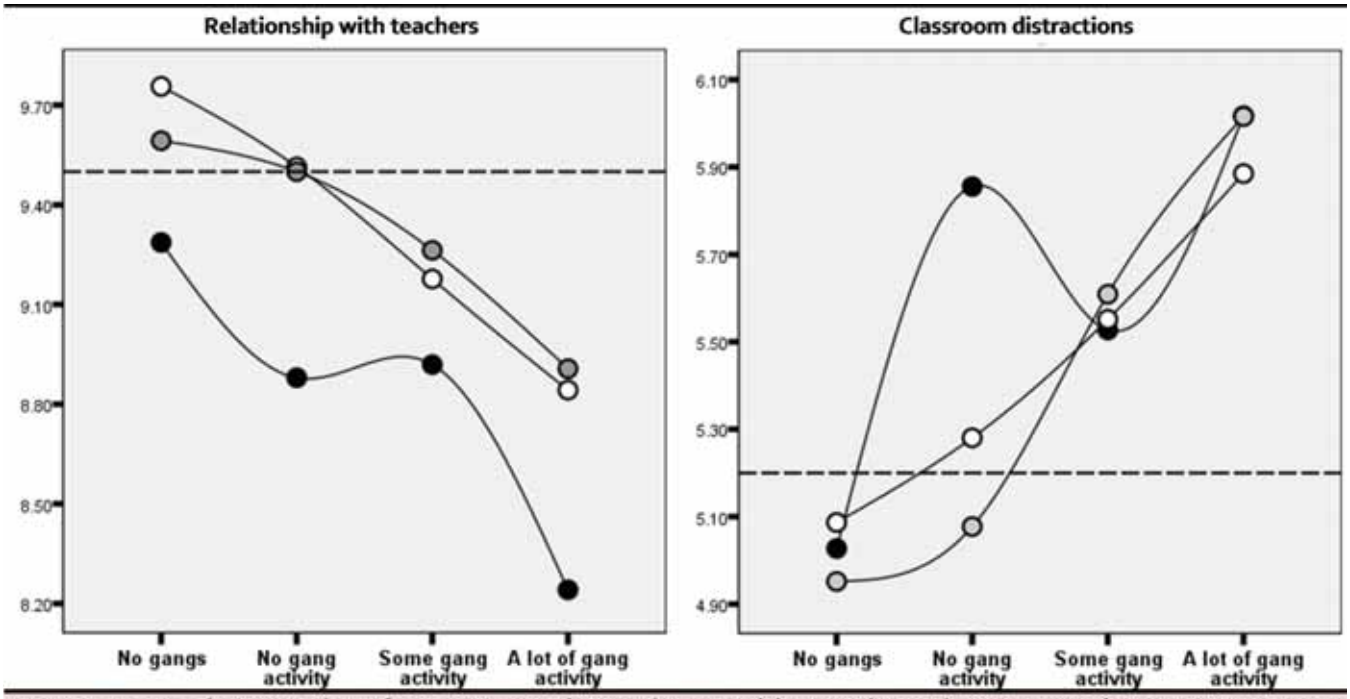


FIGURE 3.3a & 3.3b: Means plots of race (separate plots) and gang activity (X Axis) on classroom experiences (Y Axes) among students. Note. ● = black students; ● = Latino students; and ○ = white students. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable.

School measures and student behaviors and gang activity at schools

Logistic regression was used to explore the relationship between twenty-eight independent factors that were hypothesized to determine the likelihood that gangs were present at the students' schools. Since the study was exploratory in nature, a forward stepwise regression analysis was employed, in which variables were added to the model in order of statistical significance, across three blocks. The first block included school safety

measures such as metal detectors and security guards. The second block included items that measured whether students had access to common school-related activities. The final block included questions that determine if students altered behaviors in response to violent threats at the school.

As depicted in Table 3.3, of the variables tested, ten were accepted into the model based on their significant relationship with gangs at school. The final model was significant ($x^2 = 367.5$, df = 10, $p < .001$), and the resulting equation correctly classified gangs at school in 74.4 percent of the cases. The odds ratios indicated that having metal detectors, security guards, and a requirement that students wear badges were associated with great odds that gangs were present at school. In addition, students with gangs at school were more likely to stay away from school restrooms, avoid extra-curricular activities, and stay home from school. Spirit groups, performing arts, and academic clubs decreased the odds that gangs were present at the school.

School environment factors and academic success

Table 3.4 displays the means, standard deviations and F-ratios of school-related factors and academic success among black, Latino, and white male students. The table marks variables that are significant by race and level of academic success across four levels: those students reporting they make mostly (1) A's; (2) B's; (3) C's; and (4) D's and F's. The sum scores of the items comprising the four factors generated through exploratory factor analysis were used as dependent factors.

All four of the variables analyzed had a significant relationship with grades. Mean scores with a positive relationship with grades get larger when reading the table from left to right as grades improve. The opposite is true for the one variable with a negative relationship with grades (Classroom Distractions). Classroom Distractions demonstrated the strongest relationship with gang activity. Post hoc analyses of main effects across races and grades demonstrated linear relationships that were similar to those found for levels of gang activity.

TABLE 3.3: MULTIPLE LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS TO PREDICT GANG-RELATED ACTIVITY INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL POLICIES AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Variable	B	S.E.	Wald	Exp(B)	Sig
Block 1: School measures to keep students safe?					
Security guards and/or assigned police officers	1.05	.10	107.06	2.86	.00
Metal detectors	.61	.12	25.90	1.85	.00
Locked entrance or exit doors during the day	-.17	.08	4.09	.85	.04
A requirement that students wear badges or picture identification	.60	.09	45.18	1.82	.00
Block 2:Extra-curricular activities sponsored by the school					
Spirit groups, for example, cheerleading or pep club	-.31	.14	4.83	.73	.03
Performing arts, for example, band, orchestra, or drama	-.34	.09	12.93	.71	.00
Academic clubs, for example, debate team, or honor society	-.20	.10	3.90	.82	.05
Block 3:Student responses to school violence					
Stay away from school restrooms	.82	.22	13.65	2.28	.00
Avoid any extra-curricular activities	1.07	.26	16.70	2.92	.00
Stay home from school because someone might harm you	.89	.38	5.45	2.44	.02
Constant	**-6.23**	**1.01**	**37.89**	**na**	**.00**

TABLE 3.4: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F-RATIOS OF SCHOOL EXPERIENCES THAT ARE RELATED TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS AMONG BLACK, LATINO, AND WHITE STUDENTS

		Grades					F-Ratio	
	Race	D's & F's (M, SD)	C's (M, SD)	B's (M, SD)	A's (M, SD)	Total (M, SD)	Race	Grades
School Fairness	Black	14.1 (2.8)	15.2 (2.2)	15.5 (2.6)	15.9 (2.4)	15.4 (2.5)		
	White	14.5 (2.7)	15.1 (2.1)	15.5 (2.3)	15.8 (2.2)	15.6 (2.3)	1.19	22.45**
	Latino	14.7 (2.2)	15.4 (2.3)	15.6 (2.3)	15.9 (2.3)	15.6 (2.3)		
	Total	14.5 (2.6)	15.2 (2.2)	15.5 (2.3)	15.8 (2.2)	15.5 (2.3)		
School Support	Black	12.3 (2.4)	12.6 (1.9)	12.9 (2.0)	13.3 (2.0)	12.9 (2.0)		
	White	13.1 (2.3)	12.8 (1.9)	13.3 (1.8)	13.6 (1.8)	13.3 (1.8)	9.28**	17.90**
	Latino	12.6 (1.8)	12.8 (1.8)	12.9 (1.8)	13.3 (2.0)	13.0 (1.9)		
	Total	12.8 (2.2)	12.8 (1.9)	13.2 (1.8)	13.6 (1.9)	13.2 (1.9)		
Relationship with Teachers	Black	8.7 (1.8)	8.7 (1.5)	9.0 (1.6)	9.4 (1.6)	9.0 (1.6)		
	White	8.8 (1.8)	9.0 (1.4)	9.5 (1.4)	9.9 (1.4)	9.6 (1.5)	9.71**	38.92**
	Latino	8.4 (1.6)	9.2 (1.6)	9.4 (1.4)	9.7 (1.5)	9.4 (1.5)		
	Total	8.7 (1.7)	9.0 (1.5)	9.4 (1.5)	9.8 (1.5)	9.5 (1.5)		
Classroom Distractions	Black	5.8 (1.4)	5.7 (1.2)	5.3 (1.5)	4.9 (1.6)	5.4 (1.5)		
	White	6.0 (1.3)	5.5 (1.4)	5.2 (1.4)	5.0 (1.5)	5.2 (1.5)	.17	36.55**
	Latino	6.2 (1.6)	5.5 (1.4)	5.2 (1.5)	5.0 (1.5)	5.3 (1.5)		
	Total	6.0 (1.4)	5.5 (1.4)	5.2 (1.5)	5.0 (1.5)	5.2 (1.5)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; *p < .01; **p < .001

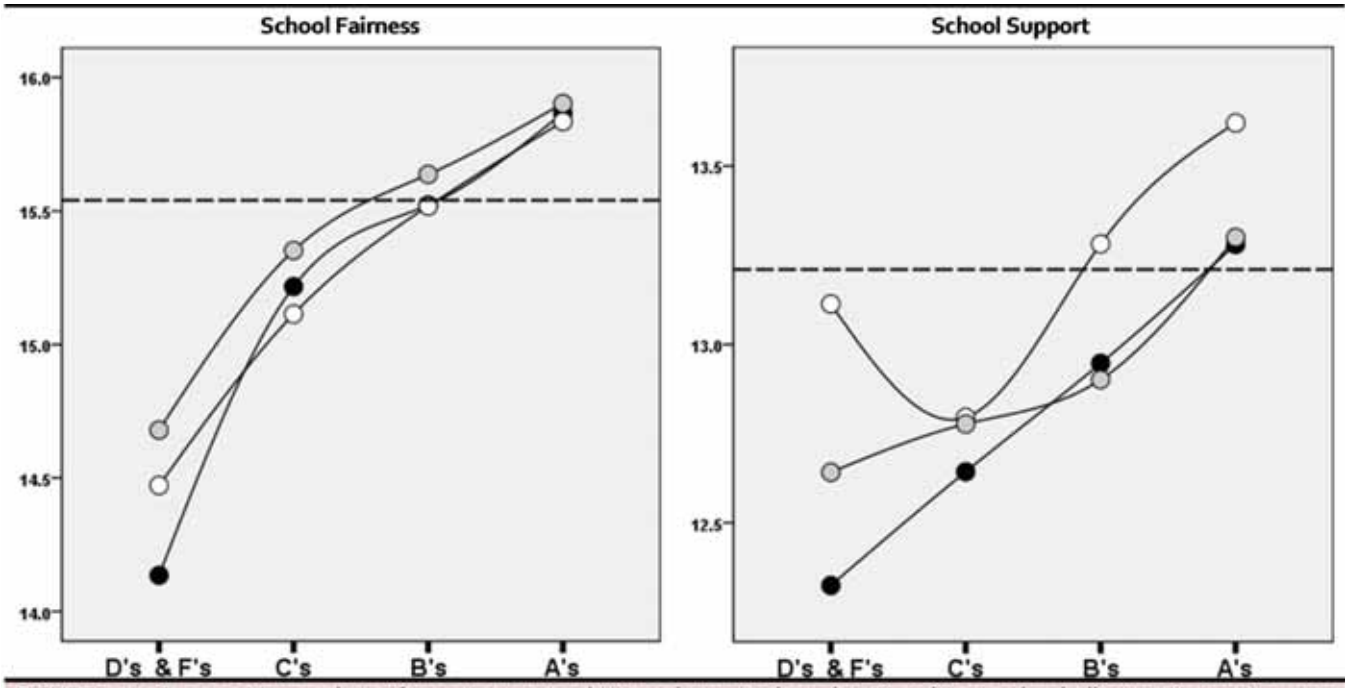


FIGURE 3.4a & 3.4a: Means plots of race (separate plots) and reported grades (X Axis) on school climate (Y Axes) among students. Note. ● = Black students; ● = Latino students; and ○ = White students. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable.

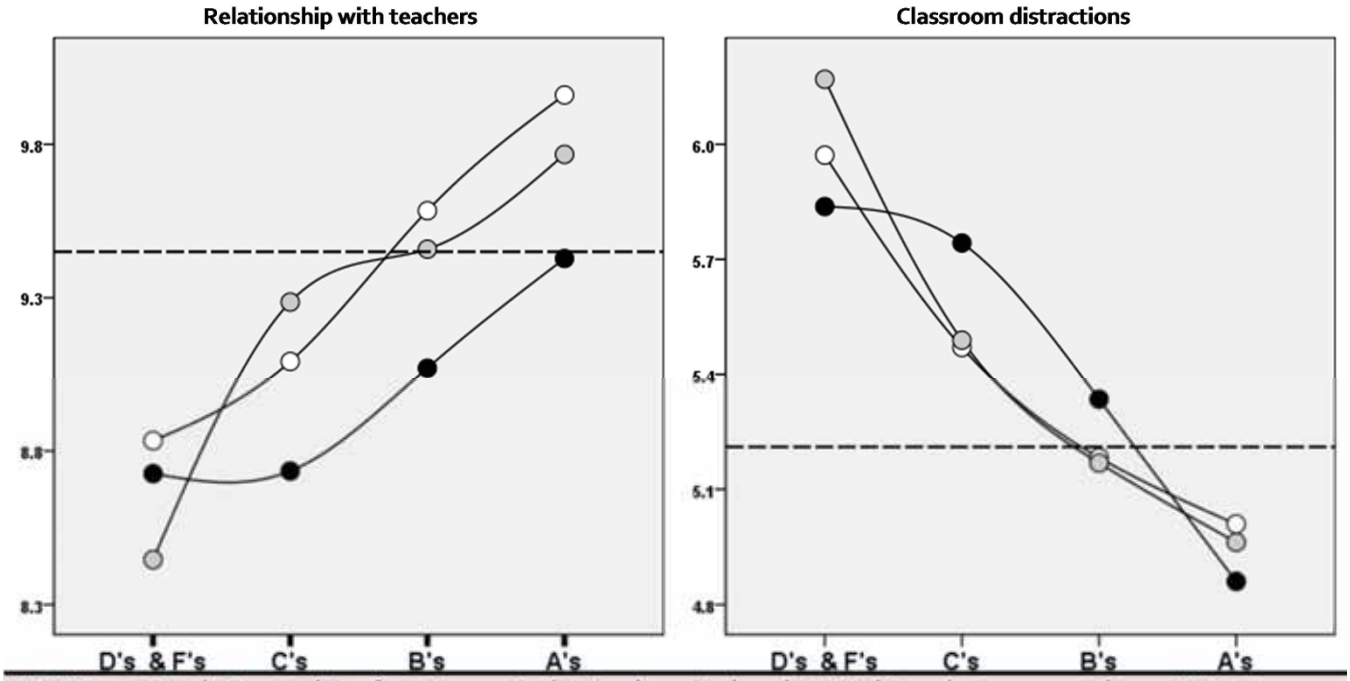


FIGURE 3.5a & 3.5b: Means plots of race (separate plots) and reported grades (X Axis) on classroom experiences (Y Axes) among students. Note. ● = Black students; ● = Latino students; and ○ = White students. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable.

SEM was used to test the structural paths between school fairness, school support, relationship with teachers, and classroom distractions and academic success for black male students. Using the factor relationships as demonstrated in Figure 3.1, the initial measurement model was constructed linking school fairness and school supporting, and hypothesizing a causal path toward the relationship teachers have with students and the frequency of classroom distractions, which ultimately influenced grades in school. The path toward the endogenous variables was tested using multiple group confirmatory factor analysis with Amos version 18 (Arbuckle, 2009).

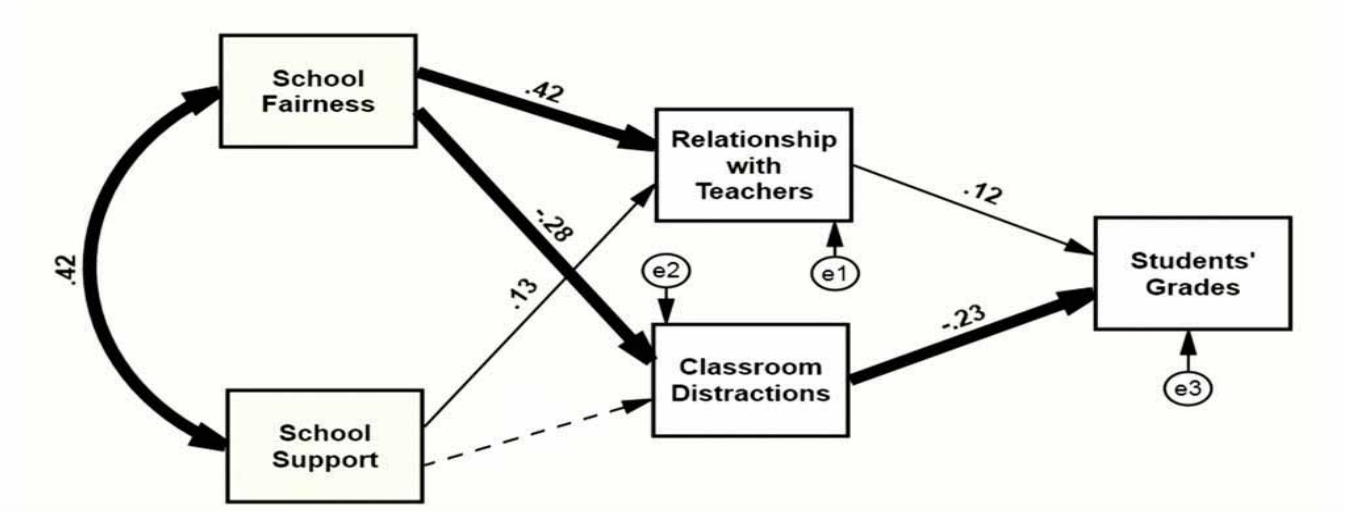


FIGURE 3.6: Structural path model demonstrating the relationship between school environment factors and academic success among school-age black males. Note: The thickest lines represent standardized path estimates that are greater than .20, and the thinnest lines represent estimates that are less than .15. Curved lines with two way arrows represent covariance and straight lines with one way arrow represent paths. The minus sign (-) indicates an inverse relationship. All path coefficients are significant ($p < .01$), except for the parameter represented by the dashed line. Data retrieved from *National Crime Victimization Survey: School Crime Supplement* (United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, & Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007)

When leaving the model unconstrained, the chi square was 111.19, df = 32, and p < .001. The Bentler-Bonett normed fit index was .97, and the comparative fit index (CFI) was .98 in the unconstrained model (Bentler & Bonett, 1980), and the root mean square error of approximation was .02, all indicating that the model was adequately constructed. As demonstrated in Figures 3.6, all parameters were significant when analyzing the critical ratios (C.R. were greater than 1.96), except for the parameter between "School Support" and "Classroom Distractions," for black students. For all races a very strong covariance coefficient emerged between "School Fairness" and "School Support" with "Relationship with Teachers." Standardized estimates of indirect effects for school fairness and grades were significant (p < .01). When comparing the models between black and white male students, one significant difference was found in the direct of effects that Classroom Distractions" and "Relationship with Teachers" have on grades. For black males, "Classroom Distractions" had a significantly stronger indirect relationship with grades when compared to white male students.

Summary of Findings

The results suggest that collectively, students in schools with more violence reported an average GPA of 2.85, compared to students in schools with no gang activity, who reported a collective average of 3.15. Students in schools with gang activity were also more likely to report being distracted from doing schoolwork because of other students misbehaving.

In addition, students in schools with less gang activity were more likely to report that teachers care about students, treat students with respect, spend less time punishing students, and were less likely to report that teachers do or say things that make students feel bad about themselves. Black students were significantly more likely to experience disillusionment with their teachers. Further, students in schools with less gang activity were more likely to report that school rules were fair and that there was an adult he/she can talk to, who cared about his/her feelings.

Importantly, popular school safety measures, including security guards and police officers in school, metal detectors, and picture identification badges were associated with more gang activity. Also associated with less gang activity were spirit groups, for example, cheerleading or pep club; performing arts, for example, band, orchestra, or drama; and/or academic clubs, for example, debate team, honor society, Spanish club, or math club.

The school restroom was identified as the place in the school where students felt most vulnerable to an attack. Research also suggests that violence that happens away from school impacts class performance. Students at schools with gang activity reported avoiding extra-curricular activities, and skipping school to avoid harm. These problems are likely compounded by the finding that students who walk to school fear gang violence significantly more that those who use other modes of transportation.

Finally, the indictors of a functional school environment directly and indirectly influence academic success for black students. Schools that have rules that are clearly understood and fairly administered were also more likely to have positive peer and adult support for students. These positive aspects of the school environment lead to teachers who have better relationships with their students and who spend less time disciplining students, leading to fewer classroom distractions, and ultimately leading to higher levels of academic success.

Implications for Policy and Practice

- Elevating academic standards at the school is a strategy for reducing school violence. School administrators should regularly monitor the collective GPA of their schools, and devise strategies to cultivate the academic identity of their students. Lawmakers should review policies that rigidly focus on standardized test scores as measures of academic success. GPA's can serve as a more fluid measure of academic success, particularly for black male students.
- Coping resources and multicultural training should be allocated to teachers who work in tough learning environments. The findings suggest that, teachers and administrators in schools with problems of

violence spend more time confronting problematic students, and may compromise the academic priorities of the school. The number of black students who report negative relationships with their teachers, especially in schools with more gang activity, needs to be further examined. Black males in schools with more gang activity may be more likely to be falsely identified as gang members. Additionally, teachers, particularly in urban school districts, may become disenchanted because they feel they have little control over the conditions and circumstances that weaken student achievement. Teacher education programs and alternative certification programs like Teach for American also play a role in ensuring that teachers and leaders understand and are able to respond to the needs of diverse classrooms, including implementing programs to recruit more black male teachers.

- Schools should measure holistic qualities of their environment based on their: (1) Abilities to make students feel supported and respected; (2) Skill at creating forums for students to express themselves; and (3) Ability to critique students without making them "feel bad about themselves." Incentives for teachers to become involved with students outside of the classroom, such as through clubs, sports and other activities, could also cultivate more cordial student-teacher relationships. Implementing more extra-curricular activities, particularly those that instill school pride, appreciation of art and culture, and academic identity can reduce violence at the school.
- School administrators who find such measures, as metal detectors and security officers necessary should carefully examine whether these strategies are adding to a culture of violence that increases overall anxiety among teachers and students. The wide racial gap that exists between students who pass through metal detectors when they enter school could be evidence of a larger problem of black and Latino students being treated with less deference than white students at school. All security measures should be implemented with compassion and respect. Young black males who feel disrespected within their learning environments may disengage from school and be more vulnerable to delinquent activities. From a legislative standpoint, provisions of the ESEA should be amended to provide specific guidelines for implementing metal detectors, which includes a requirement of in-service trainings for teachers and administrators on cultural sensitivity before purchasing metal detectors.
- School administrators should take specific measures to secure restrooms, secure routes to school, and determine whether any truancy or lack of participation in school activity is connected to threats of violence. The findings are consistent with previous research that suggests that school violence typically takes place in locations that are not monitored by teachers (Astor, Meyer, & Behre, 1999), such as restrooms. One strategy to reduce risk associated with this finding could be to train janitors to monitor suspicious activity. Also, since students most vulnerable to gang violence are more likely to walk to school, school administrators should build liaisons with the community, and work with surrounding neighbors to reduce violence outside of the school.
- Policies should emphasize the role of extracurricular activities in reducing school violence and improving academic success. Students in schools with less gang activity are more likely to participate in extracurricular activity. Routinely, school administrators should survey students to gauge the overall percent who are participating in spirit groups, for example, cheerleading or pep club; performing arts, for example, band, orchestra, or drama; and/or academic clubs, for example, debate team, honor society, or math club. If the percentage is low, specific strategies should be implemented to promote school activities.
- Through coordinated efforts to align the provisions of ESEA to accommodate schools vulnerable to gang activity, The Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement can spur the development of healthy schools designs through public and private partnerships.

"Mr. Hilton and Mr. Barnes and many more black men at Timberland High School have helped make me become the person that I am today. I am proud to say that these men together are fantastic role models for Black males like me." - **Asa Fludd** - 11th Grade

RETURNING TO SCHOOL FROM JUVENILE DETENTION

The study explored black adolescent detainees' academic potential and motivation to return to school, to inform best practices and policies for juvenile reentry to educational settings. Findings revealed that 90 percent of black male detainees want to return to school post detention, and 45 percent eventually want to go to college. Black males were more likely to evince academic potential when they had a healthy level of self-esteem, adequate future goal orientation, positive mood, family and community involvement, fewer traumatic events, and less delinquent activity. Implications include increasing the capacity and coordination of detention and school counselors, promoting parent and community involvement, and eliminating racial disparities in arrests, convictions, and sentencing.

Relevant Literature

Studies that evaluate the educational needs of youth who are detained in Juvenile Detention Facilities (JDFs) have been documented in the United States for nearly a century. In 1920, an article in the *Journal of Education* recommended a normal school environment for youth detainees, with modern equipment for teachers and students (Drewry, 1920). In more recent history, many challenges have surfaced related to educational services for detained youth, including identifying youth with special education needs (Brown & Robbins, 1979; Glick & Sturgeon, 1999); meeting federal standards for detention-based education with limited funding (Roush, 1983); addressing mental health, substance use problems and trauma among youth detainees (Francis, 1995; McPherson, 1993; L. Smith, 1998); aftercare planning (Hellriegel & Yates, 1999); and addressing cultural needs and institutional racism (Clinkenbeard, Navaratil, Yost, Hill, & Roush, 1996). In 1992, the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act mandated educational opportunities to youth detainees, however, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention found that more than 75 percent of JDFs violated at least one regulation related to providing educational opportunities for youth detainees (Painter, 2008).

One study noted that 68 percent of youth detainees in one sample identified symptoms of a mental health disorder (Nordness, et al., 2002). Female detainees have demonstrated distinct mental health issues related to having higher exposure to sexual trauma (Kelly, Martinez, & Medrano, 2004). An analysis of national trends demonstrated that overcrowded JDFs exhaust educational and health services. The study identified King County (Seattle) and Cook County (Illinois) as facilities that have demonstrated reform by using community-based approaches (Griffinger & Texeira, 2001).

Youth typically enter JDFs with more severe educational deficits than youth with no history of juvenile justice involvement (Keith & McCray, 2002). Literacy, for example was noted to impact learning continuity among youth detainees (Drakeford, 2002). The study found that improving literacy skills among youth detainees also reduced recidivism. Studies have noted that the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act for special education service delivery are also applicable to JDFs (Cramer Brooks, 2008; Leone, Drakeford, & Meisel, 2002). However, today many JDFs offer substandard special education programs. One study recommends more closely scrutinizing special education offerings at JDFs and specially designed courses and certification programs geared toward JDFs (Bailey, 2008).

Character building and decision making programs have also demonstrated efficacy in enhancing the academic potential of youth detainees (Martinez, 2008). An exploratory study found that incarcerated youth in two Nevada youth detention facilities who possessed higher levels of decision-making competence, scored higher on a post-detention success scale (Evans, Brown, & Killian, 2002). Youth who are detained seem to have a clear understanding of their needs while detained. A survey of youth detainees in St. Louis revealed that the greatest perceived needs among detainees were to learn how to make better choices and cultural diversity education (Giovanni, 2002).

Overall, the literature demonstrates that a comprehensive approach to dealing with the educational needs of youth detainees is necessary to help them reach their academic potentials. One study noted that a truly integrative approach will provide robust opportunities for JDFs and schools to collaborate, to provide for a seamless transition of youth from the detention center back to the school (Hellriegel & Yates, 1999). In the case study example, the public school district collaborated with the juvenile justice system by sharing staff resources, having joint training, having interagency involvement with transition plans, and increasing parental involvement. Other successful programs have emphasized: improving the quality of education in JDFs to provide a challenging experience (DuCloux, 2003); peer tutoring programs (David, 2005); having social workers provide detainees with educational material (Sarri & Shook, 2005); technical programs and GED preparation (Conlon, Harris, Nagel, Hillman, & Hanson, 2008); and positive behavior support (C. M. Nelson, Sprague, Jolivette, Smith, & Tobin, 2009).

Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature, the primary hypothesis of this study was that youth detainees with higher levels of self-esteem, self-efficacy, future orientation, and family and community involvement, and lower levels of depression, childhood trauma, and delinquent activity would exhibit more academic potential. The research that emphasized the importance of dealing with mental health issues, led us to the hypothesis that youth detainees with lower levels of depression and higher levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy would evince higher levels of academic potential. In addition, studies cited that linked academic success to character building and decision-making, informed our hypothesis that future goal oriented and pro-social behavior was vital to achieving academic potential. Finally, studies cited that demonstrated the importance of family involvement and community-based approaches; suggest that family and community involvement could enhance academic potential. This study also assessed race and gender differences to determine any unique indicators of higher academic potential among black males and black female detainees.

Methods

Participants

The participants consisted of male and female adolescent social offenders sentenced to two gender specific, secured JDFs. The JDFs served youths from the entire state and were privately operated under contracts with the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. The participants were typically mandated to the JDFs for 90 days, although sentences ranged between 30 and 180 days. At any given time about 300 boys and 120 girls were residing in the two facilities. The youths' ages ranged from 12 to 18 years of age. For the present study, only responses from youth detainees who attended school within the month prior to detention were analyzed.

Procedure

Juvenile detainees, within three days of entering the facility, were approached by a community interviewer to solicit their participation in Project SHARP (Stop HIV and Alcohol-Related Problems), a program addressing the prevention of HIV and alcohol and other drug (AOD) use among juvenile detainees. Researchers worked with the facility staff and provided them with the participant eligibility criteria. The staff then provided researchers with the names of those who met the criteria. Depending on the facility, the staff person was either a counselor or an administrator. The youths were informed that their participation was voluntary and that the information they provided would be handled confidentially and not shared with the YDC staff. Those who agreed signed an assent form, which authorized the researcher to request permission from parents or guardian for the youths to

"Battling negative peer pressure and the severity of cultural and economic deprivation… my unrelenting determination to success is not fortuitous but is the embodiment of … my innate desire to soar as eagles."

- Fred Lee Reed III - 11th Grade

participate. The parents or guardians of these youths were then sent a letter that described the study and informed that their child had agreed to participate. Of the total 4,031 youths approached, 2,766 (68.6 percent) agreed to participate and 2,280 (56.6 percent) actually participated.

The parents or guardians were then asked to call the principal investigator at an indicated phone number if they had any questions or needed additional information about the study. Further, they were asked to provide either passive consent by not replying to the letter or else to deny consent by signing an enclosed form and returning it by a specified date in a stamped, addressed envelope that was enclosed. Approximately 4 weeks after entering the facility, participants completed a baseline questionnaire through interviews. Trained community interviewers who resided in the communities located near the two JDFs conducted face-to-face interviews to collect baseline information on several measures. These community interviewers received an 8-hour group training session, where the project director discussed interviewing techniques, and reviewed and clarified each question in the interview protocol. All interviewers were required to complete a criminal background check with the Department of Juvenile Justice. Female interviewers were consistently matched with female participants, while either a male or female interviewer interviewed male participants. Data were collected over a three-year period between 1999 and 2001.

Measures

Academic potential was the central construct of this study and represented academic resilience indicators that enhanced the likelihood that detainees could successfully reenter school. Study participants responded to the yes or no question, “Do you plan to go back to school when you get out?” In addition, participants responded to the question: "How well do you do in school?" Response options were: “(1) Mostly A’s; (2) Some A’s and some B’s; (3) Mostly B’s; (4) Some B’s and some C’s; (5) Mostly C’s; (6) D’s and F’s; or (7) Are you failing most classes?” To streamline the analysis, the seven categories were collapsed to create four categories consisting of (1) Below Average – F’s and D’s; (2) Average – Some Bs, but mostly Cs; (3) Good – Some A’s but mostly Bs; and (4) Very Good – Mostly A’s.

Self-esteem represented the detainees’ intrinsic values of self-worth, confident and positive self-regard. The self-esteem of the participants was measured using The Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). The scale consists of 10 items rated on a four- point scale with response options ranging from one- “strongly agree” to four -“strongly disagree.” Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem. The scale was initially developed for adolescents but has since been widely used with both younger children and adults.

Self-efficacy referred to the detainee's sense that he/she had mastery of his/her life-chances and the ability to control his/her own fate. Self-efficacy was measured with the Mastery Scale (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978), a 7-item scale with Likert rating ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Sample items include: “I have little control over things that happen to me;" and "There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have."

Future Orientation signified the detainees' tendency to be forward thinking, as represented by being keen to future personal life events and circumstances. Future Orientation was assessed with the Heimberg Future Time Perspective Inventory (FTP). The FTP is a 25 item tool, but for this study 12 items were selected. Response options ranged from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree, with higher scores indicating a longer future time perspective (Heimberg, 1963).

Depression represented the detainees' internal and enduring state of sadness and despondence that may impair normal functioning. Depression was assessed by the Center for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression Scale (CESD) Short Form. The CES-D consists of 9 items, rated on a four-point scale according to how frequently there were experiences the previous week. The scale is sensitive to changes in depressive symptoms that may occur over time (Radloff, 1977).

Family Involvement signified the extent to which the detainee participated in meaningful and routine family activities. Family-social perceptions were assessed using an 11-item rating form that was developed by the

principal investigator. The device was used to assess the participants' perceptions of their families. The scale included questions related to problem solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness, affective involvement, behavior control, and general functioning. Items were rated on a 4-point scale form strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Community Involvement signified the extent to which the detainee participated in regular and meaningful activities in their neighborhoods. Community involvement was assessed by asking participants about their involvement in school, work, church, clubs, organized sports, or other community organizations (e.g., neighborhood groups, self-help groups) during the past month. At all times, participants indicated if they had been involved in each activity (yes = 1, no = 0) as well as their overall level of involvement in each activity on a 4-point scale. Options ranged from 0 to 3, with wording varied depending on the activity.

Childhood Trauma represented the severity, frequency, and nature of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse that the participant may have experienced prior to detention. Trauma was measured using the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ). Researchers used 24 items from the original 28-item self-report retrospective inventory. The scale measures childhood or adolescent abuse and neglect on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Never True to Very Often True. The CTQ contains five subscales, three assessing abuse (Emotional, Physical, and Sexual) and two assessing neglect (Emotional and Physical). Each subscale has five items. A 5-point frequency of occurrence scale is used: "(1) never true, (2) rarely true, (3) sometimes true, (4) often true, and (5) very often true". Test-retest reliabilities with testing over an average 3.6-month period yielded stability coefficients near .80, while the validity ranges from .50 to .75 (Bernstein & Fink, 1998).

Delinquent Activity represented the frequency, severity, and nature of the detainees' criminal involvement that may or may not be related to the detainees' immediate involvement in the juvenile justice system. Delinquent Activity was measured using a scale based on the Seattle Survey Instrument (Binder, Geis, & Bruce, 1988). This instrument assessed self-reported delinquent activity three months before entering the detention facility. In keeping with the original categorization of offences as described by Binder et al. (1988), these activities were classified in three indexes (a) a serious crime index (21 items, i.e. sell something you had stolen, break into a locked car to get something from it, pull a knife, gun or some other weapon on someone just to let them know you mean business); (b) a school and family index (7 items, i.e. been suspended or expelled from school, hit one of your parents/guardians); and (c) a drug index (2 items, sell any type of drugs, hold on to any type of drugs for someone). The response Likert categories were 'never', 'once or twice', 'many times' and 'often' (range: 1-4). Scores were created for each subscale offense index and the total delinquency scale had a score ranging from 1 to 4. Finally, recidivism was measured dichotomously by asking: 'Have you ever been locked up before this time?'

Socio-Demographic and Background Variables. Researchers developed a questionnaire to assess socio-demographic and other background characteristics of participants. Data on age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, family structure, parent status, as well as medical, educational, residential, and juvenile justice history w gathered.

Analysis Plan

The principle analytic technique used in this study was a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) for academic potential among black detainees, with white detainees serving as a comparison group. General linear modeling approaches were used to reveal differences in the relationship between academic potential and associated variables along race and gender lines. The hypothesized relationships between academic potential and external measures were tested with a P-value of .01 where the p was less than .01; the likelihood that the reported result is due to random chance factors is only 1 percent. Means plots are used throughout the results to display the linear relationship between various indicators of academic potential and hypothesized covariates. The plots include a dashed reference line on the Y-axis that marked the estimated mean of the variable of interest. The reference line is useful for determining the distribution of scores around the mean for various levels of pre-detention grades.

Statistical Findings

Descriptive information

Participants were 1,576 adolescents who were detained at a juvenile detention center in the southeastern region of the United States and had been attending school immediately prior to detention. The average age of participants was 15 years old, with a range of 11 to 18, and the average current grade was 8th, with a range of 5th to 12th. The race-gender distribution of participants was 407 black males, 238 white males, 581 black females, and 350 white females.

Plans to return to school

Among the youth detainees, 92.6 percent reported that they planned to return to school after release. Chi-square ($X = 37.61$; $df = 3$; $p < .001$) analysis revealed significant differences between race-gender groups. Black females were the most likely to plan to return to school with 97.1 percent, followed by white females (92.9 percent), black males (89.9 percent), and white males (85.7 percent). Across all race-gender groups, the estimated grade point average based on their reported grades was 2.4. Black females reported the highest grades of 2.6 and black males reported the lowest with 2.3. White females' and white males' estimated grades were both 2.4.

Analysis of variance revealed that participants' plans to return to school were influence by their ages, grade levels, and grades in school at the time of detention. Compared to youth who did not plan to return to school, those planning to return were significantly younger ($F = 92.48$, $df = 1$, $p > .001$), in lower grade levels ($F = 39.09$, $df = 1$, $p > .001$), and had higher grade averages ($F = 5.58$, $df = 1$, $p > .05$). More than half of all participants (52 percent) indicated that they eventually wanted to go to college after graduating from high school. For both black and white females, 59 percent responded that they planned to attend college. Forty-five (45)percent of black males, and 36 percent of white males planned to attend college. When assessing future aspirations, the top five career choices for black males were: (1) athlete; (2) undecided; (3) construction; (4) computer analyst or programmer; and (5) military. For black females the top five choices were: (1) medical profession including doctors and nurses; (2) beauty industry; (3) lawyer; (4) undecided; and (5) teacher.

Influences on Academic Potential across Races

MANOVA was used to test the hypothesis that youth detainees with higher levels of self-esteem, self-efficacy, future orientation, and family and community involvement, and lower levels of depression, childhood trauma, and delinquent activity will exhibit more academic potential, as measured by their pre-detention grades and desire to return to school. Table 4.1 displays the means, standard deviations and F-ratios of factors that have a hypothesized relationship with academic potential among black and white youth detainees. The table marks variables that are significant by race, and reported grades prior to detention.

Higher levels of self-esteem, future orientation, and family and community involvement, and lower levels of depression, childhood trauma, and delinquent activity had a significant relationship with pre-detention grades. Of the eight variables analyzed, self-efficacy was the only variable that did not have a significant relationship with pre-detention grades. On Table 4.1, mean scores with a negative relationship with pre-detention grades, such as childhood trauma and depression, get smaller when reading from left to right as academic performance increases. The opposite is true for the variables, such as family activity and community involvement, with a positive relationship with academic achievement. Five of the eight variables were significant for race. When compared to white detainees, black detainees reported higher levels of self-esteem, family activities and community involvement, and less childhood trauma. Black detainees also reported more behavior problems and higher levels of depression than white detainees.

TABLE 4.1: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F RATIOS OF FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH PRE-DETENTION ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG BLACK AND WHITE DETAINEES

Measures	Race	Grades before detention					F Ratio	
		Below Avg. (M, SD)	Avg. (M, SD)	Good (M, SD)	Very Good (M, SD)	Total (M, SD)	Race	Grades
Self-Esteem	Black	25.75 (3.97)	26.07 (3.40)	26.52 (3.26)	26.04 (3.79)	26.20 (3.57)	7.36*	5.65**
	White	24.39 (4.82)	25.62 (3.48)	25.75 (3.64)	26.03 (3.50)	25.49 (3.96)		
	Total	25.11 (4.43)	25.94 (3.41)	26.27 (3.41)	26.04 (3.68)	25.94 (3.73)		
Self-Efficacy	Black	13.27 (3.82)	13.99 (3.36)	13.44 (3.42)	13.63 (3.87)	13.53 (3.62)	5.33*	1.70
	White	13.58 (3.68)	13.44 (3.59)	12.83 (3.46)	12.34 (3.57)	12.90 (3.59)		
	Total	13.41 (3.75)	13.83 (3.42)	13.24 (3.44)	13.13 (3.81)	13.30 (3.62)		
Future Orientation	Black	40.55 (8.12)	41.27 (7.06)	42.21 (7.14)	43.08 (7.99)	42.10 (7.60)	2.28	10.49**
	White	38.72 (8.55)	40.92 (7.13)	41.96 (7.27)	42.51 (8.02)	41.26 (7.96)		
	Total	39.69 (8.36)	41.17 (7.05)	42.13 (7.18)	42.86 (7.99)	41.79 (7.74)		
Depression Scale	Black	23.06 (6.45)	25.26 (6.07)	25.54 (5.98)	24.30 (6.13)	24.73 (6.17)	1.83	3.76*
	White	23.72 (6.96)	24.74 (6.13)	23.97 (6.79)	23.49 (6.93)	23.81 (6.82)		
	Total	23.37 (6.69)	25.11 (6.07)	25.02 (6.30)	23.99 (6.45)	24.39 (6.43)		
Family Involvement	Black	28.26 (8.32)	30.31 (7.23)	31.67 (6.96)	32.94 (7.75)	31.35 (7.62)	38.3**	8.26**
	White	27.29 (7.98)	27.51 (6.69)	28.32 (7.71)	27.99 (7.54)	27.90 (7.64)		
	Total	27.80 (8.16)	29.51 (7.17)	30.56 (7.38)	31.04 (8.03)	30.07 (7.80)		
Community Involvement	Black	16.18 (5.07)	17.08 (4.27)	18.07 (4.45)	18.95 (4.75	17.92 (4.72)	62.1**	11.73**
	White	14.61 (4.25)	14.95 (4.26)	15.44 (4.42)	15.89 (5.07	15.34 (4.60)		
	Total	15.45 (4.76)	16.47 (4.36)	17.20 (4.61)	17.78 (5.09	16.96 (4.84)		
Childhood Trauma	Black	38.67 (16.50)	35.66 (11.61)	34.20 (11.46)	35.73 (14.83)	35.55 (13.53)	0.0	4.82**
	White	38.10 (14.74)	33.26 (10.67)	35.56 (12.72)	37.18 (13.89)	36.54 (13.53)		
	Total	38.40 (15.67)	34.98 (11.37)	34.65 (11.90)	36.29 (14.47)	35.92 (13.54)		
Delinquent activity	Black	47.87 (13.21)	44.59 (11.81)	42.49 (10.59)	40.68 (10.26)	43.05 (11.34)	10.0**	20.39**
	White	45.04 (11.02)	41.31 (7.71)	40.26 (8.71)	40.43 (9.07)	41.58 (9.57)		
	Total	46.54 (12.29)	43.66 (10.88)	41.75 (10.05)	40.58 (9.81)	42.51 (10.74)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; *p < .01; **p < .001

Figures 4.1a and 4.1b illustrate the linear relationship between two personal factors that evinced significant effects on pre-detention grades for black and white youth detainees. Figure 4.1a demonstrates that youth who scored higher on the future orientation scale were more likely to report that they generally received A's and B's in school prior to detention. Conversely, youth admitting to more delinquent behaviors were more likely to report receiving mostly D's and F's prior to detention. Black students were significantly more likely to report delinquent behaviors when compared to white students.

Figures 4.2a and 4.2b demonstrate that external resources, including family activities and community involvement, had a significant impact on grades, particularly among black youth detainees. There was an interaction effect for family activities ($F = 4.00$, $df = 1$, $p > 01$), indicating that while family activity significantly improved grades for black youth detainees, no such relationship existed among white youth detainees.

Influences on Academic Potential across Gender

A second MANOVA was completed between black male and black female participants to explore gender differences in the black youth detainees' levels of self-esteem, self-efficacy, future orientation, family and community involvement, depression, childhood trauma, and delinquent activity, and their respective relationships with academic potential, as measured by their pre-detention grades and desire to return to school. Table 4.2 displays the means, standard deviations and F-ratios of factors that have a hypothesized relationship with academic potential between black male and female youth detainees. When computing F-ratios for pre-detention grades only for the black participants, all measures, except self-esteem and self-efficacy, had a significant relationship. Significant differences surfaced between black male and female youth

detainees for self-efficacy, depression, trauma and delinquency. Compared to black females, black males scored lower on measures of self-efficacy, depression, and trauma, and higher on the measure of delinquency.

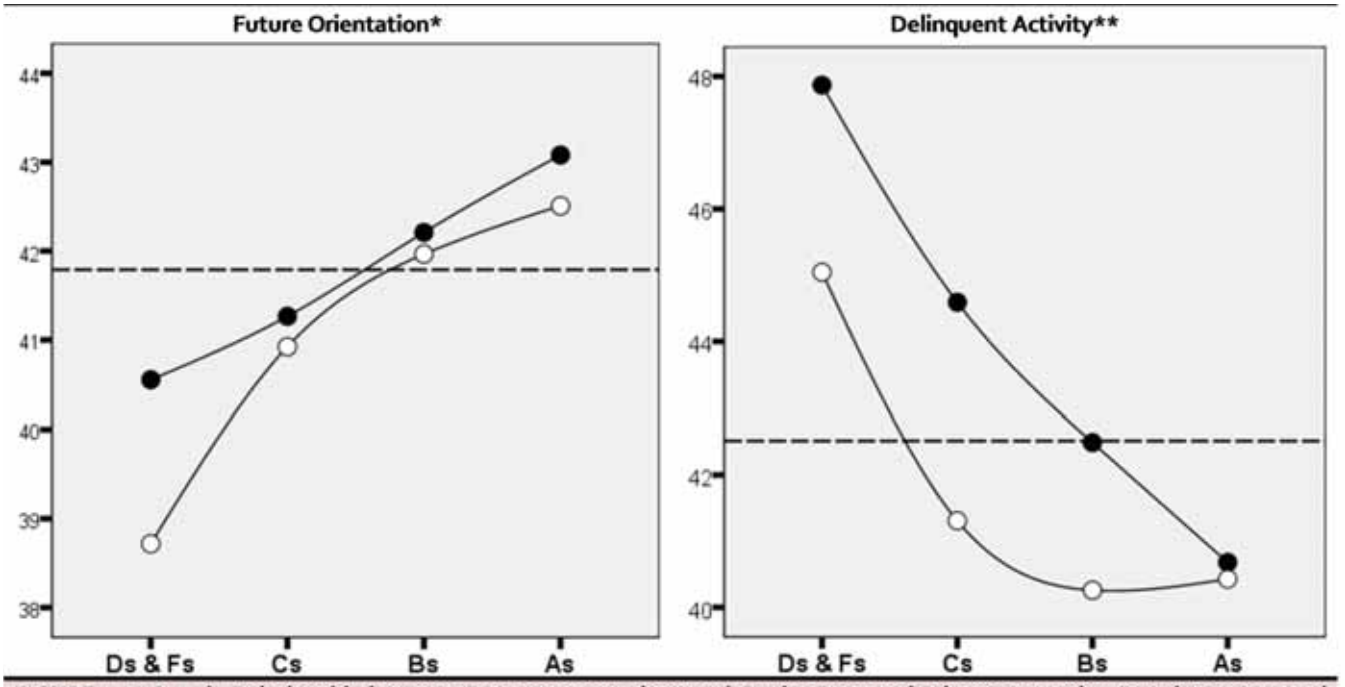


FIGURE 4.1a & 4.1b: Relationship between Race (separate plots) and Grades Reported Prior to Detention (X Axis) on Personal Characteristics (Y Axes) among Adolescent Detainees. Note. ● = black adolescent detainees; ○ = white adolescent detainees. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable. *Main effect for grades; **Main effects for grades and race.

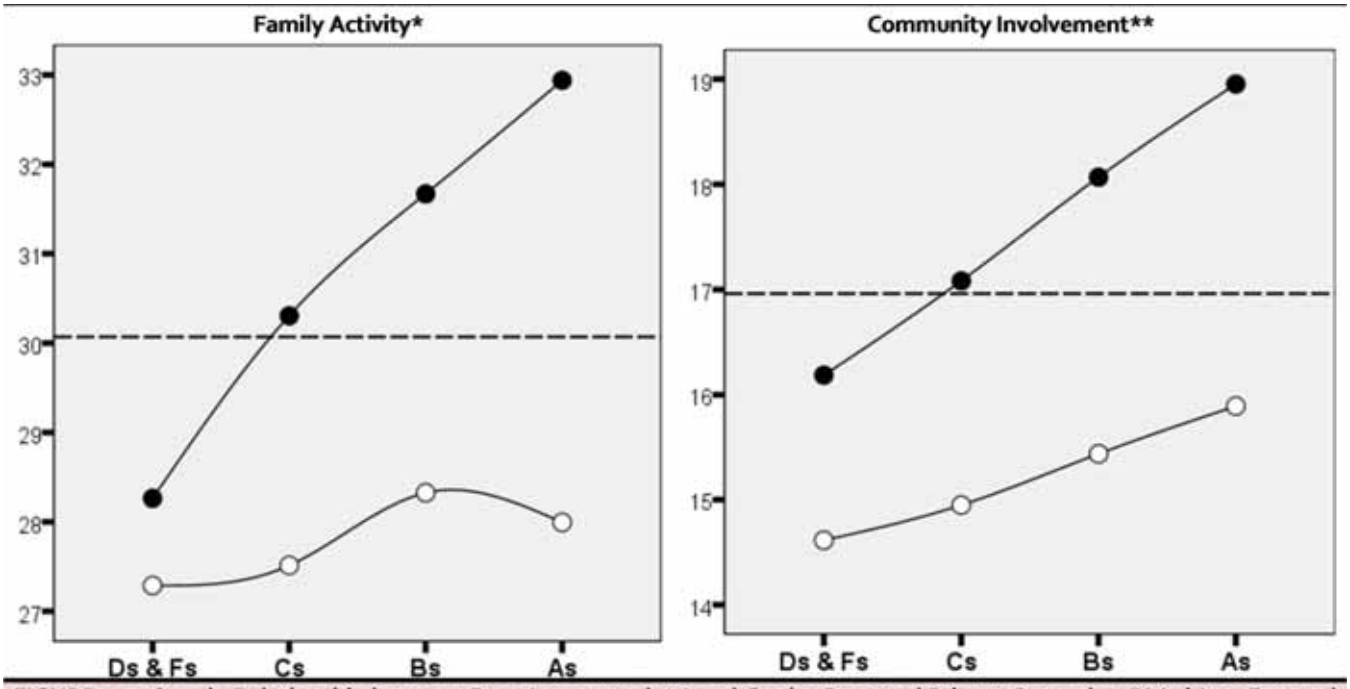


FIGURE 4.2a & 4.2b: Relationship between Race (separate plots) and Grades Reported Prior to Detention (X Axis) on External Resources (Y Axes) among Adolescent Detainees. Note. ● = black adolescent detainees; ○ = white adolescent detainees. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable. *Main and interaction effects for grades and race; **Main effects for grades and race.

TABLE 4.2: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F RATIOS OF FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH PRE-DETENTION ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG MALE AND FEMALE AFRICAN AMERICAN DETAINEES

Measures	Gender	Grades before detention					F-Ratio	
		Below Avg. (M, SD)	Avg. (M, SD)	Good (M, SD)	Very Good (M, SD)	Total (M, SD)	Gender	Grades
Self-Esteem	Male	26.13 (3.96)	25.92 (3.74)	26.63 (3.21)	26.46 (3.36)	26.41 (3.47)		
	Female	25.52 (3.95)	26.13 (2.97)	26.26 (3.44)	26.00 (3.86)	26.03 (3.66)	1.60	1.64
	Total	25.78 (3.96)	26.02 (3.37)	26.43 (3.34)	26.11 (3.75)	26.18 (3.59)		
Self-Efficacy	Male	12.75 (3.47)	12.41 (3.17)	13.07 (3.36)	13.64 (3.84)	13.02 (3.45)		
	Female	13.98 (3.89)	14.92 (2.91)	13.79 (3.52)	13.50 (3.81)	13.81 (3.66)	19.36**	.27
	Total	13.45 (3.76)	13.65 (3.28)	13.46 (3.46)	13.53 (3.81)	13.50 (3.60)		
Future Orientation	Male	39.87 (7.61)	41.86 (7.41)	41.37 (6.98)	41.99 (7.26)	41.25 (7.23)		
	Female	40.38 (8.53)	40.72 (6.31)	42.74 (7.46)	43.34 (7.91)	42.38 (7.80)	1.02	4.93*
	Total	40.16 (8.13)	41.30 (6.88)	42.11 (7.27)	43.01 (7.76)	41.93 (7.59)		
Depression Scale	Male	19.61 (6.14)	17.51 (4.80)	17.86 (5.53)	18.17 (5.63)	18.21 (5.61)		
	Female	23.07 (6.32)	21.69 (6.72)	21.25 (5.99)	21.31 (6.01)	21.62 (6.14)	76.59**	4.86*
	Total	21.58 (6.46)	19.56 (6.17)	19.69 (6.02)	20.54 (6.06)	20.27 (6.17)		
Family Involvement	Male	27.45 (8.13)	29.37 (7.13)	30.88 (7.04)	33.36 (6.53)	30.45 (7.41)		
	Female	27.84 (8.61)	30.23 (7.79)	31.71 (7.48)	32.21 (8.41)	31.10 (8.18)	.20	18.63**
	Total	27.67 (8.39)	29.79 (7.45)	31.33 (7.28)	32.49 (7.99)	30.84 (7.89)		
Community Involvement	Male	15.74 (4.70)	16.59 (4.18)	17.69 (4.36)	18.01 (4.72)	17.22 (4.53)		
	Female	15.70 (5.24)	16.79 (4.51)	17.91 (4.54)	18.56 (5.03)	17.67 (4.94)	.51	14.11**
	Total	15.71 (5.00)	16.69 (4.33)	17.81 (4.45)	18.42 (4.95)	17.49 (4.79)		
Childhood Trauma	Male	35.30 (12.10)	34.48 (8.89)	32.16 (8.04)	31.32 (7.94)	32.93 (9.16)		
	Female	41.48 (18.50)	38.11 (14.91)	37.29 (15.37)	37.49 (16.62)	38.15 (16.40)	30.57**	4.19*
	Total	38.83 (16.32)	36.27 (12.31)	34.92 (12.78)	35.98 (15.19)	36.08 (14.20)		
Delinquent activity	Male	51.93 (14.02)	46.67 (12.46)	45.39 (12.01)	43.79 (13.73)	46.56 (13.06)		
	Female	45.75 (12.20)	41.74 (8.95)	41.33 (10.53)	40.22 (8.62)	41.72 (10.23)	37.04**	16.11**
	Total	48.41 (13.34)	44.24 (11.11)	43.20 (11.41)	41.10 (10.21)	43.64 (11.68)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; *p < .01; **p < .001

As demonstrated by Figures 4.3a and 4.3b, black male and female youth detainees with higher levels of depression and delinquency were more likely to report receiving D's and F's in school. When looking at the mean score of their peers, represented by the dashed line across the Y-axes, for both depression and delinquency, youth detainees reporting D's and F's were significantly above the mean, whereas A and B students were at or below the mean. The graphs also show the stark differences between black male and female scores on depression and delinquency.

Summary of Findings

The results of this study provide clear evidence that potential exists for detained youths to reenter the school setting if their personal and emotional base is supported and they have adequate family and community resources. Over 90 percent of all detained youths indicated the desire to return to school, which suggests that the vast majority of youth detainees understand the importance of school. In spite of the natural disruptions that juvenile detention has on academic progress, more than half of the detained youth planned to pursue college and maintained lofty career aspirations.

Since only 10 percent of the participants indicated that they were not planning to return to school, self-reported grades prior to detention were used as the key indicator of academic potential. Findings revealed that youths were more likely to evince academic potential when they had a healthy level of self-esteem, adequate future goal orientation, positive mood, family and community involvement, fewer traumatic events, and less delinquent activity. Family and community involvement had a more pronounced effect on the academic potential of black youth detainees.

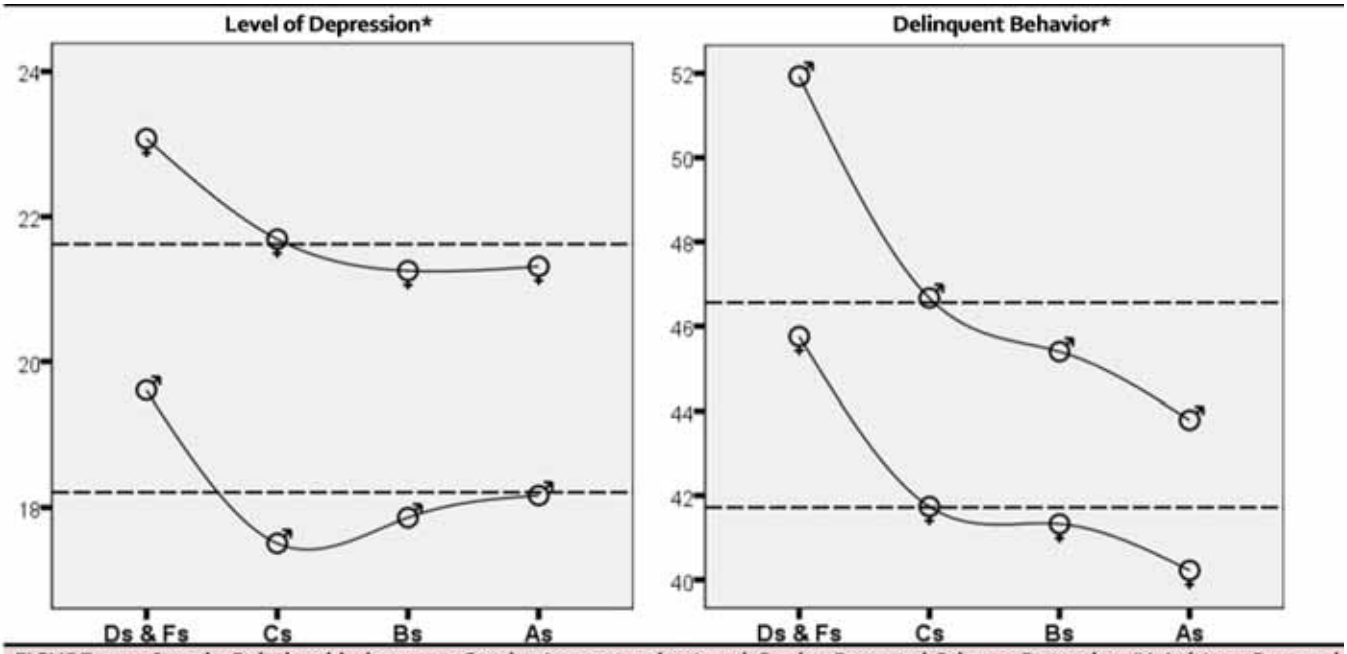


FIGURE 4.3a & 4.3b: Relationship between Gender (separate plots) and Grades Reported Prior to Detention (X Axis) on Personal Factors (Y Axes) among African American Adolescent Detainees. Note. ♀ = Female adolescent detainees; ♂ = Male adolescent detainees. The dashed reference lines on the Y-axis through the respective interpolation lines marks the estimated means of the dependent variables for each gender. *Main effects for grades and gender.

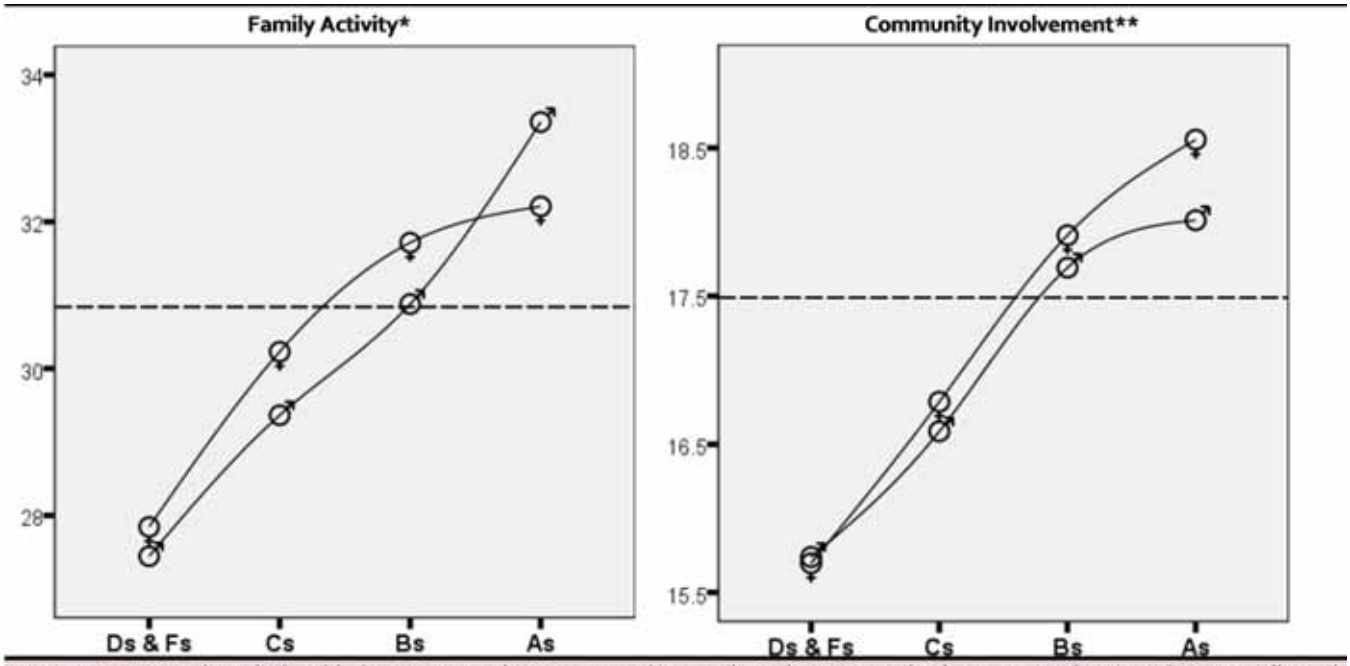


FIGURE 4.4a & 4.4b: Relationship between Gender (separate plots) and Grades Reported Prior to Detention (X Axis) on Family and Community Involvement (Y Axes) among African American Adolescent Detainees. Note. ♀ = Female adolescent detainees; ♂ = Male adolescent detainees. The dashed reference lines on the Y-axis through the respective interpolation lines marks the estimated means of the dependent variables for each gender. *Main effects for grades.

The study also revealed some insights into gender differences between black youth detainees with respect to academic potential. When compared to all other race-gender groups, black female detainees were more likely to have plans to return to school after detention, have a desire to attend college, report the highest grades prior to detention, and have the most ambitious career aspirations. Other sources of resilience for black female detainees appeared related to their higher levels of self-efficacy and less delinquent activities when compared

to black males. Consistent with previous research (Kelly, et al., 2004; Nordness, et al., 2002), factors that appear to place black female detainees at risk for not reaching their academic potentials are related to their higher levels of measured depression and increased vulnerability related to experiencing a traumatic event during childhood.

Black male detainees are also very likely to plan to return to school and well over half desire to eventually go to college or a vocational education program. Compared to black females, they enter detention with lower measured levels of depression and traumatic events, but they have less measured levels of self-efficacy. Black males also enter juvenile detention with more serious delinquent activity, which can diminish their academic potential. The findings also provide some evidence that black males have difficulty assessing realistic career options. For example, the most frequently counted career aspiration for black males was a professional athlete, followed by being uncertain. Like black females, having a high level of family and community involvement greatly reinforced academic potential.

Implications for Policy and Practice

- Policies that increase funding for detention counselors and social workers could help to improve the emotional well being of detainees. Juvenile justice policy should recognize the significant contribution of emotional well being to the successful reentry to school for black detainees. Since community involvement and family are significantly linked to black detainee's academic potential, greater emphasis should be placed on family counseling, loss and bereavement, and community empowerment. In addition, pro-social skills training programs could reduce behaviors associated with delinquent acts among black students. Counseling and mental health services geared toward juvenile ex-offenders should use positive asset development to build self-esteem and pro-social attitudes. Positive developmental assets include motivation, positive emotionality, openness to challenge and discovery, hopeful purpose, moral and pro-social orientation, and spiritual development (Scales, Benson, Roehlkepartain, Sesma, & van Dulmen, 2006).
- Consistent with findings in previous studies (Jackson & Moore, 2006), the findings also reinforce the need for college access programs for black detainees. With the large number of youth detainees who aspire to attend college, any policy that limits their access to federal Pell grants or other student aid because of their past failing is likely to reduce their level of motivation and academic potential (Tewksbury & Taylor, 1996). Programs like GEAR UP and TRIO or rites of passage programs designed to support positive development, should be expanded and further developed in schools with high concentrations of African-American male youths.
- Juvenile detention facilities should also increase attention to parent involvement in detainees' rehabilitative experiences. The explosion of the black male inmate population has conceivably contributed to the overrepresentation of black youths in detention centers. Practices that emphasize mentoring programs and other means to develop realistic career goals, particularly among black males, are likely to also improve academic potential. Supplementing Juvenile Detention Facility-based education with community resources and academic assistance can also help to build character, which can elevate academic potential. The Youth PROMISE Act represents pending legislation that would plan and evaluate evidence-based practices for juvenile delinquency and gang prevention and intervention, specifically for youths in impoverished communities.
- Overall, juvenile justice policies should be examined to reduce the frequency and burden of jail and detention center involvement among black students. NCLB mandates for educational standards in juvenile detention centers should be followed to minimize academic distractions. In addition, the over-representation of black males in the juvenile justice system needs to be addressed by targeting biases in arrests and sentencing. Beyond minimizing distractions, with reauthorizations of ESEA we have an opportunity to ensure that young detainees have meaningful transition plans that will enable them to move back to and successfully graduate from high school.

REDUCING DRUG-RELATED ARRESTS

The goal of this study was to establish culturally relevant priorities for programs aimed at preventing and treating drug selling among black adolescent males. Findings revealed important school, family, social and behavioral links to selling drugs, which have implications for alternatives to juvenile incarceration. Implications include preventing drug selling through peer and parent education, school reform, social skills training, and eliminating racial disparities in the juvenile justice system.

Relevant Literature

Research studies on drug dealers began to appear in the early 1970s. In 1973, a study that focused specifically on youth drug dealers suggested working with drug sellers in group settings using therapy, psychodrama, and guided imagery (Trussell, 1973). During the same decade, Congress passed the *Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970* (U. S. Congress, 1978). Scholarly critique of the legislation suggested that the law implicitly viewed middle class white drug addicts as victims, and drug dealers as social menaces (Peterson, 1985).

In the 1980s, with the rise of crack cocaine in urban communities along with subsequent spikes in violence across the United States, research and media began to juxtapose drug dealing with a subculture of violence, gangs, and criminal activity (Correl, Navarro, Rabb, Skolnick, & Skolnick, 1990; Lamar Jr, 1988; Skolnick, 1990). Research specifically on youth drug dealers noted that seasoned drug dealers used children because of their impressionability and their ability to elude the criminal justice system (Roth, 1990).

In the 1990s,"tough on crime" policies and attitudes began to have profound effects on the juvenile justice system. The nonviolent drug offender population became larger than the violent offender population (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2009). In the same decade, researchers began to make important observations about the circumstances of youth and petty drug dealers. In one study of 20 incarcerated youths ages 14-17, Currie (1991) noted the presence of youth drug dealers from a variety of cultural backgrounds, including middle class white children (Currie, 1991). Similarly, another report characterized youth drug dealers as a diverse group, that was tangentially related to gangs, where few advance to high level dealing, and many have drug problems (Torbet, 1992). The major findings of several qualitative studies were that most youth dealers are low level and primarily deal drugs because of drug addictions and poverty (Robertson & Waters, 1994; Tunnell, 1993). Notwithstanding, one large longitudinal study demonstrated a clear link between youth drug selling and handgun use and violence (Huizinga, Loeber, & Thornberry, 1995).

Over the last two decades, several programs have surfaced that targeted youth drug dealers. One program, "Operation Weed and Seed" demonstrated marginal effectiveness as a prevention program because social programs were underfunded, leaving only an increased police presence in poor communities (Franc, 1992). Recently, juvenile and drug courts have surfaced to deal with some of the nuanced issues related to youth drug dealing (Hiller, et al., 2010). However, these programs are relatively new and have not been subject to systematic investigation. Some early evidence suggests that the programs primarily operate in predominately black communities and can introduce youth to the criminal justice system who primarily need treatment (Leviton, Schindler, & Orleans, 1994; McBride, Terry-McElrath, VanderWaal, Chriqui, & Myllyluoma, 2008; McCollister, French, Sheidow, Henggeler, & Halliday-Boykins, 2009).

Few studies currently exist in the literature on ways to effectively prevent and treat drug selling among teens. One study's findings suggested that low levels of parental monitoring, parent substance abuse and deviant peer affiliations contributed to drug selling (Little & Steinberg, 2006). Preventative strategies can be intuited from other studies which have linked youth drug selling to fatherless homes and other high risk behaviors (Steinman, 2005), gang membership, and observations of drug selling in their neighborhood (Bellair & McNulty, 2009; Swahn, Bossarte, West, & Topalli, 2010), and deviant peer affiliations (Flom, Friedman, Jose, & Curtis, 2001).

Several issues gleaned from the literature are central to this study: (1) The deep and persistent racial disparities that exist in drug-related juvenile arrest, detention, conviction and sentencing; (2) how to best accommodate youth being released from prison so that they make a successful reentry to their communities; and (3) how to structure the community, family and schools to prevent drug selling behavior among youth.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature, the primary hypothesis of this study was that youth detainees with higher disapprovals of drug use, more positive relationships with parents, better experiences in school, and less delinquent behaviors will be less likely to sell drugs. The research that emphasized the importance of family led us to the hypothesis that youth who sold drugs will have parents who are less compassionate, more lax with boundaries, and more indifferent to drug use. In addition, studies cited that linked drug dealing to community resources led us to the hypothesis that youth who have never sold drugs will be more involved in the school and in religious activities. Studies cited that indicated that youth drug dealers are more prone to other criminal acts informed the hypothesis that youth drug dealers will be more likely to have used a gun, stolen property, or been involved in physical fights. Finally, this study posited that there would be distinct racial differences in the correlates of drug dealing, stemming from more contact with the juvenile justice system and higher rates of poverty among black and Latino drug dealers.

Method

Participants

The study participants included black, Latino, and white adolescent males between the ages of 12 and 17 who completed the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (United States Department of Health and Human Services, et al., 2009). The dataset was selected because it had a clear indicator of drug selling; had an adequate sample of black, Latino and white participants; was a national survey that included multiple states and geographic areas; and had adequate measures of contributing factors, such as parent relationship, school environment, and involvement in other delinquent activities. The database is indexed for public analysis at the *Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research*.

Procedure

The NSDUH used a stratified 50-state design with a multistage area probability sample for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The design oversampled youths and young adults, so that each state's sample was evenly distributed among major age groups. Micro Agglomeration, Substitution, Subsampling and Calibration (MASSC) methods were used to protect respondent confidentiality. The steps included eliminating variables for which there was a high risk that individuals may possibly be identified and collapsing the values of other variables.

Youths age 12-17 years were selected for participation in the survey based on multistage area probability sampling. Each respondent who completed a full interview was given a $30 incentive. The resulting sample of the NSDUH was 68,736. Of the total sample, the participants of this study consisted of a subsample of black, white, and Latino adolescent males who responded to the survey questions relevant to this study in 2007.

Measures

Drug selling. Drug selling was measured with the question, "During the past 12 months, how many times have you sold illegal drugs?" The response choices were: (1) 0 times; (2) 1 or two times; (3) 3 - 5 times; (4) 6 - 9 times; or (5) 10 or more times. To normalize the frequency of the responses, this question was reconfigured to create the following categories for this study: (1) Never - those responding "0 times"; (2) Once or twice; and (3) More than twice - those responding "3 - 5 times," "6 - 9 times," or "10 or more times." With most of the factors explored, researchers assumed a linear relationship with the three categories, whereby protective factors were hypothesized to evince a stronger association with "Never" when compared to other categories.

Contributing factors

Select interval items from the "youth experiences survey" were used to measure causal determinants of drug activity that covered a range of topics. All items used from the youth experiences survey are listed in Appendix 1. The following are general descriptions of the factors that were posited to have a relationship with youth drug selling.

Peer associations. Twelve categorical items were used that allowed youth to rate their knowledge and perceptions of their peers using alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. For each substance listed, participants indicated if no students they knew used them, every student they knew used them, or some students they knew used them. Participants also indicated to what extent they disapproved of, or were indifferent to their peers and friends using drugs.

Relationship with parents. Eleven categorical items were use to gauge specific aspects of participants' relationships with their parents that were posited to have a relationship with youth drug selling. The first section included items that measured the extent to which the participants believed their parents disapproved or were indifferent to them using drugs. The second section measured the participants' feelings about whether their parents typically said positive things to them, and were generally helpful to them with their homework. The final set of parent questions measured the extent to which participants believed that their parent placed restrictions on their behavior, such as limiting time out with friends and watching television.

School and personal influences. Other items were used to understand participants' experiences with school, participation in fighting and delinquent behavior, and religious affinity. School experiences involved youth indicating their feelings about whether they believed school to be meaningful, interesting, and important to their future. *NSDUH* recorded grades with responses to the statement, “Grades for last semester/grading period completed.” Respondents selected one of the following options: (1) “an A+, A or A-minus average”, (2) “a B+, B or B-minus average”, (3) “a C+, "C or C-minus average” or (4)“a D or less than a D average”. Participants also indicated the number of fights they had, and the frequency in which they have carried a handgun, stolen a valuable item, or assaulted someone with intent to seriously injure them. Finally, four questions were asked to determine how important religious beliefs were to them, and to what extent religion influences their decisions and choice of friends.

Analysis Plan

Initial analytic procedures involved exploratory techniques to reveal the underlying distributions of each response variable. For Likert scale items from the "youth experiences" questionnaire, principle components analysis was used to reduce the data before using multivariate techniques. Multivariate analysis of the variance (MANOVA) was used to test main effects for race and levels of drug selling for associated variables. The hypothesized relationships between drug selling and external measures were accepted or rejected based on the p-value. Means plots were used for selected measures to display the linear relationship between various indicators of youth drug selling and hypothesized dependent variables. Plots also include a dashed reference line on the Y-axis that marked the estimated mean of the variable of interest. The reference line is useful for determining the distribution of scores around the mean for various levels of drug selling for black, Latino, and white adolescent males. Finally, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the relationship between the causal factors and the equivalence between models that were constructed for black, Latino, and white adolescent males.

Statistical Findings

Descriptive information

Participants of this study included 1,173 (21 percent) black, 1,573 (28 percent) Latino, and 2,779 (51 percent) white adolescent males between the ages of 12 and 17. Of the 5,525 adolescent males who participated in this study, 5.6 percent admitted to selling drugs at least once, including 167 youth who sold once or twice, and 144 who sold more than twice. The racial breakdown of those who have sold drugs was 6.9 percent (N=82) black,

4.5 percent (N=71) Latino, and 4.3 percent (N=119) white. The grade level of the respondents ranged from 5th (.6 percent) grade to college freshman (.5 percent), with the largest percentages of participants between 8th and 11th grade (73 percent). Descriptive analyses revealed that among youth drug sellers, a larger percentage of black males began by the 6th grade (5 percent for black compared to 2 percent for Latino, and 1 percent for white). Among all races, the majority of drug sellers are in the 10th (24 percent) and 11th (35 percent) grades, with a substantial drop off at the 12th grade (16 percent).

When observing all races combined, no differences appeared between poverty levels of youth who sold drugs (18 percent live in poverty) and youth who never sold drugs (16 percent live in poverty). However, observations across races revealed that 34 percent of black and 28 percent of Latino drug sellers live in poverty compared to 9 percent of white drug sellers. The majority (56 percent) of black youth who sell drugs live in densely populated cities with populations greater than 1 million. Most white (60 percent) and Latino (51 percent) live in cities with a population of less than 1 million.

When compared to black, Latino, and white males who have never sold drugs (26 percent), a higher percentage of black, Latino, and white males who have sold drugs live in households with no father (35.6 percent), When disaggregated by race, black males were the least likely to have a father in the home, with no significant differences between those who have sold drugs (58.5 percent with no father in the home) and those who have never sold drugs (54.9 percent with no father in the home).

Across all races, the majority of youths who sell drugs have also used illicit drugs. When including marijuana, 95.7 percent of white, 84.1 percent of black, and 91.1 percent of Latinos who have sold drugs report also using drugs. When excluding marijuana, 76.6 percent of white, 31.7 percent of black, and 70.4 percent of Latinos who have sold drugs reported using drugs. Compared to their peers who have never sold drugs, youth drug sellers are more likely to spend time in jail or a detention center. Among white youths who have sold drugs, 25 percent have been to jail or detention, compared to 5.1 percent who have never sold drugs. For black youths, 43 percent of drug sellers have been to jail or detention center, compared to 11 percent who have never sold drugs. For Latino youths, 21 percent of drug sellers have been to jail or detention center, compared to 9 percent who have never sold drugs.

Dimensions of youth experiences

To reduce data, principal components analysis was used to examine the underlying dimensions of the 37 items on the survey questionnaire that measured youth experiences. Factor structure was explored with varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization. All ten factors were accepted based on their eigenvalue that exceeded 1, and the logical arrangement of items. The ten-factor solution explained 64.9 percent of the total variance. Based on the arrangement of items, as presented in Appendix 1, the names given to the ten factors were: (1) Knowing peers who use alcohol and other drugs; (2) Friends disapproval of alcohol and other drugs; (3) Parents' disapproval of alcohol and other drugs; (4) Disapproval of peers using alcohol and other drugs; (5) Positive regard for school; (6) Positive regard for religion; (7) Positive relationship with parents; (8) Fighting; (9) Restrictions from parents; and (10) Delinquent behaviors.

Peer indicators of drug selling

Table 5.1 displays the means, standard deviations and F-ratios of peer relationship indicators that had a hypothesized relationship with drug selling among black, Latino, and white adolescent males. The table marks variables that are significant by race and level of drug selling across three levels: those who reported (1) never selling drugs; (2) selling drugs once or twice; and (3) selling drugs more than twice. The sum score of the items comprising three factors generated through principle components analysis were used as dependent variables.

All three of the variables analyzed had a significant relationship with drug selling. Knowing peers who use alcohol and other drugs had a positive relationship with drug selling, as indicated by mean scores that get larger when reading the table from left to right as drug selling activity increases. The opposite is true for disapproval of friends and peers using alcohol and other drugs. Of the three factors, friends' disapproval demonstrated the

strongest relationship with drug selling activity. Disapproval of peers using alcohol and other drugs was the only variable with a significant difference for race.

TABLE 5.1: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F-RATIOS OF PEER INDICATORS THAT ARE RELATED TO SELLING DRUGS AMONG BLACK, LATINO, AND WHITE SCHOOL-AGE MALES

Measures	Race	Frequency of Selling Drugs				F-Ratios	
		Never (M, SD)	Once or twice (M, SD)	More than twice (M, SD)	Total (M, SD)	Race	Drug Selling
Knowing peers who use alcohol and other drugs [a]	Black	8.19 (2.62)	9.48 (2.35)	11.52 (2.73)	8.34 (2.68)	.343	114.72**
	Latino	7.89 (2.42)	10.37 (2.08)	10.91 (2.31)	8.00 (2.47)		
	White	7.81 (2.45)	10.28 (1.93)	10.60 (1.58)	8.00 (2.50)		
	Total	7.91 (2.48)	10.13 (2.07)	10.86 (2.03)	8.07 (2.53)		
Friends' disapproval of alcohol and other drugs [b]	Black	9.67 (2.89)	8.12 (2.94)	6.61 (2.99)	9.52 (2.95)	2.40	134.00**
	Latino	9.89 (2.63)	7.70 (2.41)	6.13 (2.69)	9.77 (2.69)		
	White	10.02 (2.57)	6.90 (2.63)	5.86 (2.17)	9.75 (2.73)		
	Total	9.91 (2.66)	7.29 (2.70)	6.07 (2.46)	9.71 (2.77)		
Disapproval of peers using alcohol and other drugs [b]	Black	10.02 (2.71)	8.36 (3.21)	6.74 (2.98)	9.86 (2.81)	4.96*	126.75**
	Latino	10.17 (2.54)	8.22 (2.49)	7.43 (3.07)	10.08 (2.59)		
	White	10.27 (2.48)	6.95 (2.59)	6.33 (2.54)	10.00 (2.66)		
	Total	10.19 (2.55)	7.47 (2.78)	6.60 (2.74)	9.99 (2.67)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; *p < .05; **p < .001; [a] Range = 4 (none) -16 (all); [b] Range = 4 (indifferent) -12 (strongly disapprove)

Post hoc analyses of main effects across races and levels of drug selling demonstrated a consistent linear relationship between peer influences and drug selling among black, Latino, and white adolescent males. There was an interaction effect ($F = 4.25$, $df = 4$, $p > .01$) in race and drug selling for disapproval of friends. Compared to black and Latino adolescents, white youths who sold drugs had lower levels of disapproval of peers using alcohol and other drugs.

Parent indicators of drug selling

As shown in Table 5.2, the three factors that measured aspects of parenting all had a significant relationship with drug selling for black, Latino and white males. Specifically across races parents with stronger disapprovals of alcohol and other drugs, more positive relationships with their children, and more restrictions placed on their children's behavior, were less likely to have sons who sold drugs. Compared to other parenting practices, parents' disapproval of drugs and alcohol had the strongest effect, and restrictions had the smallest effect on drug selling behavior. No main effects for race were found, indicating that parenting patterns were similar across the three races explored.

School and personal influences of drug selling

Results revealed that black, Latino and white males who had a positive regard for school, higher grades, less fighting and delinquent behaviors, and were more positively engaged in religion were less likely to sell drugs. Table 5.3 reveals that for each factor analyzed, race also exhibited significant main effects. Post hoc analyses revealed that black and Latino males had a more positive regard for school when compared to white males, however white males had significantly higher grades. Black males were significantly more likely to be involved in fights when compared to Latino and white males, and black and Latino males were more likely to engage in delinquent behaviors aside from selling drugs. Compared to Latino and white males, black males reported stronger religious convictions.

TABLE 5.2: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F-RATIOS OF PARENT INDICATORS THAT ARE RELATED TO SELLING DRUGS AMONG BLACK, LATINO, AND WHITE SCHOOL-AGE MALES

Measures	Race	Frequency of Selling Drugs				F-Ratios	
		Never (M, SD)	Once or twice (M, SD)	More than twice (M, SD)	Total (M, SD)	Race	Drug Selling
Parents' disapproval of alcohol and other drugs [a]	Black	11.44 (1.68)	10.61 (1.82)	9.32 (3.20)	11.35 (1.79)	2.31	112.84**
	Latino	11.58 (1.31)	10.48 (2.18)	10.35 (2.37)	11.53 (1.37)		
	White	11.59 (1.17)	10.40 (1.99)	9.52 (2.34)	11.48 (1.33)		
	Total	11.56 (1.33)	10.46 (1.98)	9.61 (2.56)	11.47 (1.45)		
Positive relationship with parents [b]	Black	13.54 (2.59)	11.76 (2.92)	12.06 (3.38)	13.44 (2.65)	2.43	49.54**
	Latino	13.06 (2.68)	12.10 (3.56)	10.26 (3.67)	12.99 (2.74)		
	White	13.54 (2.46)	12.30 (2.91)	11.26 (3.34)	13.42 (2.56)		
	Total	13.41 (2.56)	12.15 (3.02)	11.27 (3.43)	13.31 (2.63)		
Restrictions from parents [c]	Black	8.63 (2.01)	7.76 (2.03)	6.84 (2.00)	8.55 (2.04)	3.24	22.92**
	Latino	8.46 (1.96)	8.17 (2.30)	7.87 (2.38)	8.44 (1.97)		
	White	8.31 (2.07)	7.32 (2.04)	7.22 (2.14)	8.24 (2.09)		
	Total	8.42 (2.03)	7.57 (2.10)	7.24 (2.16)	8.36 (2.05)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; **p < .001; [a] Range = 4 (indifferent) - 12 (strongly disapprove); [b] Range = 4 (less positive) - 16 (more positive); [c] Range = 3 (no restrictions) - 12 (frequent restrictions)

TABLE 5.3: MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND F-RATIOS OF SCHOOL AND PERSONAL INFLUENCES THAT ARE RELATED TO SELLING DRUGS AMONG BLACK, LATINO, AND WHITE SCHOOL-AGE MALES

Measures	Race	Frequency of Selling Drugs				F-Ratios	
		Never (M, SD)	Once or twice (M, SD)	More than twice (M, SD)	Total (M, SD)	Race	Drug Selling
Positive regard for school [a]	Black	16.47 (2.50)	15.32 (3.16)	14.92 (3.47)	16.39 (2.57)	24.72**	35.40**
	Latino	15.79 (2.69)	14.67 (3.51)	13.50 (3.19)	15.72 (2.74)		
	White	14.95 (2.91)	13.28 (3.38)	12.60 (3.94)	14.81 (3.01)		
	Total	15.49 (2.84)	13.94 (3.45)	13.22 (3.82)	15.38 (2.93)		
Grades [b]	Black	2.61 (0.81)	2.23 (0.88)	2.12 (0.77)	2.58 (0.81)	3.66*	26.60**
	Latino	2.63 (0.84)	2.33 (0.96)	2.27 (0.98)	2.62 (0.84)		
	White	2.94 (0.90)	2.42 (0.94)	2.28 (0.85)	2.90 (0.91)		
	Total	2.79 (0.88)	2.36 (0.93)	2.25 (0.85)	2.76 (0.88)		
Fighting behaviors [c]	Black	2.74 (1.27)	3.84 (2.05)	4.96 (2.81)	2.84 (1.42)	20.38**	150.54**
	Latino	2.60 (1.17)	3.07 (1.14)	4.59 (2.15)	2.64 (1.22)		
	White	2.42 (0.92)	2.94 (1.32)	3.99 (2.00)	2.49 (1.04)		
	Total	2.53 (1.08)	3.14 (1.50)	4.28 (2.23)	2.60 (1.18)		
Delinquent behaviors [d]	Black	3.30 (0.81)	4.61 (1.93)	7.35 (4.06)	3.46 (1.28)	80.92**	934.80**
	Latino	3.23 (0.71)	3.93 (1.17)	8.68 (3.75)	3.34 (1.13)		
	White	3.18 (0.59)	3.97 (1.31)	5.56 (3.07)	3.29 (0.95)		
	Total	3.22 (0.67)	4.09 (1.45)	6.45 (3.59)	3.34 (1.07)		
Positive regard for religion [e]	Black	11.56 (3.37)	10.71 (3.54)	10.85 (3.52)	11.51 (3.38)	19.15**	19.26**
	Latino	10.73 (3.36)	10.11 (3.14)	9.32 (4.05)	10.69 (3.38)		
	White	10.88 (3.94)	8.05 (3.47)	7.50 (3.41)	10.66 (3.99)		
	Total	10.98 (3.69)	8.95 (3.60)	8.48 (3.78)	10.84 (3.73)		

Note: M =Mean; SD =Standard Deviation; *p < .05; **p < .001; [a] Range: 5 (very negative) - 20 (very positive); [b] Range: 1 (mostly Fs) - 4 (mostly As); [c] Range: 4 (very negative) - 18 (very positive); [d] Range: 2 (none) - 10 (20 or more fights); [e] Range: 3 (none) - 15 (30 or more times carrying a handgun, theft, and assault)

As illustrated in Figures 5.1a, 5.1b, 5.2a, and 5.2b, variance in the mean between race groups was often dependent upon level of drug dealing for school and personal influences of drug selling. For fighting, delinquent behaviors, and religion, there were significant interaction effects, indicating that the strength of the association between the factor and drug dealing was significantly dependent upon race. For positive regard for religion,

although black males' scores were significantly higher, lack of religion did not predict drug selling. White males demonstrated the strongest association between religion and drug selling. The interaction between the races was significant ($F = 5.78$, $df = 4$, $p > .001$). Figures 5.2a and 5.2b, illustrate significant interactions for race and drug selling with fighting ($F = 3.36$, $df = 4$, $p > .01$) and delinquency ($F = 58.21$, $df = 4$, $p > .001$). Black, Latino, and white males who have never sold drugs demonstrated similarly low levels of delinquency. However, as levels of drug selling rises, black and Latino males are significantly more likely to have carried a handgun, or committed theft and assault.

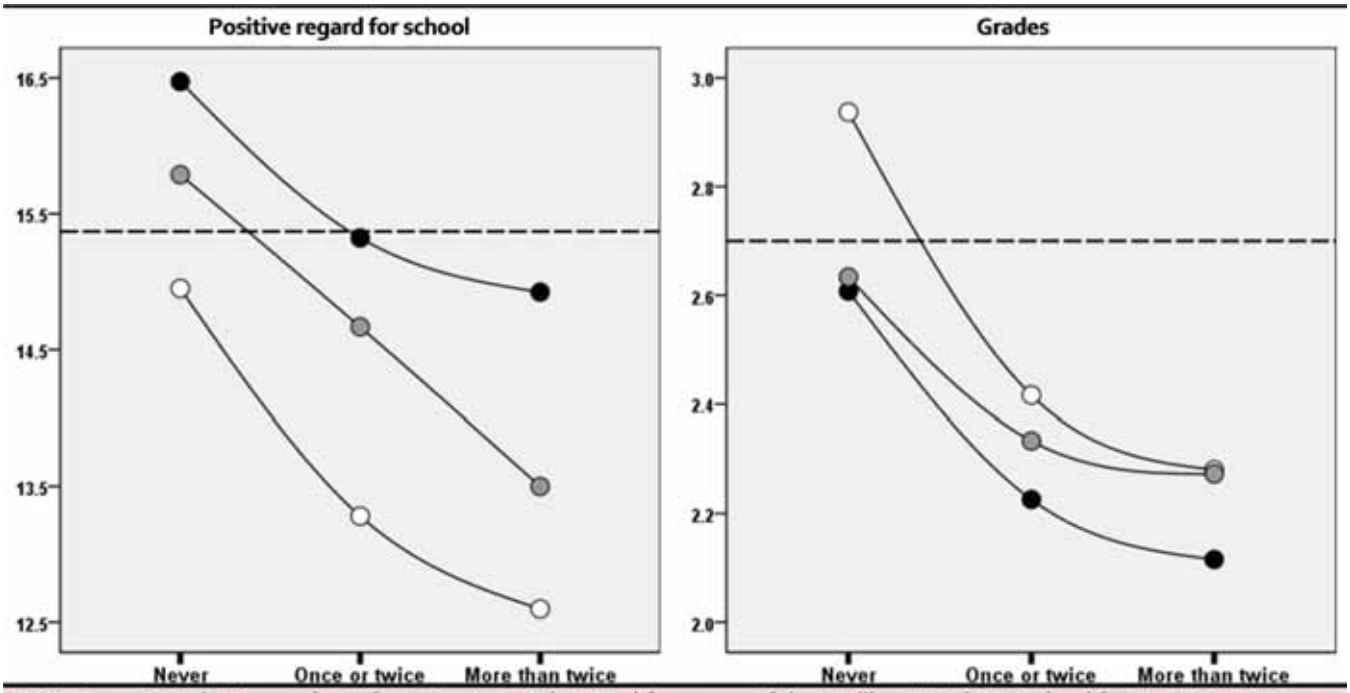


FIGURE 5.1a & 5.1b: Means plots of race (separate plots) and frequency of drug selling (X Axis) on school factors (Y Axes) among black, Latino, and white adolescent males. Note: ● = black students; ● = Latino students; and ○ = white students. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable. Never = Never sold drugs; Once or twice = Sold drugs once or twice; More than twice = Sold drugs more than twice.

Structural paths between parent and peer influences of drug selling

SEM was used to test the structural paths between selected parent and peer influences of drug selling, and the equivalence between nested models that were constructed for black, white, and Latino adolescent males. For the initial model, observable variables from Tables 4.1 and 4.2 were selected for the model based on having an F-ratio above 100. Assuming children develop a relationship with parents before their peers, parents' disapproval of alcohol and other drugs (AOD), was entered into the model at the earliest time point, linking to three indicators of the relationship participants had with their peers, ultimately to their decision to sell drugs. The path toward the endogenous variables was tested using multiple group confirmatory factor analysis with Amos version 18 (Arbuckle, 2009).

When leaving the model unconstrained, the chi square was 82.82, $df = 3$, and $p < .001$. When testing models with constrained measurement weights the chi square worsened to 116.03.03 ($df = 18$), indicating that the models were significantly different across races. The chi square difference for the nested model was 116.03, and df difference was 18. Although chi square tests indicated a poor fit to the data, other fit indices indicated that the model was adequately constructed. Specifically, The Bentler-Bonett normed fit index was .98, and the comparative fit index (CFI) was .98 in the unconstrained model (Bentler & Bonett, 1980), and the root mean square error of approximation was .04.

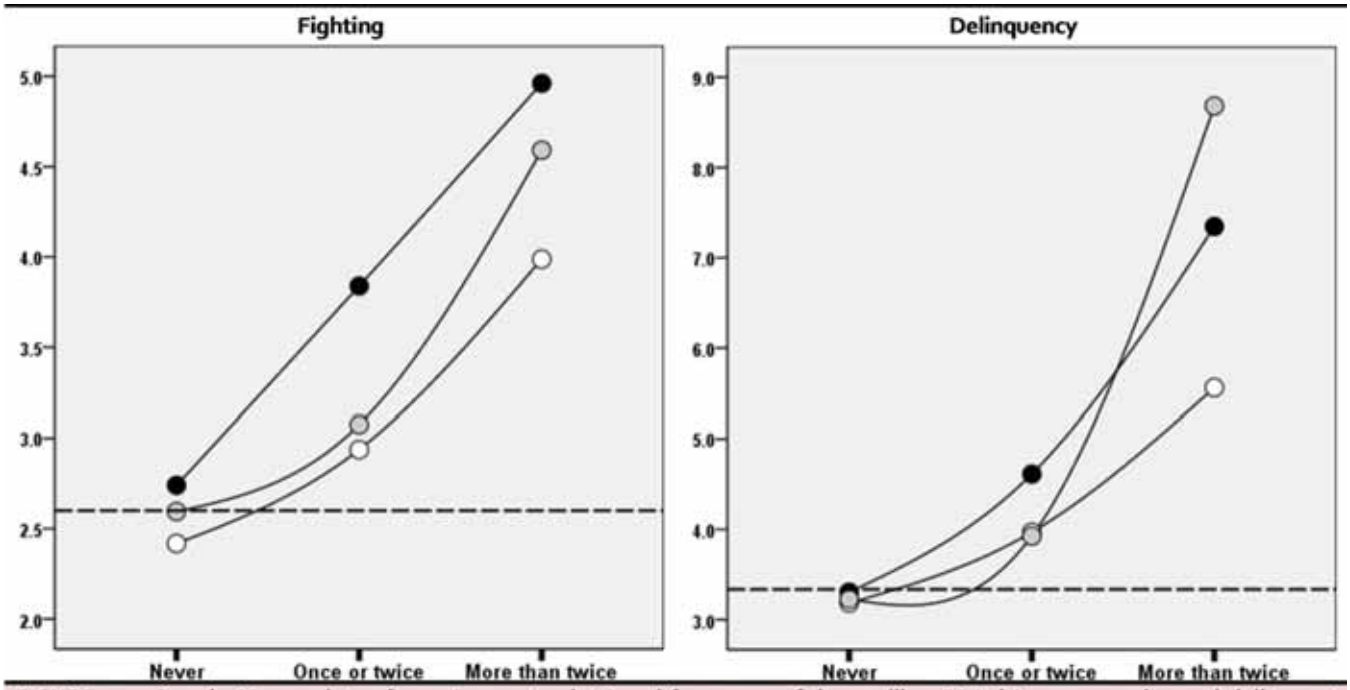


FIGURE 5.2a & 5.2b: Means plots of race (separate plots) and frequency of drug selling (X Axis) on aggressive and delinquent behavior (Y Axes) among black, Latino, and white adolescent males. Note: ● = black students; ● = Latino students; and ○ = white students. The dashed reference line on the Y-axis marks the estimated mean of the dependent variable. Never = Never sold drugs; Once or twice = Sold drugs once or twice; More than twice = Sold drugs more than twice.

As demonstrated in Figure 5.3, for the models with unconstrained weights for black males, all parameters were significant when analyzing the critical ratios (C.R. were greater than 1.96), except for the parameter between "Parents' disapproval of AOD" and "Knowing students who use AOD." A very strong path coefficient emerged between parents' disapproval of drugs and participants disapproving of their peers using drugs. Disapproving of peers using drugs had very strong associations with the number of students the participant knew who used drugs, their choice to have friends who disapproved of drugs, and ultimately their decision to sell drugs. Standardized estimates of indirect effects for parents' disapproval and drug selling behavior were significant for all three races ($p < .01$).

"I feel because I [dress] in flashy clothes, [wear] jewelry, and because of the way I speak, people automatically define me as a drug dealer or a thug… my clothes, my jewelry, and my funny way of talking doesn't define who I am. So you could take away the clothes, take away the jewelry, and anything else because with or without it I am still just being myself… a young man going somewhere in life."

- Darius Hager - 11th Grade

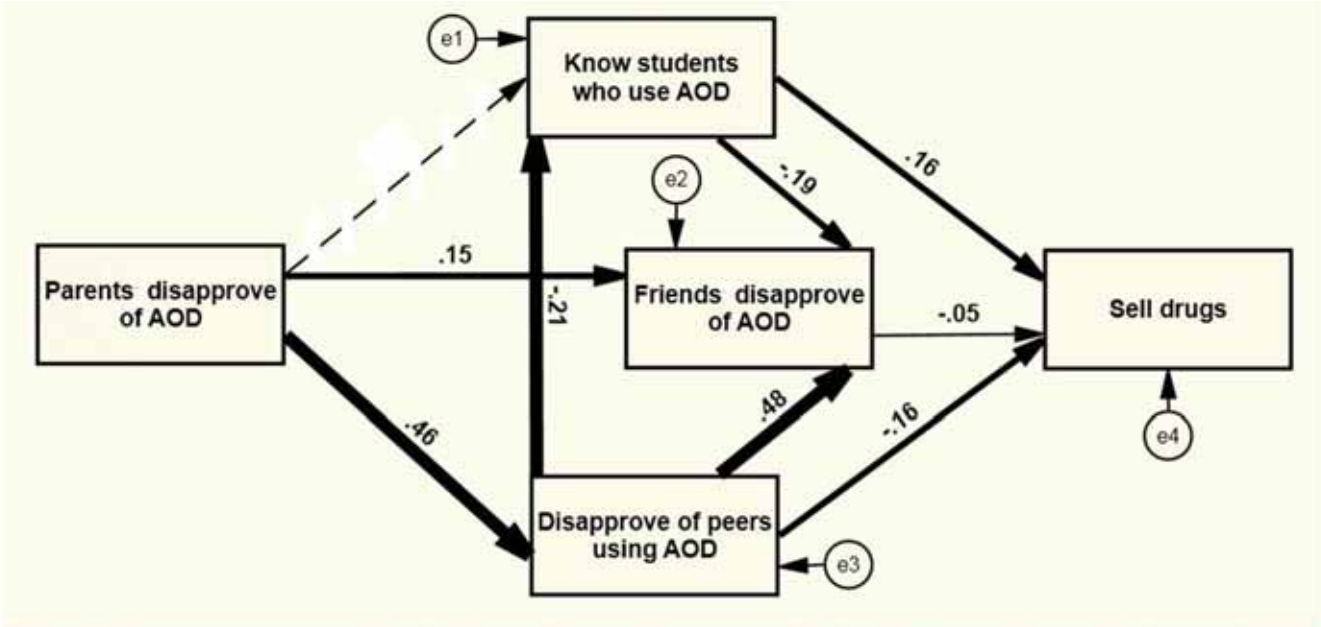


FIGURE 5.3: Structural path model used to test the hypothesized relationship between parental and peer influences of selling drugs for black males. Note: The thickest lines represent standardized path estimates that are greater than .20, and the thinnest lines represent estimates that are less than .15. Curved lines with two way arrows represent covariance and straight lines with one way arrow represent paths. The minus sign (-) indicates an inverse relationship. All path coefficients are significant ($p < .01$), except for the parameter represented by the dashed line. National Survey on Drug Use and Health (United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, & Office of Applied Studies, 2009).

Summary of Findings

The youth experiences of adolescent males who sell drugs provide important insights into prevention and intervention strategies that could reduce arrest, detention and court referrals of juvenile offenders. The findings suggest that regardless of race, youths are less likely to sell drugs when they: (1) have less drug users in their social circle and higher disapprovals of peer drug use; (2) have parents who strongly disapprove of drugs, and who interact with them positively and place restrictions on their behavior; (3) demonstrate a positive regard for school and better academic functioning; and (4) are involved with less fighting and delinquent behaviors. The surveyed youths had the highest levels of drug activity between the 10th and 11th grades, suggesting an important reference for prevention programs. Compared to adolescent males who had never sold drugs, youth drug sellers were much more likely to use drugs, especially marijuana, and spend time in jail or a detention center.

The findings also revealed significant racial differences in youth drug dealers. Relative to Latino and white male youths, black male youths were more likely to have sold drugs before the 6th grade. Black and Latino youth drug sellers were about 3 times more likely to live in poverty than white drug sellers. Compared to Latino and white drug sellers, black youths who sell drugs are more likely to live in densely populated urban areas, live in fatherless homes, and spend time in jail or detention center, and less likely to use illicit drugs. White youths who sell drugs demonstrated lower disapprovals of peers using drugs, suggesting that they may be more likely to sell drugs to their peers. Because of the nature of drug markets in urban areas, black and Latino adolescent males may be more likely to sell drugs to adult drug addicts. This probably contributes to the increase in other delinquent behaviors, especially handgun use, among black and Latino drug sellers.

Implications for Policy and Practice

- The findings of this study support continuing and creating programs that prevent drug selling through comprehensive peer and parent education, school reform, and social skills training. In peer group settings that emphasize the role that friends play in forming networks that promote character and

success, adolescent males, regardless of race, should be taught the dangers of selling drugs. However, the questionable efficacy of programs like DARE, suggest policymakers should be more creative and send messages that will connect with poor children with few social resources. Establishing public-private partners to provide youth with opportunities to learn while making money is an example of an innovative strategy that may work with children who sell drugs due to poverty.

- It may be particularly important for black and Latino males, who are more likely to sell drugs to adult drug addicts, to have a community improvement focus to peer education (Toldson & Toldson, 1999). In addition, with the high rates of poverty among black and Latino drug sellers, workforce programs and youth employment opportunities are important components of intervention programs (Fairlie, 2002; Reuter & MacCoun, 1992).
- Based on the findings, intervention programs involving families should emphasize the role that parents' disapproval of drugs have on adolescent's selection of friends, and ultimately the decision to not sell drugs. Parents play an important role in influencing adolescent males to avoid selling drugs (Little & Steinberg, 2006).
- School should also have comprehensive drug education programs that allow students to discuss strategies to avoid selling drugs, and should include character building, social stills training, and delinquency prevention. School experiences play a vital role in modulating adolescent males' decisions to sell drugs. When adolescent males find school meaningful and important and achieve good grades, they are less likely to sell drugs. For black males in particular, school experiences should be crafted with the targeted goal for increasing performance, as evidenced by better grades. The school-related results among black males, illustrate the "attitude-achievement paradox" (Mickelson, 1990) whereby their positive attitudes about school are not translating to successful academic outcomes.

MOVING FORWARD

Foundational research spanning nearly 100 years found that educational policies should consider remediation of the natural social disadvantages that certain students from low income homes have, by supplementing schools in impoverished areas with resources to build and maintain school-based activities. Over the last decade, schools have been trending toward more punitive measures to deal with students' misbehaviors or other shortcomings. Zero-tolerance disciplinary policies, law enforcement personnel at schools, and metal detectors are a few measures that seem to conflict with a normal educational experience, particularly for black males. Recently, a school security administrator for the U.S. Department of Education revealed that the Obama administration plans to create secure schools by improving overall education, getting children more involved in their studies, and strengthening school communities (Sutter, 2009). These changes will coincide with a decrease in spending for metal detectors and security personnel and an increase in school counseling services.

Collectively, the findings of these studies suggest that instead of confronting violence and delinquency head on, educators, counselors, and school administrators should cultivate an overall environment to marginalize criminal influences in the school and actively help students to overcome violence-related stress to enjoy higher levels of academic success. Safety is a factor that is uniquely related to academic success among all students, but particularly black males. School policies should view safety as an internal state that is sensitive to a nurturing environment. Several current and proposed legislative priorities are in line with findings presented in this report.

Legislative Landscape[3]

Reducing Suspensions and Disciplinary Referrals. Although the study found that African-American males receive more disciplinary referrals than any other racial group, the difference was not as significant as the contrast between black and white males' suspension rates. Fifty-nine percent of Black male students have been suspended, which is more than double the percentage of White male students. Many school and nonschool factors account for individual differences in disciplinary referrals and suspension rates, with some, such as school culture and climate, appearing to be beyond the control of students.

Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) members, Representatives Robert C. “Bobby” Scott and Danny K. Davis, and Representative Christopher S. Murphy are currently encouraging members of Congress to sign a resolution to improve school climate and student achievement, raise awareness of school “pushout” (suspension), and promote dignity in schools. The purpose of this resolution is to create policies that educate society regarding the disproportionate number of African-American, Latino, and disabled students who are being suspended and receiving unfair disciplinary treatment. It will also bring awareness to educational institutions that are actively enforcing evidenced-based preventative and positive behavior management and school discipline policies. An example of this type of practice is Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which is a systematic method several schools have adopted for selecting practices, integration, and implementation of academic and behavioral solutions to increase the level of academic and behavior success of students.

Passing legislation that brings awareness to the high rates of suspension among African-American males is only one step. Legislation also needs to address factors that influence these disproportionate rates. As stated in the report, many factors beyond the control of the students and their families influence classroom behavior management, such as teachers' lack of cultural understanding and lack of resources at the school. Representative Edolphus Towns addresses this issue in his Increased Student Achievement Through Increased Student Support Act (H.R.1361). This act provides funding and training to help increase the number of qualified

[3] The author gratefully acknowledges the material contributions of Ryan Sutton and Enchanta Jackson to this section.

staff working in a school that has been defined as needing improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. However, this act is meaningless if legislators fail to fund, expand or implement it. Having legislation that addresses the multiple factors associated with receiving disciplinary referrals among school-age black males will decrease suspension rates and provide black males with more opportunities to achieve success in school and in life.

Preventing Delinquency. Implementing policies that advance methods to prevent delinquency is vital to fostering academic success among Black males. As a response, CBC member Rep. Robert "Bobby" Scott, introduced the Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities Mentoring, Intervention, Support and Education (PROMISE) Act (H.R.3846). The Youth PROMISE Act will plan and evaluate evidence-based practices for juvenile delinquency, gang prevention and intervention, specifically for youth in impoverished communities.

In addition, Rep. Marcia Fudge, also a member of the CBC, introduced the National Youth Sports Program Revitalization Act of 2010 (H.R. 4480). This bill provides national and regional funding for instructional programs for low-income youth. Allocating funding toward after-school programs provides African-American males an incentive to do their best in school and also reduces the amount of idle time they spend in their neighborhood.

Passing legislation that executes a plan to prevent delinquency will result in an increase in academic achievement among African-American male students. High academic performance was found to be strongly dependent on black male students' ability to feel safe at school and in their neighborhoods; therefore, decreasing neighborhood crime will provide students with the opportunity to redirect their focus away from safety issues and commit themselves into their academic studies.

Eliminating Gang Activity in Schools. In the study, five factors were found to be linked to institutions with low gang activity: 1) students feeling their school rules are fair, 2) students viewing peers and adults at the school as supportive, 3) students feeling cared for and respected by the teacher, 4) students having classrooms that are free from distractions from other students' misbehavior and teachers disciplining students, and 5) and students' academic performance. These findings suggests that in order to eliminate gangs in schools, policies must provide resources and training that will enhance teacher-student interaction and reduce burn-out while sustaining the teachers' motivation. Policies also need to assist in increasing funding for extracurricular activities and proper safety monitoring.

Currently, few policies link reducing gang violence with creating a culture of learning at schools. Recently, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez introduced the Bullying and Gang Reduction for Improved Education Act (H.R. 1589). This bill amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to include bullying and gang prevention and drug abuse prevention activities that are supported by the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program. Another bill that has been introduced is the Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act (H.R. 4223). This act focuses on providing training to identify and support social and emotional learning programs in schools. Creating a better educational environment for African-American males also should involve policies that enforce accountability. CBC member, Rep. Chakka Fattah sought to address this need by introducing H.R. 2451, Student Bill of Rights. This bill directs the Secretary of Education to take civil action against any school that violates a student's basic right to a safe and caring learning environment. Once the school implements a culture that is grounded in respect and mutual understanding, the school systems will decrease gang violence and bullying activities.

Kevin Jennings, assistant deputy secretary of education, is currently organizing federal level initiatives to create a safe school environment. The Department of Education has recently allocated funds to award grants to develop community wide approaches to create safe and drug-free schools. Eligible programs must be designed to prevent violence and illegal drug use and promote safety and discipline. Coordination with other community-based organizations is required. Five types of programs are emphasized: Safe School Environments and Violence Prevention Activities; Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Prevention Activities; Student Behavioral,

Social, and Emotional Supports; Mental Health Services; and Early Childhood Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Returning to School from Juvenile Detention. The disproportionate number of young black males in the juvenile justice system weakens the nation's ability to eliminate gaps in educational attainment. The report revealed that a high percentage of detained black males want to return to school and work toward improving their life, but lack the same opportunities and privileges as other Americans. Therefore, policies need to establish programs and resources that work toward enabling black males to gain a second chance at working toward a successful future.

CBC member, Rep. Keith Ellison, shared these ideas when he proposed the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act (H.R. 629). Under this act, states are required to identify racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system, develop policies that include mental health and substance abuse treatment, improve training and recruitment for professionals working in juvenile delinquency prevention programs, and create mentoring programs.

Another factor that needs to be addressed through policy is the significant influence that families and communities have on black youth detainees. African-American males who have quality family and community involvement scored higher pre-detention grades than those who did not. Consistent with this finding, Representatives Cynthia McCarthy and Todd Russell Platts sponsored the Family Engagement in Education Act of 2010 that encourages schools to hire family engagement coordinators, implement programs that train teachers how to partner with families, and create parent leadership programs. Encouraging more family involvement will ease detainees' reentry to academic settings and enable students to reach their full academic potentials.

Breaking the cycle of children of offenders becoming offenders is an important implication of the study. The recently codified *Second Chance Act Public Law* No. 110-199 provides expanded services to offenders and their families for re-entry into society; authorizes the Attorney General to award grants up to $500,000 to establish state, local, and tribal reentry courts to monitor offenders and provide them with access to comprehensive re-entry services and programs, including programs for drug and alcohol testing and assessment for treatment; and provides access to technology career training, physical and mental health services, and other job- and skill-training programs needed to facilitate a smooth transition and reduce recidivism. Legislation aimed at unifying families separated by the criminal justice system is consistent with the findings in this report.

Reducing Drug-related Arrests. The large numbers of males of all races who report selling drugs suggest that laws and policies that only enforce punishment for drug-related crimes are ineffective. The report shows that family, social dynamics, and the student's involvement in school are heavily associated with their engagement in illegal drug activity.

To create effective prevention programs, policies must encourage Black males to actively participate in school and extracurricular activities, and promote social as well as youth leadership development training. Family also plays a large role in reducing drug-related arrest among black male students. Having mentorship and guidance from family instills proper values and morals, which increases their potential to make positive decisions for themselves. However, as shared in the report, many black males come from under-resourced homes. Policies need, therefore, to implement more mentor programs to help guide black male students on a successful path.

Representative Susan A. Davis introduced the Mentoring America's Children Act of 2009. Through this bill, schools will be required to offer mentoring programs for youth and teach them how to become responsible and successful adults. Students who are living in areas with high gang activity, drug use and dropout rates will be given priority. In addition, CBC Chairman Emmanuel Cleaver introduced a resolution to commemorate the national partnership between Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, and Omega Psi Phi Fraternities and Big Brothers Big Sisters (H.CON.RES.317).

Another policy that encourages social and academic success is CBC Foundation Chairman Donald M. Payne's, Keeping Parents and Communities Engaged (PACE) Act (H.R. 3343). This act requires local educational agencies (LEAs) to assist k-12 public schools in hiring and maintaining Parent and Community Outreach Coordinators. Their responsibility will be to improve family and community involvement, ultimately to evolve public schools into centers that encourage family and community participation and implement community education within the classroom.

Conclusion

Many bills have been proposed that would address some of the needs presented in this report. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of bills that are introduced to the House and Senate ultimately become law. In addition, many of the barriers that Black male students face are beyond the scope of the present policies or legislation. While this report primarily highlights federal initiatives, state, private and school-led programs are equally, and sometimes more important. School and community activists, administrators, parents and students are the natural leaders in education and criminal justice reform and are tasked with using research, policy and common sense to advocate for change.

Beyond the data presented in this report, many concerned citizens observe abject conditions in many public schools that serve black males. One educational researcher observed teachers with 40 students in class with only 25 seats. In addition, like other studies, several of the studies featured in this report found an "attitude-achievement" discrepancy among black males. This may be based on the assumption that education can open doors for them (college, career, better lives); however, their concrete reality does not reinforce this. In other words, what students observe in their immediate physical environments (crime in the community, relatives in prison, unemployment in the community and their families), is not consistent with the abstract notion that education is important. Educators, advocates, and policymakers must do a better job of monitoring, correcting, and clarifying social realities that dampen black males' perspective on, and motivation for, education.

Violence in inner city schools is real in the lives of many of the young men represented in these studies. Research demonstrates that children who witness violence can develop acute stress reactions, which hamper learning, attention and memory. Thus, it is critical that Black males have access to school counselors and other people in their school and community who can address difficulties with adjustment and provide mental health services. A key to challenging and changing negative subjective perceptions on education specifically and life in general is to focus on black males' strengths. Using strength -based approaches is positive and affirming to black males who have the burden of being exposed to statistics and anecdotes that highlight the worst aspects of their social condition.

Prevention is another overarching theme in the research. A natural policy connection is investing early. Strengthening existing programs like Head Start and Early Head Start, as well as creating synergy between early care and elementary school (k-3) can advance many of the proposals included in this report.

For most, the findings in this report will remind them of, or provide statistical support for, commonly held truisms in contemporary education. Overall, the findings point to a cluster of school, family, and social experiences and life circumstances that are associated with Black males who avoid delinquent activity, avoid arrest and perform in school. The insights gathered can help interventionists and community leaders to structure society, family and schools to prevent delinquent behavior among youth and accommodate youth being released from prison so that they make a successful reentry to their school and communities. Reducing reliance upon the criminal justice system to address youth problems and improving economic conditions, schools, and social services in communities will ultimately lead to a more functioning society.

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Pictured above: Participants of a forum to release the first Breaking Barriers report at the U.S. Capitol Building

APPENDIX 1: CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL FACTORS LINKED TO VIOLENCE AND GANG ACTIVITY

Student Performance

- During this school year, across all subjects, have your students achieved a GPA of more than 2.85?
- In your classes, how often are your students distracted from doing your schoolwork because other students are misbehaving?

Research evidence suggests that collectively, students in schools with more violence reported an average GPA of 2.85, compared to students in schools with no gang activity, who reported a collective average of 3.15. Elevating academic standards at the school should be viewed as a strategy for reducing school violence. Students in schools with gang activity were also more likely to report being distracted from doing schoolwork because of other students misbehaving. Often in schools with problems with violence, a lot of time is spent confronting problematic students, and not enough time checking in with students who are trying to do the right thing.

Relationship with Teachers

- Are your students likely to report that teachers care about students in general?
- Are your students likely to report that teachers treat students with respect?
- How often do teachers punish students during your classes?
- Are your students likely to report that teachers do or say things that make students feel bad about themselves?

Students in schools with more gangs were less likely to report that teachers care about students and treat students with respect. They were more likely to report that teachers punish students during classes, and do or say things that make students feel bad about themselves. Black students were significantly more likely to experience disillusionment with their teachers. Many teachers, particularly in urban school districts, become disenchanted because they feel they have little control over the conditions and circumstances that weaken student achievement. Additional coping resources should be allocated to teachers who work in tough learning environments.

School Environment

- Are your students likely to report that punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who they are (Rules are fair)?
- Are your students likely to report that at school, there is an ADULT he/she can talk to, who cares about his/her feelings and what happens to me?

Schools should measure holistic qualities of their environment based on their (1) abilities to make students feel supported and respected; (2) skill at creating forums for students to express themselves; and (3) ability to critique students without making them feel bad about themselves. Incentives for teachers to become involved with students outside of the classroom, such as through clubs, sports and other activities, could also cultivate more cordial student-teacher relationships.

School Safety Measures (Direct)

- Does your school have security guards and/or assigned police officers, metal detectors, or a requirement that students wear badges or picture identification?

- Does your school have locked entrance or exit doors during the day?

  Security guards and police officers in school, metal detectors, and picture identification badges are associated with MORE gang activity. If you have them, and find them necessary, you should carefully examine whether these strategies are adding to a culture of violence that increases overall anxiety among teachers and students. However, having a locked entrance or exit doors during the day demonstrated REDUCED gang activity at school.

School Safety Measures (Indirect)

- During the last school year, what percent of your students participate in extra-curricular activities sponsored by your school?

  Spirit groups, for example, cheerleading or pep club; performing arts, for example, band, orchestra, or drama; and/or academic clubs, for example, debate team, honor society, Spanish club, or math club, are associated with LESS gang activity. Implementing more extra-curricular activities, particularly those that instill school pride, appreciation of art and culture, and academic identity can reduce violence at the school.

Student Behavior

- During this school year, are your students likely to STAY AWAY from school restrooms because they thought someone might attack or harm them there?
- Do any of your students AVOID any extra-curricular activities at your school or stay home because they thought someone might attack or harm them?

  School restrooms were identified as the place in the school where students felt most vulnerable to an attack. Make sure restrooms are secure. One strategy might be to train janitors to discretely monitor suspicious activity. Research also suggests that violence that happens away from school impacts class performance. Students who report higher levels of safety and lower levels of bullying, were more likely to perform better in school. Students at schools with gang activity reported avoiding extra-curricular activities, and skipping school to avoid harm.

APPENDIX 2: ITEMS AND FACTOR LOADINGS FROM THE YOUTH EXPERIENCES SURVEY

Factor 1: Knowing peers who use alcohol and other drugs

1. How many of the students in your grade at school would you say drink alcoholic beverages?
2. How many of the students in your grade at school would you say get drunk at least once a week?
3. How many of the students in your grade at school would you say use marijuana or hashish?
4. How many of the students in your grade at school would you say smoke cigarettes?

Factor 2: Disapproval of friends using alcohol and other drugs

5. How do you think your close friends would feel about you smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day?
6. How do you think your close friends would feel about you having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?
7. How do you think your close friends would feel about you using marijuana or hashish once a month or more?
8. How do you think your close friends would feel about you trying marijuana or hashish once or twice?

Factor 3: Disapproval of peers using alcohol and other drugs

9. How do you think your parents would feel about you using marijuana or hashish once a month or more?
10. How do you think your parents would feel about you trying marijuana or hashish once or twice?
11. How do you think your parents would feel about you smoking one or more packs of cigarettes per day?
12. How do you think your parents would feel about you having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?

Factor 4: Parents' disapproval of alcohol and other drugs

13. How do you feel about someone your age trying marijuana or hashish once or twice?
14. How do you feel about someone your age using marijuana once a month or more?
15. How do you think your close friends would feel about you smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day?
16. How do you feel about someone your age having one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?

Factor 5: Positive regard for school

17. How interesting do you think most of your courses at school during the past 12 months have been?
18. During the past 12 months, how often did you feel that the school work you were assigned to do was meaningful and important?
19. How important do you think the things you have learned in school during the past 12 months are going to be to you later in life?
20. Which of the statements below best describes how you felt overall about going to school during the past 12 months?
21. During the past 12 months, how often did your teachers at school let you know when you were doing a good job with you school work?

Factor 6: Positive regard for religion

22. Your religious beliefs influence how you make decisions in your life.
23. Your religious beliefs are a very important part of your life.
24. It is important that your friends share your religious beliefs.
25. During the past 12 months, how many times did you attend religious services?

Factor 7: Positive relationship with parents

26. During the past 12 months, how often did your parents let you know when you'd done a good job?
27. During the past 12 months, how often did your parents tell you they were proud of you for something you had done?
28. During the past 12 months, how often did your parents provide help with your homework when you needed it?
29. During the past 12 months, how often did your parents provide help with your homework when you needed it?

Factor 8: Fighting behaviors

30. During the past 12 months, how many times have you gotten into a serious fight at school or work?
31. During the past 12 months, how many times have you taken part in a fight where a group of your friends fought against another group?

Factor 9: Restrictions from parents

32. During the past 12 months, how often did your parents limit the amount of time you went out with friends on school nights?
33. During the past 12 months, how often did your parents limit the amount of time you watched TV?
34. During the past 12 months, how often did your parents make you do chores around the house?

Factor 10: Delinquent behaviors

35. During the past 12 months, how many times have you carried a handgun?
36. During the past 12 months, how many times have you stolen or tried to steal anything worth more than $50?
37. During the past 12 months, how many times have you attacked someone with the intent to seriously hurt them?

About the Author

Dr. Ivory A. Toldson is a tenured, associate professor at Howard University, senior research analyst for the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and editor-in-chief of "The Journal of Negro Education," the country's oldest black continuous publication. Dr. Toldson has over 40 publications and research presentations in 29 US states, Paris, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Scotland and South Africa. Dr. Toldson received national acclaim for his work on addressing issues facing African-American men. He is the author of the "Breaking Barriers" series which analyzes academic success indicators from national surveys that together give voice to nearly 10,000 black male pupils from schools across the country. He has held visiting research appointments at Emory, Drexel, and Morehouse School of Medicine. Forward any inquiries regarding this report to:

Ivory A. Toldson, Ph.D.
Senior Research Analyst | Congressional Black Caucus Foundation
Research and Programs Department
1720 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036

P: (202) 263-2834 | F: (202) 263-0846

itoldson@cbcfinc.org | www.cbcfinc.org

Breaking Barriers 2 analyzes the responses of a spectrum of black males to give us a complete picture of the life and circumstances of those who do the right thing, avoid criminal justice involvement and excel in school.

The research findings in **Breaking Barriers 2** affirm the primacy of the teacher-student relationship, a supportive learning environment and the importance of shoring up our national efforts to create an academic and social environment that is consistent with the most positive youth experiences for black males.

Elsie L. Scott, Ph.D.
President & CEO
Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.

Leslie T. Fenwick, Ph.D.
Dean
Howard University
School of Education

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.
Center for Policy Analysis and Research
1720 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. | Washington, D.C. 20036
202.263.2800 | www.cbcfinc.org