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EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP AMONGST PARENTING DIMENSIONS, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, CAREER DECISION MAKING, AND COMMITMENT ANXIETY AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

A Dissertation in

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by

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Abstract

Do parents play a significant role in the academic achievement and career decision making process of African American children? Studies have confirmed the importance of the role of parents and have even identified preferred parenting styles as having the best academic achievement (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994) and career success outcomes (Amundson & Penner, 1998; Lopez & Andrews, 1987; McCollum, 1998; Penick & Jepsen, 1992; Perrino, 1985; Turner & Lapan 2002; Young, Valach, Paseluiko, Dover, Matthes, Paproshi, & Sankey, 1997). However, current theories regarding the preferred parenting styles for academic and career success outcomes appear to have mixed thoughts regarding what is effective for African American adolescent development (Garg, Levin, Urajnik, and Kauppi, 2005; Pong, Hao, & Gardner, 2005). As a result, this study examined the relationships amongst demographic background variables (gender, family configuration, parent/caregiver education level), parenting dimension variables (responsiveness, demandingness, responsiveness x demandingness interaction), career thoughts variables (decision making confusion, commitment anxiety) and academic achievement (ACT reading and math scores) of African American adolescents. A demographic survey, the Career Thoughts Inventory and the Parenting Style and Parental Involvement Inventory were administered to African American high school juniors and seniors from southeast Michigan to examine the relationships amongst variables. Participants included 117 high school students, ranging in age 16-19 years. A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to examine and analyze the data. A significant model for ACT Reading emerged at a 99% and 95% confidence interval. The findings from these data suggested that reading level, not parenting, is associated with career thoughts processing.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Study

Do parents play a significant role in the academic achievement and career decision making process of African American children? Studies have confirmed the importance of the role of parents and have even identified preferred parenting styles as having the best academic achievement and career success outcomes. However, current theories regarding the preferred parenting styles for academic and career success outcomes appear to have mixed thoughts regarding what is effective for African American adolescent development. Therefore, this study explored the relationship of parenting to academic achievement and career thoughts development of African American adolescents. Specifically, this study explored which style of parenting had the strongest relationship with successful academic development and career thoughts processing for African American adolescents. This topic was explored to identify the parenting dimension combinations that exist within the African American culture. In addition, information was gathered for a better understanding of the parenting dynamics of the African American family. The information gathered from this study will be useful for educating school counselors regarding the unique needs of the African American family and offer insight that will lead to ways for effectively engaging African American parents in the academic and career development process.

Background of the Problem

As adolescents are embarking upon their transition from high school to post-secondary opportunities, they will engage in career decision making to plan their life directions. There may likely be several factors that will influence these decisions; however, it appears the factor that
may have the most significant impact on academic and career development processes maybe the parent-child relationship that exists in the adolescent’s life. More specifically, literature supports the idea that parent-child relationships are critical to career development (Amundson & Penner, 1998; Lopez & Andrews, 1987; McCollum, 1998; Penick & Jepsen, 1992; Perrino, 1985; Turner & Lapan 2002). In addition, several relational career theorists believe that the type of interaction between parent and child can influence the career direction of the child (Roe, 1957; Young, Valach, Paseluiko, Dover, Matthes, Paproshi, & Sankey, 1997). Moreover, literature supports the idea that parent-child relationships are critical to adolescent academic development (Attaway & Bry, 2004; Aunola, Stattin & Nurmi, 2000; Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Engerman, & Bailey, 2006; Garg, Levin, Urajnik, & Kauppi, 2005; Leung, Lau & Lam, 1998).

Much of the literature reviews parenting dynamics through the application of Baumrind’s (1966, 1989) parenting style typologies which conceptually describes a parent’s level of responsiveness and level of demandingness with regards to child-rearing practices, categorizing the levels into four parenting types: Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive, and Neglectful. Most research exploring parental influences on the academic and career development of adolescents has focused on the European American adolescent population. The results of these studies have developed assumptions about parental influences on the African American adolescent population (Fisher & Padmawajaja, 1999). Based upon studies using European American families, the assumption is high levels of responsiveness and demandingness parenting strategies will increase the chances of producing higher achieving and career focused African American youth. Yet, studies have found high demandingness and low responsiveness as the effective parenting dimensions for developing good psychological and behavioral outcomes for
ethnically diverse cultures (Baumrind, 1966, 1998). As a result, the typology construct has been criticized for being limited in perspective, possibly ignoring differences in parenting styles related to ethnic or cultural differences (Garg et al., 2005; Pong, Hao, & Gardner, 2005). Therefore, it will be important to acknowledge and explore ethnic differences in parenting styles. To accommodate for cultural differences, this study focused on the parenting dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness, rather than the four parenting typologies of authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Focusing solely on the dimensions, rather than the typologies is an attempt to account for cultural differences through solely looking at communication dynamics of parenting.

Researchers who have examined the correlation between Baumrind’s parenting typology and academic achievement have found parental support and family relationships positively impact academic success (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg, et al., 1992; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994). However, very few researchers have explored the correlation between parent involvement and career development. As a result, the concepts developed from previous research examining the correlation between parenting styles and academic achievement was applied to career development.

The achievement gap that exists between European American and African American students is common knowledge. However, the literature continues to suggest that parental relationship is the factor that assists African American youth with overcoming the challenges they will face and endure as they develop their academic and career goals, regardless of the statistics and financial statuses that present academic and career challenges in African American communities (Carpenter, 1980; Howard, 2003; Kao, 1995). In addition, it is recognized that the achievement gap continues to impact African American degree attainment, which impacts career
development. There is a lack of career development, which contributes to the continual low socioeconomic statuses amongst the African American population (McCollum, 1998). It is widely recognized that a substantial number of African American youth are educated in poor, urban and rural school districts, limiting them to poor occupational outlooks and opportunities. However, there are exceptions to the low expectations, which results in a percentage of African American youth who are able to be successful in school and make career decisions, engaging in effective and realistic career planning, in spite of the challenging academic environments they have had to overcome. School counselors can play a significant role in increasing degree attainment in the African American community through their encouragement and engagement of parents in the academic achievement and career development process. In order to effectively engage African American parents in these processes, school counselors must have a better understanding of the African American’s parenting style and which parenting dimension has the greatest impact on academic achievement and career development. Therefore, having a better understanding of African American parenting could have an impact on minimizing the achievement gap and engaging African American youth in expanding their career opportunities.

**Purpose of the Study**

Using what is understood about the impact of parenting styles on European American adolescents, the purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among academic achievement, career thinking processes and parental involvement of African American high school juniors and seniors from southeast Michigan. The purpose was to determine if parental involvement played a significant role in African American youths’ academic and career development. In particular, this study explored the relationship between parenting dimensions (demandingness and responsiveness) and African American adolescent’s career thoughts and
academic achievement. An inventory based upon Baumrind’s parenting typology was used to identify the parenting dimensions of the African American parents. In addition, the purpose of this study was to determine if Baumrind’s parenting typology of high demandingness and low responsiveness was true for good behavioral and psychological outcomes in African Americans. It is hoped this study will answer the following questions: Does a particular parenting dimension influence academic achievement and engagement in career exploration? Does a particular parenting dimension impact an adolescent’s thought processes regarding their future career? Does a particular parenting dimension effectively guide adolescents towards the initial process of establishing career goals and post-secondary plans?

The reason for exploring these concepts is because researchers have found weak correlations between Baumrind’s parenting typologies and positive psychological and behavioral outcomes for African American, Asian American, and Latino children, even though there is literature to support parent-child interactions as influential in career decision making, (Chao, 2001; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987). For this reason this study focused on the parenting dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness for the data collection. In addition, understanding these concepts gives insight into the implications these factors have on the educational and career advancement of African American youth. If we have clarity regarding African American parenting dimensions, we will have a better understanding of how parents socialize their children to overcome societal challenges and barriers, and achieve positive psychological and behavioral outcomes. It can be assumed that educational development includes career development, since it is the hope that a child’s educational development will progress into a future career. Baumrind’s parenting styles have been tested in the context of
academic achievement (Engerman & Bailey, 2006). However, there has been little exploration regarding the relationship of parenting styles to career development.

**Research Questions**

To explore the application of Baumrind’s parenting dimensions to career and academic development, this study explored the following research question: to what extent do background variables (gender, family configuration, parent/guardian education level), parenting variables (demandingness, responsiveness, demandingness x responsiveness interaction), and career thoughts (decision making confusion and commitment anxiety) influence academic achievement for Southeast Michigan public school African American juniors and seniors? The literature supports the preferred parenting dimensions of European American parents as the measure to determine positive psychological and behavioral outcomes for all adolescents from various cultures. In addition, the literature identifies the preferred parenting dimensions of high demandingness and high responsiveness as having a significant impact on academic achievement and career development of European American adolescents. However, the literature identifies high demandingness and low responsiveness parenting dimensions as the prominent parenting dimensions found in African American parents. Yet, high demandingness and high responsiveness are still identified as the parenting standard for producing positive psychological and behavioral outcomes. As a result, this study explored the impact of each individual dimension of demandingness and responsiveness, as well as the interaction between the parenting dimensions and their relationship to academic achievement and career thoughts processing.

To explore the research question, I collected data, by surveying 11th and 12th grade African American adolescents, to see if there was an association between high demandingness
and responsiveness parenting dimensions, high academic achievement, and mature career
thoughts. In addition, I examined if there was an association between low demandingness and
responsiveness parenting dimensions, low academic achievement, and delayed career thoughts.
To further study the research question, I explored the following:

1) Is there an association between high career thoughts processing, high academic
achievement, and high demandingness parenting dimension?

2) Is there an association between low career thoughts processing, low academic
achievement, and low demandingness parenting dimension?

3) Is there an association between high career thoughts processing, high academic
achievement, and high responsiveness parenting dimension?

4) Is there an association between low career thoughts processing, low academic
achievement, and low responsiveness parenting dimension?

To explore the research questions, I used parenting dimensions and career thoughts
as the predictor measures to examine the outcome measure of academic achievement. The
predictor measure reports continuous data of types of parenting dimensions and career thoughts.
The predictor was identified through self-reported surveys, which identified parenting
responsiveness and demandingness levels, and the career thoughts of each African American
student. In addition, this study defined the outcome measure of academic achievement with the
use of state wide standardized test scores.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was based upon the Social Cognitive Career
Theory, which studies the interaction of the environment, including behaviors and personal
factors such as self-efficacy, beliefs, preferences, and self-perceptions and its relationship to
career decision making (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 1996). The two environmental concepts of parenting’s impact on behavioral and psychological outcomes explored were the relational approach to career development and parenting styles determinant of academic achievement. Relational approaches to career development consider the impact parents have on career decision making and occupational choices (Roe, 1957; Sharf, 2006; Young et al., 1997). In particular, relational approaches explore the influences of parenting practices on career development of children. Studies regarding relational approaches are not limited to examining parental influences. Relational approaches also consider the impact of other prominent relationships like siblings, other family members, teachers, and friends (Sharf, 2006). The concept takes into account bonds and attachments that shape the environment in which the child is raised. In particular, this study focused on Young et al., (1997) concept of parent-child communication, and its relationship to the career decision-making process. Young and his colleagues further explored Roe’s (1957) concepts of parental influences on career development through studying parent-child agreement and disagreement conversations regarding career choice discussion. His studies have identified four goal-directed actions that are taken during the career development process, which are the family relationship type, identity issues, identification of reporting objectives, and attention to cultural factors and goals (Young et al., 1997).

In addition, research suggests that parenting styles have a significant impact and is a determinant of academic achievement and behavioral outcomes (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992). Dornbusch et al., (1987) and Steinberg et al., (1992, 1994) explored variables of demandingness and responsiveness of parenting styles and its relationship to positive and negative behavioral and psychological outcomes. Research has confirmed Baumrind’s parenting typology of authoritative parenting (high demandingness and
responsiveness) as associated positively with school grades, school adjustment, and school engagement, (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg et al., 1992). Therefore, this study considered both concepts of the relational approach of career development and parenting styles as determinants of academic achievement as the framework for conceptualizing the type of impact parenting dimensions have on academic achievement and career thoughts processing.

**Definition of Terms**

To understand the application of the theoretical framework of the study and to further understand the purpose and focus of this study, it is important to understand the conceptual and operation terminology that was used during this study and throughout this thesis. This study’s view of parental influences is based upon the understanding of the type of parent-child interaction and relationship. The conceptual definition and operational definition of parenting influences will be based upon the two dimensions of the Baumrind’s parenting style typology. The two Baumrind dimensions are parent demandingness and parent responsiveness. Parent demandingness refers to the level of control by the parents, the parents’ willingness to confront their children, the parameters that the parents set for their children, and the expectations that are created for their children (Baumrind, 1966, 1989). Parent responsiveness refers to the level of support by the parents, the equal exchange of communication between parent and child, the attention parents give to their child’s needs, and the predictability of the created family environment (Baumrind).

Career Thoughts Processing, conceptually, is a process of making a choice based upon an exploration of self and the decision-makers environment (Herr, Cramer, & Niles, 2004). Operationally, the term “career thoughts” will express the level of career exploration readiness and level of dysfunctional thinking of the adolescent. For this study, career thoughts was not a
reflection of the firmness of a career decision, but a reflection of the thought process of the adolescent. Operationally, “delayed career thoughts” will identify a character deficit due to poor identity formation, demonstrating a developmental delay in career decision making (Grites, 1981 & Holland, 1977, as cited in Lopez & Andrews, 1987). Typically a person who is found to have a high career thoughts level will be viewed as one who operates from an internal locus of control (Burlin, 1976 as cited in Perrino, 1985); whereas a person who is found to have a low career thoughts level will be viewed as one who operates from an external locus of control. In addition, academic achievement, conceptually, is the degree of success or accomplishment in academic subjects (Aiken, 1988). Operationally, the term academic achievement was identified by the adolescents’ level of performance on a state standardized test obtained during their high school matriculation.

Conceptually, locus of control refers to the adolescents’ level of vocational career maturity and academic achievement (Perrino, 1985). In addition, locus of control is an indication of the type of parent-child interaction (Perrino). Based upon Perrino’s usage of locus of control, operationally, this study used internal locus of control to indicate high levels of career maturity and academic achievement, reflecting a high demandingness and responsiveness parent-child interaction. In addition, this study used external locus of control to indicate low levels of career maturity and academic achievement, reflecting a high demandingness and low responsiveness parent-child interaction.

**Importance of the Study**

Secondary education is the point at which the adolescent is expected to start making decisions about the direction they plan to pursue during their post-secondary education period (Cobb, 1995; Myrick, 2003). Therefore, it is important to determine if the relationship between
parenting, career thoughts, and academic achievement is valid and distinct in African American adolescents (Levin, Urajnik, & Kauppi, 2005; Sorkhabi, 2006; Steinberg, 2001). Understanding the impact of parental influences on the adolescent’s readiness to engage in this process would be significant for enhancing the career development programs and academic curriculum that currently exist in elementary through secondary schools. Knowledge about this involvement would contribute to answering the broader questions of the future of the African American culture, economic statuses, and educational attainment (Attaway & Bry, 2004; Carpenter, 1980; Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007; Fisher & Padmawajaja, 1999).

This study hopefully gives insight into the identification of the salient African American parenting dimensions. In addition, this study hopefully offers insight into the need for thinking about the role of parenting on overall African American child development. This study could be critical for developing effective career guidance and academic initiatives specifically designed to meet the developmental needs of African American youth, as well as give insight to school counselors regarding working more effectively with African American families.

**Summary**

In summary, the literature supports the influence of parent relationships on academic achievement and career development. There are significant amounts of literature which addresses parenting and academic achievement. Very little research explores the level of impact of parenting on career development. However, the relational approach concept of parental influences on childhood career development suggests the parent-child relationship is critical in engaging adolescents in career development. In addition, most of the supporting literature has identified high demandingness and responsiveness as the preferred parenting dimensions which encourages high academic achievement and career exploration. However, this has been
confirmed for the European American population. The literature does not address the impact of parental influences on academic achievement and career development in the African American culture.

By applying the relational approach concepts to career development and the concepts of parenting dimensions influence on psychological and behavioral outcomes as the theoretical framework, this study explored the impact African American parenting styles have on academic achievement and career thoughts in African American adolescents. In particular, the research determined if there was a salient parenting dimension that increased the level of career decisiveness, as well as academic achievement. The data collected examined the possible relationships between the parenting dimensions of African American parents and the academic achievement and career decisiveness levels of African American high school juniors and seniors. It is hoped that the results of this study would give school counselors insight into understanding African American parenting expectations and parenting styles so that they will be able to work more effectively with African American students. In addition, it is hoped this knowledge would assist in creating effective career and academic development initiatives for African American children, as well as give insight into how to better engage African American parents in the academic and career development process.

The introduction of this thesis has given an overview of the background and statement of the problem, the purpose, and importance of the study, the theoretical framework of the study, the research questions, and definitions of important terminology used during the study. Chapter two will review critical literature regarding parental styles and involvement, academic achievement, and career development. This thesis will present research demonstrating various relationships between each of the study variables. Chapter three will review the methods and
procedures of the study, addressing the research design and participants used to explore the research questions. This chapter will explain information regarding the data collection process, instruments to measure parenting styles, academic achievement, and career thoughts, and the statistical analysis used to examine the data. This chapter will also discuss the assumptions and limitations of the study. Chapter four will provide the interpretation of the results of the data collected during the study. Finally, chapter five will discuss the results of the study, offering insight and implications of the information gathered. In addition, this final chapter will discuss the limitations and recommendations for future exploration of the topic.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Family relationships have a profound impact on the development of people (Lopez, 2001). Research supports the impact of parental involvement on child development. Research also supports the idea that various parenting styles produce various behavioral outcomes in children. To understand the impact of parental involvement, this literature review explores the relationship between parenting styles and academic achievement and parenting styles and career development. This chapter begins with a review of various relational approaches of career development. Also, the Baumrind parenting style typology is explained to establish a framework for understanding the relationship of parental influences on academic achievement and career development. Also, this chapter introduces various research studies that explored parental involvement and career development. In addition, this literature review explores the relationship between academic achievement and career decisiveness cognitions. This literature review presents information clarifying the utilization of the terms academic achievement and career decisiveness thought processing, to provide an understanding of the context of this terminology. Also, the literature review explores information regarding race, ethnicity and gender differences and its relationship to parenting styles, academic achievement, and career thoughts processing. Finally, this chapter explores the concepts and diverse perspectives of parenting styles, academic achievement, and career thoughts processing from the perspective of the African American family.
Relational Approaches to Career Development

Roe (1957) hypothesized early relationships and early experiences were instrumental determinants of vocational choices. Roe’s research led her to conceptualize the significance of early experiences and interactions on the career direction a person pursues. Her research suggested that early experiences, attitudes, abilities, interests, and personality factors affect the career selection of individuals. Roe believed that Maslow’s hierarchy of basic needs is significant during an individual’s early experiences. The life direction a person pursues is influenced by the level at which the hierarchy of basic needs such as food, safety, love, and respect, are being met. In addition, the intensity of satisfaction or frustration of a person’s basic needs impacts the level of motivation one pursues for a personal sense of accomplishment. The important factor that determines the effectiveness of early experiences is the emotional construct of the family. Roe suggests the parents’ attitudes and attachment to their children was more important than the specific behaviors of the parents.

Roe (1957) developed categories of early experiences with parents. She believed children developed attitudes and beliefs based upon the emotional concentration received by the parents, the avoidance by the parents, and the acceptance by the parents. There are two areas of emotional concentration identified by Roe; overprotection, which encourages dependence and hinders exploratory behavior; and over-demanding, which engages the child in intense training, pushing the child to perform at a particular level. Also, Roe identifies two areas of avoidance, which are emotional rejection of the child and neglect of the child. Emotional rejection does not involve physiological neglect; however, gratification from love, respect, belongingness, and self-esteem is intentionally lacking. On the opposite spectrum is neglect, which does not involve emotional neglect, but refers to physiological needs, such as food and shelter, not being satisfied. Finally,
Roe identifies two areas of acceptance; casual acceptance, which is acceptance by default due to non-interference by the parents, and loving acceptance, which is intentional, or even strategically planned encouragement of independence and development of the child’s own abilities. As a result of the dynamics of those early experiences, Roe suggests the child will develop attitudes, interests, and patterns that will be evident of the direction the child will pursue in his or her adult life. More specifically, the career choice is a reflection of the early experiences with the parents during the child’s development. Roe speculated that children raised in neglectful environments will develop defensiveness towards others, turning to relationships with non-persons, possibly not distinguishing others from objects in the environment. Likewise, children raised in accepting environments may develop strong interests in others or even developing relationships with non-persons, but able to distinguish their connection with the non-person. According to Roe it is those interests which developed from the early experiences with parents that might influence career choices.

Roe’s research made significant contributions to the theoretical framework of relational approaches to career development. However, her concept identifying parent-child relationships as a significant factor predicting career direction was not substantiated (Sharf, 2006). The results of her studies did give evidence that within occupations, certain activities of one’s job reflected parental influences and parent-child relationship (Sharf). Even though Roe’s theory was proven inconclusive, it did bring awareness to the consideration of the role of parenting styles in childhood career development.

As developmental career theory continued, Richard Young’s research also explored parent-child interactions regarding career development (Sharf, 2006). More specifically he looked at relational conversations, with many of his studies focused on perceptions of career
decision making. The conversations and perceptions explored were referred to as “joint actions”, which is defined as an intentional behavior of a group attempting to engage in a process of reaching a common goal (Young, Valach, Paseluikho, Dover, Matthes, Paproski, & Sankey, 1997). Young et al. hypothesized that these joint actions, the conversations parents and adolescents have regarding career choices, have a significant impact on the career decision making of the adolescent. In several cases, Young et al. found that the levels of agreement and disagreement between parent and adolescent determined the process the adolescents engaged in making career decisions. In addition, Dix (1991, as cited in Young, Paseluikho, & Valach, 1997) hypothesized the parent-child interaction is a relationship of strong emotions and the development of goals for each person is a coordination of the arousal of these emotions. Young, Paseluikho, and Valach explored the role of emotion in the joint action process of career decision making. Their study demonstrated that parent-adolescent joint action conversations flow smoothly when there is strong emotional support and shared goals. The study also showed how disagreements and anger within the conversation can delay and hinder the career decision making process in the adolescent.

Young and Frieson (1990) suggest there is a need for understanding the role of family in career development. This is necessary because evidence of the family role has not been clarified (Young & Frieson, 1990). What appears to be clear from the literature is parent-child communication does play a role in career development. Yet, the hypothesis of the relational approach to career development, which conceptualizes parent-child interactions have a significant impact on career decision-making has been found to be inconclusive. The literature consistently support parents have a significant impact on behavioral outcomes of academic
achievement and career decision making. However, the literature is inconsistent regarding the impact parenting styles have on academic achievement and career decision making.

Review of Career Decisiveness Thoughts Processing

Herr, Cramer, and Niles (2004) stated the decision process is a central construct in career guidance and career counseling. Career decisiveness is a process of choice made based upon an exploration of self and one’s environment (Herr, Cramer, & Niles, 2004). Therefore, making decisions about careers requires understanding and processing of individual thought about one’s own abilities, limitations, and opportunities.

Brown (2002) cites Frank Parsons who identified three broad factors to assist with the career choice thought process. Brown found Parsons recommends having a clear understanding of self, aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations, and knowledge of their causes. Parsons also recommends gaining knowledge about the requirements, conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages, compensation, opportunities, and prospects of different vocations (Brown). Finally, Parsons recommends reviewing and understanding the relationship between self-exploration and gathered vocation information (Brown).

Making a career decision is a challenging task for many students (Lopez & Andrews, 1987). The foundation of decision theory is choice based upon several alternatives or courses of action (Herr et al, 2004). Each person is faced with the challenge of making a choice that reflects their identity, as well as economic needs. As each person engages in making choices, they will find themselves in stages of undecidleness or indecisiveness. It must be understood, there is a distinction between being career undecided and career indecisive. Being undecided is indicative of an informational deficit (Lopez & Andrews, 1987), whereas, career indecisiveness is regarded as a developmental delay in career decision making (Grites, 1981 as cited in Lopez & Andrews,
Career indecisiveness is viewed as a character deficit, characterized as having a poor identity formation, operating from an external locus of control, and anxiety (Holland, 1977, as cited in Lopez & Andrews, 1987). Locus of control refers to the concept of underlying causes of events in a person’s life (Rotter, 1966). In this case, external locus of control refers to a person’s destiny being controlled by outside forces or powerful others (Rotter, 1966), like parenting styles. Therefore, it is possible to conceive that powerful others, like parents, can be an influential force on career thoughts processing and academic achievement. In addition, there is a possibility the type of locus of control can determine the career thoughts developmental status and level of academic achievement.

**Adolescent Career Thoughts Readiness**

Adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18 years of age are expected to be able to engage in socially approved feminine and masculine roles and behaviors, achieve emotional independence of parents and other adults, set realistic vocational and personal goals in accordance to interests and abilities, and acquire a values and ethical system that guides personal behaviors (Myrick, 2003). According to Erikson, this is the developmental stage of “identity versus role confusion” (Cobb, 1995; Myrick, 2003). During this developmental stage the adolescent is engaging in a process of discovering who they are separate from their family of origin. In addition, Piaget’s cognitive developmental stage for this age group, “the formal operational stage”, suggests the adolescent is capable of abstract processing with the ability to make decisions and draw conclusions based upon information available (Cobb, 1995; Myrick, 2003). These developmental stages suggest the adolescent begins to assert their independence to find their place in society. According to Erickson’s and Piaget’s developmental stages, adolescents are ready to engage in career thoughts processing and career decision-making. They
are in the stage of their life where they are engaging in self-exploration and processing their identity and societal roles. The adolescents’ ability to successfully navigate through the developmental stages will impact their ability to be career decisive.

**Conceptualization of Academic Achievement**

Achievement is defined as the degree of success or accomplishment in a given area (Aiken, 1988). Aiken stated tests of abilities, such as intelligence and academic performance, measure what individuals have achieved. School systems measure academic achievement and aptitude through various forms of evaluations, which can include teacher developed subject tests, standardized proficiency tests, and letter or numerical grades known as summative evaluations. The purpose of these types of evaluations is to test a person’s level of scholastic accomplishments and deficiencies for purposes of academic placement and ability identification.

Extensive research has been done to develop efficient testing measures to assess, with as much accuracy as possible, the level of intelligence and abilities in students. However, achievement measures do not assess all objectives of educational philosophers (Aiken, 1988). Other areas that can be considered for achievement evaluations are confidence in thinking, learning to cope with change, interest in academic subject matters, or the development of interpersonal and social competence (Aiken, 1988). Therefore, the literature suggests that there is more involved in identifying academic achievement, which is difficult to measure using standard forms of evaluations.

In addition, letter or numerical grades, which are known as summative evaluations, are also used to measure achievement of academic knowledge and identify deficiencies. Snowman and Biehler, (2003, as cited in Allen, 2005) explained the purpose of grades is to accurately communicate the level of academic achievement obtained by a student. Allen cites several
researchers who confirm receiving a letter or numerical grade for each academic subject is generally the most common form of communication of student learning in middle and secondary schools. Bailey and McTighe (1996, as cited in Allen) suggest that this form of communication is used to understand the student's achievement for the purpose of making informed decisions regarding the student's future. It is acknowledged grades are supposed to report a summary of subject knowledge and proficiency. However, it is noted that teachers include factors such as effort, attitude, compliance, and behavior in grade evaluations (Allen, 2005). As a result, the validity and reliability of this assessment's ability to accurately measure academic achievement is questionable.

Even though the literature suggests academic achievement is difficult to measure by using standard forms of testing, academic achievement continues to be measured based upon cognitive abilities. Several studies used proficiency exams and school grades to represent the academic achievement variable. Trusty, Watts, and Lim (1995) conducted a study that found social confidence of African American seventh and eighth grade students was significantly related to achievement. Trusty et al., used the total reading and mathematics scores of the Stanford Achievement Test to quantify achievement. Trusty and Niles (2004) also used the reading and mathematics Standford Achievement Test scores of eighth graders to quantify achievement during a study that examined early signs of talent and potential for bachelor degree attainment. Stumph and Stanley (2002) used both standardized tests and grade evaluations to quantify academic achievement and ability. They used students' ACT and SAT scores, and students' grade point averages to predict college success, and graduation rates at select post-secondary institutions. All of these studies demonstrated the use of assessments and grades showing degrees of success and accomplishment for the identification of academic achievement.
Therefore, the literature suggests using achievement assessments or grades would be appropriate determinants of academic achievement.

**Factors of Academic Achievement**

Kao (1995) has identified factors that explain the philosophy of academic achievement. These factors, which have been found to determine academic achievement, focused on the social environment of the student (Kao, 1995). These factors are parental involvement, home resources, and peer groups. Kao cites several researchers who emphasize parental involvement as one of the key factors for academic success. Kao has found that parents, serving as effective managers of their children's academic endeavors, produce higher academic performance in children. Researchers have stated high levels of parental involvement, knowledge of school activities, and frequent contact with teachers had positive effects on children’s academic achievement (Kao). In addition, Kao cites researchers who have found home resources created an environment conducive to educational pursuits, therefore increasing academic progress and success. It has been suggested the availability of home resources, which includes books, computers, newspapers, plus parents with higher educational levels and income, impacts academic performance (Kao). Finally, Kao reviewed researchers who examined the effects of peer groups on academic achievement. Research has not confirmed if peers have a negative or positive effect on academic performance, but there is recognition that peer group culture can hinder learning. Corsaro and Eder (1990, as cited in Kao, 1995) have found that older adolescents tend to select friends who possess the same attitudes towards academics.

Kao’s hypothesis appears to support the Walberg Model of Educational Productivity (1981), which also identifies four psychological environmental factors that negatively or positively affect academic performance. These psychological factors also reflect resources,
which are home environment stimulation, peer environment, classroom environment, and mass media exposure (Ma & Wang, 2001). After reviewing Kao’s model and Walberg’s model, it is possible to conceptualize academic achievement beyond a measure of assessments, but in collaboration with social environment and productivity. Especially since the home environment, peer environment, school involvement, and access to resources are areas that can be influenced by parents. Kao, Ma and Wang appear to agree that academic achievement is linked to parent involvement and home environment stimulation. Therefore, the literature suggests that parenting can be included in the list of determinants of academic achievement.

Salient Factors Influencing Career Thoughts and Academic Achievement

The literature presented salient factors that were found to be instrumental in career thoughts and academic achievement with regards to both ethnicity and gender. Societal socialization was one of the identified variables that impacted the academic achievement and career thoughts for both, gender and ethnicity. Watson, Quatman, and Edler (2002) cited several researchers who emphasized the impact of early gender role socialization. Their study confirmed that female adolescent students who were socialized in an all female school environment, demonstrated higher career aspirations and academic achievement, which was determined to be the result of the role modeling and attention given by their teachers. Howard (2003) believes African American students have the challenge of negotiating their personal and racial/ethnic identities with their academic identity. In addition, Carpenter (1980) found African American and Mexican females were more likely to aspire to lower career options because of the expectation of females to be less career-minded and less committed to the American work ethic than males. Also, Kao (1995) perceived Asian students overachieved academically and in career aspirations to offset the effects of discrimination. Finally, Robbins, Wallis, and Dunston (2003)
found the under-formulated career plans of the Zulu students in South Africa were a reflection of the apartheid and oppression they experienced. Based upon the review of the literature, ethnic and gender socialization was identified as a critical factor impacting academic achievement and career thoughts.

Throughout the literature another salient factor found to be instrumental in career thoughts processing and academic achievement was parental influence. Many participants from various studies indicated parents influenced their academic progress and motivation towards career success (Howard, 2003; Kao, 1995; Carpenter, 1980). Carpenter (1980) found parental involvement enhanced career aspirations. She discovered the higher the parental involvement, the lower the disparity between career aspirations and career expectations, as well as the lower the relationship between career expectation and academic performance. Howard (2003) found the African American students indicated the significant role parents played in their academic identity and performance. The students talked about how their parents cared deeply about them reaching their academic potential and goals. This was also confirmed by Robbins, Wallis, and Dunston (2003), who found the Zulu students’ emphasized family as the main source of support and guidance. Again, based upon the review of the literature, parental involvement was also identified as a critical factor impacting academic achievement and career thoughts.

**Review of Parenting Styles**

The literature suggests parental involvement plays a role in academic achievement and career thoughts. Roe and Young suggest parent-child communication and interactions are critical for career development. In addition, locus of control plays a role in the decisiveness maturity and academic performance. Locus of control appears to impact a person’s destiny, controlling a person’s identity development and future direction. Although Roe’s relational
approach theory has been found to be inconclusive and literature has established the creation of the home environment as influential on academic performance and career decision-making. Baumrind's Parenting Style Typology appears to present a model for understanding parental involvement on academic achievement and career development outcomes.

**Baumrind’s Parenting Style Typology**

Baumrind (1966, 1989) developed the foundation for understanding parenting behaviors and attitudes. The Baumrind parenting style typology offers an explanation regarding the impact parents have on their children's behavioral and psychological outcomes. This foundation gives insight into the methods parents use to relate to their children and an understanding of how parents critically think about relationships with their children.

Baumrind developed the typology based upon the premise of how parents respond to their children and the expectations they enforce on their children. Each parenting type can be explained through the comprehension of two dimensions of parent-child interactions; responsiveness, which reflects support, communication, attention to children’s needs, and an established predictable environment; and demandingness, which reflects control, willingness to confront children, parameters, and creating expectations. Baumrind developed four parenting style typologies based upon the dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness. The parenting style typologies are Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive, and Neglectful.

*Authoritative Parenting* utilizes high responsiveness and demandingness, which results in few behavioral problems and is good for psychological development. Authoritative parents are those who effectively balance being responsive and being directive. The focus of this parenting style is the encouragement of autonomy and the careful direction of the child’s activities. The authoritative communication format includes reasoning with their children and encouraging
equal verbal exchange between the parent and child. These types of parents affirm their children’s present abilities and qualities, while setting standards for their future behavior.

*Authoritarian Parenting* utilizes low responsiveness and high demandingness, which results in few behavioral problems, yet has been deemed detrimental for psychological development. Authoritarian parents are those who set rules and expectations on their children. They control their child’s environment, expecting respect and obedience. Discipline is usually used to contain poor behavior. The authoritarian style does not encourage autonomy, but encourages dependence and reliance on the parents. This type of parenting also does not encourage verbal exchange between parent and child. The focus of this parenting style is on establishing standards and expectations to manage child development.

*Permissive Parenting* utilizes high responsiveness and low demandingness, which results in high behavioral problems, yet has been found not to be detrimental for psychological development. The permissive parenting style is centered on a non-directive format with the children. This style responds to children’s impulsive behaviors in an accepting and affirming manner. This style also allows the children to regulate their own lives, making few demands for household responsibilities and orderly behavior. The permissive communication style uses reason to communicate with the children, allowing them to participate in family decisions and often giving explanations for family rules.

*Neglectful Parenting* utilizes low responsiveness and demandingness, which results in high behavioral problems and is detrimental for psychological development. The neglectful parenting style does not engage in the development of the child. This style does not regularly communicate with the children and does not establish structure or standards for children to follow. Baumrind’s research identified the Authoritative Parenting style as the most acceptable
parenting format that produces the best behavioral and psychological outcomes. Baumrind also identified the Authoritarian Parenting style as the traditional parenting format for many ethnically diverse families, which produces fewer behavioral problems, yet has been deemed detrimental for good psychological outcomes.

**Applicability of Baumrind’s Typology to Ethnic Groups**

Baumrind’s parenting style typology has established the foundation for how we think about parent-child interactions. However, researchers suggest these typologies are limited in perspective and; not representative of ethnic or cultural parenting styles. Garg, Levin, Urajnik, and Kauppi (2005) suggested that Baumrind’s parenting style typology may not have the same meaning from an ethnic or cultural perspective; therefore, indicating parenting styles differ by racial and ethnic groups (Pong, Hao, & Gardner, 2005). However, there is literature that supports the applicability of Baumrind’s parenting typology to ethnic parenting styles. Steinberg (2001) has concluded from his extensive review of twenty-five years of parenting style research that Baumrind’s parenting model measures are comparably across ethnic and socioeconomic groups. The literature Steinberg explored suggests that adolescence develop better in an authoritative parenting dynamic, regardless of the racial or socioeconomic background, suggesting that Baumrind’s parenting typologies are applicable to diverse ethnic groups. He also found that literature does not present evidence that African Americans fare better with authoritarian parenting styles. In addition, Sorkhabi (2005) explored literature that researched the applicability of Baumrind’s parenting styles model in collectivistic cultures, in particular its applicability to the Asian culture. Her findings presented arguments that supported and denied the applicability of the model.
The literature that denies the applicability of Baumrind’s parenting typology to diverse cultures suggests that the typology does not clearly define the dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness. The controversy that appears to question the applicability of Baumrind’s parenting typology to diverse cultures center around whether or not parental warmth exists in the authoritarian parenting style, which is the prevalent parenting typology of ethnically diverse families. Harsh physical discipline, which is a part of the authoritarian parenting style, was found to be more prevalent in African American families than in European American families. Interestingly, the physical discipline in African American families did not produce aggressive externalizing behaviors in African American children, as it did in European American children (Deater-Deckard, Dodge, Bates, & Petit, 1996). It was suggested African American children did not perceive their parents discipline as lacking care and warmth (Deater-Deckard, et al., 1996). Although Rudy and Grusec (2001) hypothesized a significant negative association between authoritarianism and warmth, it was found to have a positive association in collectivistic cultures, in particular the Egyptian-Canadian culture.

However, there is literature that supports the utilization of harsh physical discipline producing aggressive externalizing behaviors, supporting the authoritarian parenting style as detrimental to behavioral outcomes. Chang, Lansford, Schwartz, and Farver (2004a) found that maternal harsh parenting was positively associated with aggressive and disruptive behaviors in primary age children from Hong Kong. In addition, Zhou, Eisenberg, Wang, and Reiser (2004) also confirmed that parental hostility and corporal punishment was associated with lowered ability to engage in self-control, and increased frustration and anger in 7 and 8 years old Beijing children.
There is literature that supports Baumrind’s typology applicability to diverse cultures (Chang, et al., 2004a; Steinberg, 2001; Zhou, et al., 2004) and literature which questions the applicability of Baumrind’s typology to diverse cultures (Deater-Deckard, et al., 1996; Rudy & Grusec, 2001). Sorkhabi (2005) concludes researchers have not presented enough evidence that determines the recommended parenting typology for collectivistic cultures. Steinberg (2001) suggests examining the association between parenting dimensions and child outcomes as an alternative to understanding parenting dynamics.

**Exploration of Other Parenting Style Concepts**

Researchers have engaged in studies that applied a different perspective of Baumrind’s parenting typology to explore the association between parenting styles and psychological and behavioral outcomes in diverse cultures. Weis (2002) acknowledged that Baumrind’s parenting style typology was based upon a sample of middle-class, European American families. As a result, he examined the applicability of Baumrind’s typology to a sample of low-income African American families. His study focused on parenting cognitions of single, adolescent, African-American mothers. Weis preferred the terminology of “cognition”, rather than parenting style because it was representative of the critical thought process of parenting. Three parenting cognitions emerged during the study, which were warmth, control, and anger. These cognitions were the foundation for the four dimensions Weis identified from his study. These dimensions were dismissive, permissive, authoritative, and affectionate-distressed. These parenting cognition classifications refer to the mother’s psychological distress, level of human capital, which is access to available resources, and socio-economic status.

The results of Weis’ study showed the focus of child-rearing in African American families was socialization, protection, and survival. The results also clarified the importance of
affect as a critical factor that impacted the child rearing practices of African American single mothers. Distress and frustration levels were instrumental in the type of cognition that was utilized during child rearing. It is clear that cognition needs to be considered when evaluating the parenting practices of ethnically diverse parents. The literature suggested that the parent’s environment and circumstances shaped the cognitions and perspectives of child-rearing practices.

Ferrari (2002) also conducted research that offered a different perspective on ethnic differences in parenting. Ferrari’s research explored the way cultural beliefs and attitudes impacted parenting behaviors. Familism, machismo, and valuing children were investigated to examine if these variables contributed to parental behaviors. The correlation between cultural values and the parent’s own history with their parents was also examined. Ferrari engaged in this exploration to discover the level of parents’ history with maltreatment and abuse. Another purpose of the study was to determine if the parents sampled were more likely to engage in abusive relationships with their own children. The overall purpose of the research was to explore possible Euro-American biases of “good parenting”. It was believed the interpretation of “good parenting” may have led to higher reports of child abuse in African American and Latino families.

Ferrari (2002) found there were ethnic differences in parental nurturing. African American parents were significantly more nurturing than Latino parents and more likely to use physical discipline than Latino and European American parents. There were no significant differences in nurturing between African American and European American parents. Ferrari’s findings also supported the belief that African American and Latino parents were more likely to demonstrate an authoritarian parenting style.
Ferrari's (2002) and Weis' (2002) studies appears to support the concepts of the applicability of Baumrind's typologies to ethnically diverse parenting dynamics. In theory, Weis, and Ferrari discuss factors such as demandingness and responsiveness as a part of the parent-child interaction. Ferrari's and Weis' studies encouraged critical thinking about the application and implications of parenting style labels. Their studies appear to minimize the focus on parenting categories, to focus on parent-child communication and expectations. To deem the Baumrind authoritative parenting typology as the acceptable style may not take into account the challenges parents of color endure and their perspectives of parenting. However, Baumrind, Ferrari, and Weis appear to demonstrate similar perspectives on family warmth, communication, control, and expectations as salient factors for good behavioral and psychological outcomes.

An additional factor to consider with regards to ethnically diverse parenting styles is the immigration status of the parents. Research supports the immigration status of ethnically diverse parents also having an impact on the academic achievement of the next generation of United States students. Several researchers found foreign-born parents, in particular Latino and Asian parents, are more likely to be more authoritarian than U.S. born parents (Kao & Tienda, 1995; Leung et al., 1998; Pong et al., 2005). These researchers identified significant parenting behavior differences between foreign-born parents and native born parents, which appeared to produce differences in academic performance in their children. Based upon the literature, immigration status must be considered as critical to understanding behavioral and psychological outcomes as a result of parenting styles.

**Salient Factor Regarding Parenting Styles and Ethnicity**

Howard (2003) cited several researchers (Fine, 1987; Ford & Harris, 1999; Nieto, 1992, 1994; Sola & Bennett, 1985), who stated schools have become a place of alienation, silence, and
ultimate failure for many students of color. As a result, parents have the daunting task of raising their children in a race-based environment of alienation and silence (Bennett, 2006). The literature suggests ethnically diverse families are socialized to overcome the emotional challenges of a race-based environment, rather than to overcome low academic achievement. However, Kao (1995) believes the reason Asian parents raise their children to over achieve is to offset the effects of the perceived discrimination they experience as an ethnic group.

The literature suggests the challenge of raising children in a race-based environment must be addressed by using more stringent parenting behaviors. Based upon the parenting dimensions of Baumrind’s parenting style, it is understood the demandingness dimension is the most salient parenting behavior important for ensuring children of color are well protected and family survival is achieved. This perception is supported by Weis (2002) who determined the goal of child rearing for African American families is survival and protection. The demandingness parenting values appeared to help maintain cultural standards and values, establishing the parameters for obedience and respect for the parents.

Each study reviewed made reference to expectations that were based on cultural values. The values of familism and machismo demonstrated the concept of strong connections to cultural values (Ferrari, 2002). In addition, literature regarding the Asian parent expectations made reference to bringing honor and respect to the family (Kao, 1995; Leung et al., 1998; Pong et al., 2005). The literature’s emphasis on values demonstrated racial socialization and racial identity as factors influencing parenting styles and academic achievement outcomes in children of color.

**Parenting Styles and Gender**

Several researchers explored parenting styles by gender to examine their influence on children’s academic achievement. Aunola, Stattin, and Nurmi (2000) explored the impact
parenting styles had on academic achievement by examining the application of various adaptive and maladaptive achievement strategies. Even though their study was focused on a sample of 14 year olds, they found interesting gender differences. The researchers found the girls were overrepresented in the authoritative parenting style families, and the boys were overrepresented in the neglectful parenting style families. In examining the adolescent’s ability to apply achievement strategies to various academic situations, it was discovered the girls were less likely to use self-enhancing attributions and exhibited higher levels of failure expectations than the boys. The parents surveyed also found this to be true in their daughters. However, parents reported they expected failure and task-irrelevant behaviors to be typical of boys. This could explain the overrepresentation of boys in the neglectful parenting style homes. Aunola et al., (2000) found parents expected maladaptive externalizing behaviors in boys, resulting in the parents not responding with demandingness to control the expected behaviors.

In addition, the literature suggests the impact of parenting style is more significant in opposite gender parent-child relationships. The authoritative parenting style of one parent was found to be more influential for the college adjustment of the child of the opposite sex, than the authoritative parenting style of the same sex parent (Hickman & Crossland, 2004). The responsiveness of the father had a positive impact on the college adjustment of their daughters; as well as, the responsiveness of the mother’s had a positive impact on the college adjustment of their son’s. This was also confirmed in a study by Scott and Mallinckrodt (2005), who found the responsiveness of the father had an impact on the daughter’s self-efficacy with science achievement. Even though the nurturance of the mother was present, the father’s emotional support was critical for achievement performance in male dominated areas, like science.
The findings of Aunola et al. (2000) and Hickman and Crossland (2004) introduced the possibility of dual parenting styles existing in the home environment and the possibility that parenting styles are adjusted in accordance to the child’s gender. The literature suggests high levels of demandingness and responsiveness is associated with the rearing of the daughters. This is supported by the overrepresentation of girls in authoritative parenting style families (Aunola et al., 2000). Also, based upon Aunola et al. findings, it is interesting to consider low demandingness and responsiveness as associated with the rearing of the sons. This is also supported by the over representation of son’s in the neglectful parenting style families (Aunola et al., 2000).

**Salient Factor Regarding Parenting Styles and Gender**

The literature suggests the salient factor for academic achievement and gender is parent-child relationship. Hickman and Crossland’s (2004) study confirmed the impact of the parent-child relationship regarding gender differences. In this study parenting styles did not have a significant impact, but the relationship between father and daughter and mother and son influenced academic achievement. Even though the father is usually perceived as the disciplinarian in the family, this study demonstrated the daughter’s perception of her father’s responsiveness and communication style significantly influencing adjustment to college. This was also true for the mother and son relationship. Scott and Mallinekrodt (2005) also confirmed the impact of parental bond on academic achievement, in particular with regards to science self-efficacy. Paternal intrusive control and love-withdrawal had the greatest impact on daughters’ comfort with the sciences. It was determined unconditional love and support from fathers was crucial for actualizing their daughters’ potential in the sciences. Scott and Mallinekrodt (2005) suggest negative emotional bonds between fathers and daughters were more harmful to science
self-efficacy. Based upon the literature, it appears parental relationships, in particular parent relationships with the opposite gender child impacts academic achievement.

Summary

It is important to acknowledge parent-child interactions have an impact a person’s development. Baumrind hypothesizes that parent responsiveness and demandingness are critical for the behavioral and psychological outcomes of child development. Although the parenting style typologies have been normed based upon European American, middle class families, researchers continue to test its applicability to various ethnic groups. Current researchers believe that Baumrind’s parenting typology does not have the same meaning for ethnically diverse families and parenting styles differ for racial and ethnic groups (Ferrari, 2002; Garg et al., 2005; Pong et al., 2005; Weis, 2002). Even though the there is literature that questions Baumrind’s applicability to racial and ethnic families, there is research that supports its applicability (Sorkhabi, 2005; Steinberg, 2001). However, the literature that supports the applicability still suggests further exploration of its applicability and to consider focusing on the parenting dimensions, rather than the typologies, when applying Baumrind’s concepts to examining parenting dynamics of ethnically diverse cultures. It appears the question is not the applicability of the parenting typologies, but should the dimensions be defined differently for ethnically diverse families (Ferrari, 2002; Weis, 2002). In addition, the literature does acknowledge the gender of the parent and the child also plays a role in the parenting dynamics and its impact on behavioral and psychological outcomes (Aunola et al., 2000; Hickman & Crossland, 2004; Scott & Mallinckrodt, 2005). Regardless of the considerations regarding the application of the parenting styles typologies, literature does support the concepts of parent responsiveness, such as communication and support; and demandingness, such as parameters and expectations, are
applicable and can be used as a foundation for exploring the impact of parenting on academic achievement and career decisiveness.

**Parenting Styles in Career Development Research**

Several researchers have explored career development through understanding the impact of parent-child communication exchanges. Amundson and Penner’s (1998) qualitative study, exploring family dynamics during a career counseling session, resulted in mixed reactions from the student participants. Four of the eight students’ reactions to their parents’ presence were positive, while the others expressed shyness and embarrassment during the session. However, when the parents’ presence was discussed with the students six months later, four of the students expressed comments regarding feelings of being more understood by their parents and an increase in communication about careers. In addition, Young et al., (1997) conducted a qualitative study exploring the “joint action” career conversations between parents and adolescents, investigating the conversation patterns between the parent and adolescent, and their engagement in developing a common goal. The researchers found three critical conversation patterns occurring between the parent and adolescent dyad which were negotiating, exploring, and struggling. These conversation patterns appeared to influence the adolescents’ way of processing their career goals. Young, Paseluikho, and Valach (1997) used the data from the same qualitative study conducted by Young et al., (1997) to explore the role of emotions in the development process, and found emotions influenced the career goal setting process. When the joint action showed emotional support, the conversation flowed smoothly. But, when anger was present, the adolescent opposed the parent’s ideas about career choice. Each of these studies implies communication is critical to the career thinking process. The parent’s presence and type of conversation played a role in how the adolescent engaged in career development. These
studies demonstrated the salience of the responsiveness dimension of parenting as it relates to career thoughts processing. The studies confirm parent-child communication exchanges as having an important role in career exploration.

In addition, research has explored parent involvement by focusing on parents’ career expectations in their children’s career choices. Turner and Lapan (2002) hypothesized that parents shape the values and perceptions of career appropriateness in children through setting expectations on academic and occupational decisions. Based upon using the Social Cognitive Career Theory model (SCCT; Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1996) to examine parental support, career self-efficacy, career planning and exploration, gender typing, and career interests of middle school adolescents, the results indicated that the interaction among parental support, career self-efficacy and career planning predicted career interests in adolescents. Kinnier et al. (1990) studied the relationship between career decisiveness and family-of-origin enmeshment as it is related to problems of career indecision. The belief was individuals who experienced triangulation have difficulty with self-differentiation basing their career decisions on the emotional and reactive connections to their parents. The results actually indicated those who were enmeshed in their families were more likely to experience difficulty in making career decisions. These studies support a need to further explore the role of parental expectations on career decision making. Since Turner and Lapan found parents’ values and support was critical for career self-efficacy and Kinnier et al. found family enmeshment lead to career indecisiveness, it is difficult to determine the actual impact of parenting expectations and demandingness on career development.

Although Roe’s theory was found to be inconclusive, these studies appear to support her concept of parent-child relations impacting career decision making. In addition, the research
appears to demonstrate the need to further explore the impact of the parenting dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness on career exploration and the thoughts process. Parents appear to play a critical role in the career development process. Further exploration is necessary to understand the role parents play and the role of responsiveness and demandingness in career development.

**Parenting Styles and Academic Achievement**

Research suggests that parenting styles have a significant impact and is a determinant of academic achievement and behavioral outcomes (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992). Research has found the authoritative parenting style is associated positively with school grades, school adjustment, and school engagement, while authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful parenting styles are negatively associated with school grades and school engagement (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg et al., 1992). The literature suggests the authoritative parenting style is good for academic achievement because it encourages independent problem solving and critical thinking (Hess & McDevitt, 1984, as cited in Aunola, Stattin, & Nurmi, 2000). The literature also suggests that the authoritarian parenting style discourages exploration and problem solving, detracting from learning and fostering an environment of dependence, resulting from excess control (Hess & McDevitt, 1984, as cited in Aunola, et al., 2000). In addition, underachievement is associated with neglectful and permissive parenting environments (Barber, 1996, as cited in Aunola et al., 2000).

Research confirms the authoritative parenting style has been effective in producing positive academic achievement outcomes in students. However, most research that examines the impact of parenting practices on academic achievement primarily focuses only on European American or all ethnic groups as one group (Pong, Hao, & Gardner, 2005). The research on
various ethnic group academic achievement outcomes appeared to offer contradictory results. Weak and/or inconsistent relationships between the Baumrind’s parenting typology and academic scores have been demonstrated in studies that examined parental impact on the academic performances of African Americans, Asian Americans and Latino children (Chao, 2001; Dornbusch et al., 1987).

Pong, Hao, and Gardner (2005) found authoritative parenting was beneficial for European American students, but had no impact on Asian student academic performance. In addition, the authoritarian parenting style was harmful to European American students, but had no significant negative impact on the Asian students’ academic performance (Pong et al., 2005). These findings contradict previous research findings of the authoritative parenting style as the preferred style to predict positive academic outcomes. In fact, researchers found in general, Asian students are the only population who academically outperform all other racial and ethnic groups, which challenges the concept of authoritarian parenting detracting from learning (Garg et al., 2005; Kao, 1995; Pong et al., 2005). Therefore, the literature suggests that the authoritarian parenting style of some Asian parents appear to have a strong, positive influence on the academic achievement of Asian children. (Garg et al., 2005; Kao, 1995; Pong et al., 2005). Asian parents tend not to get involved or discuss academic issues, which is characteristic of authoritarian parenting. However, they have higher educational expectations and rules about maintaining good grades than European American parents, which is also characteristic of authoritarian parenting (Kao, 1995).

Kao (1995) explored the impact of mainstream factors of parent involvement, home resources, and peer groups on the academic achievement of Asian adolescents. Kao (1995) wanted to examine the association of these factors with Asian academic performance, since these
factors have been found to positively impact European American academic achievement. Kao found communication about school, home resources of books and computers, and peer associations did not have an individual discernible effect on Asian students’ grades. One factor did not have more significant impact over the others. Kao discovered the parents demonstrated their value of education differently than European American parents. Instead, a combination of all three factors created the home environment that promoted education. The findings show access to all three factors was contingent upon access to available resources. Kao also found that there were cultural differences in the level of investment into educational resources to promote education. Despite comparable incomes between European American and Asian parents, and the belief Asian parents invested more in educational resources, Asian parents appeared to push their children more to achieve academically (Kao, 1995).

Latino parents are also identified as utilizing an authoritarian parenting style to raise their children. Lopez’s (2001) qualitative study of the Padilla family explained how the parents taught their children to work hard and appreciate an education through positive reinforcement for academic performance. The parents, who were migrant workers, reinforced the need for their children to study hard to avoid a career of manual labor. In addition, the demandingness of the Padilla parents created parameters and expectations that were integrated into the children’s academic development process. For example, the Padilla parents reinforced their expectations that their children would not grow up to work in the fields by teaching them the challenges of hard work and the drudgery of manual labor. Although, the authoritarian parenting style was present, this study demonstrates a different application and utilization of the parenting style in a different ethnic group.
Even though it was easy to identify the Padilla parents’ perspective on academic achievement, it was difficult to pinpoint the perspectives of academic achievement in other Latino family studies. Lopez’s study showed the positive outcome of one family’s attempt at promoting the importance of getting an education. However, other research supports that Latino youth raised in authoritarian households continue to perform at the lower level of the academic achievement scale (Pong et al., 2005). They continue to be outperformed by European American and Asian students. In comparison to their European American and Asian counterparts, they are more likely to be raised by less educated parents and live in lower income households (Pong et al., 2005). Based upon Kao’s (1995) and Ma & Wang’s (2001) explanation of academic achievement, their research would suggest that the lack of financial and parental support is the cause of the Latino children’s academic progress. The literature appears to emphasize the importance of familism and machismo as the goal for Latino youth (Ferrari, 2002). Where the Asian parents tend to heavily invest in academic success, it appears the Latino parents tend to heavily invest in the family unit. The literature does not suggest that academic success is not important to the Latino culture because no literature to support such a statement has been found. However, based on the values of the Latino culture, the literature suggests academic achievement is challenged by limited access to resources, and may in fact be viewed in accordance to the potential impact it will have on the family unit relationship. This view supports the concept of protection and survival as the prevalent focus found in ethnically diverse families (Weis, 2002), which could be referred to as meeting the basic needs of the family unit. This appears to be more critical than investing heavily in a future that is not guaranteed through high achievement.

Research supports the identification of African American parents as more authoritarian than European American parents as well (Weis, 2002). However, the literature is inconsistent
regarding the type of impact parenting styles has on academic achievement. Attaway and Bry (2004) cited researchers (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg et al., 1994, 1992) suggesting parenting styles were not a good predictor of academic achievement for African Americans, even though it appeared to be a good predictor of academic achievement for European Americans. However, Attaway and Bry found that the greater amount of parental control, the lower the African American children’s grades. This suggests the authoritarian parenting style of African American parents negatively affects the academic performance of their children. Similar to the Latino parents, it appears the goal of parenting has been identified as protection and survival (Weis, 2002). As a result parents may have limited expectations of upward mobility, but, raise their children to have critical survival skills (Weis, 2002). It is possible African American parents, similar to Latino parents are more concerned about meeting basic family needs, rather than investing in a future that is not guaranteed through academic performance.

Bennett (2006) believed that ethnic identity was the more salient factor in academic achievement amongst African American children. This suggests racial socialization is the critical factor that influences academic achievement outcomes. He cites Arroyo and Zigler (1995) and Cross (1991), who attribute anxiety, delinquency, depression, low academic achievement, low self-esteem, school dropout, and substance abuse to lack of achieved ethnic identity. It is recognized that African Americans, as well as other racially and ethnically diverse populations face adversity that is influenced by their placement in society (Bennett, 2006; Weis, 2002). The literature suggests that ethnic minority parents must socialize their children to effectively navigate a race-based society (Bennett, 2006). This implies that the messages African American youth receive from their parent, socializes them to endure and overcome racial challenges. The probability of the child’s ability to acquire the motivation, achievement, and belief in possible
upward mobility will be contingent upon the parent’s achievement of their own ethnic identity, not their parenting style (Bennett, 2006). This also implies that parenting styles are not relevant to academic achievement outcomes. Yet, literature does support parenting styles having an impact on behavioral outcomes of academic achievement (Attaway & Bry, 2004; Dornbusch, et al., 1987; Howard, 2003). Therefore, Bennett suggests the parenting style will be influenced by the parent’s own racial socialization. Howard (2003) confirmed that African American students identified their parents as the more powerful influence on their academic identities. The results of Howard’s qualitative study of African American youth also identified race and socioeconomic status as additional factors shaping their academic identities. After reviewing the literature, it cannot be concluded academic achievement is not a priority of African American families. However, research supports African American families must address other issues regarding the socialization of their children, which may take priority over academic achievement (Bennett, 2006).

Pong et al. (2005) found first and second generation Latino adolescents reported having stricter parents and more difficulty making decisions on their own than their European American adolescent counterparts. This again demonstrates the characteristics of an authoritarian environment of dependence and reliance on the parents. This appeared to contradict the characteristics of the native Asian authoritarian parenting found in the literature, who do not engage their children in family decision making. The children of immigrant parents are probably included in the family decision making process because of language barriers and other acculturation issues affecting immigrant parents.

Kao (1995) believes the acculturation to the American culture negatively affected academic achievement, therefore explaining the higher achievement among children of
immigrant parents. Foreign-born parents were found to have significantly higher academic aspirations for their children, than native-born parents (Kao & Tienda, 1995). Similar to Asian children of native born U.S. parents, Asian children of immigrant parents outperformed their European American counterparts. In particular, first generation and second-generation Asian children had higher grades than the third and beyond generations of Asian students (Kao & Tienda, 1995). This was also true for first generation Blacks, who were found to earn higher grades than native-born Blacks (Kao & Tienda, 1995). Unfortunately, there were no significant generational differences in academic performance of the Latino children of immigrant parents (Kao & Tienda, 1995). However, Kao and Tienda (1995) found generational differences in college aspirations for the Latinos. They found that first and second generation Latino youth had stronger aspirations to attend and graduate from college than their U. S. born Latino counterparts, who have U.S. born parents.

**Academic Achievement and Career Decision Making**

The correlation between academic achievement and career decision making has been explored through various research studies. The literature suggests high academic achievement influences career decisiveness. It appears teachers and parents correlate academic achievement, personal competence, and motivation with career aspirations (Carpenter, 1980). Career decision making begins to truly surface for an adolescent during the period when they are trying to decide whether they will continue their post-secondary education, while additionally considering the format and setting of the post-secondary education (Carpenter, 1980). Carpenter (1980) cites Erikson (1959) who suggests academic performance is related to adolescent self-identity. Carpenter (1980) explains, as a result of self-identity, the adolescent reacts to social pressures and societal demands, responding by making career commitments and engaging in career
decision-making. The decided work role becomes the expression of achievement, thus becoming the foundation of one's personal identity (Carpenter, 1980).

Perrino (1985) investigated the relationship between locus of control, career maturity, and low and high achievement. Perrino (1985) cites Garner and Cole (1984), who found a relationship between locus of control and school achievement. Locus of control is defined by the students' perspective of the level of control they have over their outcomes. Students with strong internal locus of control were found to be higher achievers and students with a strong external locus of control were found to be underachievers. Perrino also cites Burlin (1976) who states that those with a strong internal locus of control have higher vocational maturity in relation to career development. In addition, Perrino cites Holland (1966) who explains those who exhibit vocational consistency are less influenced by external forces and appear to do better academically. As a result, Perrino found academic achievement had a significant effect on career maturity. The high achieving students had a higher level of career maturity than the low achieving students; thereby suggesting that the results of the study demonstrated a connection between academic achievement and career decision making.

**Academic Achievement, Career Decision Making, and Ethnicity**

Carpenter (1980) explored the disparity between academic achievement and career aspirations and expectations among African American and Mexican American students. The study discovered ethnically diverse students used academic achievement as a way to evaluate their ability to be a contributing member of their ethnic group (Carpenter, 1980). The purpose of the study was to explore whether academic achievement encourages a realistic view and determination of adolescent career expectations and desires. Carpenter found that there was a correlation between academic achievement and career expectations and aspirations. A stronger
correlation was found to be true when there were high levels of parental influence, the student was a male, the student had a positive attitude towards work, the family was from an upper socioeconomic status, the student was an African American, and the student was in the 11\textsuperscript{th} grade. In addition, career aspirations were more related to academic achievement than career expectations. The results held true in all areas indicated in the first demonstrated correlation except for the students’ view of work. A stronger correlation between career aspirations and academic achievement held true when students were found to have a negative view of work. This correlation can be interpreted to mean high achieving students aspired to higher career options because of the desire to avoid lower level jobs that required intensive manual labor. This study demonstrated academic achievement is a function of career aspirations more than career expectations. Overall, Carpenter found that the students’ motivation to achieve success is related to the expectancy academic performance will lead to a valued career.

**Academic Achievement, Career Decision Making, and Gender**

Research showed academic achievement appeared to motivate adolescent girls towards prestigious career choices. Watson, Quatman, & Edler (2002) conducted a comparison of high, moderate, and low achieving adolescent girls career aspirations and their school environment. The results were also compared to high, moderate, and low achieving boys. The researchers confirmed the higher achieving girls aspired towards the ideal highest prestigious career options, with the moderately high achieving girls’ aspirations surpassing the highest achieving girls’ aspirations. It was also found that high and moderate achieving girls’ ideal career aspirations surpassed the high achieving boys’ ideal career aspirations. The researchers also found a female only school environment had a greater influence on the prestige of the career aspirations. However, the researchers noticed career aspirations declined as the adolescent girls matured and
matriculated between 10th and 12th grades. The drop in prestigious status of careers showed the girls were becoming more realistic about career choices and assessing their abilities and suitability for certain career options. Even though the study confirmed high achieving girls as having higher aspirations, the study did not describe the possible causes of the moderately high achieving student’s aspirations surpassing the higher achievers’ aspirations. Based upon the literature, this phenomenon could also be attributed to higher achieving girls having more realistic career aspirations than the moderately high achieving girls.

Danziger (1983, as cited in Watson, Quatman, & Edler, 2002) explained academic achievement elevated the girls’ self-confidence, motivating them toward higher career aspirations. Gender, achievement level, age, and school environment were factors that influenced adolescent girl’s career choices (Watson, Quatman, & Edler, 2002). The results of Fox and Zimmerman’s (1985, as cited in Watson, Quatman, & Edler, 2002) study found that academically “gifted” adolescent girls demonstrated strong interest in science and other professional careers. However, girls have been found to be more likely to make career decisions based on their perceptions of what the opposite sex deems appropriate (Hawley, 1971 as cited in Watson, Quatman, & Edler, 2002). The study showed the girls did not feel rewarded for intelligence and high achievement (Watson, Quatman, & Edler, 2002). In contrast, adolescent boys’ career choices were influenced by abilities, academic achievement, and opportunities (Danziger, 1983 as cited in Watson, Quatman, & Edler, 2002). Danziger also found adolescent girls’ career choices were influenced by parental expectations. Girls were found to be challenged by the pressures of developing their gender identity and the historical socialization, which has discouraged motivation towards academic achievement in women (Watson, Quatman, & Edler, 2002)
Carpenter (1980) found a strong relationship between academic performance and the disparity between career aspirations and expectations among males and females. She found high levels of academic performance correlated with high levels of disparity and there was more disparity among the males than the females. The females were found to aspire toward lower prestige jobs, expecting to be able to obtain these aspirations. The males were found to aspire to higher prestige jobs, but did not expect to achieve their aspirations. Since the population Carpenter sampled was primarily African Americans and Mexican Americans, the results of this portion of her study were reflective of the cultural challenges these students faced. Therefore, based upon Carpenter’s study, higher academic performance produced more realistic assessments of one’s abilities and perceptions of achieving career goals. As a result, this study suggests that the females in this study selected their aspirations and expectations not just based upon their academic achievements, but in relation to the feasibility of obtaining certain career goals due to their race, gender, and socioeconomic status. This study also suggests that the males applied the same approach. It is important to acknowledge that traditionally, minority females have stronger academic performances in school than minority males (Carpenter, 1980). Interestingly, the minority males in this study were actually the higher achievers, which explained the higher aspirations. However, the feasibility of obtaining their aspirations was probably based upon their perceptions of access as a result of their race and socioeconomic status.

African American Socialization

According to the literature, African American adolescents are socialized to address the racial and discrimination challenges they will face in society. The process of racial socialization is the transmission of parents’ worldview about race and ethnicity to children (Bennett, 2006).
The parents focus on promoting cultural awareness and critical awareness of discrimination in preparation for coping with the challenge (Hughes et al., 2006). Preparation for the biases may be a part of child-rearing strategies, which is based upon parental historical knowledge of oppression (Ward, 1991). Preparation for biases have been found to be more prevalent in African American parents than other cultures (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1999; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). Therefore, racial identity development may be a reflection of externalized parental attitudes or societal stereotypes (Parham, 1989). It is clear that racial identity development results in part from interactions with family (Fisher, Jackson & Villarreal, 1998).

Literature suggests racial identity socialization is critical for African American adolescent academic performance and career development (Bennett, 2006). The challenges that ethnically diverse families face involve parenting for positive behavioral outcomes and good psychological development, as well as the ethnic identity of their children. Bennett suggests racial identity socialization is an important part of parenting for parents of color, which possibly explains why ethnically diverse parents are more likely to have an authoritarian parenting style. Bennett cites Griffen, Scheier, Botvin, Diaz, & Miller (1999) who explained that one of the pivotal roles of parents of color is the protection factor, which focuses on parenting through strong support and strong supervision.

Other researchers further explored career development from the parent-child socialization perspective. This perspective considered the home environment as influential in leading children towards intentional career behavioral outcomes (Young & Frieson, 1990). Several researchers have found that the parent-child interaction influences the socialization of children (Bennett, 2006; Howard, 2003; Kao & Tienda, 1995; Weis, 2002), and emphasizes the importance of exploring the ways parents prepare their children for their future (Young & Frieson, 1990).
These researchers recognize the need for more understanding of career development from a relational perspective, meaning from the parent-child, as well as the family interactions perspective (Vondrecek, Lerner, & Schulenberg, 1986, as cited in Young & Frieson, 1990).

The literature document and support the impact of parental influence on the academic and career development of underrepresented adolescents. However, little is documented about underrepresented populations’ perceptions of parental influences on their career development (Fisher & Padmawidjaja, 1999). In particular, there has been little research exploring the importance of parental influences on the career development of African American youth. Most literature has explored the dynamics of parental influences on the European American middle class, with the results often being applied to developing assumptions about parental influences on ethnic minority populations (Fisher & Padmawajaja, 1999; Weis, 2002). The limited research available that considers parental influences on African American adolescents does indicate that it is an important factor, but the specifics about the parental factors have not been clarified (Fisher & Padmawajaja, 1999).

Constantine, Kindaichi, and Miville (2007) explored factors influencing the educational and career transitions of African American and Latino adolescents. They discuss the belief that the transition of African American and Latino high school students varies in accordance with internal and external contexts including perceptions of barriers to educational and career goals, which are school disengagement, lack of role models, socio-economic status, socio-political problems, and cultural values (Constantine, Erickson, Banks, & Timberlake, 1998; Gloria & Hird, 1999 as cited in Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). The literature suggests understanding individual, structural, and cultural factors will give greater clarity to what
influences the African American’s educational and career transitions, and the serious implications it has on the progress and advancement of the African American culture.

Factors Influencing Academic Achievement

Constantine, Kindaichi, and Miville (2007) discussed several individual factors which research identifies as contributing to the African American adolescents’ academic development. They believed that African American adolescents are challenged by their perceived connectedness to the prescribed academic content, thus impacting their school engagement and academic achievement (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). As a result, the adolescents find school uninteresting, leading to disengagement and school drop out (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). Secondly, this disengagement leads to negative self-perceptions of the feasibility of success, further disassociating themselves from academic achievement (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). This academic disengagement is occurring even in the midst of the high aspirations African American youth hold. Arbonna (1990) and Evans and Herr (1991), (as cited in Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007) reported that African American adolescents have academic and career aspirations comparable to their European American peers. However, African American youth are challenged by translating their aspirations into academic achievement (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). In addition, the ability to translate their aspirations into career exploration and planning may be connected to their perceptions of career barriers within their fields of interest (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007).

What appears to be a critical factor in the ability of African American adolescents to be engaged in school and academic achievement, to pursue their educational and career aspirations, and engage in career exploration and planning, is the level of interaction with adults who can
influence their academic and career transitions. Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, (2007) believe role models and mentors of similar race, ethnicity, and gender can influence the adolescents readiness for academic transitions. The role model or mentor can provide the type of socialization necessary to endure the transitional challenge, in spite of the racism and sexism that the adolescent may fear they will encounter (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). These ideas clearly support the necessity for parental involvement in the African Americans’ academic development.

Research supports the African American parents’ goal of child rearing and socialization for survival within the predominantly European American society is to develop the cultural identity of the adolescent (Bennett, 2006; Ferrar, 2002; Weis, 2002). This is critical for the development of their self-concept with regards to their place and purpose in society academically and vocationally. Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, (2007) explains that positive racial and ethnic messages from the parents, in addition to other supportive mentors would be instrumental in decreasing the African American adolescents’ anxiety so that they can effectively face the academic challenges of the predominantly European American society.

Factors Influencing Career Development

Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville (2007) discussed several structural factors which research also supports as factors that contribute to the African American adolescents’ career development and decision making. Socioeconomic status, in particular, poverty is a factor that continues to impact career development of African American adolescents (Weis, 2002). Even though high aspirations exist, such challenges as family unemployment, poor health care, and exposure to crime and violence are a few of the environmental factors that influence the adolescents’ ability to achieve vocationally (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). Low
socioeconomic status families may be limited in knowledge and access to career and post-secondary information therefore, unable to effectively engage the child in career development opportunities (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). However, research supports that ethnic identity and socialization are important for establishing a career identity (Bennett, 2006; Ferrar, 2002; Weis, 2002). Research also supports the parents' self concept and perceptions about their identity impacts the adolescents' perceptions of their own ethnic identity (Bennett, 2006). Therefore, it can be assumed strong ethnic socialization compensates for the lack of available finances and access to career resources.

In addition, ethnic socialization assists the adolescent in overcoming the other structural factor of anticipated racial discrimination. African Americans experience unique socio-political problems during the career development process (Lee, 1990 as cited in McCollum, 1998). Unfair access to the job market and life circumstances has resulted in the underrepresentation of African Americans in higher education (Kimbrough & Salomone, 1993 as cited in McCollum, 1998). The underrepresentation has limited African Americans to lower level jobs and have limited their opportunities for career advancement (Carter & Wilson, 1992; Herr & Cramer, 1993 as cited in McCollum, 1998). In addition, these limitations have had an impact on the types of careers African Americans pursue. Literature supports African Americans select career options based upon their perceptions of the openness and acceptance of that vocational environment. A substantial number of African American college students pursue careers that are considered less racially discriminatory, like the social sciences, education, medicine, and law (McCollum, 1998).

Gloria and Hird (1999, as cited in Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007) believe that career aspirations may not lead to actual placement into their desired occupation, even though the required and competitive qualifications are achieved. As a result of this career barrier,
African American adolescents may struggle with career decisions, causing disruptions in the career and academic transitions process (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville (2007) believe African American adolescents who are prepared to face the challenges of racial discrimination may have heightened coping and career self-efficacy. This again supports the critical issue of parental involvement in the ethnic identity socialization.

Lastly, Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville (2007) discussed the cultural factors which research also supports as factors that contribute to the African American adolescents’ career development and decision making. It is possible that academic and career transitions are a reflection of cultural values and family commitments. Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville (2007) believe the possible conflict in adhering to family collectivistic values while negotiating the individualistic societal values is reflected during the academic and career transitions.

Commitment to family values can be both an encouragement towards and a barrier from effective academic and career transitions (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). In addition, cultural differences have been found to have an impact on career development and decision making. McCollum (1998) cites several researchers who believe that cultural differences in language, habits, personality characteristics, and values act as barriers to career development. For some African Americans, the decision to pursue post-secondary education could mean an emotional and physical distance from their cultural values and ethnic identity (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). It could also increase the adolescents’ anxiety to meet parental expectations (Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007). This implies that ethnic identity costs are greater for African American adolescents, meaning parental socialization will be critical to effectively guide them towards and through their academic and career transitions.
Summary

Career development theory has considered the concept of relational approaches to career development. Roe, as well as Young and his colleagues, have explored the relationships between parenting and career development outcomes and directions. Even though Roe’s theory was not substantiated, it has laid the foundation for understanding the possible relationship between parenting dynamics and career directions of adolescents. However, Young has been able to demonstrate that “joint actions” regarding career decision making conversations between a parent and child has a significant impact on career decision making. Young found that levels of parent-child agreement and disagreement, in addition levels of emotions influence a child’s career decision making process. Other researchers also found parent perceptions, family communication, and enmeshment to influence the career development process. As a result, research makes a case for the need of school counselors to consider engaging parents in the career development process.

The literature also suggests there are cultural differences that impact parenting styles. Most of the research that examined the correlation between parenting styles and positive psychological and behavioral outcomes used a predominately middle class, European American population as the sample for the studies. Unfortunately, the results of these studies are used to set the standards of psychological and behavioral outcomes for ethnically diverse populations. These previous studies do not take into consideration the cultural challenges many ethnic groups endure while attempting to effectively negotiate the majority European American culture. Researchers who focused on the parenting dynamics of various ethnic groups found the purpose of parenting to be focused on survival and protection in a majority culture society, rather than academic achievement and career development. These researchers were not indicating academic
achievement and career development as unimportant, but were demonstrating the complexities of parenting for these groups. Several researchers make the case for rethinking the traditional Baumrind’s parenting style typologies for ethnically diverse groups. In addition, racial identity socialization was a salient factor that was critical for successful academic achievement and career development.

It is critical to explore the role of parenting and its application to African American adolescent academic and career development. Most research has looked at the impact of parenting on academic achievement in African Americans. However, little is known about the impact of parenting on African American career development. Literature suggests that understanding the individual, cultural, and structural challenges will give greater clarity to the influences on vocational and educational transitions of the African American culture. African American adolescents have academic and career aspirations comparable to their European American peers. However, literature supports there are barriers and challenges that hinder their academic progress and career choices. Since researchers found racial identity and socialization to be the salient factors in academic and career development, it is important to explore which parenting dimension dynamic has the strongest relationship with positive academic and career development outcomes in African American adolescents.

In conclusion, literature supports the influence parental involvement has on academic achievement and career development. The literature suggests there is a correlation between parenting styles and academic and career development outcomes. Therefore, the literature demonstrates the need for further exploration of the relational approach concept of career development. As a result of the literature review, this study explored and identified the relationship between parent responsiveness and parent demandingness with academic
achievement and career decisiveness in African American adolescents. In addition, this study explored the gender relationships of the parent-child interactions as it relates to parent responsiveness and demandingness, and adolescent academic achievement and career thoughts processing.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Research confirms the positive impact of parenting on the child development process. Parenting proves to be important to the development of self-esteem, self-confidence, interpersonal relationships and academic success (Admundson & Penner, 1998; Lopez, 2001). Literature suggests that parenting styles have a significant impact on academic achievement (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg et al., 1992). Most career development research overlooks the role of parents and family dynamics on the career decision making process (Kinnier et al., 1990). The sample used for most studies exploring the relationship of parenting styles, academic achievement, and career thoughts were primarily European American. Little is known about the relationship between parenting styles, career development, and academic achievement in African Americans. However, based upon the literature regarding the impact parents have on academic development, this study explored the relationship between parenting dimension, career thoughts, and academic achievement in African American adolescents.

Literature identifies the parenting dimensions of high demandingness and high responsiveness as the effective parenting style that produces high academic achievement. In addition, the literature supports the idea that the type of parental relationship influences the career direction of children (Roe, 1957; Young et al., 1997). However, this is confirmed for European American parenting dynamics, but believed to be applicable to other ethnic groups. The literature actually implies that the parenting dimensions of high demandingness and high responsiveness are not effective for other ethnic groups. The literature also implies that because the parenting goals of other ethnic groups may differ than their European American counterparts,
then, it is possible to believe that there is a different combination of parenting dimensions that are more effective for other ethnic groups, in particular African Americans. In order to identify and understand which combinations of dimensions are more effective for producing high academic achievement and readiness to engage in career thought processing, information was gathered to formulate ideas and thoughts about what could possibly be the parenting factors that may influence career decision making and academic achievement in African American adolescents.

**Research Question**

To what extent do background variables (gender, family configuration, parent/caregiver education level), parenting variables (demandingness, responsiveness, demandingness x responsiveness interaction), and career thoughts (decision making confusion, commitment anxiety) influence academic achievement for African American high school juniors and seniors? The independent variables for this study were the background variables, the parenting variables, and the career thoughts variables. The dependent variable for this study was academic achievement.

**Research Design**

To explore parenting dimension variables, career thoughts variables, and academic achievement of African Americans adolescents, a correlation research design was used, to examine the strength in relationship between variables to possibly explain an occurrence (Heppner, Kivlghan, & Wampold, 1999). Using a correlation design not only explored a possible relationship between the study’s variables, but explored the possible causal effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Heppner, Kivlghan, & Wampold, 1999). This type of research design was chosen for the purpose of gathering information that could
demonstrate the possibility of understanding parenting dimension outcome differences within the African American population. Data was collected to show the scope of parenting dimension levels and career thoughts, and its possible connection to academic achievement.

The correlation design was used to support or disconfirm Young’s theory of relational approaches to career development. Young et al., (1997) explored variables of parent-child conversations of agreement and disagreement, and their relationship to the career decision-making process. The correlation design was also used to support or disconfirm current theories of parenting styles influence on academic achievement. Dornbusch et al., (1987) and Steinberg et al., (1992, 1994) explored variables of demandingness and responsiveness of parenting styles and its relationship to positive and negative behavioral and psychological outcomes. As a result, this study examined parenting dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness, which was based upon Dornbusch et al., (1987) and Steingberg’s et al., (1992, 1994) parenting interactions and Young’s parent-child joint conversation variables, and explored its relationship to academic achievement and career thoughts.

Participants

This study focused on a homogenous group of African Americans to solely concentrate on the dynamics of their academic and career development, as well as to gain insight into the parenting dynamics of the African American family. For this study African American junior and senior high school students were recruited from two school districts in southeast Michigan, Detroit and Oak Park. The students were required to meet, a minimum, 75% attendance criteria to be eligible participants for the study. The attendance criteria represented students who were actively engaged in academic matriculation. For the purpose of collecting parenting dimension data, the term parent was defined as the guardian/caregiver of a child. To control for the family
dynamics of single parent and dual parent home environments the participants were categorized by a family composition identification code. High school juniors and seniors were chosen as the targeted adolescent population to capture participants who were in the process of thinking about their future after high school. In addition, juniors and seniors were the target population because this population met the norm standards of the inventory that was used during this study.

**Instruments**

Several assessments and surveys were used to collect the independent and background information data for this study. In addition, statewide standardized scores were used to reflect the dependent variable of academic achievement. The following instruments were used to collect data examining parenting dimensions, academic achievement, and career thoughts processing:

**Dependent Variable**

**Michigan Merit Exam/American College Test** (MME/ACT, Michigan Merit Examination Guide to Report, 2009). This is a multiple choice and constructed response state standardized test taken by high school students. The Michigan Merit Exam (MME) is a part of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), which is a Michigan standardized test program measuring math and reading proficiency of elementary to high school students, administered throughout the state of Michigan over a three day testing period. All high school juniors, including special education students are assessed in the areas of math, science, social studies, and English language arts (reading and writing). The assessment is used to distinguish achievement performance levels of high school juniors and seniors. The assessment questions are developed based upon the proficiency standards of the Michigan State Board of Education. The assessment has been designed to control for guessing on the questions.
There are three components of the MME: the ACT Plus Writing, the WorkKeys assessments and Michigan Mathematics, and the Michigan Social Studies, Science and Writing tests. These components reflect the Michigan curriculum framework and high school content expectations. In addition, these components meet the federal accountability standards of No Child Left Behind.

The MME Reading Score is based on 40 multiple choice ACT Reading questions and 30 multiple choice WorkKeys questions. WorkKeys questions are items which test the basic reading, mathematics, and diagram synthesis skills related to workplace performance. The MME Writing Score is based on 75 multiple choice ACT English questions and two constructed responses reflecting social studies and English, each worth 12 points. The MME Reading Score and the MME Writing Score are averaged and combined to form the MME English Language Arts Score. The MME Mathematics Score is based on 60 multiple choice ACT Mathematics questions, 15 multiple choice ACT Science questions, 30 WorkKeys Applied Mathematics questions, and 12 multiple choice Michigan Mathematics questions. The MME Science Score is based on 40 multiple choice ACT Science questions and 44 multiple choice Michigan Science questions.

The MME is used to identify the following performance level of students: Advanced, Proficient, Partially Proficient, and Not Proficient. This assessment is also used as a Michigan college scholarship eligibility tool. Students identified as high achieving in all subject areas receive a Michigan Merit Scholarship of $2500 annually, for four years, to attend an in-state institution. For this study the MME/ACT Reading and Math scores were used to identify academic achievement. The MME/ACT scores were collected and recorded using the Reading and Math ACT composite scoring format of scores ranging from 1(low) to 36 (high).
Independent Variables

**Demographic Survey.** The survey focused on the students' personal background information. The survey asked each student questions pertaining to their age, ethnicity, academic year, gender, family composition, and parent education level. I designed the demographic survey for the study. Collecting this information for the study was important for understanding the overall demographics of the study sample. These data gave insight into the students' family household and caregiver. In addition, the survey asked questions regarding their educational track to distinguish between and control for students enrolled in a special education track. Collecting these data was important for understanding the students' academic performance, the types of courses they are taking, and the curriculum offered in their high school. This information was used to categorize the background variables of the study.

**The Career Thoughts Inventory** (CTI, Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998). For this study, two of the three scales measuring, Decision Making Confusion and Commitment Anxiety, were used. This inventory was administered to eleventh and twelfth grade high school students and used to identify the African American adolescent's career cognitive processing. Gathering this information was useful for understanding if they are starting to engage in thinking about making career decisions. This inventory was appropriate to administer to the African American adolescent population because the pilot testing took into consideration the variance of diversity issues that impacts career thoughts processing, as well as made adjustments to minimize item biases that impacted the responses of any ethnic group. This inventory also controlled for the impact gender would have on the responses. Since this inventory was standardized on eleventh and twelfth graders, this inventory was appropriate for the study participants.
The inventory was used to assess negative cognitions and to develop intervention strategies for effective career problem solving and decision making. The CTI is effective as a screening measure, able to distinguish the individuals who will have significant difficulty making career choices as a result of their cognitions. The CTI is designed to use with the following populations: eleventh and twelfth grade high school students, who are in the process of considering their post secondary options, as well as college students and adults considering a vocational change. The inventory’s readability level is between the sixth and seventh grade. To account for the variance of diversity issues, the inventory was reviewed by a panel of career counselors of diverse ethnic populations to identify item biases related to ethnicity. The survey developers acknowledged that various life experiences resulting from diversity issues can have an impact on the career decision making cognitions.

The CTI is a 48-item inventory, which requires a response to a 4-level Likert scale with responses of strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The CTI uses three sub-scale domains to measure three factors: Decision Making Confusion, Commitment Anxiety, and External Conflict. The Decision Making Confusion scale reflects the inability to initiate the decision making process resulting from the lack of understanding about the decision making process. The Commitment Anxiety scale reflects the inability to make a commitment to a specific career choice. The External Conflict scale reflects the inability to balance self-perceptions and input from significant others.

Each of the inventory sub-scale domains were developed based upon dysfunctional thoughts as they relate to the following: self-knowledge of one’s personal characteristics and occupational knowledge, and information regarding the structure of the world of work. In particular, the Decision Making Domains were developed based upon dysfunctional thoughts as
they relate to the following: communication, which involves resistance, inhibition, or distortion of acknowledging presenting career development problems attributed to the presence of disabling emotions; analysis, which is associated with a lack of motivation or inability to understand career concepts; synthesis, which involves the ability to develop career alternatives through conceptualizing the relationship between self-knowledge and occupational knowledge; valuing the inability to form priorities among a set of career options; and execution, which involves the impeded formulation and implementation of steps to attain educational and career goals.

The CTI was standardized based on data collected from a sample of adults (n=571), college students (n= 595), eleventh and twelfth grade high school students (n=396), and an additional group of college and adult career center clients (n=376) (CTI, Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998). All ethnic, gender and geographic distribution populations were represented. There was an overrepresentation of female adults and female career center clients, and an underrepresentation of Latino adults. However, the analysis of the data showed that there was no need to develop separate normative data for gender and ethnicity because there was little relationship between gender and ethnicity with regards to the total scores of the inventory. Gender and ethnicity accounted for .2% and .1% of the variance in total scores of the inventory (CTI, Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998).

The CTI’s content, construct, and convergent validities were also assessed to determine if each item effectively measured the theoretical foundation of the inventory. The content validity examined the congruence of each item and the construct scale. Several factor analyses were done to examine the construct validity, which explored the association of the item clusters as it related to the inventory’s theory. Constructs of decision making confusion, commitment anxiety, and
external conflict were identified as the clusters and were replicated throughout the norm groups. A three factor model (decision making confusion, commitment anxiety, and external conflict) were confirmed for the college student and combined adult and college student career center clients’ sample. A two factor model was confirmed for both the adult sample (decision making confusion and external conflict) and the eleventh and twelfth grade high school students (decision making confusion and commitment anxiety).

The convergent validity was explored to examine the correlation with other similar construct measures (The Career Decision Profile: Jones, 1988; The Career Decision Scale: Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico, & Koschier, 1987; the NEO PI-R: Costa & McCrae, 1992a; My Vocational Situation: Holland, Daiger, & Power, 1980a). Convergent validity was tested using a geographic, ethnic and gender sample of 50 adults, 152 college students, and 151 eleventh and twelfth grade high school students. The CTI was found to be correlated with various components of each of the other measures (CTI, Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998).

The reliability of the CTI was determined based upon the internal consistency and the stability of the inventory. The internal consistency of the CTI total scores and the construct scales were calculated for each of the norm groups by using coefficient alphas. The internal consistency alpha coefficients for the CTI total scores were found to range from .93 to .97 (CTI, Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998).

The construct scales’ alpha coefficients for the CTI total scores were found to range from .74 to .94 (CTI, Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998). The stability of the inventory was explored through administering the inventory twice, over a four week period to a sample of college students (n=73) and eleventh and twelfth grade high school students.
(n=48) (CTI, Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998). This was done to test score consistencies over a four week period using the same sample of volunteers. The results of testing the stability showed little change in the responses of the sample over the four week period. The stability coefficients for the college students was $r = .86$, with construct scales ranging from .74 to .82 and the stability coefficients for the eleventh and twelfth grade high school students was $r = .69$, with construct scales ranging from .52 to .72 (CTI, Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998). The internal consistency alpha coefficients and stability coefficients of this study's sample population was calculated to compare the internal consistency coefficients to the norm group's internal consistency.

**Parenting Style and Parental Involvement Inventory** (Touliatos, Perlmutter, & Strauss, 2001). For this study, only the two scales measuring parent demandingness and parent responsiveness were used. This inventory was administered to the high school students and used to identify the levels of parental responsiveness and demandingness for each of the African American participants. The questions on this inventory were appropriate for identifying levels of responsiveness and demandingness in African American parents. Since the inventory was standardized using an adolescent population, it was assumed the African American adolescent participants would understand the structure of the questions and respond to the questions with ease. Even though the inventory was used to assess parenting dimensions of two parent households, the inventory appeared to take into consideration non-biological parents by including step-parents as a part of the care-giving team.

The PSPI was developed in 1996 by Sharon E. Paulson. This is a 52- item self report scale designed to measure various aspects of parenting styles. The inventory is a three part, 5-point Likert scale that measures parent demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement. The
inventory was specially designed to explore correlations between adolescent academic achievement and maternal employment (Touliatos et al., 2001).

The PSPI was developed based on the assessment of a sample of ninth grade boys (n=96) and their parents (n=144). The families that participated in the study were two parent households, which included a step-parent as a part of the two parent household. A substantial number of the participants were European American (86%), with small representation from diverse ethnic groups (African American, 6%; Asian, 3%; Latino, 2%) (Touliatos et al., 2001). A factor analysis was conducted to confirm the structure of the demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement subscales.

The validity of the parenting scales were originally validated using two independent samples (Paulson, Marchant, & Rothlisberg, 1998). The scales were found to have good construct validity. The structure of the scales were confirmed using principal component analysis with varimax rotation. In addition, the validity coefficients of the Parenting Styles questionnaire were explored during a study examining the parent/adolescent perceptions and the differences in maternal and paternal parenting styles and parental involvement (Paulson & Sputa, 1996). The study also explored the changes in parenting styles and parental involvement between ninth and twelfth grade adolescents (Paulson & Sputa, 1996). The validity was tested using a diverse geographic (urban, suburban, and rural), ethnic and gender sample of 244 ninth grade boys (n=98) and girls (n=146) and their parents from public high schools in the Southeast and Midwest. A three year follow-up was conducted with a sample of 31 twelfth grade students and their parents (boys, n=11, girls, n=20). The validity of the inventory was examined through exploring the correlation with other similar construct measures (The Children’s Report of Parental Behavior Inventory: Schaefer, 1965; The Family Environment Scale: Moos & Moos,
1981). The Parenting Styles portion of the PSPI was found to have a correlation range of .50 to .80 with various components of each of the other measures (Paulson & Sputa, 1996).

The reliability of the PSPI was calculated for the adolescent ratings of maternal and paternal demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement. The alpha coefficients for maternal and paternal demandingness were .78 and .84; for maternal and paternal responsiveness were .84 and .87; and for maternal and paternal parent involvement were .86 and .82 (Touliatos et al., 2001). In addition, the reliability of the PSPI was calculated for the parent ratings of maternal and paternal demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement. The alpha coefficients for maternal and paternal demandingness were .71 and .78; for maternal and paternal responsiveness were .83 and .77; and for maternal and paternal parent involvement were .68 and .73 (Touliatos et al., 2001). In addition, the internal consistency alpha coefficients of this study’s sample population were calculated to compare the internal consistency coefficients to the norm group’s internal consistency.

**Research Procedures**

Prior to engaging in collecting data from the study population, I conducted a pilot study to establish the research protocol and procedures for the study. Four high school juniors from a high school in southeast Michigan were given the demographic survey, the Career Thoughts Inventory, and the Parenting Styles and Parent Involvement Inventory. The pilot study participants were required to fill out and submit a parental consent form prior to participation. Thank you letters were given to the students and families to acknowledge their willingness to participate.

Students from southeast Michigan were targeted as participants for this study. The assistance of school administrators, school counselors, and teachers were solicited to advertise
the study at the high schools. Flyers and informed consent forms were distributed to interested students during in-class presentations at the various high schools. Students were required to return the signed informed consent forms to their teachers by a designated deadline set by their teachers. Upon completion of all surveys and inventories, thank you letters and incentive vouchers were given to the students to acknowledge their willingness to participate. Once informed consent forms had been collected, and surveys and inventories were completed, the school counselors identified the MME/ACT reading and math scores of the participants. Each set of MME/ACT scores were given a code that was linked to the packet of inventories of each participant.

Each student was given a packet containing each inventory that was coded to match the responses of the surveys of each individual student. The students were assured that their identities would be kept confidential and the coding system was used to match the survey responses. The students were instructed to complete each survey in a particular sequence. Students were first instructed to fill out the demographic survey. After completing the demographic survey, they were asked to first fill out the Career Thoughts Inventory, then the Parenting Style and Parenting Involvement Inventory. Upon completion of each survey, the students were asked to place the surveys in an envelope for sealing and collection.

**Data Analysis**

A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to examine and analyze the data collected from the MME, CTI, PSPI and the demographic survey. The hierarchical regression analysis allowed for the sequential examination of the relationship of various levels of variables on multiple levels and the interaction between variables. The interrelationship between the dependent variable of academic achievement and the independent variables of parenting
dimensions (responsiveness, demandingness, and responsiveness x demandingness interaction) 
and career thoughts (decision making confusion and commitment anxiety) were explored. Prior 
to performing the hierarchical regression analysis, a univariate and bivariate analysis was 
conducted. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to perform all of the 
analyses used in this study.

First, a univariate analysis was conducted on the independent variables of parenting 
dimensions (responsiveness, demandingness, and responsiveness x demandingness interaction) 
and career thoughts (decision making confusion and commitment anxiety), and the dependent 
variable of academic achievement. A univariate analysis was done to examine the frequency 
distribution of each variable. This meant the distribution location, spread, and shape of each 
variable were reviewed (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). The location of the distribution refers to the 
mean, median, and mode of the variables’ data (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). The spread of the 
distribution refers to the standard deviation, which is the variability or dispersion of the 
distribution (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). The shape of the distribution refers to the bell-shape of 
the distribution. Review of the distribution determined if the bell-shape indicated a normal or 
skewed distribution, and if the bell-shape had a single peak or multi-peak (Hartwig & Dearing, 
1979).

To examine the distribution skewness the computer generated a skewness statistic and a 
standard error of the skewness statistic. The purpose of this examination was to determine if the 
distribution was significantly skewed. The skewness was calculated by dividing the skewness 
statistic into the standard error of skewness. If the result of the calculation was equal to or 
greater than 2, then a non-linear transformation was done to make the data closely approximate 
to a normal distribution. If the distribution was negatively skewed, then a power transformation
was done. If the distribution was positively skewed, then a square root transformation was done. In addition, a frequency distribution analysis was also conducted to determine if there is missing data.

Secondly, a bivariate analysis was conducted between each independent variable and the dependent variable. A bivariate analysis allowed for the cross tabulation of variables to determine if there was a relationship or if the variables were independent of each other (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). If there was a relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, the analysis would be able to indicate the strength of the relationship.

Finally, the bivariate relationships were used to extract residuals to build and explain multivariate relationships (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). The multivariate model was constructed by successively extracting structure from the residuals of each variable until the final residual was extracted from the existing data set (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). The purpose of performing this analysis was to identify unique relationships between each independent variable of parenting dimensions (responsiveness, demandingness, and responsiveness x demandingness interaction) and career thoughts (decision making confusion and commitment anxiety), the dependent variable of academic achievement, and the background variables (gender, family configuration, and parent educational level).

The first regression model analyzed the correlations between the background variables and parenting dimensions. The second regression model analyzed the correlation between the background variables and the career thoughts variables. The third regression model analyzed the correlations among the background variables, the parenting dimensions, and the career thoughts variables. The fourth regression model analyzed the correlations among the background variables, the parenting dimensions, the career thoughts variables, and academic achievement.
Since the dependent variable was presented as nominal data, a logistic regression was used during the hierarchical analysis.

**Assumptions of the Study**

Studies that have explored issues impacting African American adolescent development have found several factors that have affected the outcome of the study. I suspected that the variable of parenting dimensions in this study will reflect factors and issues that also have a strong influence on career cognitions and academic achievement. Parenting dimensions then becomes the conduit that influences career decision making and academic achievement. I believed the results of this study would demonstrate parenting dimensions as having a greater meaning than just the significance of producing positive psychological and behavioral outcomes in African Americans, encouraging more consideration of the role of cultural socialization and gender in parenting styles.

Literature supports high demandingness and low responsiveness as the most salient dimensions prevalent in ethnically diverse parenting styles (Baumrind, 1966, 1989). In addition, Weis (2002) felt the cognitive process of parenting in ethnically diverse families was dependent upon the psychological distress of the parent, the parent’s access to resources, and parent’s socio-economic status. Based upon this understanding of theories regarding African American parenting, I believed the results of the study would reflect the parent’s ability to provide the resources for their children to pursue and achieve academic and career success. It appeared the literature demonstrated a link between the way African American parents’ think about parenting and the resources available to facilitate effective parenting. Therefore, I believed the African American students who demonstrated a higher readiness to engage in career decision making would have higher indicators of academic achievement, resulting from parenting that had greater
access to resources. In particular, African American adolescents who are being raised in duel parent homes would demonstrate a stronger readiness for career decision making than African American adolescents from single parent homes. In addition, I believed the study would also show African American adolescents raised by their biological parent will demonstrate a stronger readiness for career decision making than African American adolescents raised by a grandparent or non-biological caregiver. Also, African American adolescents raised in homes with parents with higher incomes and educational levels would demonstrate higher academic achievement and career decision making readiness.

Secondly, literature supports cultural socialization of the African American adolescent as a salient factor in career decision making and academic achievement (Bennett, 2006; Ferrari, 2002; Weis, 2002). In particular, the cultural identity of the parents was found to influence the cultural identity and academic achievement of the African American adolescent. This possibly meant parenting occurs in accordance to the cultural identity of the parent. Therefore, I believed that the stronger the cultural identity of the parent, the higher the demandingness dimension in parenting. Literature supports African American parents engage in child rearing strategies to teach survival in the European American dominant society. Therefore, higher demands and expectations are enforced to ensure the proper behavior for survival. Therefore, I believed the African American adolescents who demonstrate a stronger readiness for career decision making and have higher academic success would reflect a strong cultural identity resulting from the higher demandingness dimension of parenting.

In addition, literature supports gender influences parenting styles (Aunola et al., 2000; Hickman & Crossland, 2004; Scott & Mallinckrodt, 2005). Researchers found the gender of the child influenced the type of parenting dimensions that were facilitated in the home (Aunola et al.,
2000; Hickman & Crossland, 2004). High demandingness and responsiveness was associated with raising daughters and low demandingness and responsiveness was associated with raising sons (Aunola et al, 2000). Relating to this concept was the discovery that the gender of one parent has a greater impact on the academic achievement of the child of the opposite gender (Hickman & Crossland, 2004). In particular, the high demandingness and low responsiveness of fathers towards their daughters significantly and positively impacted their daughters’ self actualization and potential for careers in the sciences (Scott & Mallinckrodt, 2005). The results of these studies suggested this is true for the European American culture. However, I believed the gender of the parent, nor the gender of the child would impact the parenting dimensions used to engage the African American adolescent career exploration readiness and academic success. Again, it appears the goal of the African American parent is child rearing for survival. Therefore, based upon Bennett’s (2006) concepts of African American parenting, I believed ethnicity would have a greater impact on the parenting dimensions used, rather than the gender of the African American parent and child. I believed African American adolescents raised by either gender parent would demonstrate various levels of career decision making readiness and academic success.

**Limitations of the Study**

The assumptions of the study were viewed as an enhancement to the study, encouraging further exploration. However, the limitations of the study were considered hindrances that would question the validity of the results and the generalizability of the results across the African American community. Based upon this understanding, I realized there were factors that were difficult to control during the study, impacting the overall outcome of this study. I believed the population of adolescents, the area the sample is from, the results of the self report data, and the
gender balance of adolescents and parents would be factors that influence the outcome of this study.

The population size of the study challenged the generalizability of the results to the African American community. It was critical to gather data from a substantial number of adolescents to fully represent the diversity of socioeconomic, education levels, and cultural values that is a part of the African American community. Using a sample that was not representative of the African American community would skew the results of the data and only demonstrate applicability of the results to a certain group of African Americans. Also, I suspected recruiting adolescent participants willing to report information regarding their interactions with their parent and their MME/ACT scores for the academic achievement data would pose a challenge, which is did. Even though the students’ identities were kept confidential, the surveys and measurements used in this study asked students to expose their thoughts about their parents and academic abilities. In addition, I believed it would be a challenge to recruit the numbers of participants necessary to validate the results of the study, which was true. What was most critical to the recruitment of participants was getting the permission from parents and school districts to administer the surveys to the African American adolescent population.

Secondly, it was assumed the area from which the population was recruited would significantly impact the results of the study, which it did not. The African American adolescents I used for the data collection were from the southeast area of Michigan. This area is known as the automotive region of the United States. Many of the high school graduates followed in the footsteps of their parents and pursued careers at the big three automotive companies, which are Daimler-Chrysler, Ford Motor Company, and General Motors. Therefore, career plans and
directions were set for these students. However, the automotive industry is currently in financial dire circumstances, resulting in thousands of employee layoffs and closures of automotive plants. I believed the financial conditions of the state of Michigan, which is resulting from the downturn in the automotive industries, would impact the results of the study, which did not appear to be true. Therefore, determining if parental interactions or the economy would truly impact career decision making was inconsequential.

Third, I believed the self reported data collected through the instruments used during the study would be another limitation of the research. I hoped the adolescent participants reported information regarding their parental interactions, academic progress, and career cognitions as honestly and as accurately as possible. It was possible the adolescent participants reported information regarding their beliefs and perceptions of their parental interactions, rather than the actual facts of their parental interactions.

Finally, I believed the gender balance of the study would impact the results of the study, which was not the case. With regards to parent-child interactions, research supports the gender of the parent had a significant impact on the academic achievement of the opposite gender child. It is not unusual for many African American family structures to reflect a maternally dominant environment. Therefore, I assumed that a skewed sample of one gender strongly represented during the study would challenge the generalizability of the study.

Summary

In summary, this study explored the relationship between the parenting dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness and career thoughts and the possible correlation with academic achievement. I examined this possible relationship using a correlation research design to gather information regarding my belief that there was a relationship between African
American parents' demandingness and responsiveness, career thoughts processing, and academic achievement. To study this possible correlation I used African American high school juniors and seniors from southeast Michigan high schools. Various inventories were used to collect data regarding the demographics of the adolescents and their parents and the adolescents’ career thought processes. A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to analyze the data.

Even though this study was instrumental in understanding the African American parenting dimensions and African American adolescent career thoughts, I believed the results of this study would have a greater meaning than just the significance of parenting dimensions producing positive psychological and behavioral outcomes in African Americans. This would raise questions regarding the influence of cultural socialization and gender in parenting styles. In addition, there were limitations that impacted the validity and reliability of the study. Factors like the composition of the population used during the study, the area the sample was from, the results of the self report data, and the gender balance of adolescents and parents challenged the generalizability of the study.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

A hierarchal regression analysis was done to examine and analyze the data collected from the Michigan Merit Examination ACT Reading and Math scores, the Career Thoughts Inventory, the Parenting Style and Parental Inventory scale, and the demographic survey. The analyses were done to answer the following research questions:

1) Is there an association between high career thoughts processing, high academic achievement, and high demandingness parenting dimension?

2) Is there an association between low career thoughts processing, low academic achievement, and low demandingness parenting dimension?

3) Is there an association between high career thoughts processing, high academic achievement, and high responsiveness parenting dimension?

4) Is there an association between low career thoughts processing, low academic achievement, and low demandingness parenting dimension?

Prior to performing the hierarchal regression analysis, univariate and bivariate analyses were conducted.

Pre-Analysis Data Review

Data was collected from 250 participants. Each of the 3 surveys (demographic, Career Thoughts Inventory, Parenting Style and Parental Involvement) completed by the participants were reviewed to determine if the participants supplied enough data to adequately perform the analyses for this study. Data from 122 participants were eliminated from the analyses because these participants did not give permission for the release of ACT reading and math scores. An additional 11 participants were eliminated from the hierarchal regression analyses because of
missing responses on the demographic survey (parent gender, family composition, parent educational level, race/ethnicity). As a result, data from 117 participants was used for the analysis.

**Descriptive Analysis**

Majority of the participants were African American (97.4%, n = 114). One student self identified as biracial African American/Caucasian (.9%) and two students did not identify their race/ethnicity. The female/male distribution was 59% (n = 69) and 41% (n = 48), respectively. Majority of the students were seniors (84.6%, n = 99), between the ages of 17-18 (86.3%, n = 101).

Majority of the students were enrolled in a college bound high school curriculum (78.6%, n = 92), with 53% (n = 62) enrolled in a college bound educational track and 25.6% (n = 30) enrolled in a college bound educational track that included honors or advanced placement courses. Statistics and probability was identified as the highest level of mathematics completed (46.2%, n = 54), with Algebra 2 as the second highest level of mathematics completed (30.8%, n = 36). Twelfth grade English was the highest level completed (54.7%, n = 64), with 11th grade English as the second highest level completed (36.8%, n = 43). Forty-eight percent (n = 56) of the students expected to complete college and 28.2% (n = 33) expected to pursue degrees beyond 4 years of college.

Sixty-one percent of the participants (n = 71) indicated that they are being raised in homes where the female is the primary and sole caregiver. Fifty percent of the participants indicated their caregiver (n = 58) has never been married and 20% of the participants (n = 23) indicated that their caregivers are currently married. The participants were asked if their family
composition situation changed during their high school matriculation. Twenty-five percent (n = 29) indicated that their family situation had changed while in high school.

The participants were asked to identify the educational levels of each caregiver in the home. The data was reviewed based upon the highest educational level represented in the home to control for single and dual caregiver homes. The data showed 35% of the participants (n = 41) indicated their caregiver(s) completed high school. Seventeen percent of the participants (n = 20) indicated their caregiver(s) did not finish high school. Approximately 29% (n = 34) indicated their caregiver(s) attended 2 to 3 years of college. Approximately, 10% (n = 12) indicated their caregiver(s) had a bachelor’s degree and approximately, 9% (n = 10) indicated their caregiver(s) had a master’s or higher degree.

**Univariate Analysis**

A univariate analysis was conducted to examine the distribution location, spread, and shape of each independent and dependent variable (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). The second process of the analysis was conducted to characterize the variability of each variable in the data set (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). The means and standard deviations for the continuous variables are presented in Table 4.1.
Table 4.1

Summary of Univariate Analysis for Study Variables

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<td>n=117</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACT Scores - 1 (low) to 36 (high)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACT Reading Score</td>
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<td>3.72</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>10-24</td>
<td>1.611</td>
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<td>Parenting Style Scores - 0 (low) to 75 (high)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Responsiveness</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>8.45</td>
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<td>Parent Demandingness</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>8.64</td>
<td>23-75</td>
<td>.028</td>
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<td>Demand x Response</td>
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<td>2352</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>1254-4473</td>
<td>.575</td>
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<td>Career Thoughts T-Scores - 27 (low) to 80 (high)</td>
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<td>11.04</td>
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<td>13.02</td>
<td>25-80</td>
<td>-.068</td>
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</table>

Note: M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

The skewness statistic was examined to determine if the distribution was significantly skewed. The skewness was calculated by dividing the standard error of skewness (.224) into the skewness statistic for each variable. The calculation results of four of the variables (ACT Reading, ACT Math, Demandingness x Responsiveness, Decision Making Confusion) resulted in a value greater than 2. Therefore, a non-linear transformation was done to make the data closely approximate to a normal distribution. In addition, these four variables were positively skewed. Therefore, a square root transformation was done.
A square root transformation was done twice for ACT Math, in an attempt to bring the skewness as close to an approximate normal distribution. Performing an additional square root transformation on this variable, as well as Decision Making Confusion, did not appreciably lessen the skewness, and therefore, subsequent square root transformations were not used. The transformed means and standard deviations for the continuous variables are presented in Table 4.2. The transformed data were used for the bivariate and hierarchical analyses.

Table 4.2
Summary of Univariate Analysis for Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n=117</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Scores - 1 (low) to 36 (high)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Reading Score</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>2.2-5.4</td>
<td>.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Math Score</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>1.8-2.2</td>
<td>.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Styles Scores - 0 (low) to 75 (high)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Demandingness</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8.64</td>
<td>23-75</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Responsiveness</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>32-71</td>
<td>.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand x Response</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>35-66</td>
<td>.183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Thoughts T Scores - 27 (low) to 80 (high)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making Confusion</td>
<td>6.82</td>
<td>6.78</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>5.7-8.9</td>
<td>.466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment Anxiety</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>13.05</td>
<td>25-80</td>
<td>-.068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation
Bivariate Analysis

A bivariate analysis was conducted to determine if there was a relationship between variables or to determine if each variable functioned independently of each other. The Pearson Correlations ($r$) cross tabulation results of the various combinations of the dependent and independent variables are presented in Table 4.3. The interpretation of the relationship significance is based upon following suggested guidelines: small relationship ($r = .10$ to $.29$); medium relationship ($r = .30$ to $.49$); and large relationship ($r = .50$ to $1.0$) (Cohen, 1988, as cited in Pallant, 2007).

Table 4.3
Correlation Matrix of Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ACT Reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.526**</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>-.338**</td>
<td>-.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ACT Math</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>-.062</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>-.125</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Parent Demandingness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.066</td>
<td>.674**</td>
<td>-.191*</td>
<td>-.077</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Parent Responsiveness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.685**</td>
<td>-.011</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Demandingness x</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.142</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Decision Making</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Commitment Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level.
* Correlation is significant at the .05 level.

Overall, the results from the Pearson correlation matrix showed slight, yet significant relationships between several of the dependent and independent variables. The strongest relationship was found between Decision Making Confusion and Commitment Anxiety ($r = $
.707, p = .000). The correlation coefficient suggests as career decision making confusion increases, career commitment anxiety increases. Also, ACT Reading and ACT Math (r = .526, p = .000) presents a strong relationship. The correlation coefficient suggests as the ACT Reading score increases, the ACT Math score increases. In addition, there were strong relationships between Parent Demandingness and the Demandingness/Responsiveness Interaction (r = .674, p = .000), as well as Parent Responsiveness and the Demandingness/Responsiveness Interaction (r = .685, p = .000), which was expected. The square root transformation slightly strengthened the relationship between Decision Making Confusion and Commitment Anxiety, and the relationship between ACT Reading and ACT Math.

The Pearson correlation matrix also showed significant negative relationships between variables. The strongest negative correlation was between ACT Reading and Decision Making Confusion (r = -.338, p = .000). The correlation coefficient suggests that as the ACT Reading scores increases, the career decision making confusion decreases. In addition, there was a small correlation between Parent Demandingness and Decision Making Confusion (r = -.191, p = .047). The correlation coefficient suggests that as the parent demandingness expectations increases, the career decision making confusion decreases. The square root transformation slightly strengthened the relationship between ACT Reading and Decision Making Confusion, and the relationship between Parent Demandingness and Decision Making Confusion.

**Hierarchical Regression Analysis**

The purpose of this study was to explore to what extent do background variables (gender, family configuration, parent/caregiver level), parenting variables (demandingness, responsiveness, demandingness x responsiveness interaction), and career thoughts (decision making confusion, commitment anxiety) influence academic achievement for southeastern
Michigan African American juniors and seniors? To address the research questions, two hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationships and impact of the student and parent demographics, parenting dimensions, career thoughts processing and academic achievement. The purpose of performing a hierarchical regression was to see if a particular model can predict academic achievement after controlling for additional variables (Pallant, 2007).

Using the SPSS Block method, the ACT Reading and Math scores were entered as the dependent variables for each hierarchical regression analysis. The independent variables of demographic variables were entered into Model 1. The purpose of entering the demographic variables in Model 1 was to statistically control for these variables (Pallant, 2007). Parenting dimensions and the parenting dimension interaction were entered into Model 2, and career thoughts processing were entered into Model 3. By using this method to enter the two models of independent variables the data was be able to show if a particular model explained some of the remaining variance in the dependent variable (Pallant, 2007).

A significant model for ACT Reading emerged: $F(9, 107) = 3.99, p = .000$. The model as a whole explained approximately 25% of the variance ($R^2 = .251$, Adjusted $R^2 = .188$). The variables which had the greatest effect were Career Decision Making Confusion and Career Commitment Anxiety, which explained approximately 16% of the variance ($R^2$ Change = .157) in ACT Reading. In addition, no significant models emerged for ACT Math. Tables 4.4 and 4.5 display information for the predictor variables that are included in the ACT Reading and ACT Math models. However, the data displays small Adjusted $R^2$ results, which is a reflection of the small sample size used in this study. This means the results must be reviewed with an understanding that the data may be unreliable in scientific value and may not be generalizable
with other samples (Pallant, 2007). In addition, the residual analysis reviewing the assumptions of linearity and regression plots are discussed on page 90.

Table 4.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Reading Model 1</th>
<th>Reading Model 2</th>
<th>Reading Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>β</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Gender</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.276</td>
<td>.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Gender</td>
<td>-.011</td>
<td>.921</td>
<td>-.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Comp.</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.218</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Edu. Level</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>.939</td>
<td>-.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demandingness</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand x Response</td>
<td>-.133</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>-.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making Conf.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total R²</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>.251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R² Change</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p < .05 p < .05 *p < .01 **p < .05

Review of Table 4.4

Model 1, which included the control variable of ACT Reading and the demographic variables accounted for 4% of the variance (R² = .036, Adjusted R² = .001) in reading achievement. Student and parent gender, family composition, and the highest level of education in the home were not significant predictors of reading achievement. Model 2, included the parenting dimensions of demandingness, responsiveness, and the interaction between demandingness and responsiveness (Demand x Respons). Inclusion of these variables resulted in
an additional 9% of the variance ($R^2 = .094$, Adjusted $R^2 = .036$) in reading achievement even when the effects of the demographic variables were statistically controlled for. The inclusion of these variables also was not significant predictors of reading achievement.

The final model, Model 3, included the career thoughts of Decision Making Confusion and Commitment Anxiety. Inclusion of these variables resulted in an approximate additional 25% of the variance ($R^2 = .251$, Adjusted $R^2 = .188$) in reading achievement. Decision Making Confusion and Commitment Anxiety accounted for a large amount of variance in predicting reading achievement, with Decision Making Confusion at a 99% confidence level ($\beta = -.351, p = .000$) and Commitment Anxiety at a 95% confidence level ($\beta = .011, p = .015$). The data shows that levels of Decision Making Confusion and levels on Commitment Anxiety had a direct relationship with ACT Reading scores. Lower Decision Making Confusion and higher Commitment Anxiety was associated with higher reading ability.
### Table 4.5

**Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting ACT Math**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Math Model 1</th>
<th>Math Model 2</th>
<th>Math Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>$p$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Gender</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.752</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Gender</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.293</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Comp.</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>.703</td>
<td>-.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Edu. Level</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>-.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demandingness</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.408</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand x Response</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td>.440</td>
<td>-.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conf.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total $R^2$        | .029       | .037         | .068        |
| Adjusted $R^2$     | -.006      | -.027        | -.012       |
| $R^2$ Change       | .029       | .008         | .032        |

$p < .05$  $p < .05$  $p < .05$

**Review of Table 4.5**

Model 1, which included the control variable of ACT Math and the demographic variables accounted for approximately 3% of the variance ($R^2 = .029$, Adjusted $R^2 = -.006$) in math achievement. Student and parent gender, family composition, and the highest level of education in the home were not significant predictors of math achievement. Model 2, included the parenting dimensions of demandingness, responsiveness, and the interaction between demandingness and responsiveness (Demand x Response). Inclusion of these variables resulted in an approximate additional 4% of the variance ($R^2 = .037$, Adjusted $R^2 = -.027$) in math achievement. The inclusion of these variables was also not significant predictors of math achievement.
The final model, Model 3, included the career thoughts of Decision Making Confusion and Commitment Anxiety. Inclusion of these variables resulted in an additional 7% of the variance ($R^2 = .068$, Adjusted $R^2 = -.012$) in math achievement. The inclusion of these variables also was not significant predictors of math achievement.

The data from the hierarchical analysis was used to answer the research questions. Based upon the review of the data presented in tables 4.4 and 4.5, the analysis indicated that there was an association between low decision making confusion (high career thoughts processing), high reading academic performance (high academic achievement). In addition, the analysis also indicated there was an association between high career commitment anxiety (high career thoughts processing) and high reading academic performance (high academic achievement). However, the data did not confirm any association between parenting demandingness, parenting responsiveness, career thoughts processing and academic achievement.

**Residual Analysis Results**

A review of the residuals was done at the completion of the bivariate and hierarchical regression analyses. A review of the histograms supported approximate normal distribution for all variables. Also, a visual inspection of the ACT Reading and ACT Math Normal Probability Plots showed the plot of observed probabilities closely followed a straight line, supporting the assumptions of linearity.

The Partial Regression Plots of the dependent and independent variables confirmed the correlation analyses (Table 4.3). The Partial Regression Plot of ACT Reading and Decision Making Confusion was the only scatterplot that supported the assumption of linearity and homoscedasticity. In addition, a casewise diagnostic was done to search for outliers. The casewise diagnostic for the ACT Math dependent variable hierarchical analysis found two cases
of outliers, which were removed from the analysis. However, there were no cases of outliers found for the ACT Reading dependent variable hierarchical analysis.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

This research began with the basic question, "do parents play a significant role in the academic achievement and career decision making process of African American children?" Using what was understood about the impact of parenting styles on European American adolescents, the purpose of this study was to explore the relationship among academic achievement, career thinking processes and parental involvement of African American high school juniors and seniors from southeast Michigan. Studies have confirmed the importance of the role of parents and have even identified preferred parenting styles for the best academic (Baumrind, 1996, 1998; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994) and career success outcomes (Roe, 1957; Young & Frieson, 1990; Young, Valach, Pasekuiko, Dover, Mathes, Paproski, & Sankey, 1997). Current theories regarding the preferred parenting styles for academic and career success outcomes have mixed thoughts regarding what is effective for African American adolescent development (Garg et al., 2005; Pong, Hao, & Gardner, 2005). This study continued the argument regarding the role of parental involvement in African American academic achievement and career development. The intention of the study was to identify the parenting dimension combinations that existed within the African American culture. In addition, the intention was the information gathered would offer a better understanding of the parenting dynamics of the African American family. Although the outcome of the study did not identify parenting dimensions for academic and career development success, the information gathered from this study is useful for educating school counselors regarding the unique needs of the African
American families and offer insight that will lead to effective engagement of African Americans in the academic and career development process.

**Review Study Methodology**

School administrators, school counselors and teachers from southeast Michigan high schools were instrumental in gathering participants for this study. The study began with a pilot study to establish the research protocol and procedures. Four high school juniors from southeast Michigan were given the demographic survey, the Career Thoughts Inventory, and the Parenting Styles and Parent Involvement Inventory to monitor the process and establish the instructions and protocol for distribution of the surveys at the various schools. Once protocol was established, I visited several schools and personally administered the inventories. The school counselors assisted with gathering the MME/ACT reading and math scores of each participant. Each set of MME/ACT scores were given a code that was linked to the packet of inventories of each participant. The identity of each participant was kept confidential.

First, a univariate analysis was done to examine the frequency distribution of each variable. The distribution location and skewness of each variable’s means, medians, and modes were examined (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979). The outcome of this analysis indicated that a transformation of the data was needed to ensure the distribution of each variable appeared to meet the standards of a normal distribution. Secondly, a bivariate analysis was conducted between each independent variable and the dependent variable to determine if there were any significant relationships or if the variables functioned independently of each other (Hartwig & Dearing). Finally, a hierarchical regression analysis was done to examine sequential relationships of the dependent and independent variables on multiple levels and the interaction between variables (Hartwig & Dearing).
The first regression model analyzed the correlations between the background variables and parenting dimensions. The second regression model analyzed the correlation between the background variables and the career thoughts variables. The third regression model analyzed the correlations among the background variables, the parenting dimensions, and the career thoughts variables. The fourth regression model analyzed the correlations among the background variables, the parenting dimensions, the career thoughts variables, and academic achievement.

Summary of Findings

The theoretical framework for this study was based upon the Social Cognitive Career Theory, which studies the interaction of the environment, including behaviors and personal factors such as self-efficacy, beliefs, preferences, and self-perceptions and its relationship to career decision making (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 1996). The two environmental concepts of parenting's impact on behavioral and psychological outcomes explored were the relational approach to career development and parenting styles determinant of academic achievement. Relational approaches to career development consider the impact parents have on career decision making and occupational choices (Roe, 1957; Young et al., 1997). In addition, literature suggests that parenting styles have a significant impact and is a determinant of academic achievement and behavioral outcomes (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992). This study considered both concepts of the relational approach of career development and parenting styles as determinants of academic achievement as the framework for conceptualizing the type of impact parenting dimensions have on academic achievement and career thoughts processing.
Academic Achievement

Social Cognitive Career Theory suggests the environment, such as having resources, plays a significant role in career exploration and preparation, including academic achievement for post-secondary planning (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 1996). Kao (1995) confirmed parental involvement, home resources, and peer groups as factors determining academic achievement. Kao found that parents, serving as effective managers of their children’s academic endeavors, produce higher academic performance in children. In addition, Kao cited researchers who found home resources created an environment conducive to educational pursuits, therefore increasing academic progress and success. It has been suggested the availability of home resources, which includes books, computers, newspapers, plus parents with higher educational levels and income, impacts academic performance (Kao).

The study seemed to support the association of home resources having a connection with academic development. The data confirmed a strong correlation between reading and career decision making in African American high school juniors and seniors. Based upon the study it can be assumed that reading is instrumental in exposing African American students to various life options and possibilities. This supports the critical need for having access to resources, such as books, in the home and the school environment. Even though the outcome of the study did not show a strong relationship between parenting dimensions and academic achievement, it is clear parents can influence the home environment and be engaged in the school environment, through ensuring access to books in the home and advocacy for books in the schools. The role of advocacy for books in the schools is critical. Currently, many of the predominately African American schools in southeast Michigan have limited book resources for classes. Many students are unable to take books home from the schools because there are not enough textbooks to
accommodate the large class sizes. In addition, many of the public libraries have been closed due to lack of state and city funding, which also limits access to books for students in southeast Michigan.

**Demographic Influences**

Literature supports students exposed to higher educational levels in the home will lead to better academic performance (Kao, 1995). In addition, the literature indicated that the gender of the parent, as well as the gender of the child, played a role in academic and career development (Hickman & Crossland, 2004; Scott & Mallinckrodt, 2005). Social Cognitive Career Theory would suggest that people will benefit from a home with parents with high educational levels (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 1996). In addition, the theory would support parent/child interactions, as well as family composition as environments conducive to positive career and academic outcomes. However, the outcome of the bivariate and hierarchical regression analyses did not confirm student gender, parent gender, family composition, or parent education level as predictors of academic achievement in African American students. This outcome demonstrates that African American family dynamics do not play a significant role in the academic performance or the career thoughts processing of African American students.

Although literature supports the benefits of family structures and conditions impacting academic achievement and career development outcomes, this study’s outcome would suggest that more is needed to ensure proper academic and career development in African Americans. The structural conditions of the family composition, the parents’ educational level, nor the parent-child gender interactions appear to be not enough to produce African American students who are academic achievers and ready to make career decisions. Suggesting African American students who are raised by two parents, with a college education and African American students
who are raised by a single parent, who did not complete high school are equally at risk of being academic underachievers and not ready to make realistic career decisions. This strongly supported Weis’ (2002) concept that parents’ socio-economic status and access to resources is critical for successful academic and career development in African Americans.

**Parenting Dimensions**

The Social Cognitive Career Theory would suggest career decision making would be based upon the self-efficacy of the person, which is the persons’ perception of their capabilities to engage in the required actions to organize and pursue the possible goals (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 1996). A person with high self-efficacy would be ready to make career decisions, therefore possessing lower career decision making confusion. Within the context of the theory, it appears parent expectations shape the students self-efficacy, which leads to the ability to make career decisions.

The bivariate analysis showed a small relationship between parenting demandingness and career decision making confusion. The analysis showed the higher the parenting demandingness, the lower the existence of career decision-making confusion in African American students. Although, family composition and parental educational level did not have a significant impact on career thought processing, it appeared parental expectations had a role in assisting with the career decision making process. This suggests parents play a small role in how African American students engage in post-secondary planning and as parents make known their expectations to their children, the students are able to engage in a career development process.

However, parenting dimensions, as a model in the hierarchical regression, added very little to predicting academic achievement. This confirmed my assumption about the role of parenting in African American academic and career development, which was based upon Weis’
understanding of parenting in ethnically diverse populations. Weis (2002) believed the cognitive process of parenting in ethnically diverse parents was dependent upon the psychological distress of the parent, their access to resources, and their socio-economic status, not the parenting style or dimensions of parenting. In addition, literature supports cultural socialization as a salient factor in career decision making and academic achievement of African American adolescents (Bennett, 2006; Ferrari, 2002; Weis, 2002). Implying, parent cultural identity, self-efficacy, and expectations are influential factors in the student’s academic achievement and readiness to make career decisions (Bennett, 2006; Ferrari, 2002; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 1996; Weis, 2002).

**Career Thoughts Processing**

Herr, Cramer, and Niles (2004) stated the decision process is a central construct in career guidance and career counseling. Career decisiveness is a process of choice made based upon an exploration of self and one’s environment (Herr, Cramer, & Niles, 2004). This suggests that the parenting dimensions and family demographics must exist and work in collaboration with career thoughts processing for effective career exploration and academic achievement to occur. The Social Cognitive Career Theory believes one’s perception of their own capabilities and competence is directly connected to one’s self-efficacy, or readiness to make career decisions (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 1996). This study supported the student’s reading and math competency was connected to career decision making confusion and career commitment anxiety.

The bivariate analysis showed a significant relationship between career decision making confusion and ACT Reading. This illustrated the significance of reading ability and the ability to effectively explore and consider career ideas. This suggests the need for African American children to continually engage in reading, so that they are exposed to career possibilities, while
acquiring knowledge that will assist with career thoughts processing. It is apparent reading encourages students to possibly foresee a future.

In addition, the bivariate analysis showed a significant relationship between career decision making confusion and career commitment anxiety. It appears African American students who experienced high career decision making confusion, experienced high levels of anxiety regarding career choices. Based upon the relationship between reading and decision making confusion, and decision making confusion and commitment anxiety, students experiencing higher levels of career decision making confusion and career choice anxiety are experiencing these challenges because of their limited reading abilities. The limited reading skills are preventing them from gaining the knowledge necessary to engage in the career exploration.

Career thoughts processing, as a model in the hierarchical regression analysis, significantly added to the overall regression model. The addition of career decision making confusion data to the demographic and parenting dimension variables significantly improved the prediction of ACT Reading performance. It appears high achieving African American students experience lower career decision making confusion and higher commitment anxiety. This implies high academic achieving African American students have established career goals and may have developed a post-secondary plan, yet they may be experiencing some anxiety regarding the process of pursuing and achieving their goals.

**Implication for Counselors**

Even though the outcome of this study did not confirm the importance of the parents’ role in academic and career development, the outcome of the study did confirm the important role of school counselors' work with African American parents. The dominate belief of researchers, like
Baumrind, Dornbusch and Steinberg, as well as educators and organizations have been that a particular parenting style or dimension is critical for the positive behavioral and psychological outcomes. However, this study demonstrated parenting styles without the important resources will still hinder the academic and career development of the African American child. Therefore, school counselors will need to re-consider the possible reasons for poor academic performance and the lack of career exploration engagement.

As a result, counselor educators and school counselors need to consider the issue of African American parental involvement from the perspective of limitation of resources in the home and the schools. Using the standards of multicultural competencies (Sue, Arredondo, McDavis, 1992), counselor educators and school counselors must engage in self-awareness, exploring their own values and beliefs about parental involvement. Secondly, counselor educators and school counselors must accept there are cultural differences regarding parental involvement and recognize access to resources is the true hindrance to academic achievement and career development. Thirdly, counselor educators and school counselors must reconnect to African American parents through validating their circumstances and serving as a advocate for the resources needed to produce academically and career successful African American youth.

**Strengths of the Study**

There are a few strengths to this study. Very few studies have solely focused on collecting career development data from an African American population. Most of the literature referenced comparisons between various groups or included African Americans as part of the total minority sample explored (Baumrind, 1966, 1998; Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007; Ferrari, 2002; Fisher & Padmawajja, 1999).
Also, the findings of this study, indicating the connection between reading and career development were very significant. For decades, literature has supported the connection between parental involvement and positive psychological and behavioral outcomes (Dornbusch et al., 1987; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992). The outcome of this study supports home and school resources as instrumental in career development. Reading ability was found to be critical to the ability for an African American student to be able to make decisions regarding post-secondary planning.

In addition, this study encourages the consideration of other factors impacting academic achievement and career development. The literature implies that effective parenting is the key to positive academic achievement and successful career exploration. Yet, this study has found other factors may have a critical impact on academic achievement and career development in African Americans. This study supports the idea that the standard form of evaluating effective parenting, which has been influenced by Steinberg (et al, 1992) and Dornbusch, (et al, 1987), may not be true for ethnic populations. This study supports the research of Kao (1995) and Weis (2002), who believe the parenting typologies may not be applicable to ethnic populations and that there may be other factors that must be considered with regards to parenting of ethnic populations.

**Limitations of the Study**

There were factors that were difficult to control during the study, impacting the overall outcome of this study, and the generalizability of the results across the African American community. I had difficulty acquiring a larger sample size for the study for several reasons. The state of Michigan has been experiencing severe economic difficulties that have severely impacted the school districts in the state, particularly the southeast Michigan school districts. Schools districts were experiencing school closures, financial turmoil, administrative changes,
and faculty layoffs, just to name a few. As a result, schools committed to participating in the study became unavailable to participate, due to school closures and mid-semester administrative changes. In addition, because of the turmoil occurring in the schools, administration and faculty were less likely to trust the intentions of outside organizations requesting to utilize their schools for research purposes. Several schools feared the information collected for this study would be used to identify deficiencies in their school, leading to additional school closures and faculty layoffs. In several cases, this prevented me from collecting the ACT Reading and Math scores to complete the data collection, even though I received written permission from both the students and their parents. In addition, one school district was very concerned about the sensitive nature of the demographic survey questions. The district’s assistant superintendent was concerned the survey questions would be an emotional experience the students would not be able to handle.

During the facilitation of the study, I observed students struggling with reading and understanding the questions, indicating literacy and comprehension issues. Several of the students needed my assistance and the assistance of their peers with reading and understanding the questions. Even though the surveys and inventories used were normed for this particular age group, ethnic group, and reading level, these students were having difficulty understanding vocabulary words or sentence constructs used in several of the questions. The students from the lower performing schools had the most difficulty with the surveys.

The collection of self-reported data was another limitation of the research. It was hoped the adolescent participants would report information regarding their parental interactions, academic progress, and career cognitions as honestly and as accurately as possible. It is possible the adolescent participants reported information regarding their beliefs and perceptions of their parental interactions, rather than the actual facts of their parental interactions. In addition,
circling responses without reading the questions may have occurred because of the number of surveys and length of the surveys needed to be completed. Students who were caught engaging in this practice were asked to redo the surveys and were monitored by the teachers during this process.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

There is a need for more research in the area of parenting, career exploration and academic achievement in the African American population. Little research has focused on the African American population in these areas. It would be beneficial to replicate this study to address the limitations of the current study. In particular, it would be beneficial to collect data from a larger sample of African American juniors and seniors and to expand the population to include other regions and states beyond southeast Michigan. A larger sample size would allow for deeper exploration into student gender, family composition, and educational level differences.

It would also be helpful to explore the role of faith and religion in career development and academic achievement. The belief is religion is a salient part of the African American culture. Therefore, it would be beneficial to explore if participation in a faith organization can predict academic achievement and career thoughts processing. In addition, it would be interesting to explore the differences amongst the various types of religious organizations.

**Conclusion**

Literature suggests that parent-child relationships are critical to career development (Amundson & Penner, 1998; Lopez & Andrews, 1987; McCollum, 1998; Penick & Jepsen, 1992; Perrino, 1985; Turner & Lapan 2002), as well as academic development (Attaway & Bry, 2004; Aunola, Stattin & Nurmi, 2000; Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, 2007; Dornbusch,
Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Engerman, & Bailey, 2006; Garg, Levin, Urajnik, & Kauppi, 2005; Leung, Lau & Lam, 1998). Even though high demandingness and responsiveness have been found to be the effective and preferred parenting dimensions, studies have found high demandingness and low responsiveness as the effective parenting dimensions for developing good psychological and behavioral outcomes for ethnically diverse cultures (Baumrind, 1966, 1998). However, this study recognized good psychological and behavioral outcomes do not solely depend on the presence of preferred parenting dimensions within the dynamics of the African American family. It is clear, the need for access to resources are necessary to ensure that African American youth achieve academic success and engage in successful career thoughts processing. The connection between reading and career exploration demonstrated the critical need to ensure that African American youth receive the access to resources. In addition, this connection explained the reason why so many of the African American youth are not prepared to engage in post-secondary planning.

This information can be used to educate the southeast Michigan school counselors, educators, and parents about the importance of access to resources, in particular access to books. School closures, faculty layoffs, library closings and budget cuts are the current realities of the southeast Michigan school districts. I am certain, these are common challenges faced by many urban school districts. However, during this tumultuous time southeast Michigan school districts must advocate for the educational tools necessary to ensure that African American students will acquire the academic preparation needed to pursue any post-secondary options and have the opportunity to make clear career decisions. In particular, schools can be instrumental in improving African American literacy amongst parents and students. Weis (2002) determined the goal of child rearing for African American families is survival and protection. Therefore,
academic development and career exploration must be seen as two of the keys instrumental for the survival and protection of African American adolescents.
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http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-22709_35150---,00.html


APPENDIX A

Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research
The Pennsylvania State University

Title of Project: The examination of the relationship amongst parenting dimensions, academic achievement, career decision making, and commitment anxiety among African American high school students.

Principal Investigator: Jocelyn M. Bennett-Garraway, Graduate Student
The University of Detroit Mercy
246 Reno Hall
Detroit, MI 48221
(313) 993-1227; jmb15@psu.edu

Advisor: Dr. Spencer G. Niles
The Pennsylvania State University
327 CEDAR Building
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 863-2412; sgn3@psu.edu

1. Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research study is to explore the impact of parenting responsiveness and demandingness on the academic achievement and career decision making of African American high school students.

2. Procedures to be followed: You will be asked to answer 50 questions on a survey.

3. Discomforts and Risks: There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Some of the questions are personal and might cause discomfort.

4. Duration: It will take about 15 minutes to complete the survey.

5. Statement of Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is confidential. No record of your name or any identifying information will be released as a result of this study. Your participation requires that you report your MME reading and math score. Once the information is collected from your student file, your information will be coded so that there will be no link to your responses or your academic information. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared.
6. **Right to Ask Questions:** Please contact Jocelyn Bennett-Garraway at (313) 993-1227 with questions or concerns about this research. You can also contact my advisor, Dr. Spencer Niles at (814) 863-2412 if you have any questions, concerns, problems about your rights as a research participant or would like to offer input.

7. **Voluntary Participation:** Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise.

If you are under 18 years of age, you must get the consent of your parent(s) to take part in this research study. If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please sign your name (and if under 18 years of age, have a parent sign) the form and indicate the date below.

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

__________________________  __________________________
Student Signature  Date

__________________________
Print Student Name

__________________________  __________________________
Parent Signature  Date

__________________________
Print Parent Name

__________________________  __________________________
Person Obtaining Consent  Date
APPENDIX B
Email Permission to Use the PSPI

From      "Paulson, Sharon E." <SPAULSON@bsu.edu>
           "Paulson, Sharon E." <SPAULSON@bsu.edu>  
To        JOCELYN M BENNETT-GARRAWAY <jmb15@psu.edu>
           JOCELYN M BENNETT-GARRAWAY <jmb15@psu.edu>  
Subject   Re: Request Permission to Use PSPI
Date      Fri, Oct 30, 2009 04:58 PM
On [Turn Off]   What is "Safe View"?

Hi Jocelyn,

The measure is not a published measure, so I have attached a copy of the
original measure, plus information about psychometric properties. You are
welcome to use the measure if you find it suitable for your work.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Sharon Paulson

Sharon Paulson, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology -- Educational Psychology
Department of Educational Psychology
TC 524
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306

Phone: 765-285-0516
APPENDIX C

SECTION A: Student Information

1) Academic Year: ___Junior
___Senior

2) Gender: ___Female
___Male

3) Race/Ethnicity
___Caucasian/European American
___African American
___Asian/Asian American
___Middle Eastern
___Latino/Hispanic

4) How old are you? _______

5) What is your educational track in school?
___College bound with Honors/Advanced Placement courses
___College bound without Honors/Advanced Placement courses
___Vocational /Technical
___Special Education

6) What is the highest level of math completed?
___Algebra
___Geometry
___Algebra II
___Trigonometry
___Calculus
___Probability and Statistics
___Accounting

7) What is the highest level of English completed?
___English 9
___English 10
___English 11
___English 12

8) How far in school do you expect to go?
___Won’t finish high school
___Will finish high school
___Vocational Technical, Trade or Business school
___Will attend college
___Will finish college
___Will pursue more education after college

9) Family Composition: Who lives in your house?
___Mother and Father
___Mom and male guardian
___Father and female guardian
___Mother only
___Father only
___Other relative (ex. Grandparent)
___Other non-relative

Appendix C continued

10) Parent Marital Status
___Divorced
___Widowed
___Separated
___Never married
___Marriage like relationship
11) Has your parenting situation change during your high school years?
   ___ Yes  ___ No

SECTION B: Female Parent/Caregiver
   1) Female Parent/Caregiver living in your home:
      ___ Mother
      ___ Stepmother
      ___ Aunt
      ___ Grandmother
      ___ Other (Please identify _____________________)

   2) Highest Education Level of Female Parent/Caregiver:
      ___ Did not finish high school
      ___ Finished high school
      ___ Junior College/Community College
      ___ Less than 4 years of College
      ___ Bachelor’s degree
      ___ Master’s degree
      ___ Ph.D. or Profession degree (Ex. medical or law degree)

SECTION B: Male Parent/Caregiver
   1) Male Caregiver living in the home
      ___ Father
      ___ Stepfather
      ___ Uncle
      ___ Grandfather
      ___ Other (please identify _____________________)

   2) Highest Education Level of Male Parent/Caregiver:
      ___ Did not finish high school
      ___ Finished high school
      ___ Junior College/Community College
      ___ Less than 4 years of College
      ___ Bachelor’s degree
      ___ Master’s degree
      ___ Ph.D. or Profession degree (Ex. medical or law degree)
APPENDIX D
Parenting Style & Parenting Involvement Scale

Parenting Measures

Demandingness Measure

Using the scale below, indicate the number which best describes your MOTHER from 1 Very Unlike to 5 Very Like for each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Unlike than Like</th>
<th>More UnLike nor Unlike</th>
<th>Neither Like nor Unlike</th>
<th>More Like than Unlike</th>
<th>Very Like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. My mother has rules for me about watching TV.
2. I would describe my mother as a strict parent.
3. It is okay with my mother if I do not follow certain rules.
4. When I do something that is wrong, my mother usually does not punish me.
5. I think my mother disciplines me a lot.
6. My mother usually wants to know where I am going.
7. My mother gives me a lot of freedom.
8. My mother makes most of the decisions about what I am allowed to do.
9. My mother gives me chores to do around the house routinely.
10. My mother lets me do pretty much what I want without questioning my decisions.
11. My mother rarely gives me orders.
12. My mother has few rules for me to follow.
13. My mother expects me to be home at a certain time after school or in the evening.
14. It does not really matter to my mother whether or not I do assigned chores.
15. My mother sometimes tells me that her decisions should not be questioned.

Scoring instructions:
For a total score on the demandingness scale, items 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, and 15 are added to the recoded (i.e. 1=5, 2=4, etc.) items 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, and 14. High scores indicate high levels of demandingness. Mean scores are obtained by dividing by the number of items completed.

Father scale--change “mother” to “father” and replace pronouns as appropriate

Parent scales--rewrite items for either mother or father; for example #1-5 would be:
“Have rules for my adolescent about watching TV”
“I would describe myself as a strict parent”
“It is okay with me if my adolescent does not follow certain rules”
“When my adolescent does something that is wrong, I usually do not punish him/her.”
“I think I discipline my adolescent a lot”
Appendix D continued

Responsiveness Measure

Using the scale below, indicate the number which best describes your MOTHER from 1 Very Unlike to 5 Very Like for each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Much More</th>
<th>UnLike</th>
<th>Neither Like nor UnLike</th>
<th>More Like than Unlike</th>
<th>Very Like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

___ 1. My mother sometimes criticizes me for what I do.
___ 2. My mother expects me to tell her when I think a rule is unfair.
___ 3. My mother encourages me to look at both sides of an issue.
___ 4. It is hard for my mother to admit that sometimes I know more than she does.
___ 5. My mother does not think that I should help with decisions in our family.
___ 6. My mother encourages me to talk with her about things.
___ 7. My mother does not believe that she should have her own way all the time anymore than she believes I should have mine.
___ 8. My mother would rather I not tell her my troubles.
___ 9. My mother expects me to do what she says without having to tell me why.
___ 10 My mother seldom praises me for doing well.
___ 11. My mother believes I have a right to my own point of view.
___ 12. My mother takes an interest in my activities.
___ 13. My mother encourages me to talk to her honestly.
___ 14. My mother usually tells me the reasons for rules.
___ 15. My mother does not believe I should have a say in making rules.

Scoring Instructions:

For a total score on the responsiveness scale, items 2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, and 14 are added to the recoded (i.e. 1=5, 2=4, etc.) items 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 15. High scores indicate high levels of responsiveness. Mean scores are obtained by dividing by the number of items completed.
APPENDIX E

Career Thoughts Inventory™ (CTI™)
Test Booklet

James P. Sampson, Jr., PhD
Gary W. Peterson, PhD
Janet G. Lenz, PhD
Robert C. Reardon, PhD
Denise E. Saunders, MS

This inventory has been developed to help people learn more about the way they think about career choices. Inside this booklet you will find statements describing thoughts that some people have when considering career choices. Please answer each statement openly and honestly as it describes you.

Directions:
Read each statement carefully and indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each item by circling the answer that best describes you. Do not omit any items.

SD = Strongly Disagree   D = Disagree   A = Agree   SA = Strongly Agree

Circle SD if you strongly disagree with the statement.  SD  D  A  SA
Circle D if you disagree with the statement.       SD  D  A  SA
Circle A if you agree with the statement.         SD  D  A  SA
Circle SA if you strongly agree with the statement. SD  D  A  SA

If you make a mistake or change your mind, DO NOT ERASE! Make an "X" through the incorrect response and then draw a circle around the correct response.
<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>No field of study or occupation interests me.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Almost all occupational information is slanted toward making the occupation look good.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I get so depressed about choosing a field of study or occupation that I can't get started.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I'll never understand myself well enough to make a good career choice.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I can't think of any fields of study or occupations that would suit me.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The views of important people in my life interfere with choosing a field of study or occupation.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I know what I want to do, but I can't develop a plan for getting there.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I get so anxious when I have to make decisions that I can hardly think.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Whenever I've become interested in something, important people in my life disapprove.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>There are few jobs that have real meaning.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I'm so frustrated with the process of choosing a field of study or occupation I just want to forget about it for now.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I don't know why I can't find a field of study or occupation that seems interesting.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I'll never find a field of study or occupation I really like.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I'm always getting mixed messages about my career choice from important people in my life.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Even though there are requirements for the field of study or occupation I'm considering, I don't believe they apply to my specific situation.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I've tried to find a good occupation many times before, but I can't ever arrive at good decisions.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>My interests are always changing.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Jobs change so fast it makes little sense to learn much about them.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>If I change my field of study or occupation, I will feel like a failure.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Choosing an occupation is so complicated, I just can't get started.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I'm afraid I'm overlooking an occupation.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>There are several fields of study or occupations that fit me, but I can't decide on the best one.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>I know what job I want, but someone's always putting obstacles in my way.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>People like counselors or teachers are better suited to solve my career problems.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Even though I've taken career tests, I still don't know what field of study or occupation I like.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. My opinions about occupations change frequently.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I'm so confused, I'll never be able to choose a field of study or occupation.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. The more I try to understand myself and find out about occupations, the more confused and discouraged I get.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. There are so many occupations to know about, I will never be able to narrow down the list to only a few.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I can narrow down my occupational choices to a few, but I don't seem to be able to pick just one.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Deciding on an occupation is hard, but taking action after making a choice will be harder.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. I can't be satisfied unless I can find the perfect occupation for me.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I get upset when people ask me what I want to do with my life.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. I don't know how to find information about jobs in my field.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. I worry a great deal about choosing the right field of study or occupation.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. I'll never understand enough about occupations to make a good choice.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. My age limits my occupational choice.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. The hardest thing is settling on just one field of study or occupation.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Finding a good job in my field is just a matter of luck.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Making career choices is so complicated, I am unable to keep track of where I am in the process.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. My achievements must surpass my mother's or father's or my brother's or sister's.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. I know so little about the world of work.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. I'm embarrassed to let others know I haven't chosen a field of study or occupation.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Choosing an occupation is so complex, I'll never be able to make a good choice.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. There are so many occupations that I like, I'll never be able to sort through them to find ones I like better than others.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. I need to choose a field of study or occupation that will please the important people in my life.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. I'm afraid if I try out my chosen occupation, I won't be successful.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. I can't trust that my career decisions will turn out well for me.</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VITA

JOCELYN M. BENNETT-GARRAWAY, LPC

EDUCATION
Ph.D., Counselor Education & Supervision, The Pennsylvania State University, August 2011
B.S., Psychology, The Pennsylvania State University, August 1986

TEACHING EXPERIENCE
Assistant Professor, Tenure-track, The Department of Counseling and Addiction Studies, The University of Detroit-Mercy, Detroit, MI, September 2008 – Present
Adjunct Instructor The Department of Counseling and Addiction Studies, The University of Detroit-Mercy, Detroit, MI, May 2007 – December 2007
Lecturer, The Department of Counseling, Oakland University, Rochester, MI, May 2007 – May 2008
Facilitator, Cross-Cultural Counseling, and Psychological Services, State College, PA January 2006 – present

COUNSELING EXPERIENCE
Assistant Director, Student Success and Outreach Programs, The Academic Skills Center, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, December 2007 – August 2008
Academic Advisor, The Smeal College of Business Administration, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, May 1993 – June 1995
Counselor, Lock Haven University, Lock Haven, PA, August 1992 – April 1993
Half-time Clinical Counselor (August 1992- April 1993)
Project Counselor, Upward Bound Project, Lock Haven University, Lock Haven, PA October 1988 – September 1991

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE
Interim Director, The Academic Skills Center, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan, August 2008 – December 2008
Director, Scholarships and Special Programs, The Office of Student Aid, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, October 2004 – August 2006
Director, Undergraduate Diversity Enhancement Programs, The Smeal College of Business Administration, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, July 1995 – October 2004
Project Director, Upward Bound Project, Lock Haven University, Lock Haven PA, September 1991 – July 1991

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS
American Counseling Association (November 2006 – present)
American School Counseling Association (November 2006 – present)
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (November 2006 – present)
Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (November 2006 – present)
Association for Specialist in Group Work (November 2007 – present)
National Career Development Association (November 2006 – present)