Order Number 9315460

The effect of autonomy and locus-of-control on the academic achievement of black male community college students

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City University of New York, 1993

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THE EFFECT OF AUTONOMY AND LOCUS OF CONTROL ON THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF BLACK MALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Center Faculty in Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

1993

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

January 7, 1993
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Whoda thunk it?

* * *

There are many to whom I owe a debt of gratitude. First among the many is my dissertation chair, Dr. Vera Paster. She believed that I could do this long before I truly believed it. She mentored and mothered, nagged and cajoled, challenged and counseled, in short, did whatever it took to get me from candidacy to here. There were rough spots along the way, points of frustration and even rage, but she saw to it that the job got done. Vera, I am deeply grateful and, no, I will never forget what we've been through together.

My sincerest thanks also go to Dr. Harold Wilensky. His service on my committee was especially meaningful considering that he had retired by the time I began to work on the dissertation in earnest. He was, nonetheless, always willing to listen, to discuss, and to provide valuable suggestions. His attention to detail and his statistical acumen proved especially helpful to me.

I am also extremely grateful to Dr. William King who joined my committee when Dr. Louis Gerstman could no longer serve due to illness. Dr. King was supportive at moments when it really counted. His suggestions

regarding data analysis framed my thinking early on and saved me time and anguish in the long run.

Thanks also to my readers, Drs. A. J. Franklin and Lawrence Gould for their efforts and for making themselves available on such short notice.

I must also thank the teachers and counselors who believed enough in me and/or this research to encourage their students to participate. And to the 128 young (and not-so-young) men who participated in this study, there aren't words enough to express my gratitude. Without them, the research could not have been done.

And, last, but nonetheless especially, thanks and love to my family, adopted families, and friends for your care, concern, and support. To my daughter, Khadijah, whose childhood was sacrificed to this endeavor, I say, thank you for being the best KID a mother could ask for. I hope that I turn out to be half the inspiration to you that you have been to me.

I dedicate this work to the memory of two very special people. First, to my father, who left me long before I was ready for him to go. I hope that his spirit rejoices knowing that I have accomplished what he wanted so, but was unable, to do. I may never know for sure whether I did this for him or for me. And to "Sister," who never quite understood that I was not going to be a doctor of the needle-giving sort, but, who

was always so proud and supportive of me. Through her I learned that illiteracy is not shameful and that "mother wit," hard work, and concern for others are no less valuable than an education.

And, finally, thanks to the Creator for blessing me with all of the above and more.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Black males are alleged by some to be more dependent than white males (Cameron, 1967/1971; Grossack, 1957) and black females (Brazziel, 1965/1971). Many are also subject to pressure from a peer culture that devalues academic achievement (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; McDermott, 1987; Trotter, 1981). It has also been found that the lower class and black students tend to have an external locus of control (Battle & Rotter, 1963; Castenell, 1983; Coleman, 1966; Lessing, 1969; Ogletree, 1976). Since dependency, excessive peer reliance, and externality are correlates of academic underachievement (Allocca, 1985; Davis, 1988/1989; Findley & Cooper, 1983; Gough & Lanning, 1986; Hollander & Marcia, 1970; Keith, Pottebaum, & Eberhart, 1986), this study will investigate whether these correlates are characteristic of poor achieving lower income black male community college students.

Significance of the Problem

Overall, black youth earn lower grades and drop out of high school at a higher rate than whites (Reed,

1988). While males of all ethnic groups complete high school at a lower rate than females, the drop out rate for black males is particularly high. For example, the drop out rate for black males in New York City has recently stood as high as 72% ("Black males," 1986). Wilson (1987) asserts that the failure to complete high school will lead to increasing levels of unemployment as the economic base of cities continues to change from the production of goods to the processing of information. Unemployment and illiteracy among black males not only threaten their earning potential and life opportunities, but threaten the fiber of the black community and thus present pressing issues for the society as a whole. Single parenthood and poverty among black women and children are directly linked to the high rate of unemployment among black men. Also, increased crime is linked to a rising unemployment rate. Needless to say, social problems of this magnitude reflect large-scale, political, social, racial, and economic inequities. Nevertheless, it is also important to explore whether certain psychological characteristics may be involved in determining which black males are the most vulnerable to academic difficulty.

The ways in which teachers and the educational system fail poor and minority group students is not the focus of this research. However, a few words on this

topic are in order at the outset to dispel any misconception that this research blames the victim. Many have pointed to the failure of the current educational process in meeting the educational needs of black youth (Edelman, 1980; Hare & Castenell, 1985; Holliday, 1985; McDermott, 1987; Murray & Jackson, 1982/1983; Ogbu, 1978; Reed, 1988; Spindler, 1987; Taylor & Foster, 1986). For example, Murray and Jackson's (1982/1983) "Conditioned Failure Model" posits a 5- step process in which teachers' stereotypic perception of black students, especially the males among them, as non-learners causes teachers to reward black students for failure and punish them for success. In the end, the students internalize the negative evaluation and cease to exert effort in the academic situation. Holliday (1985) perceives a similar situation wherein students adopt a stance of learned helplessness as a result of teachers' negative responses to their assertiveness. Holliday (1985) indicates that boys are more likely than girls to be the objects of negative teacher attitudes. Taylor and Foster (1986) found that black males were disproportionately suspended from schools in a Southeastern school district that they studied. Spindler (1987) contends that schools in minority neighborhoods "prescribe and accept" failure (p. 165) by utilizing principals primarily as

administrators and disciplinarians, thus, stifling incentives for educational innovation.

Another way in which schools fail minorities and the poor is through heavy reliance upon biased testing (Edelman, 1980; Edelman, 1985; Reed, 1988; Williams, 1972; Williams & Mitchell, 1980). Such testing results in a disproportionately large number of black children being tracked into classes for slow learners and the mentally retarded and, conversely, a disproportionately small number of black students being placed in classes for the gifted. Testing also disadvantages black students in the college admissions process when entrance decisions are based on the scores of such standardized entrance examinations.

The above issues warrant the continued attention that they are receiving (Berger, 1990; Fiske, 1990; Johnson, 1989; "Panel criticizes," 1990). In addition, however, it is necessary to focus attention on the student himself as he is an integral part of the learning process. If certain personality variables facilitate achievement and these variables can be identified and influenced, this would lead to an important protective force for those who are at risk for school failure.

Correlations have been reported between academic achievement and personality variables such as aggression

(Balkin, 1987; Behrens & Vernon, 1978), repressed anger (Fleming & DuBois, 1981), need for affiliation (Schneider & Coutts, 1985; Schneider & Green, 1977), anxiety (Davis, 1988/1989; Gottfredson, 1982), achievement motivation (Balkin, 1987; Romine & Crowell, 1981; Schneider & Green, 1977), autonomy/dependency (Allocca, 1985; Davis, 1988/1989; Gough & Lanning, 1986), and locus of control (Findley & Cooper, 1983; Keith, Pottebaum, & Eberhart, 1986). Autonomy/dependency and locus of control have been chosen as independent variables in this study because of their empirical relationship to academic achievement, their purported educationally maladaptive configuration in the character structure of some black male youth, and the paucity of research on these variables with a black population.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Autonomy/Dependency

Neonates enter the world dependent upon others for their very survival. In Western cultures, the normal course of development is defined as a progression from this state of total dependency into autonomous selfhood. In this view, the progression from dependency to autonomy continues throughout the lifespan, however, under normal circumstances it is largely completed by the end of adolescence. Incomplete resolution of the process during either infancy or adolescence is believed to have enduring consequences for the individual, one of which is overdependency. Overdependency is defined as excessive need for approval, help, and nurturance from others, and over conformity to others' demands and opinions (Bernardin & Jessor, 1957; Cameron, 1967/1971).

According to psychoanalytic theory, overdependency is the result of child-rearing practices. Parenting that is either overprotective or neglectful perpetuates dependency because the individual's needs are oversatiated in the former instance and frustrated in the latter. The separation-individuation process described by Mahler (1975) represents a psychoanalytic view of the infant's development of self. In brief, this process unfolds as follows. Between the ages of 15

months and approximately 3 years, during the rapprochement subphase of the individuation process, the toddler engages in an ambivalent struggle to separate from the symbiotic relationship that has existed with the mothering figure since birth. The child's innate push for autonomy is countered by a fear of the separateness and aloneness that independence will bring. This conflict, the rapprochement crisis, is resolved through the child's re-acceptance of the parent's omnipotence and internalization of parental values. Subsequent to resolution of the rapprochement crisis, the child internalizes a constant image of the mothering figure that serves as a comfort even in her absence. The final task of individuation is development of the ability to reconcile contradictory feelings toward others and about the self.

Adolescence is marked by a recapitulation of the struggle for independence from parents and family. Successful negotiation of the individuation process during adolescence sets one on the path to the autonomy which is ideally characteristic of mature adulthood.

The foregoing discussion of development was qualified as being characteristic of Western cultures for the following reason. Other cultures, such as African and Asian cultures, are oriented toward the group rather than the individual (Caudill, 1973;

Kobayashi, 1989; Nobles, 1980). According to Nobles (1980), African culture "does not allow for individuals." Instead, "corporate responsibility and collective destiny" define the African worldview (p. 29). Likewise, in Japanese culture, "an individual...exists only in terms of the group to which he belongs" (Caudill, 1973, p. 244). These cultures encourage a degree of attachment among individuals that is discouraged in Western cultures. Thus, the sense of group responsibility and loyalty that are the norm in such cultures might be construed as pathological dependency by Western, individualistic standards. The present study does not assume that either perspective is superior to the other. Rather the validity of both cultural perspectives is acknowledged. This qualification is made at the outset because the literature reviewed below does not necessarily represent a similar mindset.

Some researchers have found African-Americans, in general, and African-American males, in particular, to be more dependent than the norm for white persons (Brazziel, 1965/1971; Cameron, 1967/1971; Grossack, 1957). Cameron (1967/1971) and Grossack (1957) view this dependency as a consequence of black peoples' subjugation under a brutal slave system and their continuing lower caste status. On the other hand,

researchers such as Nobles (1980) view this dependency as an aspect of the group identification of African culture that has endured in America.

Grossack (1957) conducted a study to ascertain the differences, if any, that existed between the personality characteristics of blacks and whites. In this effort, he administered a general personality measure, the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS), to a sample of Southern black students and then compared the resultant black personality profile to that of the white, normative sample. Grossack (1957) found numerous race- and gender-related personality differences. He found that black males differed significantly from white males on 9 of the 15 personality traits tapped by the EPPS. Four of the personality differences found between black and white males are germane to this discussion. Black males scored significantly higher on Deference and Abasement and significantly lower on Autonomy and Dominance. Grossack (1957) attributed this differential profile to black people's caste status in the United States and the segregated South, in particular. In addition, he conjectured that desegregation might alter this personality profile.

The personality scores of five Jamaican males, apparently tested separately from the above sample, were

used to support Grossack's (1957) contention that socio-cultural factors affected black personality. The Jamaican males averaged higher Autonomy and Dominance scores and lower Deference and Abasement scores than Southern black males. Thus, the Jamaicans scored more like the normative sample than did black Southerners. Grossack (1957) implied that the score differences between the Southerners and the Jamaicans were due to the fact that the Jamaicans had not experienced in Jamaica the same dependency-producing racial and cultural restrictions that exist in the United States.

Spurred by Grossack's (1957) findings, Cameron (1967/1971) tested the hypothesis that overdependency, as measured by the Deference and Autonomy subscales of the EPPS, would be more characteristic of Southern blacks than of blacks from Northern and border states, primarily, Maryland and Washington, D.C. Like Grossack (1957), Cameron (1967/1971) tested black males and females. The subscale scores of Cameron's (1967/1971) subjects were not reported, nor did he indicate how he divided his sample on the personality measure, however, he found a significantly greater incidence of overdependency among Southern males relative to both Northern and border state males. Conversely, he found the greatest incidence of independence among Northerners. Cameron (1967/1971) also surveyed his

subjects' perceptions of their parents' rearing of them. Compared to independent males, overdependent males tended to perceive their parents as more strict, more rejecting, and more demanding, but also more rewarding when they met parental demands. Thus, Cameron (1967/1971) concluded that culture and child-rearing interact in the development of overdependency in black males.

Brazziel (1965/1971) investigated sex differences between black males and black females. He found higher Deference scores on the EPPS among the males. He renounced certain scales of the EPPS as culturally biased. However, the scales he used to measure dependency were not among those that he attacked.

The research by Grossack (1957), Cameron (1967/1971), and Brazziel (1965/1971) indicates that dependency characterizes black males. More recently, the pejorative premise of these findings has been challenged. Staples (1971/1977), for example, rebuts these researchers' findings. He frames his rebuttal in terms of masculinity/femininity rather than autonomy/dependency. He implies, and others such as Lewis (1975) agree, that dependency is synonymous with femininity within Euro-American culture. Staples (1971/1977) asserts that a "myth" of black male impotence has been perpetuated by whites out of fear of

the black man's sexuality. He further contends that sociological and psychological research are used to substantiate this myth. He discredits findings such as black males' higher Femininity scores on the MMPI with the explanation that black individuals' responses to the items upon which the scale is based (e.g., wanting to be a singer, feeling things intensely) reflect culturally defined sex role expectations that differ for blacks and whites. In the same vein, Lewis (1975) contends that there is more overlap in masculine and feminine behavior within the black community because black socialization is less sex-stereotyped than white socialization.

Along the dimension of masculinity/femininity, the issue of father-absence surfaces in the exploration of the dependency status of black males. Moran & Barclay (1988), for example, contend that father-absence has a feminizing effect upon males. If this contention is true, yet another theoretical threat is posed to the integrity of black masculinity because black children are more likely than children of other ethnic groups to be raised without a father (Edelman, 1980; U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1984). Other researchers (Hannerz, 1969; Herzog, 1974), however, assert that the findings of immature, submissive, dependent, and effeminate behavior among fatherless, white, middle class boys are not necessarily

generalizable to boys from other social classes and cultural groups. According to Hannerz (1969), the mothering of father-absent, ghetto children differs from that of father-absent, middle class children. He contends that middle class mothers have the luxury of overprotecting their children while ghetto mothers are more likely to be employed outside of the home, to have several children, and to struggle under conditions of hardship. Such a mother has less opportunity to overprotect her children. Although mothers of all socioeconomic classes are currently more likely than they were in the 1960's to be employed outside of the home, black mothers remain the harder pressed because they generally go to work when their children are younger and work longer hours for lower wages (Edelman, 1980).

While the literature regarding the overall dependency status of black males is contradictory, there is more consensus regarding dependency upon the peer group. Several researchers (Ausubel & Ausubel, 1963; Hannerz, 1969; Hare, 1987; Jackson & Nelson, 1986; Proshansky & Newton, 1968) contend that a general lack of maternal supervision characterizes the upbringing of inner-city children and engenders early independence from the family with a concomitant increase in the socializing influence of peers. The importance of the

peer group in the socialization process will be discussed in the next section.

Peer Group

It is generally held that parents are the most important socializing influence in their children's lives until children enter school. In this view, peers enter the socialization process when children reach 5 or 6 years of age. Peers facilitate disengagement from the family and the development of age- appropriate social skills. However, parents, teachers, and other adults remain the most important socializing agents until children reach adolescence.

Early research attributed black boys' peer reliance to deficits in their parenting. For example, according to Ausubel and Ausubel (1963), poor, black children who grow up in racially segregated environments are subject to a different socialization process. The peer group becomes the primary socializer of lower class children before they reach school age because their parents are "less succorant" (p. 113) and exercise less supervision than do middle class parents. Ausubel and Ausubel (1963) further contend that lower class black males are especially attached to the peer group because many of them grow up in female-headed households where maleness is devalued. Grambs (1964) concurs regarding the peer reliance of the lower class and the greater

vulnerability of males with the following explanation. She indicates that black children are more likely to seek emotional gratification and support from their peers because nurturance is unavailable in the home as a result of the hostility and dependence of their economically insecure fathers. She adds that boys are more vulnerable because their male role models are demoralized and females communicate that men are failures.

It has been found that peer reliance is linked to gender across race and class lines. Hollander and Marcia (1970) found that white, middle class suburbanite boys were more peer dependent than their female peers. Steinberg and Silverberg (1986) also report greater self-reliance and resistance to peer pressure among girls relative to boys. These researchers do not specify the race of their subjects, however, their socioeconomic status ranged from blue-collar to professional. Thus, these examples of more recent findings of greater peer reliance among boys across class and race cast doubt on the conclusions drawn by Ausubel and Ausubel (1963) and Grambs (1964) regarding the greater peer reliance of lower class black boys.

Researchers such as Hare (1987), Lewis (1975), and Reed (1988) also counter the intimations of psychopathology inherent in the Ausubels' (1963) and

Grambs' (1964) assessments of the peer reliance of the lower class. Hare (1987) and Reed (1988) suggest that the peer group provides an alternative arena for status and recognition for youth who are experiencing difficulties in school. According to Hare and Castenell (1985) black males are "the most feared, least likely to be identified with, and least likely to be effectively taught" (p. 211), thus, there is little wonder that so many black males have problems in school. Accordingly, they turn to the social arena in search of the acceptance unavailable to them in school. Lewis (1975) contends that early independence training is simply endemic to African-American culture. She acknowledges that black children are expected to become self-sufficient members of their peer group as early as 3 years of age, but she adds that prior to this early emancipation from the family, the child enjoys an intense, positive relationship with parents. While Ausubel and Ausubel (1963) acknowledge "precocious independence" (p. 113) as a subcultural norm for the lower class, in general, and black people, in particular, they attribute this not to cultural prescription or pressures upon parents or to a search for a compensatory source of self-esteem, but to pejorative aspects of the family life of black people.

In summary, the earlier works present negative

interpretations of the behaviors of black people, while later writers interpret the behaviors as legitimate subcultural or problem-solving variants. Notwithstanding these differing perspectives, there is consensus that lower class, black children become peer-oriented early in life, and that males, regardless of race and age, are more peer-oriented in general than are females.

The third, and last, personality variable that will be examined in this research is locus of control. In the next section this concept and its particular relationship to lower income, African-Americans males will be discussed.

Locus of Control

The locus of control construct developed out of attribution theory within the field of social psychology. Attribution theory was initially concerned with the study of the perceived causation of others' behavior, but it has come to be concerned with the individual's explanation of his/her own behavior as well (Antaki, 1982; Kelley & Michela, 1980). Attributions are cognitive variables that have three possible antecedents: (1) information regarding the consequences of various actions; (2) beliefs about the causes of various actions; and, (3) personal motivations such as self-enhancement and self-protection. Once made,

attributions mediate consequences in behavior, affect, and/or expectancy. According to Kelley and Michela (1980), "attributions affect our feelings about past events and our expectations about future ones, our attitudes toward other persons and our reactions to their behavior, and our conceptions of ourselves and our efforts to improve our fortunes" (p. 489). Attributions are presumed to be made along various dimensions. The internal-external dimension is but one of these. Other dimensions of causality include stability (stable/unstable), controllability (controllable/uncontrollable), and globality (global/specific). In the educational arena, researchers have enhanced the achievement of failing students by training them to attribute their academic failure to lack of effort, which is subject to the individual's control, rather than to lack of ability, which is beyond the individual's control (Andrews & Debus, 1978; Chapin & Dyck, 1976; Dweck, 1975).

The internal-external locus of control construct relates to one's sense of personal power. Those with an internal locus of control believe that their behavior determines what happens to them. Those with an external locus of control believe that their lives are controlled by outside forces such as luck or powerful others. Internals are characterized as assertive, independent,

self-sufficient, and self-directed whereas externals are characterized as passive, defensive, rebellious, anxious, and they are said to perceive themselves as victims of circumstance (Feather, 1967; Hill, 1978; Ogletree, 1976).

Researchers report links between locus of control and demographics such as class, race, and sometimes gender. The lower class and non-whites are generally reported to be more external in their attributions than are the middle class and white people (Battle & Rotter, 1963; Castenell, 1983; Coleman et al., 1966; Hsieh, Shybut, & Lotsof, 1969; Lessing, 1969; Ogletree, 1976). On the other hand, studies regarding gender differences in locus of control report inconsistent findings (Celini & Kantorowski, 1982; Castenell, 1983; Fry & Scher, 1984; Goodman & Waters, 1987; Payne & Payne, 1989; Prawat, Grissom, & Parish, 1979; Rohner, Chaille, & Rohner, 1980).

In a theoretical analysis of values, Kohn (1977) asserts that middle class parents value "internal processes of self-direction and empathic understanding" whereas working class parents value "conformity to externally defined standards" (pp. 21-22). Although he does not specifically refer to the locus of control concept, the self-direction perpetuated by the middle class and the conformity that is engendered in the

working class are behavioral dispositions that reflect internality and externality, respectively. Kohn (1977) contends that these orientations have adaptive value in the workplace where the middle class gives orders and the working class follows them. Wilson (1987) contends that the schools perpetuate these class-linked values because schools for the poor and minorities are generally authoritarian and repressive whereas suburban schools provide less direct supervision and allow for student initiative. Cummings (1977) concurs, suggesting that "institutional barriers" (p. 75) such as tracking and negative teacher expectations which are beyond students' control engender an external orientation in black students.

Black people and other non-whites have been found by many to be more external than white people (Castenell, 1983; Coleman et al., 1966; Hsieh, Shybut, & Lotsof, 1969; Lessing, 1969; Ogletree, 1976). Ogletree (1976) attributes the externality of black people to the reality of white domination, rather than reliance upon luck. Ducette and Wolk (1972), on the other hand, found no difference between lower class black children and middle class white children on locus of control whereas Payne and Payne (1989) indicate that class sometimes confounds purported racial differences on locus of control.

Several researchers have found differences in locus of control across cultures. Hsieh, Shybut, and Lotsof (1969) contend that locus of control is a culture-bound variable and support this assertion with study results that show Americans to be more internal than Chinese-Americans and Chinese-Americans, in turn, to be more internal than Chinese people in Hong Kong. The authors attribute the differences in locus of control to the "individual- centered" nature of the American culture as compared to the "situation-centered" Chinese culture (p. 122). Kishor (1983) found differences on locus of control between Fijians and Fiji-Indians. He attributed the difference in locus of control to differences in culture that coexist in the same country. Tyler, Dhawan, and Sinha (1989) found cross-cultural differences and similarities between Indians and Americans on locus of control and concluded that "locus of control attributions are psychologically based and reflect the cultures and life experiences of respondents" (p. 218). The cultural difference analogy can be extended to black people because African culture is communal and kinship-based rather than individualistic (Nobles, 1980) and black people in America are presumed to have retained aspects of their African culture despite adaptations to American culture.

Finally, researchers report conflicting findings

regarding the relationship between gender and locus of control. Fry and Scher (1984) and Prawat, Grissom, and Parish (1979) report greater externality among males. Celini and Kantorowski (1982) report greater externality among females. Castenell (1983) reports inconclusive findings regarding the relationship between gender and locus of control, whereas Rohner, Chaille, and Rohner (1980) and Payne and Payne (1989) report no gender differences. Goodman and Waters (1987) indicate that gender contributes very little (less than 2%) to variance in locus of control scores.

On the whole, while empirical and theoretical evidence suggesting general dependency, peer group dependency, and an external locus of control among black males has been developed, there is evidence to the contrary as well. There is agreement, however, that these traits are correlated with academic achievement. These relationships will be presented in the following sections.

Autonomy/Dependency and Academic Achievement

Yeger and Miezitis (1985) reviewed a vast body of literature related to teachers' differential treatment of boys' and girls' dependency behaviors during the early school years. Especially during children's first years in school, when new academic and behavioral demands are being placed upon them, satisfaction of

dependency needs is a requisite for academic adjustment. Furthermore, the development of autonomy in general requires the appropriate satisfaction of dependency needs. Boys start off at an educational disadvantage because, the authors contend, teachers who behave stereotypically are accepting of girls' dependency behaviors while discouraging the same in boys. Thus, boys resort to negative attention-seeking behavior to satisfy their dependency needs or they defend against the frustration resulting from their unmet needs through withdrawal or the adoption of a pseudo-independent stance. In the process, boys' learning suffers and sex-typed behaviors of male independence and competence, albeit sometimes pseudo-independence or pseudo-competence, are reinforced. This eventually affects the longterm achievement of males since independence is a personality characteristic of high achieving students and strong dependency needs have been shown to characterize underachievers of all ages (Allocca, 1985; Burgess, 1956; Crandall, Preston, & Rabson, 1960; Davis, 1988/1989; Gough & Lanning, 1986; Maynard, 1975; Wood, Chapin, & Hannah, 1988). Because young girls' dependency needs are not frustrated in the classroom, their academic performance tends to exceed that of young boys.

Studies with college samples have shown the

following relationships between autonomy and academic achievement. Mathiasen (1985) studied a small sample of college honor students. He found that they scored significantly lower than the general student population on the Deference subscale of the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule. Mathiasen (1985) interpreted this result as an indication that the honor students were "nonconforming, independent, and confident in making decisions" (p. 143). Based on correlations between grade point average and the subscales of the California Personality Inventory, Gough and Lanning (1986) concluded that independence was characteristic of high achieving students. Autonomy, as measured by yet another personality measure, the Omnibus Personality Inventory, has also been related to academic achievement. Davis (1988/1989) found that students on academic probation scored significantly lower than students in good academic standing on the Autonomy subscale of this measure. Using the same measure, Maynard (1975) found that community college students who persisted to graduation scored higher on Autonomy than did non-persisters. In contrast, Koutrelakos (1986) found no difference between remedial and non-remedial students on Autonomy as measured by 6 items from the Omnibus Personality Inventory.

Utilizing the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT),

Burgess (1956) found that underachieving male freshmen showed significantly higher dependency needs than did overachievers. Burgess (1956) assessed students' dependency needs in the realm of academic achievement through analysis of their responses to a TAT card that pulls for school-related themes and attitudes. The vast majority of both overachievers and underachievers perceived the female in the foreground of this card to be a student. However, there were marked differences in the attitudes and motivations that the two groups ascribed to the perceived student. Slightly more than half of the underachievers who perceived the female as a student attributed her student status to parental pressure or other external motives. Nearly half thought that she disliked school and that she preferred her home environment to school. In contrast, none of the overachievers shared any of the above perceptions and, in fact, most held opposite views. Most overachievers felt that the student liked school and that she wanted to escape the limitations of her home environment.

The negative impact of dependency upon black male achievement is demonstrated in recent ethnographic research conducted by Allocca (1985). She studied 20 of the highest ranked and 20 of the lowest ranked seniors enrolled in an urban, specialized high school. The 1,300 member senior class was comprised of Blacks,

Chinese, Hispanics, Jews, Italians, and Greeks. High and low ranked students were drawn from each ethnic group. Based on interviews and/or questionnaires completed by the study sample, their parents, school peers, and teachers, Allocca (1985) determined that independence, vaguely defined as working well alone, was one of the characteristics shared by all upper ranked students. Dependency was characteristic of lower ranked black males only. This dependency was most often exemplified by immediate parental intercession whenever school problems arose. Thus, these low-achieving boys were denied the opportunity to learn how to resolve problems on their own. The researcher attributed the parental dominance of these boys' lives to the parents' reluctance to surrender their male children to the hostile environment of the white world. The parents of black girls apparently did not have similar concerns because dependency was not characteristic of lower ranked black girls. It might also be added that black girls usually face a less hostile and less non-confirming school environment.

The studies discussed above provide strong support for the assertion that dependency is associated with academic achievement and that dependent males are at greater academic risk than are dependent females. The peer group, important to all youth as they make the

transition from dependency upon parents and family to autonomy, is, according to some, especially important to those of the lower class. Dependency in general has also been found to be detrimental to academic achievement. The impact of the peer group upon academic achievement will be discussed below.

Peer Group Dependency and Academic Achievement

Researchers have described the youth culture as inimical to intellectual pursuits (Braham, 1965; Coleman, 1959). In addition, there is some indication that males may be more negatively affected by peers than females (Hare & Castenell, 1985; Schneider & Coutts, 1985).

Braham (1965) indicates that the adolescent peer group "suppress[es] intellectual interest and motivation in all but the deviates" (p. 252). According to Coleman (1959) the price adolescents pay for academic achievement is social isolation. This creates a dilemma for adolescents who would prefer to be popular. Schneider and Coutts (1985) studied the "person orientation" and academic achievement of Canadian high school students. The male and female students that they studied agreed that high grades were not social assets, however, the males were significantly more likely to report that their academic achievement was negatively affected by what their friends thought. Hollander and

Marcia (1970) found greater peer-orientation among students enrolled in the academically slower of two 5th grade classes of white, middle class children. They also found that the academically slower boys showed the greatest peer-orientation. Black youth culture may be more averse to schooling than the general youth culture, in response, at least in part, to a realistic appraisal of the social and economic limitations placed upon them by the society-at-large (Coleman, 1986; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu, 1978) and/or as a result of negative school experiences (Hare, 1987; Hare & Castenell, 1985; McDermott, 1987). Some of these youth opt for the recognition available in a street culture that eschews middle class values such as academic achievement as the demands of the white "other".

Labov and Robins (1969) found that "club"-involved Harlem youth were more prone to reading failure than their peers who were not similarly involved. To those involved with street clubs, which are similar to gangs but not as prone to group violence, schooling was "hostile, distant, and essentially irrelevant" (p. 397). Among the traits and activities that they valued were physical prowess, facility with insults, skill in stealing, and experience in reform school (p. 398). The researchers found that out of the 43 club-involved youngsters studied, none read above grade level, only

one read at grade level, and most were 3 or more years behind grade level in reading. In contrast, 11 of 32 non-club members read at or above grade level. Labov and Robins (1969) attribute the reading failure of the club-involved to conflict between the culture of the street and that of society as a whole.

McDermott (1987) seems to agree with the cultural conflict theory. He argues that school failure among minority group students represents a rational, ego-defensive adaptation to a hostile environment. He describes a process wherein persistent miscommunication between the teacher and individual students leads students to join together to defeat the teacher and the educational process. With regard to reading, he states:

> Reading is an act which apparently aligns the black child with the 'wrong' forces in the social universe. In the classroom social organization produced by the politics of everyday life, reading takes its place as part of the teacher's "ecology of games"....To read is to accept these games and all the statuses and identities that accompany them. Not to read is to accept peer group games and their accompanying statuses and identities. In other words, given a particular social organization, reading failure is a social achievement. (p. 186)

The theme of academic failure as a social achievement among black students is echoed by others such as Fordham and Ogbu (1986), Hare and Castenell (1985), and Morris and Jackson (1986). Morris and Jackson (1986) found that high achievement was "something of a social liability" among black, urban poor children as early as the fourth grade. Hare and Castenell's (1985) study of the academic achievement and self-esteem of black and white, male and female pre-adolescents led them to similar conclusions regarding black males. The researchers studied achievement and four areas of self esteem: general, school, peer, and home. They found that relative to the other groups studied, black males had the lowest achievement scores and that their self-esteem was low in relationship to school, but high in relationship to peers and equal to other students overall. These results led the researchers to suggest that "whatever academic liabilities black boys suffer may...be compensated for by their perceived social assets" (p. 208).

The situation persists into high school where, for example, black students studied by Fordham and Ogbu (1986) indicated that studiousness was tantamount to "social death" (p. 191) and that high-achieving males were presumed to be homosexual. "Alienation, ridicule,

[and] physical harm" (p. 197) were the consequences of high academic achievement in the milieu studied by Fordham and Ogbu (1986). Likewise, most of the academically successful black high school students studied by Edwards (1976) acknowledged the existence of a similarly anti-intellectual environment in their school. From interviews with these students, Edwards (1976) concluded that their adherence to parental and adult values regarding achievement coupled with their independence from their peers contributed to their academic success. More recently, Steinberg, Dornbusch, and Brown (1992) found that many high-achieving African-American students affiliated primarily with students other ethnic groups because peer support for academic achievement was so limited among African-American students.

Trotter (1981) surveyed the attitudes toward schooling of high-achieving and low-achieving 'academically able' black male high school students. He found that low achievers' attitudes toward school were more negative than high achievers' attitudes. Also, both high achievers and low achievers perceived their peers as holding more negative attitudes toward school than they themselves held. Low achievers, however, perceived the peer environment as more inimical to achievement than did high achievers. Thus, the author concludes

that 'academically able' black males may perceive themselves as "swimming against...[a] tide of peer disapproval" (p. 61). He suggests that this negative peer environment may negatively affect black males' academic achievement.

Thus, there is ample support for the assertion that the peer group of black youth, especially black males, militates against academic achievement. In the following section the relationship between locus of control and academic achievement will be explored.

Locus of Control and Academic Achievement

Findley and Cooper's (1983) summary of the findings of five reviews of the locus of control and achievement literature indicates that internality is generally associated with high achievement. The authors conducted their own subsequent review to include more adult populations, to review the literature more extensively, and to systematically investigate the impact of such mediating variables as age and race. Their review of the literature is based on 98 studies that utilized 22 different locus of control measures and 36 achievement measures of various types. Findley and Cooper (1983) found that the vast majority (93%) of studies that reported significant locus of control-achievement findings showed an association between greater internality and higher achievement, leading the authors

to a "confident conclusion that internality and academic achievement are positively related" (p. 424). They also concluded that the magnitude of the relationship between locus of control and achievement was small to medium, stronger for children than for adults, and stronger for males than for females. They could not determine the magnitude of the effect for race because so few studies reported the race of subjects and most that did specify race involved only white subjects.

A recent study by Keith, Pottebaum, and Eberhart (1986) supports the above finding regarding locus of control and achievement. These authors used path analysis to determine the impact of locus of control and variables such as race, family background (e.g., parental education and occupation, family income), ability, and self-concept on the achievement of a national sample of nearly 28,000 high school seniors. Of all of the variables studied, only ability proved more strongly related to achievement than locus of control.

Another large-sample study that found a strong correlation between locus of control and achievement was the 1966 study conducted by Coleman et al. This nationwide study examined the relationship between achievement test scores, school factors, family factors, students' educational and occupational aspirations,

motivation, self-concept, locus of control, and student achievement among students in grades 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12. Coleman et al. (1966) found that while black students and the other minorities studied expressed a "much lower" sense of environmental control than whites, locus of control was the variable most strongly related to achievement for all minority groups except Asian-Americans, with minority internals showing "considerably higher" achievement than minority externals (pp. 319-320).

More recent investigations of the relationship between locus of control and academic achievement include the following. Tidwell (1981) found that intellectually gifted minority group 10th graders were more internal than their white peers. Abatso (1985) found that internality was an important component of coping ability which in turn facilitated academic achievement. Kishor (1983) found that although Fiji-Indians were more internal that Fijians, internality was positively correlated with the achievement of both groups. Mathiasen (1985), on the other hand, found no difference in locus of control between college honor students and the general student population. Nor did Chu-Richardson (1988) find a significant difference in the locus of control scores of academically successful college students, academically

unsuccessful college students, and college faculty. However, the academically unsuccessful among Chu-Richardson's sample were slightly more external than the other two groups.

Zigler's (1963) findings regarding social reinforcers seem related to the discussion of locus of control and achievement. He found that praise (e.g., "good," "fine") proved more effective as a reinforcer with the lower class whereas being correct was a more effective reinforcer with the middle class. He attributed the middle class response set to a higher developmental level. Praise, the reinforcer of choice for the lower class, is an external reward whereas being correct has intrinsic value for the individual performing the task and does not hinge upon external validation. Thus, Zigler's (1963) findings provide empirical support for the purported externality of the lower class.

Summary

Autonomy/dependency, peer group dependence, and locus of control have all been shown to be correlated with academic achievement. Research and theory indicate that overdependency, strong peer reliance, and externality generally characterize lower class, black males. In addition to, or in lieu of, dependency upon parents, lower class black males are presumed dependent

upon their peer group. It is conjectured that peers assume socialization functions for poor and lower class youth who are deprived of parental attention at an early age or those who are unsuccessful academically. Lastly, non-whites and the lower class generally have been found to be external in their locus of control. Dependency, strong peer reliance, and externality have all been shown to be related to poor academic performance. These variables, however, have not been studied with a population of lower income, black male college students. The present research will attempt to do this.

HYPOTHESES

It is contended that black males who are internal in locus of control and generally independent of others, including peers, will be higher achievers academically than those who are external in locus of control and dependent upon others. The following hypotheses guided this research:

Ho 1: Greater internality will be associated with higher achievement.

Ho 2: Greater autonomy will be associated with higher achievement.

Ho 3: Greater dependence upon peers will be associated with lower achievement.

Ho 4: Internality and autonomy will be positively correlated with each other and each will be negatively correlated with peer group dependency.

Chapter 3

METHOD

Subjects

The primary research subjects consisted of black male, urban, public community college freshmen who had failed to achieve acceptable proficiency levels in reading, writing, and/or mathematics. Therefore, all were enrolled in at least one remedial class at the time of this study. An achieving comparison group consisted of black males hired as teaching assistants in remedial classes. All study subjects were inner city black males. Of the 117 black males upon whom this research is based, 98 were enrolled in remedial courses and 19 were employed as teaching assistants. A description of the remedial subjects and the comparison group follows.

The primary study sample consisted of 98 black males enrolled in their first or second semester of college. All of these subjects were enrolled in at least one remedial course at the time of this study. Seventy-seven (77) were enrolled in reading remediation. These students had earned scaled scores of 13 or less on the Developmental Test of Learning Skills (DTLS), a reading placement examination taken by all students upon their acceptance to the college at which this study was conducted. The scaled reading test scores of study participants enrolled in remedial reading averaged 8.47

and ranged from 1 to 13. The grade equivalent of these reading scores ranges from below the 5th grade level to the 11th grade level. The remaining 21 remedial subjects had scored 14 or above on the DTLS. These subjects' scaled reading test scores averaged 17.62, ranged from 14 to 24, and qualified these subjects for exemption from reading remediation because their scores represent reading proficiency at the 12th grade level or higher. These 21 subjects were enrolled in either a remedial math or a remedial writing course at the time of this study.

Selected demographic characteristics of the remedial subjects and teaching assistants are presented in Appendix A. As shown in this appendix, the 98 remedial subjects ranged in age from 17 to 48 and averaged 24.22 years of age (SD=7.42). Sixty percent (60%) of the remedial subjects who indicated their country of birth were born in the United States. The foreign-born remedial subjects emigrated from the West Indies (22%), Haiti (12%), Africa (5%), and South America (1%). The average age at which these subjects entered the United States was 19.43 (SD=7.90). Their average length of residence in the United States was 6.74 years (SD=6.05). English was the second language of approximately 15% of the study subjects.

The vast majority (97%) of remedial subjects had

completed high school with either a high school diploma (76%) or its equivalent, a General Education Diploma (21%). The remaining 3% had not completed high school and were attending college under a special program that enables students to obtain a high school diploma upon successful completion of 24 college credits. With regard to the educational level of the remedial subjects' parents, Appendix A shows that approximately three-quarters of the parents for whom educational information was provided had a high school education or less. Specifically, 21% of the remedial subjects' mothers and 26% of their fathers had not completed high school; 53% of mothers and 53% of fathers had completed high school; 26% of mothers and 21% of fathers had attended or completed college.

The types of households in which remedial subjects were raised were as follows: headed by a single female, 41%; headed by a single male, 3%; headed by two parents, 46%; headed by extended family members, 10%. Thirteen percent (13%) of the subjects did not respond to questions regarding the number and gender of their siblings. Of those who did provide this information, 9% indicated that they had no siblings, 31% that they were the oldest child, 37% a middle child, and 23% the youngest child. The mean number of children in the families of the remedial subjects was 4.44 (SD=2.35).

Black male teaching assistants comprised a comparison group for this study. Teaching assistants work with teachers in the classroom and tutor students individually and in groups during and outside of class hours. Current educational requirements for this position are completion of at least 60 college credits with a B average. However, requirements were less stringent at the time that some of the teaching assistants were hired.

Nineteen teaching assistants agreed to participate in this study. As shown in Appendix A, the teaching assistants averaged 26.26 years of age (SD=5.15) and they ranged in age from 21 to 40. Approximately half (47%) of them were born in the United States. The foreign-born of this group were born in the West Indies (42%) and Haiti (11%). The average age at which they came to the United States was 19.78 (SD=9.67) and they averaged 8.44 years (SD=6.42) in this country.

Teaching assistants had completed an average of 3.72 years of college. Six had completed the Bachelors degree and one was currently enrolled in graduate school. With regard to the educational attainment of the teaching assistants' parents, Appendix A shows that approximately half had attended college. Specifically, 24% of mothers and 43% of fathers had not completed high school; 24% of mothers and 14% of fathers were high

school graduates; and, the remaining 52% of mothers and 43% of fathers had attended or graduated from college.

The types of households in which teaching assistants were raised were as follows: headed by a single female, 21%; headed by two parents, 58%; and headed by extended family members, 21%. Of the 18 teaching assistants who indicated the age and gender of their siblings, 17% indicated that they were the only child, 33% that they were the oldest child, 22% a middle child, and 28% the youngest child. The mean number of children in the families of teaching assistants was 3.22 (SD=1.93).

Design

Academic achievement, the dependent variable in this study, was assessed in two different ways. First, remedial subjects were compared to the teaching assistants. This comparison was based on the premise that the teaching assistants represent a high achieving group. They are presumed to be high achievers based upon their advanced standing in college or their completion of college as well as their selection for the position of teaching assistant. Secondarily, for the remedial group, objective achievement was analyzed. Specifically, the following achievement variables were assessed: the reading test score that prompted the subject's reading placement at the time of the study or allowed for his exemption from reading remediation (pre-test score); the reading test score earned upon re-testing at the end of the reading course for those enrolled in reading (post-test score); the change in reading score from the beginning to the end of the reading course for those subjects enrolled in reading; and high school average.

The personality and demographic variables investigated in this study were assessed using the instruments described below.

Instruments

1) Rotter's I-E Scale (Rotter, 1966)

This locus of control measure is the one most frequently used with adults (Hill, 1978). Locus of control is generally defined as a measure of an individual's sense of personal control over his/her destiny. For each of 23 items (excluding six filler items that are not scored) respondents choose which of an internal and external response they believe to be more true. Only external responses are scored, yielding a maximum external score of 23. Rotter (1966) reports that the locus of control scale does not generate specific factors. However, other researchers disagree. Factor analysis by Mirels (1970) suggests the existence of two independent factors: perceived mastery over one's life and belief in an individual's ability to affect political institutions. Schneider and Parsons (1970) have identified five categories which are discussed in some detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

The locus of control construct represents a worldview. It is not presumed to represent a personality trait or state. However, internal-external characteristics are considered fairly stable, albeit susceptible to change through intervention strategies or as a result of adverse circumstances (Layton, 1985). Rotter (1966) reports test-retest reliabilities between

.49 and .83 for various samples over one to two month intervals. Layton (1985) reports stability coefficients of .53 and .57 for populations tested at intervals of 6 and 12 months, respectively. Hersch and Scheibe (1967) report test-retest reliabilities between .43 and .83 for five samples of students over two-month intervals and .72 for one sample over a one year period.

Goodman and Waters (1987) report other researchers' findings of correlations between -.52 (in the expected direction) and .68 between the Rotter I-E and three other locus of control measures, the Internal Control Index, the Nowicki-Strickland locus of control scale for adults, and the Levenson scale. The authors' own analysis of correlations between these measures confirms convergent validity, but only for the dimensions of fate and control over political institutions, both of which are tapped by Rotter's measure. Further support for concurrent validity is provided by Hersch and Scheibe (1967) whose analysis of subjects' responses on Rotter's I-E and two personality measures led them to conclude that "inferences as to internality may be made on the basis of inspection of...instruments such as the Adjective Checklist or California Personality Inventory profiles" (p. 612).

The Rotter's I-E Scale appears as the first 29 questions of Questionnaire A in Appendix B. Appendix B

is a facsimile of the research packet that was completed by study participants. Rotter's I-E Scale was used to test Hypothesis 1, that greater internality would be associated with higher achievement.

2) Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) (Edwards, 1953)

This instrument was designed for research and counseling purposes to measure 15 normal personality traits derived from Murray's hierarchy of needs. The measure diminishes the influence of the socially desirable response set by forcing a choice between two statements of equal desirability. Two of the test's 15 subscales were administered resulting in a total of 54 test items (28 items per subscale, 2 items of which are the same for each subscale). Descriptions of the traits tested follow.

> Deference: To get suggestions from others, to find out what others think, to follow instructions and do what is expected, to praise others, to tell others that they have done a good job, to accept the leadership of others, to read about great men, to conform to custom and avoid the unconventional, to let others make decisions.
>
> Autonomy: To be able to come and go as desired, to say what one thinks about things, to be independent of others in making decisions, to feel free to do

what one wants, to do things that are unconventional, to avoid situations where one is expected to conform, to do things without regard to what others may think, to criticize those in positions of authority, to avoid responsibilities and obligations. (Edwards, 1959, p.11)

Edwards (1954) reports the split-half reliability of the subscales to be .60 for Deference and .76 for Autonomy. He reports test-retest reliability over one week of .78 for Deference and .83 for Autonomy. Caputo, Psathas, and Plapp (1966) present test-retest reliabilities derived over intervals of 1 week, 3 weeks, and 15 months. They found short-term reliabilities similar to Edwards' and for the 15- month interval found stability coefficients of .45 and .65 for Deference and Autonomy, respectively. The authors conclude that the EPPS shows acceptable reliability even over the longterm.

Bernardin and Jessor (1957) conducted three experiments that generally support the construct validity of the Deference and Autonomy subscales as measures of dependency. Bernardin and Jessor (1957) used the percentile rankings from the normative data of the EPPS to classify subjects as either independent or dependent. They classified as dependent those subjects who met the following the criteria: scored at the 70th

percentile or above on Deference; the 50th percentile or below on Autonomy; and, exhibited at least a 30 percentile difference between the two subscale scores. They classified as independent those who scored at the 70th percentile or above on Autonomy, the 50th percentile or below on Deference, and exhibited at least a 30 percentile difference between subscale scores. They found that dependent subjects showed a greater reliance upon others for approval and help than did independent subjects. However, they found no difference between dependent and independent subjects on conformity.

The Autonomy and Deference subscales of the EPPS appear as Questionnaire B in Appendix B. These EPPS subscales were used to test Hypothesis 2, that greater autonomy would be associated with higher achievement.

3) Pseudoautonomy and Peer-Group Dependence Scales (Lapan & Patton, 1986)

The Pseudoautonomy Scale is "inferred to represent the adolescent's defensive independence and nonconformity." The Peer-Group Dependence Scale is "inferred to measure the adolescent's defensive reliance on, and need for reassurance from, friends" (Lapan & Patton, 1986, p. 141). Kohut's self-psychology is the theoretical base upon which these scales were constructed. Each scale contains eight pairs of

forced-choice items. Respondents are asked to choose the statement within each pair that describes how s/he feels most of the time. One statement in each pair is neutral; the other reflects defense against grandiose or idealizing needs. Neutral responses are not scored; the alternative response receives a score of one. Thus, higher scores reflect greater vulnerability of the self. The authors report overall reliability of .77 for the Pseudoautonomy Scale and .75 for the Peer-Group Dependence Scale. Two readers knowledgeable in Kohutian theory accurately categorized the non-neutral statements as grandiose or idealizing 87% of the time. No other validity data is available. However, in personal communication with this writer, the second author indicated that the Pseudoautonomy Scale should show concurrent validity with Rotter's I-E.

The Pseudoautonomy Scale appears as Questions 30 through 37 of Questionnaire A in Appendix B. The Peer Group Dependence Scale appears as Questions 38 through 45 of Questionnaire A in Appendix B. The Peer Group Dependence Scale was used to test Hypothesis 3, that greater dependence upon peers would be associated with lower achievement. The Pseudoautonomy Scale was used in conjunction with the Autonomy and Deference subscales of the EPPS to determine a difference score measuring Independence.

4) Demographic Questionnaire

This 19-item questionnaire was designed to ascertain the age, ethnicity, family background, and peer interactions of study participants. The family background data requested includes: household composition; parents' education, occupation, and country of birth; and, the age and gender of siblings. The questionnaire for the teaching assistants differed from that for the remedial subjects in that the college of enrollment and years of college completed were requested instead of whether or not the subject was a high school graduate.

The demographic questionnaire appears as Questionnaire C of Appendix B.

5) Consent Form

This form was used to advise subjects of the voluntary nature of their participation in this research and of the confidentiality of the research results. It was also used to obtain subjects' signatures as evidence of their informed consent as study participants. The Consent Form appears as the first page of Appendix B, a facsimile of the research packet completed by study participants.

Procedure

The researcher asked a random sample of reading teachers to distribute research packets consisting of

the above-described questionnaires to the black males enrolled in their reading class(es) or to allow the researcher to do so. In addition, counselors and teachers of remedial math and remedial English were asked to administer the research questionnaires to the black males enrolled in their classes or to allow the researcher to do so.

The research was described to teachers and counselors as a study designed to ascertain factors that contribute to the academic success of black males. The teachers and counselors were advised of the voluntary nature of students' participation, of the importance of the consent form, and that the surveys would take approximately 30 minutes to complete. In those instances where the teacher or counselor distributed the research packet, the researcher also advised of her availability and willingness to speak with any students who raised questions or concerns that the teachers and counselors could not or cared not to address. All subjects were assured of the confidentiality of the results. It was left to each teacher and counselor to determine whether his/her students completed the questionnaires during the class period or outside of class. Most study participants returned completed questionnaires to the teacher or counselor who had distributed them. A few subjects who had received the

study questionnaire from a counselor or teacher returned completed questionnaires directly to the researcher. Those subjects who had been recruited by the researcher returned their completed surveys to the researcher.

The researcher solicited the participation of teaching assistants. The research was described to them in the same way that it was described to the teachers and counselors. However, teaching assistants were informed that they were not the main focus of the research and that they would serve as a comparison group.

Approximately 325 study questionnaires were distributed. One hundred twenty-eight (128) completed questionnaires were returned. However, 11 returns were excluded from the analysis for the following reasons: 7 respondents indicated ethnic identifications other than black on the Demographic Questionnaire included in the research packet; 3 respondents failed to complete the Consent Form and provided no identifying information; and, 1 respondent's response pattern was obviously random. Thus, 117 (36%) of the returns were utilized in this study. Of the 117 subjects upon whom this research is based, 98 were enrolled in remedial courses and 19 were teaching assistants. A description of the study subjects appears at the beginning of this chapter.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

Demographics

The demographic characteristics of the primary study participants, 98 freshmen enrolled in remedial courses, and the 19 teaching assistants who served as a comparison group are presented in Appendix A and discussed in Chapter 3. In the present chapter, the remedial subjects and the teaching assistants are compared on demographic variables in order to determine whether demographic differences exist between the two groups. The demographic variables on which the remedial subjects and the teaching assistants are compared are: age; age at immigration to the United States for those born outside of the United States; years of residency in the United States for the foreign born; maternal and paternal educational levels; number of children in family of origin; subject's position in the birth order relative to his siblings; and, whether subject's family of origin was headed by a single adult or multiple adults.

The results of statistical comparisons between the two groups on the demographic variables are presented in Tables 1 and 2. As shown in Table 1, a summary of t-test results, remedial subjects and teaching

Table 1

t-Test Results Comparing
Remedial Subjects and Teaching Assistants
on Demographic Variables

Variable	Grp	N	Mean	S.D.	t	df	p
Age	Rem	98	24.22	7.42	-1.14	115	.26
	TA	19	26.26	5.15			
Age at Immigration	Rem	35	19.43	7.90	-0.11	42	.91
	TA	9	19.78	9.67			
Years in U.S.	Rem	35	6.74	6.05	-0.74	42	.46
	TA	9	19.78	9.67			
# Children in Family	Rem	84	4.44	2.35	2.05	100	.04
	TA	18	3.22	1.93			

KEY
Rem = Remedial Subjects
TA = Teaching Assistants

assistants did not differ on age, the age at which foreign-born subjects immigrated to the United States, or the number of years foreign-born subjects had lived in the United States. However, the groups did differ on the number of children in their families of origin with teaching assistants coming from families with fewer children.

Table 2 presents the results of chi-square tests of association for the remaining demographic variables: maternal and paternal educational levels; subjects' position in the birth order relative to their siblings; whether subjects were born in the United States or elsewhere; and whether they were raised in households headed by a single adult or multiple adults. This table shows no significant differences between remedial subjects and teaching assistants on any of these variables. However, two nearly significant findings are noteworthy. With parental educational levels grouped as non-high school graduates, high school graduates, and those with education beyond high school, Table 2 shows a nearly significant difference ($p=.08$) between the paternal educational levels of teaching assistants and remedial subjects with teaching assistants' fathers tending to be better educated than the fathers of remedial subjects. With household composition dichotomized as headed by a single adult or multiple

Table 2

Chi-Square Results Comparing Remedial Subjects and Teaching Assistants on Selected Demographic Variables

Variable	Group	N	X^2	df	p
EDM	Remed	94	2.29	2	.32
	TA	19			
EDF	Remed	93	4.96	2	.08
	TA	19			
SIBPOS	Remed	87	1.88	3	.60
	TA	18			
COB	Remed	96	1.11	1	.29
	TA	19			
HCOMP	Remed	98	3.17	1	.07
	TA	19			

KEY
EDM = Mothers' Education
EDF = Fathers' Education
SIBPOS = Position in birth order relative to siblings
COB = American- v. Foreign-born
HCOMP = Single v. multiple heads of household

adults, Table 2 also shows a nearly significant difference (p=.07) on this variable with teaching assistants tending to come from families headed by multiple adults and remedial subjects tending to come from families headed by one adult. Overall, the demographic backgrounds of teaching assistants and remedial subjects were similar except that teaching assistants grew up in families with fewer children. In addition, teaching assistants tended to have better educated fathers and tended to come from families headed by more than one adult.

Correlational analyses and t-tests were run to determine any relationships between the demographic variables discussed above and the personality variables of Autonomy, Deference, locus of control, Pseudoautonomy, and Peer Group Dependence. Because teaching assistants represent a small (N=19) comparison group, findings related to them are of limited generalizability. Therefore, teaching assistants are excluded from some of the analyses and when data is presented for them, it is included for purposes of comparison with remedial subjects.

Spearman correlations were run on the personality variables and the demographic variables of parental education and subjects' position in the birth order relative to their siblings. Pearson correlations were

run on the personality variables and the demographic variables of age, age at immigration to the United States, years of U.S. residency for foreign-born subjects, and number of siblings. Table 3 presents the results of these correlational analyses for remedial subjects and teaching assistants as separate groups. T-tests were run on the personality variables and the demographic variables of household composition and country of birth. The test results for household composition and country of birth are presented in Tables 4 and 5, respectively.

Table 3 shows that age was the demographic variable most often correlated with the personality variables under investigation. For remedial subjects, age was correlated with three of the personality variables: Deference ($r=.25$, $p=.004$), locus of control ($r=-.19$, $p=.02$), and Pseudoautonomy ($r=-.18$, $p=.02$). These results indicate that older remedial subjects had higher Deference scores, had lower locus of control scores (were more internal), and had lower Pseudoautonomy scores than younger remedial subjects. For teaching assistants, on the other hand, no personality variables were correlated with age.

The age at which foreign-born remedial subjects immigrated to the United States was positively correlated with their Deference scores. This finding

Table 3

Correlations Between Demographic and Personality Variables

Remedial Subjects (N=98)

	AUT	DEF	LOC	PA	PGD
Age	-.16	.29**	-.27**	-.20*	-.04
Age@IM	-.18	.51***	-.10	-.11	-.14
RESID	.15	-.04	-.11	.02	-.08
EDM	.04	.04	-.14	-.09	-.03
EDF	.01	-.20	-.15	-.25*	-.20
SIBS	-.12	.09	.09	-.07	-.13
SIBPOS	-.09	.15	-.06	-.15	-.00

Teaching Assistants (N=19)

	AUT	DEF	LOC	PA	PGD
Age	.06	.10	.24	-.10	-.33
Age@IM	.34	-.39	.02	-.30	-.50
RESID	.22	-.02	-.07	-.09	-.14
EDM	.02	.03	-.07	.13	.39
EDF	.17	.00	.49*	.21	-.11
SIBS	-.18	.11	-.10	.09	-.04
SIBPOS	-.41*	.00	-.77***	-.08	.34

* p < .05, one-tailed
** p < .01, one-tailed
*** p < .001, one tailed

KEY
Age@IM = Age at immigration to U.S.
RESID = Years of residence in U.S.
SIBPOS = Position in birth order relative to siblings
EDM = Mothers' Education
EDF = Fathers' Education
SIBS = Number of Siblings
AUT = Autonomy
DEF = Deference
LOC = Locus of Control
PA = Pseudoautonomy
PGD = Peer Group Dependence

indicates that the older a remedial subject was at the time of his immigration to the United States the higher was his Deference score. Age at immigration to the United States was not related to any of the personality variables for teaching assistants.

The educational level of remedial subjects' fathers was negatively correlated with Pseudoautonomy ($r=-.25$, $p=.03$) indicating that remedial subjects with better educated fathers had lower Pseudoautonomy scores. Paternal education was positively correlated with locus of control for the teaching assistants ($r=.49$, $p=.04$) indicating that teaching assistants with better educated fathers were more external in their locus of control.

Lastly, with subjects' position in the birth order relative to their siblings ranked by increasing values from zero through three for "only," oldest," "middle," and "youngest" child, respectively, teaching assistants' position in the birth order was negatively correlated with Autonomy and locus of control scores. These findings indicate that later-born teaching assistants had lower Autonomy and lower locus of control scores (scored more internally) than did teaching assistants who were only children or earlier born. For remedial subjects, position in the birth order was not related to any of the personality variables. Three demographic variables presented in Table 3, maternal education,

years of U.S. residency, and number of siblings, proved unrelated to the personality variables for either group.

T-tests were used to determine whether household composition or country of birth were associated with differences on the personality variables for remedial subjects. Household composition was dichotomized as headed by a single adult or headed by multiple adults; country of birth was dichotomized as born in the continental United States or born outside of the United States. As shown in Table 4, household composition was related to Deference. Remedial subjects raised in families headed by a single adult showed lower Deference scores than those raised in families headed by multiple adults ($p=.02$). Table 5 shows a difference in the Autonomy scores of remedial subjects born in the United States relative to those born elsewhere ($p=.03$). Remedial subjects born in the United States scored higher on the Autonomy measure than did remedial subjects born outside of the United States.

In addition to testing for relationships between the demographic and personality variables for remedial subjects and teaching assistants, correlational analysis was used to determine the relationship between the demographic variables and the achievement of the remedial subjects, the only subjects for whom objective achievement data was available. The data utilized in

Table 4

t-Test Results Comparing Remedial Subjects Raised in Households Headed by Single and Multiple Adults on Personality Variables

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t	df	p
AUT	1 HH	41	10.73	3.49	-1.06	93	.29
	1+HH	54	11.52	3.67			
DEF	1 HH	41	10.63	3.39	-2.44	94	.02
	1+HH	55	12.27	3.15			
LOC	1 HH	42	9.83	2.89	1.43	95	.16
	1+HH	55	8.91	3.35			
PA	1 HH	42	1.33	1.07	0.47	96	.64
	1+HH	56	1.21	1.35			
PGD	1 HH	41	1.78	1.35	-0.76	95	.45
	1+HH	56	2.00	1.45			

KEY
AUT = Autonomy
DEF = Deference
LOC = Locus of Control
PA = Pseudoautonomy
PGD = Peer Group Dependence
1 HH = Single household head
1+HH = Multiple household heads

Table 5

t-Test Results Comparing American-Born and Foreign-Born Remedial Subjects on Personality Variables

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t	df	p
AUT	American	56	11.79	3.53	2.20	91	.03
	Foreign	37	10.14	3.58			
DEF	American	56	11.16	3.28	-1.28	92	.20
	Foreign	38	12.05	3.36			
LOC	American	58	9.53	3.21	0.80	93	.43
	Foreign	37	9.00	3.16			
PA	American	58	1.43	1.40	1.69	94	.09
	Foreign	38	1.02	0.94			
PGD	American	57	1.77	1.41	0.78	93	.44
	Foreign	38	2.00	1.36			

KEY
AUT = Autonomy
DEF = Deference
LOC = Locus of Control
PA = Pseudoautonomy
PGD = Peer Group Dependence

the analysis of remedial subjects' achievement was as follows: (1) reading pre-test score; (2) reading post-test score; (3) gain in reading score; and, (4) high school average. Reading pre-test scores were available for all remedial subjects (N=98). Reading post-test scores and gain scores were available for all but one of the subjects enrolled in remedial reading (N=76), and high school averages were available for 62 of the remedial subjects. Spearman and Pearson correlations were run on the demographic variables and the reading pre-test scores, reading post-test scores, and high school averages of the remedial subjects. Reading score gain was subjected to partial correlation controlling for pre-test score. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 details the correlations between demographic and achievement variables for the remedial subjects. This table shows the following significant relationships. Age was negatively correlated with high school average ($r=-.34$, $p=.003$) indicating that older subjects had higher high school averages. Years of residency in the United States was negatively correlated with post-test scores ($r=-.28$, $p=.05$) such that the longer foreign born subjects had been in the United States, the lower were their post-test scores. Years of residency in the United States was positively correlated

Table 6

Correlations Between Demographic and Achievement Variables for Remedial Subjects

Demographic Variable	Pre-test (N=98)	Post-test (N=76)	Score Gain[a] (N=76)	HSA (N=62)
Age	.09	.16	.16	-.34**
Age@IM	-.00	.18	.22	.14
RESID	-.19	-.28*	.16	.40*
Mothers' Education	.26*	.31*	.15	-.18
Fathers' Education	.22*	.16	.04	-.36*
Number of Siblings	.08	-.19	-.22*	.02
SIBPOS	.02	-.12	.04	-.20

[a]Partial correlations controlling for pre-test score.

* p < .05, one-tailed
** p < .01, one-tailed

KEY
HSA = High school average
Age@IM = Age at immigration to U.S.
RESID = Years of residence in U.S.
SIBPOS = Position in birth order relative to siblings

with high school average (r=.40, p=.04) indicating that the longer foreign-born subjects had been in the United States the higher were their high school averages. Maternal education was positively correlated with reading pre-test scores (r=.26, p=.02) and reading post-test scores (r=.31, p=.01). These results indicate that remedial subjects with better-educated mothers earned higher reading test scores. Paternal education was also positively correlated with pre-test scores (r=.22, p=.04), but negatively correlated with high school average (r=-.36, p=.02). The correlation between maternal education and high school average was also negative, albeit non-significant (p=.13). Thus, overall, remedial subjects with better-educated parents tended toward higher reading scores, but lower high school averages. In addition, remedial subjects with fewer siblings tended to make greater gains in reading score from pre-test to post-test (r=-.22, p=.04). However, remedial subjects' position in the birth order relative to their siblings was not associated with any of the achievement variables.

T-tests were run to determine whether there were achievement differences between remedial subjects raised in households headed by one adult as compared to remedial subjects raised in households in which multiple adults were present. These test results are presented

in Table 7. As shown in Table 7, no significant relationships were found between household composition and the achievement of remedial subjects. However, remedial subjects raised in households with more than one adult tended toward higher high school averages than those raised in single-parent households (p=.07).

Table 8 summarizes the results of t-tests to determine whether there were achievement differences between remedial subjects born in the United States and remedial subjects born elsewhere. This table shows that subjects born in the United States scored higher on reading pre-tests than did subjects born outside of the United States (p=.002). The significance of this difference remained even after 17 subjects from non-English-speaking countries were excluded from the foreign-born group (p=.007).

Testing of the Hypotheses

In testing the research hypotheses, t-tests were used to determine the significance of differences between the mean personality scores of the remedial subjects and teaching assistants, the achieving comparison group. Further, one-tailed Pearson correlations and partial correlations were used to test for relationships between the personality variables and the objective achievement data available for the subjects enrolled in remedial courses. This further

Table 7

t-Test Results Comparing Remedial Subjects Raised in Households Headed by Single and Multiple Adults on Achievement Variables

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t	df	p
Pre	1 HH	42	10.67	4.95	0.41	96	.68
	1+HH	56	10.25	5.08			
Post	1 HH	31	12.48	4.88	-0.26	74	.80
	1+HH	45	12.78	4.96			
Gain	1 HH	31	4.03	3.93	-0.12	74	.90
	1+HH	45	4.16	4.45			
HSA	1 HH	29	68.71	4.06	-1.86	60	.07
	1+HH	33	70.88	4.96			

Table 8

t-Test Results Comparing American-Born and Foreign-Born Remedial Subjects on Achievement Variables

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t	df	p
Pre	American	58	11.69	5.68	3.16	86	.002
	Foreign	38	8.97	2.62			
Pre	American	58	11.69	5.68	2.78	77	.007
	EngFor	21	9.33	1.85			
Post	American	37	13.00	5.12	0.61	72	.55
	Foreign	45	12.78	4.96			
Gain	American	37	4.46	4.05	1.17	72	.25
	Foreign	37	3.35	4.09			
HSA	American	41	69.34	5.07	-1.23	60	.22
	Foreign	33	70.87	3.60			

KEY
Pre=Reading Pre-test Post=Reading Post-test
Gain=Gain in reading score from pre- to post-test
HSA=High School Average
1 HH=Single household head 1+HH=Multiple household heads
EngFor = Born in English-speaking foreign countries

testing of the hypotheses was limited to the remedial subjects because no objective achievement data was available for the teaching assistants. Rather, the teaching assistants' status as achievers was presumed on the basis of their advanced standing in college or their completion of college.

The personality variables investigated in this study were as follows: (1) locus of control; (2) Autonomy; (3) Deference; (4) Pseudoautonomy; and, (5) Peer Group Dependence. For remedial subjects, the following objective achievement data was utilized: (1) reading pre-test score; (2) reading post-test score; (3) gain in reading score; and, (4) high school average.

Due to the considerable range in the ages of the subjects (range=17 to 48 years), some data was also analyzed by age. Subjects were divided into a younger group aged 22 years and younger and an older group aged 31 years and older. The sample was so partitioned because students entering college directly from high school generally begin college at 17 or 18 years of age and, if their college education is not interrupted, graduate at 21 or 22 years of age. Thus, the younger group reflects the traditional college age range. The lower limit of the older group was determined by adding one standard deviation (7.13) to the mean age for the study sample (24.56). The younger group consisted of 63

subjects; 22 subjects were in the older group. Analysis by age was limited to remedial subjects becthere were too few teaching assistants in either of the age groups to allow for age comparisons between the teaching assistants and remedial subjects. Specifically, 4 teaching assistants were in the younger group and 3 were in the older group.

By individual hypothesis, the research findings were as follows.

HO 1: Greater internality will be associated with higher achievement.

Rotter's I-E Scale was used to measure locus of control. Internality and externality represent opposite poles of the locus of control continuum. External options are scored on Rotter's I-E Scale, therefore, lower scores reflect greater internality and higher scores reflect greater externality. The maximum score on this scale is 23. According to the hypothesis, teaching assistants should score lower, more internally, on this measure than do remedial subjects. In turn, higher achieving remedial subjects should score lower than lower-achieving remedial subjects.

As shown in Table 9, the mean locus of control score of teaching assistants, the high achieving comparison group, was 9.63 (SD=3.89). Teaching assistants' locus of control scores ranged from 4 to 20.

Table 9

t-Test Results Comparing Remedial Subjects and Teaching Assistants on Personality Variables

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t	df	p
LOC	Remed	97	9.31	3.17	-0.39	114	.70
	TA	19	9.63	3.89			
Acad	Remed	94	0.94	0.88	0.19	111	.85
	TA	19	0.89	0.81			
Ldr	Remed	97	0.94	0.92	-1.12	114	.26
	TA	19	1.21	1.18			
Luck	Remed	97	2.36	1.38	-0.17	114	.87
	TA	19	2.42	1.81			
Pol	Remed	95	2.79	1.42	1.22	111	.23
	TA	18	2.33	1.64			
Resp	Remed	97	2.35	1.13	-1.99	114	.05
	TA	19	2.89	.87			
AUT	Remed	95	11.18	3.60	-2.23	110	.03
	TA	17	13.29	3.60			
DEF	Remed	96	11.57	3.34	1.02	112	.31
	TA	18	10.67	4.07			
PA	Remed	98	1.27	1.24	0.33	115	.74
	TA	19	1.16	1.64			
PGD	Remed	97	1.91	1.41	0.64	114	.52
	TA	19	1.68	1.29			

KEY

Remed=Remedial Subjects
TA=Teaching Assistants
LOC=Locus of Control
Acad=Academic LOC cat.
Ldr=Leadership/Success LOC cat.
Luck=Luck LOC cat.
Pol=Politics LOC cat.
Resp=Respect LOC cat.
AUT=Autonomy
DEF=Deference
PA=Pseudoautonomy
PGD=Peer Group Dependence

The mean locus of control score for the subjects enrolled in remedial courses was 9.31 (SD=3.17) with a range from 2 to 17. The difference between the locus of control scores of the two groups was not statistically significant. Therefore, the hypothesis that the achieving group would show greater internality, lower locus of control scores, was not supported.

Table 9 also shows the mean scores of the teaching assistants and the remedial subjects on the 5 locus of control categories identified from Rotter's I-E Scale by Schneider and Parsons (1970). These categories are: "Academics;" "Leadership/Success;" "Luck;" "Politics;" and "Respect." This table shows that the only difference between the groups was on the category of "Respect," with teaching assistants scoring higher than remedial subjects. This finding of greater externality among the teaching assistants does not support the hypothesis.

In addition to testing for the significance of differences between the locus of control scores of the teaching assistants, the high achieving comparison group, and the remedial subjects, correlations were run to determine the relationship between remedial subjects' locus of control scores and their achievement as measured by their reading pre-test scores, reading post-test scores, gain in reading score, and high school

averages.

Table 10 details the correlations between remedial subjects' locus of control scores and the achievement variables. This table shows that, for all remedial subjects, locus of control and reading pre-test scores were negatively correlated ($r=-.25$, $p=.008$). Thus, consistent with the hypothesis, greater internality (lower locus of control score) was associated with higher reading pre-test scores. Whereas there was no relationship between locus of control and reading pre-test scores for remedial subjects age 22 years and younger, the relationship between these variables was fairly strong for the older remedial subjects ($r=-.46$, $p=.02$). In further support of the hypothesis, locus of control was negatively correlated with reading post-test scores ($r=-.56$, $p=.02$), gain in reading score ($r=-.54$, $p=.02$), and high school average ($r=-.56$, $p=.04$) for the older age group. Thus, the findings indicate that for the older remedial subjects, lower locus of control scores (greater internality) were associated with higher reading pre-test scores, higher reading post-test scores, greater gain in reading scores, and higher high school averages. In other words, for this group, locus of control scores were correlated in the hypothesized direction with all of the achievement variables.

Table 10 also details the correlations between the

Table 10

Correlations Between Locus of Control, Locus of Control Categories, and Achievement Variables for Remedial Subjects

All Remedial Subjects (N=98)

	Pre-test	Post-test	Score Gain[a]	HSA
Locus of Control	-.25**	-.17	-.13	-.08
Academics	-.16	-.12	-.10	.02
Leadership/Success	-.29**	-.03	.13	-.08
Luck	-.06	-.16	-.22*	-.08
Politics	-.35***	-.27**	-.20*	.00
Respect	.22*	.20*	.15	-.07

Remedial Subjects Aged 17-22 Years (N=59)

Locus of Control	-.19	-.12	-.04	.22
Academics	-.04	-.19	-.11	.12
Leadership/Success	-.19	.04	.16	.07
Luck	-.06	-.19	-.11	.11
Politics	-.33**	-.27*	-.13	.16
Respect	.16	.30*	.16	.09

Remedial Subjects Aged 31-48 Years (N=19)

Locus of Control	-.46*	-.56*	-.54*	-.56*
Academics	-.44*	-.38	-.44	-.17
Leadership/Success	-.53**	-.39	-.15	-.20
Luck	.01	-.09	-.44	-.49
Politics	-.36	-.49*	-.35	-.40
Respect	.05	-.05	.08	-.26

[a]Partial correlations controlling for pre-test score.

* $p < .05$, one-tailed
** $p < .01$, one-tailed
*** $p < .001$, one-tailed

achievement variables and the five locus of control categories identified by Schneider and Parsons (1970). Four of the five categories were correlated with at least one achievement variable. The categories that showed the strongest correlations with achievement were "Politics" and "Leadership/Success." "Politics" was negatively correlated with reading pre-test scores ($r=-.35$, $p=.000$), reading post-test scores ($r=-.27$, $p=.009$), and gain in reading score ($r=-.20$, $p=.04$) for all remedial subjects. "Leadership/Success" was negatively correlated with reading pre-test scores ($r=-.29$, $p=.002$). In addition, "Luck" was negatively correlated with gain in reading score ($r=-.22$, $p=.03$) and "Academics" was nearly significantly correlated with reading pre-test scores ($r=-.16$, $p=.06$). These negative correlations are in the hypothesized direction. However, a positive correlation was found for all remedial subjects between "Respect" and reading pre-test scores ($r=.22$, $p=.02$) and "Respect" and reading post-test scores ($r=.20$, $p=.04$).

Findings regarding Hypothesis 1 were inconclusive. Firstly, teaching assistants, the achieving group, and the remedial subjects did not differ on total locus of control. Secondly, on the one locus of control category on which the groups did differ, the achieving group scored more externally than did the non-achieving group

when it was hypothesized that higher achievers would score more internally. Nonetheless, analysis of the achievement of the remedial subjects provided some support for the hypothesis. The hypothesis was supported by the finding of a negative relationship between total locus of control scores and reading pre-test scores indicating that greater internality was associated with higher reading pre-test scores. In further support of the hypothesis, locus of control was negatively correlated with all of the achievement variables for older remedial subjects. Two locus of control categories, "Politics" and "Leadership/Success," showed particularly high negative correlations with reading pre-test scores. A third category, "Luck," was also negatively correlated with gain in reading score. However, the finding of a positive correlation between "Respect" and reading pre-test and post-test scores did not support the hypothesis.

HO 2: Greater autonomy will be associated with higher achievement.

The Autonomy and Deference subscales of the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) were used to assess autonomy. According to the EPPS manual, the Autonomy subscale taps tendencies toward unconventionality, outspokenness, and independence in thought and action. Thus, this subscale was presumed to measure independence

or some aspect of independence. The Deference subscale taps tendencies such as seeking the advice of others, accepting the leadership of others, and adherence to conventional standards. Therefore, this subscale was presumed to measure dependency or some aspect of it. The maximum score on each of these subscales is 28. Higher subscale scores indicate a stronger propensity toward the trait in question. Thus, teaching assistants were expected to have higher Autonomy scores and lower Deference scores than remedial subjects. In addition, a positive correlation was expected between Autonomy scores and the reading scores and high school averages of remedial subjects whereas a negative correlation was expected between Deference scores and the achievement measures.

The mean Autonomy score of teaching assistants was 13.29 (SD=3.60) with a range from 8 to 21. In comparison, the Autonomy mean for remedial subjects was 11.18 (SD=3.60) with a range from 3 to 20. Thus, as hypothesized, teaching assistants scored higher on Autonomy than did remedial subjects. As shown in Table 9, the difference is significant (p=.03).

The mean Deference score of teaching assistants was 10.67 (SD=4.07) with a range from 3 to 19 as compared to a mean of 11.57 (SD=3.34) and a range from 4 to 18 for subjects enrolled in remedial courses. As shown in

Table 9, the difference between teaching assistants and remedial subjects on this measure was not significant. Thus, this finding does not support the hypothesis.

Table 11 summarizes the relationships between the Autonomy and Deference subscale scores and the objective achievement of subjects enrolled in remediation. Consistent with the hypothesis, Table 11 shows a negative correlation between Deference and reading pre-test scores ($r=-.17$, $p=.05$). However, Deference was also positively correlated with gain in reading score ($r=.24$, $p=.02$). The direction of this correlation is opposite that hypothesized and, thus, this finding is inconsistent with the hypothesis and with the first finding regarding Deference. These findings indicate that higher Deference scores were associated with lower reading pre-test scores as well as greater gains in reading score from pre-to-post testing. No other significant relationships obtained between Deference or Autonomy and the achievement of remedial subjects.

In summary, the above results provide some support for this hypothesis. However, findings are few and apparently contradictory. As hypothesized, the achieving comparison group scored higher on Autonomy than did remedial subjects. However, the groups did not differ on Deference. For remedial subjects only, Autonomy was not associated with achievement.

Table 11

Correlations Between Autonomy and Deference Subscales and Achievement Variables for Remedial Subjects

All Remedial Subjects (N=98)

Schl	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain[a]	High Score Avg.
Autonomy	.10	-.15	.01	-.10
Deference	-.17*	.18	.24*	.07
Remedial Subjects Aged 17-22 Years (N=59)				
Autonomy	.09	-.14	-.00	-.07
Deference	-.08	.13	.17	-.13
Remedial Subjects Aged 31-48 Years (N=19)				
Autonomy	.27	-.28	-.16	.24
Deference	-.21	.06	.41	.15

[a]Partial correlations controlling for pre-test score.

* $p < .05$, one-tailed

Deference, on the other hand, was associated with two achievement variables for this group, but in opposite directions. As hypothesized, lower Deference scores were associated with higher pre-test scores, but, contrary to expectation, higher Deference scores were also associated with greater gain in reading score from pre- to post-testing. The inconclusiveness of the findings regarding Deference and achievement and the lack of findings regarding Autonomy and achievement may be related to the fact that autonomy as a personality trait is not simply a matter of a low Deference score or a high Autonomy score, but rather some combination of the two. If this is the case, it might be more appropriate to assess the combined influence of these variables on achievement. To this end, an attempt was made to classify subjects as dependent or independent based upon a classification scheme devised by Bernardin and Jessor (1957).

Bernardin and Jessor (1957) used normative data on the percentile rankings of the Deference and Autonomy subscales to classify individuals as dependent or independent. These researchers classified individuals as dependent if they scored at the 70th percentile (score of 13) or above on the Deference subscale, at the 50th percentile (score of 14) or below on the Autonomy subscale, and showed a 30 percentile difference between

the two subscale scores. Conversely, individuals who scored at the 70th percentile (score of 17) or above on the Autonomy subscale and at the 50th percentile (score of 11) or below on the Deference subscale with a 30 percentile difference between the two subscale scores were classified as independent.

Using the criteria outlined above, 31 of the subjects in this study sample would be classified as dependent and two would be classified as independent, with teaching assistants accounting for four of those classified as dependent and both of those classified as independent. However, most of the subjects, remedial as well as teaching assistants, would be unclassified falling somewhere between nearly dependent and nearly independent on a dependent-independent continuum.

In a second attempt to determine dependency status utilizing the Autonomy and Deference subscales in tandem, a difference score was calculated. However, considering the speculative nature of the procedure and, thus, the results, this analysis will be presented in a Subsidiary Analysis section.

HO 3: Greater dependence upon peers will be associated with lower achievement.

Dependence upon peers was measured by the Peer Group Dependence Scale (Lapan & Patton, 1986). The maximum score on this scale is 8. It was expected that

teaching assistants would score lower on Peer Group Dependence than remedial subjects and likewise that higher-achieving remedial subjects would score lower on the measure than their lower-achieving peers.

As shown in Table 9, teaching assistants averaged a Peer Group Dependence score of 1.68 (SD=1.29) as compared to a mean of 1.91 (SD=1.41) for subjects enrolled in remedial courses. The difference between the means of the two groups is not significant. The lack of difference between the Peer Group Dependence scores of teaching assistants and remedial subjects does not support the hypothesis.

To test this hypothesis further, the Peer Group Dependence scores of remedial subjects were correlated with their reading achievement and high school averages. The relationships between the Peer Group Dependence scores and the achievement of remedial subjects are summarized by the Pearson's correlations in Table 12. This table shows significant correlations between Peer Group Dependence and reading pre-test scores ($r=-.33$, $p=.000$) and Peer Group Dependence and reading post-test scores ($r=-.24$, $p=.02$) for all remedial subjects. These correlations are negative as hypothesized, and indicate that greater peer dependence is associated with lower reading achievement.

The lack of difference between the peer group

Table 12

Correlations Between Peer Group Dependence and Achievement Variables for Remedial Subjects

Remedial Group	Pre-test	Post-test	Score Gain[a]	High Schl Avg.
All (N=98)	-.33***	-.24*	-.09	-.02
Younger (N=59)	-.24*	-.22	-.10	.02
Older (N=19)	-.37	-.17	-.19	-.18

[a]Partial correlations controlling for pre-test score.

Age range for younger group = 17 - 22 years
Age range for older group = 31 - 48 years

* $p < .05$, one-tailed
*** $p < .001$, one-tailed

dependency scores of teaching assistants and remedial subjects does not support the hypothesis. However, the findings of negative correlations between Peer Group Dependence and the reading pre-test and post-test scores of remedial subjects provide strong support for this hypothesis.

HO 4: Internality and autonomy will be positively correlated with each other and each will be negatively correlated with peer group dependency.

According to this hypothesis, the following relationships should obtain: (1) a negative correlation between locus of control score and Autonomy score; (2) a positive correlation between locus of control and Deference; (3) a positive correlation between locus of control score and Peer Group Dependence score; (4) a negative correlation between Autonomy and Peer Group Dependence scores; and, (5) a positive correlation between Deference and Peer Group Dependence scores.

Table 13 shows the correlations between the personality variables of locus of control, Autonomy, Deference, and Peer Group Dependence for remedial subjects as a group and for teaching assistants as a group. With respect to the relationship between internality and the personality variables, this table shows that locus of control was not correlated with

Table 13

Intercorrelations Between Autonomy, Deference, Locus of Control, and Peer Group Dependence

Remedial Subjects (N=98)

	DEF	LOC	PGD
AUT	-.01	-.12	-.08
DEF	--	-.06	-.10
LOC		--	.15

Teaching Assistants (N=19)

	DEF	LOC	PGD
AUT	-.27	.37	-.64**
DEF	--	.12	-.01
LOC		--	-.19

** p < .01, one-tailed

KEY

AUT = Autonomy
DEF = Deference
LOC = Locus of Control
PGD = Peer Group Dependence

Autonomy, Deference, or Peer Group Dependence for either of the groups. These findings suggest that there is no relationship between internality and the other personality variables. However, as shown in Table 13.1, which details correlations between the personality variables for the younger and older remedial subjects, locus of control and Peer Group Dependence were positively correlated for remedial subjects 31 years of age and older ($r=.39$, $p=.05$). Consistent with the hypothesis, this finding indicates that among older remedial subjects, those who were more external were also more dependent upon their peers.

Table 13.2 presents correlational data for the locus of control categories and the personality variables of Autonomy, Deference, and Peer Group Dependence. Whereas total locus of control scores were correlated with only one personality variable, Peer Group Dependence, and then only for older remedial subjects, Table 13.2 shows several significant relationships for the locus of control categories. The following relationships are shown for remedial subjects: "Leadership/Success" and Deference ($r=.30$, $p=.002$); "Luck" and Peer Group Dependence ($r=.32$, $p=.001$); and, "Respect" and Peer Group Dependence ($r=-.29$, $p=.002$). The positive correlations between "Leadership/Success" and Deference and between "Luck" and Peer Group

Table 13.1

Intercorrelations Between Autonomy, Deference, Locus of Control, and Peer Group Dependence for Younger and Older Remedial Subjects

All Remedial Subjects (N=98)

	DEF	LOC	PGD
AUT	-.01	-.12	-.08
DEF	--	-.06	-.10
LOC		--	.15

Subjects Aged 17-22 Years (N=59)

AUT	.12	-.07	.07
DEF	--	-.20	-.14
LOC		--	.08

Subjects Aged 31-48 Years (N=19)

AUT	.07	-.18	-.36
DEF	--	.23	-.22
LOC		--	.39*

* $p < .05$, one-tailed

KEY
AUT = Autonomy
DEF = Deference
LOC = Locus of Control
PGD = Peer Group Dependence

Table 13.2

Correlations Between Locus of Control Categories and Autonomy, Deference, and Peer Group Dependence

Remedial Subjects (N=98)

	AUT	DEF	PGD
Locus of Control	-.12	-.06	.15
Academics	-.11	-.11	.04
Leadership/Success	-.09	.30**	.12
Luck	-.15	-.13	.32***
Politics	-.00	-.10	.12
Respect	-.00	-.04	-.29**

Teaching Assistants (N=19)

	AUT	DEF	PGD
Locus of Control	.37	.12	-.19
Academics	-.20	.46*	.39*
Leadership/Success	.25	.21	-.24
Luck	.16	.14	-.23
Politics	.31	-.18	-.07
Respect	.48*	-.20	-.03

*p < .05, one-tailed
**p < .01, one-tailed;
***p < .001, one-tailed

KEY
AUT = Autonomy
DEF = Deference
PGD = Peer Group Dependence

Dependence are consistent with the hypothesis. The negative correlation between "Respect" and Peer Group Dependence is not. For teaching assistants, the correlations between locus of control and the other personality variables were as follows: "Academics" and Deference (r=.46, p=.03); "Academics" and Peer Group Dependence (r=.39, p=.05); and, "Respect" and Autonomy (r=.48, p=.03). The positive correlations for "Academics" with Deference and "Academics" with Peer Group Dependence are consistent with the hypothesis. The positive correlation between "Respect" and Autonomy is not consistent with the hypothesis.

With respect to the relationship between Autonomy and peer group dependency, Table 13 shows a strong, negative correlation between Autonomy and Peer Group Dependence for teaching assistants (r=-.64, p=.003). In addition, Autonomy was nearly significantly negatively correlated with Peer Group Dependence for older remedial subjects (r=-.36, p=.07). The negative direction of these correlations is as hypothesized and indicates that, except for the younger remedial subjects, subjects who were more peer dependent tended to be less autonomous.

The results provide some support for the hypothesis, however, age appears to be an important factor in the relationship between the variables. In

addition, individual locus of control categories appear to be more strongly related to the other personality variables than is total locus of control score.

Subsidiary Analysis

HO 2: Greater autonomy will be associated with higher achievement.

Since the findings regarding Autonomy, Deference, and achievement were few and sometimes contradictory, it was hypothesized that autonomy (independence) as a personality trait might be better assessed by combining the personality variables rather than viewing them in isolation. The results of one attempt to achieve this end, utilizing a classification scheme devised by Bernardin and Jessor (1957), were presented above. The results indicated that based on their combined Autonomy and Deference scores, teaching assistants were more likely than remedial subjects to be classified as independent. However, since none of the remedial subjects were classified as independent, achievement comparisons for independent and dependent remedial subjects could not be made. The difference score discussed below allows for the analysis of achievement data for remedial subjects using a measure that combines Autonomy and Deference scores.

A difference score, called Independence, was computed using subjects' Autonomy, Deference, and

Pseudoautonomy scores. The Pseudoautonomy scale which purports to measure "the adolescent's defensive independence and nonconformity" (Lapan & Patton, 1986) was included in the difference equation because it showed a positive correlation with Autonomy scores ($r=.30$, $p=.001$). This finding suggests that subjects' Autonomy scores may have been defensively inflated. An obvious limitation of the Pseudoautonomy scale is inherent in its specificity to adolescents. In fact, as shown in Table 3, the present results show a negative correlation between Pseudoautonomy and age for remedial subjects ($r=-.20$, $p=.03$) indicating a decline in Pseudoautonomy scores with increasing age. However, this finding does not necessarily invalidate the measure for older subjects. The decline in Pseudoautonomy for older subjects may simply reflect a decline in defensiveness that occurs as actual autonomy increases or as one comes to accept whatever level of autonomy one may have attained.

The above issue notwithstanding, Independence scores were calculated by subtracting each subject's Pseudoautonomy and Deference scores from his Autonomy score (Independence = Autonomy minus Pseudoautonomy minus Deference). The Independence score thus determined has the advantage of incorporating three scale scores into one continuous measure that allows for

the assessment of all subjects. In contrast, the percentile ranking procedure discussed previously led to the classification of 31 study participants as dependent and only two as independent. No meaningful analysis of differences between the dependent and independent groups could be conducted because of the small and discrepant group sizes.

Independence scores for the sample as a whole (remedial subjects and teaching assistants) averaged -1.09 (SD=4.97) and ranged from -13 to 12. Although a negative value for a personality measure is, perhaps, counter-intuitive, the measure provides an indication of relative independence. It is also plausible to define all negative values as indicative of dependency and positive values as indicative of autonomy. However, such classification is not necessary in order to test the hypothesis of the relationship between autonomy and achievement.

Table 14 shows that the Independence scores of teaching assistants averaged 1.47 (SD=5.52) as compared to a mean of -1.55 (SD=4.75) for remedial subjects. The difference between the groups is significant (p=.02). The finding that teaching assistants, the achieving comparison group, scored as more independent than the remedial subjects supports the hypothesis that greater independence would be associated with higher

Table 14

t-Test Results Comparing
Remedial Subjects and Teaching Assistants
on Independence

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t	df	p
Remedial	95	-1.55	4.75	-2.35	110	.02
TA	17	1.47	5.52			

Table 15

Correlations Between Independence and
Achievement Variables for Remedial Subjects

Remedial Group	Pre-test	Post-test	Score Gain[a]	High Schl Avg.
All (N=98)	.16	-.18	-.09	-.06
Younger (N=59)	.09	-.15	-.09	.03
Older (N=19)	.41*	-.24	-.30	.21

[a]Partial correlations controlling for pre-test score.

Age range for younger group = 17 - 22 years
Age range for older group = 31 - 48 years

* $p < .05$, one-tailed

achievement.

As a further test of the hypothesis, the Independence scores of remedial subjects were correlated with their reading scores and high school averages. Table 15 shows the correlations between Independence and the achievement variables. This table shows no significant correlations between Independence and any of the achievement variables for all remedial subjects as a group. However, the correlation between Independence and reading pre-test scores is nearly significant for all remedial subjects ($r=.16$, $p=.06$) and is significant for older remedial subjects ($r=.41$, $p=.05$). The positive correlation between Independence and pre-test scores supports the hypothesis. However, the nearly significant negative correlation between Independence and reading post-test scores ($r=-.18$, $p=.06$) is not consistent with the hypothesis.

This hypothesis is supported by the finding that teaching assistants scored higher on Independence than did remedial subjects. However, the findings regarding the achievement of remedial subjects were contradictory, and, thus, only partially supportive of the hypothesis of an association between autonomy/independence and academic achievement.

Regression Analysis

In the analysis of the achievement of remedial subjects, reading pre-test score was the achievement variable most often significantly correlated with the personality measures under consideration. The pre-test score is also the least confounded of the objective achievement measures and the only one for which data was available for all remedial subjects. In order to determine the impact of the personality variables on reading pre-test scores, hierarchical stepwise regression was used to predict reading pre-test score from the personality variables significantly correlated with it.

After controlling for age because of its correlation with some of the personality variables, Deference, Peer Group Dependence, and locus of control were entered into a regression on pre-test scores with the following results. As shown in Table 16, the prediction of reading pre-test score yielded the following beta weights: Peer Group Dependence, -.32; Deference, -.23; locus of control, -.16; and, age, .10. The unique contributions of Peer Group Dependence and Deference remained significant after all variables were entered, whereas the unique contribution of locus of control did not. With age controlled, Peer Group Dependence and Deference explained 16% of the variance

Table 16

Summary of Hierarchichal Regression
Controlling for Age
Predicting Reading Pre-Test Scores
from Deference, Locus of Control, and
Peer Group Dependence Scores

Step	Variable	Beta	t	t Sig.
1	Age	.10	.93	.36
2	Peer Group Dependence	-.32	-3.34	.001
3	Deference	-.23	-2.33	.02
4	Locus of Control	-.16	-1.56	.12

Table 16.1

Summary of Hierarchichal Regression
Controlling for Age
Predicting Reading Pre-test Scores
from Deference, Locus of Control Categories,
and Peer Group Dependence Scores

Step	Variable	Beta	t	t Sig.
1	Age	.13	1.32	.19
2	"Politics"	-.30	-3.15	.002
3	Peer Group Dependence	-.27	-2.73	.008
4	Deference	-.24	-2.45	.03
5	"Leadership/Success"	-.09	-0.92	.36
6	"Respect"	.06	.60	.55

in reading pre-test scores. With locus of control included in the equation, 19% of the variance is explained. Peer Group Dependence alone explained 11% of the variance.

A second regression on reading pre-test score, controlling for age, included Deference, Peer Group Dependence, and the three most predictive locus of control categories, "Politics," "Leadership/Success," and "Respect." Table 16.1 shows that this regression yielded the following beta weights: "Politics," -.30; Peer Group Dependence, -.27; Deference, -.24; age, .13; "Leadership/Success," -.09; and, "Respect," .06. Only the unique contributions of "Politics," Peer Group Dependence, and Deference were significant with all variables entered into the regression equation. With age controlled, these three variables explained 26% of the variance in reading pre-test score. An additional 1% of the variance in reading pre-test scores is explained by "Leadership/Success" and "Respect." "Politics," the single most predictive variable, explained 12% of the variance.

Summary of Findings

This study sought to determine whether autonomy and internality were associated with the academic achievement of black male college students and graduates. The study sample consisted of 98 black male

freshmen enrolled in remediation and 19 black male college teaching assistants who served as an achieving comparison group. The personality variables investigated in this study were: (1) locus of control; (2) Autonomy; (3) Deference; (4) Pseudoautonomy; and, (5) Peer Group Dependence. The achievement of remedial subjects was assessed by the following: (1) reading pre-test score; (2) reading post-test score; (3) gain in reading score; and, (4) high school average. Pearson and Spearman correlations, t-tests, chi-squares, and hierarchical regression were used to interpret the demographics and to test the research hypotheses.

Findings regarding demographics were as follows. The only demographic variable on which teaching assistants and remedial subjects differed was the number of children in their families of origin with teaching assistants having fewer siblings. Among remedial subjects, those with better-educated parents and those born in the United States had higher reading pre-test scores. In addition, remedial subjects with fewer siblings made greater gains in reading score from pre- to post-testing. For remedial subjects, age was the demographic variable most consistently correlated with the personality variables. Older remedial subjects had lower locus of control and lower Pseudoautonomy scores than younger subjects. On the other hand, older

remedial subjects scored higher on Deference than did younger subjects. Remedial subjects raised in families headed by a single adult showed lower Deference scores than did remedial subjects raised in households headed by multiple adults. And, lastly, American-born remedial subjects had higher Autonomy scores than subjects born elsewhere.

Findings with respect to the hypotheses follow. Hypothesis 1, that greater internality would be associated with higher achievement, was partially supported. Contrary to expectation, teaching assistants and remedial subjects did not differ on locus of control. However, consistent with the hypothesis, locus of control was negatively correlated with reading pre-test scores, one of the variables analyzed with respect to the achievement of remedial subjects.

Hypothesis 2 stated that greater autonomy would be associated with higher achievement. This hypothesis was supported by the finding that teaching assistants scored higher on the Autonomy subscale of the EPPS than did remedial subjects. Teaching assistants and remedial subjects did not differ on their Deference subscale scores, however. In addition, Hypothesis 2 generated apparently contradictory findings for remedial subjects with Deference scores negatively correlated with reading pre-test scores and positively correlated with gains

made in reading scores upon post-testing. The conflicting findings with respect to Deference, and the findings that Autonomy was not correlated with achievement, but was correlated with Pseudoautonomy, led to the further testing of the hypothesis using a difference score that incorporated the personality variables of Autonomy, Deference, and Pseudoautonomy. Teaching assistants and remedial subjects differed on this difference score, called Independence, with teaching assistants scoring as more independent. In addition, Independence was correlated in the hypothesized direction (positive) with the reading pre-test scores of older remedial subjects and nearly significantly, positively correlated with the reading pre-test scores of all remedial subjects. However, Independence was also nearly significantly correlated in the negative direction with post-test scores. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was only partially supported.

Hypothesis 3 stated that greater dependence upon peers would be associated with lower achievement. Inconsistent with the hypothesis, teaching assistants and remedial subjects did not differ on Peer Group Dependence. However, Peer Group Dependence proved negatively correlated with two of the four achievement variables analyzed for remedial subjects. Remedial subjects who were more dependent upon their peers were

found to have lower reading pre-test and post-test scores. These latter findings support Hypothesis 3.

The last hypothesis was concerned with the intercorrelation between subjects' personality scores. This hypothesis was supported by the findings of a positive correlation between locus of control and Peer Group Dependence for remedial subjects aged 31 and over as well as a negative correlation between Autonomy and Peer Group Dependence for teaching assistants.

Regression analysis showed that, of the personality variables studied, subjects' beliefs about their clout vis-a-vis the political system as assessed by Rotter's I-E Scale were the most predictive of achievement for remedial subjects. Deference and Peer Group Dependence were the next most predictive personality variables for this group. With age controlled, these three variables explained 26% of the variance in reading pre-test scores.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This study sought to determine whether higher achieving "inner city" black male college students and college graduates rated higher on measures of autonomy and internality than did their lower-achieving peers. The study sample consisted of 98 black male freshmen enrolled in remedial reading, writing, and/or mathematics at an urban, public community college. Nineteen black male teaching assistants employed at the same college served as an achieving group against which the remedial subjects were compared. The research hypotheses were tested in two ways: (1) by comparing the achieving comparison group to those enrolled in remedial courses; and (2) by correlational analysis of achievement data that was available for remedial subjects only.

The following objective achievement data was included as dependent variables in this study: (1) reading pre-test score; (2) reading post-test score; (3) reading score gain; and, (4) high school average. Reading achievement was chosen as a dependent variable in this study because reading is such an essential academic tool. It is a requisite skill for most other

academic areas. In fact, at the college from which the study subjects were recruited, students are barred from enrollment in nearly all academic courses until they reach a specified level of reading proficiency. The initial reading score (pre-test score) is undoubtedly the most reliable of the achievement variables utilized because there are multiple problems attendant with each of the others. The other variables were included in the analysis despite the problems associated with them because of the possibility that they would, nonetheless, provide additional, useful information. The problems associated with post-test scores, gain scores, and high school average will be discussed below.

Borg and Gall (1983) cite several difficulties with gain scores, among these are: (1) the ceiling effect which allows for greater gain among those with lower initial scores; (2) regression toward the mean; and, (3) unreliability due to high correlations between pre-and post-test scores. These researchers suggest partial correlation as a means to compensate for these psychometric difficulties, however, others, for example, Cronbach and Furby (1970) believe that no adjustment is truly adequate and caution against undue reliance upon gain scores. Post-test scores are influenced by two of the problems noted above, specifically, the ceiling effect and regression to the mean. Finally, high school

average is problematic as an indicator of achievement for the following reasons. High school average is a measure of past academic performance and represents long past performance for some of the subjects in the present study, considering that some subjects were as old as 48. As such, perhaps high school average should not be expected to correlate with
current personality functioning, especially for increasingly older subjects. Also, high school averages cannot be compared reliably because grades differ so much from teacher to teacher and school to school. These qualifications notwithstanding, all significant correlations are reported regardless of the achievement variable with which they were correlated.

With respect to the first hypothesis, that greater internality would be associated with higher achievement, no difference was found between the locus of control scores of teaching assistants and remedial subjects. However, a negative relationship was found between locus of control and reading pre-test scores. This finding supports the hypothesis because lower locus of control scores reflect greater internality. This finding is also consistent with a large body of research including many of the 98 studies analyzed in a literature review by Findley and Cooper (1983) as well as the more recent research of the following: Abatso (1985); Banks (1988);

Keith, Pottebaum, and Eberhart (1986); Kishor (1983); and, Payne and Payne (1989).

Locus of control was also correlated with high school average for remedial subjects age 31 and older, with greater internality associated with higher grades as hypothesized. However, high school grades are a measure of long-past academic performance for this particular age group. In addition, locus of control scores were found to decline with age. Therefore, it is questionable whether these older subjects' high school averages can be tied reliably to their current locus of control scores since their locus of control scores at the time the high school averages were earned were probably higher. Thus, despite its significance, this finding is difficult to interpret. It is also noteworthy that the direction of the correlation between locus of control and high school average is different for the younger and older remedial subjects, positive for the younger ones and negative for the older ones. College grade point average would be a more reliable measure of overall academic achievement. However, the remedial students were freshmen and, therefore, they had accumulated few, if any, college credits.

Some locus of control studies utilize scores from complete locus of control scales whereas others use selected locus of control items. In the present study,

in addition to analysis utilizing total locus of control scores, the relationship between achievement and the five locus of control categories identified from Rotter's I-E Scale by Schneider and Parsons (1970) were investigated.

"Politics," a 5-item category that taps attitudes toward government and politicians proved more strongly correlated with the reading pre-test scores of remedial subjects than did total locus of control score or any of the other locus of control categories. "Politics" was also correlated with remedial subjects' post-test scores and gain in reading score over the course of one semester of reading instruction. Regression analysis showed that, of all the personality variables included in this study, this locus of control category was the most predictive of remedial subjects' achievement. Although the comparison group and the remedial subjects did not differ on this variable, the finding that feelings of powerlessness to influence the political system were so strongly related to the achievement of remedial subjects may be instructive regarding the relatively low academic achievement of the poor and of people of color. And, in fact, certain researchers have posited an explanatory connection.

Fordham and Ogbu (1986) found that the poor academic achievement of the black high school students

that they studied represented an "adaptation to ... limited social and economic opportunities" (p. 178) such as the job ceiling that excludes African-Americans from certain employment positions regardless of their educational qualifications. Coleman (1986) found diminished achievement motivation among black youth that he attributed to their awareness of discrimination in education and employment. Thus, it appears that some black students refuse to invest themselves in the educational process when they believe that they have little, if anything, to gain by doing so.

"Leadership/Success" was another locus of control category that was significantly correlated with remedial subjects' reading pre-test scores. This 4-item category is concerned with leadership and success in life as well as in the world of work. External responses on this category indicate a belief that luck has more to do with success than does ability. Again, teaching assistants and remedial subjects did not differ on this item. The significance of this finding for remedial subjects resulted from an especially strong correlation for subjects aged 31 and over. Thus, among older, academically under-prepared black males, those who felt that luck was more important for success than ability were particularly prone to academic underachievement. Because of their age, these subjects have had more life

experience. Therefore, there is possibly a circular relationship between repeated disappointments, notwithstanding their motivation for success, and their belief that successful achievement is out of their hands. Perhaps their pursuit of a college education represents an attempt on their part later in life to 'beat their luck.' However, their pessimism may be self-defeating.

The final locus of control category that showed a significant relationship with reading pre-test scores was "Respect." However, unlike total locus of control scores and the scores from the other locus of control categories, "Respect" was correlated in the positive direction. In other words, remedial subjects with higher reading pre-test scores scored more externally, rather than internally, on this particular category. In addition, "Respect" was the only locus of control category on which teaching assistants and remedial subjects differed, with teaching assistants scoring more externally.

External responses on the "Respect" category reflect the belief that it is virtually impossible for an individual to influence others to like him. Examples of external responses in this category are, "No matter how hard you try some people just don't like you" and "There's not much use in trying too hard to please

people, if they like you, they like you." An individual who agrees with these statements might feel socially rejected and defeated or, on the other hand, might feel self-confident and justified in attempting to please no one but himself. Regardless of the meaning that the "Respect" items hold for specific individuals, the findings that teaching assistants scored more externally on "Respect" than did remedial subjects and that the remedial subjects who responded more externally scored higher on reading pre-tests and post-tests indicate that, on this particular category, externality rather than internality is associated with higher achievement. Despite the convergence of findings regarding the relationship between "Respect" and achievement for teaching assistants and remedial subjects, differences between the groups connected with the "Respect" category suggest personality differences that might be related to the achievement of black males.

The finding of a negative correlation between "Respect" and Peer Group Dependence for remedial subjects ($r=-.29$, $p=.002$) indicates that remedial subjects who responded externally on "Respect" were less peer dependent. Perhaps these particular young men feel, or actually are, rejected by their peers. Considering the relationship between "Respect" and achievement, perhaps these higher achieving remedial

subjects' alienation from their peers increases their willingness to do what is expected of them in school, the arena other than the peer group that is salient for in-school adolescents (Jones & Shallcrass, 1972). Or, perhaps the reverse is true, and these particular young men are alienated from their peers because of their academic orientation.

Considerations of causality aside, the fatalism characteristic of an external orientation is generally associated with underachievement because the individual feels that his efforts are useless. Perhaps remedial subjects who scored externally on the "Respect" category persevere in the face of adversity, and in so doing exhibit behavior characteristic of those with an internal locus of control. It should be noted that those scoring high on "Respect" tended to score low on "Politics." In fact, the only negative correlation found between any pair of locus of control categories was between "Respect" and "Politics" and this relationship approached significance ($r=-.15$, $p=.06$). Thus, those high on "Respect" were not the same subjects who expressed the greatest sense of alienation and disenfranchisement.

For teaching assistants, "Respect" was positively correlated with Autonomy. Thus, for these young men, there is an association between their externality on the

"Respect" category and their sense of independence. For them, the fact that "there's not much use in trying too hard to please people" seems to translate into self-motivated behavior that is in turn associated with achievement. Thus, one can speculate that the externality of teaching assistants and remedial subjects differs in the underlying feelings and the ensuing motivations. Whereas teaching assistants high on "Respect" seem motivated by a sense of positive self-regard, remedial subjects high on "Respect" seem to be motivated by a sense of social rejection. Both groups enjoy relative academic success, but for remedial subjects' the success appears to be at some psychic cost.

Hypothesis 2 stated that autonomy would be associated with higher achievement. To test this hypothesis, teaching assistants and remedial subjects were compared on the Autonomy and Deference subscales of the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule. Secondarily, the Autonomy and Deference subscale scores of remedial subjects were correlated with their actual achievement in reading and their high school averages.

The Autonomy subscale taps tendencies such as unconventionality, outspokenness, and independence in thought and action. A positive correlation with achievement as indicated by higher Autonomy scores for

teaching assistants relative to remedial subjects and higher Autonomy scores among remedial subjects with higher reading scores and higher high school averages was hypothesized based on the findings of researchers such as Davis (1988/1989) and Maynard (1975). Davis (1988/1989) found that college students in good academic standing scored higher than students on academic probation on the Autonomy subscale of the Omnibus Personality Inventory. Maynard (1975) found that college students who persisted to graduation scored higher than college dropouts on this same measure. Hypothesis 2 was supported by the finding that teaching assistants, who were presumed to be high achievers, scored higher on the Autonomy subscale than did the remedial subjects. However, the lack of association between Autonomy scores and the reading scores or high school averages of remedial subjects did not support this hypothesis.

The Deference subscale taps tendencies toward conventionality, seeking the advice of others, and following their lead. A negative correlation with achievement as indicated by lower scores for teaching assistants relative to remedial subjects and lower scores among remedial subjects with higher reading scores and higher high school averages was expected for this variable based on the findings of Mathiasen (1985).

Mathiasen found significantly lower Deference scores among college honor students relative to the general student population. The present finding of no difference between teaching assistants and remedial subjects on Deference did not support the hypothesis. However, findings regarding the association between Deference scores and the achievement of remedial subjects provided some support.

Consistent with the hypothesis, Deference was negatively correlated with the reading pre-test scores of remedial subjects such that those with higher Deference scores tended toward lower pre-test scores. However, on the other hand, Deference was positively correlated with reading score gain. This finding does not support the hypothesis and reflects the fact that those with higher Deference scores tended to make greater gains in reading score. This apparent contradiction between the two findings regarding Deference and the achievement of remedial subjects is at least partially explainable by the ceiling effect as those with the lowest pre-test scores have the potential for the greatest gain simply because their initial scores were farthest away from the maximum score. Conversely, the higher the pre-test score, the lesser the difference between the pre-test score and the maximum score. While it is arguable that outspokenness

and independent thought simply are not conducive to learning in our typical school situations, whereas conformity and a preference to follow, rather than to lead, are conducive to learning, this assertion is not supported by the literature. Nor would such a restatement of the hypothesis circumvent the problem of apparently conflicting findings. The contradiction would remain, only in reverse, with regard to Deference and pre-test scores. An alternative explanation for the finding that more deferent subjects made greater gains in reading when the opposite finding was hypothesized may be specific to black males.

Hare and Castenell (1985) assert that black males are "the most feared, least likely to be identified with, and least likely to be effectively taught group" (p. 211). If teachers fear their black male students, teachers are likely to treat them differently. For example, active, inquisitive behavior that generally is perceived as positive in students might be perceived as threatening coming from black males. If this were the case, and some studies have found such to be the case, some black males might feel forced into a deferent, passive stance simply to avoid conflict and to increase their chances for a positive educational experience. The finding of a significant positive correlation between the "Academics" locus of control category and

Deference for the teaching assistants, the high achieving comparison group (see Table 13.2) supports this speculation.

External responses on the "Academics" category reflect a sense that academic success is unrelated to the student's efforts. Among teaching assistants, the high achieving comparison group, those who perceived the academic situation to be the most unpredictable were the most deferent. Such a response is not necessarily logical, an individual might as readily respond to a frustrating situation such as this with defiance or withdrawal. However, teaching assistants' deferent response is a constructive one in that they manage to achieve in the academic situation despite their sense of its unpredictability. Therefore, it would appear that black males predisposed to deferential behavior would have an educational advantage whereas those not so predisposed would either have to make behavioral changes or suffer the consequences. Thus, just as Green and Farquhar (1971) found that verbal aptitude was correlated with achievement for black females, white males, and white females, but not for black males, the association between Deference and achievement might be different for black males than it is for other students.

The apparent contradiction in the association between Deference and reading pre-test scores and

Deference and reading score gain could be explained further by the fact that an individual's reading pre-test score represents what he brought to the educational process at the point of initial testing, whereas score gain represents what he derived from the process over the course of one semester of instruction. Perhaps Deference as an enduring personality trait is associated with lower achievement whereas Deference as a situational adaptation can facilitate academic achievement. This explanation is consistent with the fact that reading per se is rarely taught in the secondary schools. Rather, proficiency in reading is taken for granted at that level. Thus, the level of reading proficiency that a student exhibits upon entrance to college represents a cumulative achievement over the course of his educational career, inside and outside of school.

Because of the inconclusive nature of the findings regarding Autonomy, Deference, and achievement, a further attempt was made to test the hypothesis of a relationship between autonomy and achievement by utilizing the Autonomy and Deference subscales in tandem to identify independent and dependent subjects. To this end, a classification scheme devised by Bernardin and Jessor (1957) was employed. By this classification system, 31 study subjects were classified as dependent

and two were classified as independent. Although teaching assistants proved more likely than remedial subjects to be classified as independent using this classification scheme, no analyses of achievement by dependency status could be conducted for the remedial subjects because none of the remedial subjects qualified as independent.

As an alternative to Bernardin and Jessor's (1957) classification system, Autonomy, Deference, and Pseudoautonomy scores were incorporated into a difference score. The Pseudoautonomy scale, designed to measure defensive autonomy among adolescents, was included in the equation as a correction for what appeared to be a compensatory negation of basic dependency considering the positive correlation between Pseudoautonomy and Autonomy ($r=.30$, $p=.001$). Despite its purported specificity to adolescents, the Pseudoautonomy scale was presumed valid for all subjects regardless of age because analysis of variance showed no difference between the means of subjects' Pseudoautonomy scores when remedial subjects were divided into 3 age groups: 22 years and under, 23-30 years, and 31 years and over (see Table 17).

Pseudoautonomy was not directly addressed in the hypotheses. However, since its definition implies a negation of autonomy, it would be expected to correlate

Table 17

ANOVA:
Pseudoautonomy by Age for Remedial Subjects

	Age Group		
	17 - 22 yrs (N=59)	23 - 30 yrs (N=20)	31 - 48 yrs (N=19)
Mean	1.59	1.10	.95
S.D.	1.41	.97	.85

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Grps	3.95	2	1.97	1.29	.28
Within Grps	145.15	95	1.53		

with achievement in the direction opposite to that hypothesized for autonomy. As such, Pseudoautonomy would be expected to be negatively correlated with achievement. In fact, as shown in Table 18, Pseudoautonomy was negatively correlated with reading post-test scores ($r=-.26$, $p=.01$) and with gain in reading score from pre-testing to post-testing ($r=-.26$, $p=.04$). The scored items on this scale have a decidedly belligerent tone, e.g., "I use my anger to get what I want" and "I get respect by being tough." If feelings such as these are evident in the student's interactions with the teacher, then the fears that the teacher already allegedly harbors toward black males would be validated in the teacher's mind by the student's presentation. A negative interaction, whether overt or covert, would almost inevitably ensue with the student the ultimate loser in the academic situation.

The difference score of Independence was calculated by subtracting each subject's Deference and Pseudoautonomy scores from his Autonomy score. Independence scores, thus determined, differed for teaching assistants and remedial subjects with teaching assistants scoring more as more independent (see Table 14). Although Independence scores were not correlated with any of the achievement variables for remedial subjects as a group (see Table 15), the positive

Table 18

Correlation Between Pseudoautonomy and Achievement Variables for Remedial Subjects

	Pre-test	Post-test	Score Gain[a]	High Schl Avg.
All Remedial Subjects	-.05	-.26**	-.26*	-.09

* $p < .05$, one-tailed
** $p < .01$, one-tailed

correlation between Independence scores and pre-test scores was nearly significant for all remedial subjects ($r=.16$, $p=.06$) and significant for older remedial subjects ($r=.41$, $p=.05$). These findings are consistent with the findings of researchers such as Alloca (1985), Burgess (1956), Davis (1988/1989), Gough and Lanning (1986), and Wood, Chapin, and Hannah (1988) all of whom found higher achievement among independent students.

Hypothesis 3, which stated that Peer Group Dependence and achievement would be negatively correlated, was partially confirmed. Teaching assistants and remedial subjects did not differ on Peer Group Dependence. However, Peer Group Dependence showed negative correlations with the reading pre-test and post-test scores of the remedial subjects (see Table 12). These latter findings are consistent with those of Labov and Robins (1969) who found a pattern of reading failure among black youth who were very peer involved. The finding of a correlation between peer group dependency and achievement does not explain causality, however.

While it could be argued that loyalty to a peer group that devalues academic achievement would undermine achievement strivings, contemporary black scholars suggest an alternative explanation. Hare (1987) and Reed (1988) suggest that the peer group serves an

ego-enhancing function for black males who are experiencing difficulties in school. Taylor and Foster (1986) contend that black males are effectively pushed out of an educational system that disproportionately suspends, expels, and otherwise punishes them. Considering these assertions, as well as those of Hare and Castenell (1985) regarding teachers' negative response to the black male, one gets the impression that the black male is something of a pariah in the educational system. It is understandable that individuals thus rejected would gravitate toward others like themselves. Also, under such circumstances, it is not unusual for individuals to reject a system that they perceive as insensitive to, if not rejecting of, them. The subjects of this study are not altogether rejecting, however. The fact that they are in college attests to their seeking further education despite any negative reactions they may have toward "the system" as a whole and any negative experiences they may have had within the educational system, in particular. What the results of such conflict may be emotionally is beyond the scope of this study. However, the present findings suggest that such conflict exists.

The fourth hypothesis dealt with intercorrelations between the personality variables of locus of control, Autonomy, Deference, and Peer Group Dependence (see

Table 13). It was hypothesized that: (1) locus of control and Autonomy scores would be negatively correlated; (2) locus of control and Deference scores would be positively correlated; (3) locus of control and Peer Group Dependence scores would be positively correlated; (4) Autonomy and Peer Group Dependence scores would be negatively correlated; and, (5) Deference and Peer Group Dependence scores would be positively correlated. None of these variables were correlated for remedial subjects. However, Autonomy and Peer Group Dependence were negatively correlated for teaching assistants. This correlation was in the hypothesized direction; less autonomous teaching assistants proved to be more peer dependent. An additional correlation was found for older remedial subjects. For remedial subjects over 31 years of age, locus of control and Peer Group Dependence were positively correlated (see Table 13.1). This correlation was also in the hypothesized direction and indicates that more external subjects were more peer dependent.

Additional correlations were found between specific locus of control categories and the other personality variables (see Table 13.2). For remedial subjects, correlations were found between "Leadership/Success" and Deference, between "Luck" and Peer Group Dependence, and

between "Respect" and Peer Group Dependence. The positive correlations between "Leadership/Success" and Deference and between "Luck" and Peer Group Dependence are consistent with the hypothesis that higher locus of control scores (greater externality) would be associated with higher Deference and higher Peer Group Dependence scores. External responses on the "Leadership/Success" category reflect the belief that success, particularly on the job, is the result of getting the "right breaks." External responses on the "Luck" category reflect a generalized notion of the unpredictability of life. The negative correlation between "Respect" and Peer Group Dependence is inconsistent with the hypothesis, but it is consistent with the findings of this study regarding achievement. Namely, that "Respect" is correlated with achievement in the opposite direction of total locus of control and the other locus of control categories.

As shown in Table 13.2, the locus of control categories tended to be associated with the personality variables differently for the teaching assistants and for the remedial subjects. Significant relationships that obtained for remedial subjects did not obtain for teaching assistants, and vice-versa. A few of these relationships seem particularly relevant to achievement differences between the groups. Specifically, "Academics" was correlated with Deference and with Peer

Group Dependence for teaching assistants, but was not correlated with any of the personality variables for remedial subjects.

As discussed in connection with Hypothesis 2, the positive correlation between "Academics" and Deference for teaching assistants indicates that among academically successful black males those who perceived the academic environment to be the most unpredictable scored higher on Deference than did those who felt that their effort had meaning in the classroom situation. This finding suggests that whereas Deference is generally associated with lower achievement, it is sometimes associated with higher achievement among black males. This finding may be related to special adaptations that black males must make in order to succeed in a negative academic environment. It is suggested that black males who are high on Deference behave in such a way that they do not intimidate their teachers. Thus, these black males are better able to gain from their academic experiences.

Teaching assistants high on "Academics" were also high on Peer Group Dependence. This finding is consistent with other researchers' assertion that black males who are alienated from the educational system seek solace among their peers (Hare, 1987; Reed, 1988). However, the other researchers' findings pertain to

underachieving black males whereas the present finding pertains to high achievers. Although peer group dependence is generally associated with lower achievement, the peer support that teaching assistants seem to seek in response to negative academic experiences must be viewed in the context of their overall autonomy. The similarity of teaching assistants' and remedial subjects' scores on the "Academics" category (see Table 9) indicates that the groups perceive the academic environment to be equally unpredictable. The fact that teaching assistants seem to make accommodations to it, whereas remedial subjects do not, may be related to achievement differences between the groups. It would appear that the high achievers tend to make constructive adaptations to even negative classroom environments and that they have access to peer supports whereas the lower achievers are less responsive to the academic environment.

Age proved to be an important variable in this study. Remedial subjects ranged in age from 17 to 48 and, for them, age was correlated with three of the five personality variables included in this study, Deference, locus of control, and Pseudoautonomy (see Table 3). Age was not correlated with achievement in any meaningful way, however. The correlation between age and high school average shown in Table 6 is not readily

interpretable because of the discrepancy between when the grades were earned and subjects' present ages. The significant findings regarding age will be discussed below.

The finding that internality increased with age is consistent with the findings of Lao (1974) and Ryckman and Malikiosi (1975) who found that internality increased among the subjects that they studied up until approximately 50 years of age and leveled off thereafter.

Age differences found for the Autonomy and Deference subscales are consistent with the findings of Koponen (1957), who, in an unpublished doctoral dissertation, analyzed the influence of gender, age, income, and city of residence on the EPPS subscale scores of nearly 9,000 people. Koponen (1957) found that Deference scores increased significantly with age. The same relationship was found for remedial subjects in the present study. Koponen found that the relationship between Autonomy and age was U-shaped with subjects under 30 and over 55 exhibiting the highest scores. Although the ages of the subjects in the present study did not range as high as Koponen's subjects, the age trend that he described was in evidence for the youngest subjects of the present study. Koponen (1957) divided his sample into the following age groups: less than 30

years, between 30 and 39 years, between 40 and 54 years, and 55 years and older. For the first 3 age ranges, the mean Autonomy scores of remedial subjects in the present sample were, respectively: 11.65 (SD=3.58); 9.36 (SD=3.15); and, 9.50 (SD=3.45). Thus, the youngest subjects in the present study had the highest Autonomy scores. However, because there were only six subjects in the 40 to 54 year old age group and none in the 55 and older age group it is not certain what shape the age distribution would take were a wider age range included. Nonetheless, the age-related changes in Autonomy noted for this sample are consistent with Harter's (1983) distillation of Levinson's theory of male adult development. According to this theory, consistent with their higher Autonomy scores, those under 30 years of age are said to be separating from their parents and postponing serious commitment to work and relationships in order to test as many options as possible. Consistent with their lower Autonomy scores, those between 30 and 39 are consolidating love relationships and occupational commitments, and thus, relinquishing their independence.

Interestingly, race/ethnicity was not mentioned in Koponen's (1957) study nor in the manual for the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (Edwards, 1954) which includes Koponen's subjects as the normative

sample for non-college students. It is not clear whether race was not an issue because all of the subjects were white or because racial data was not collected. In contrast, these days, it would be unthinkable to conduct a demographic study without including race as a variable. In addition, some contend that groups excluded from, or grossly under-represented in, a normative sample should not be evaluated using that measure because of the possibility that score differences between the excluded group and the normative sample may be the result of cultural differences (Dembo, 1988; Hare, 1980). Because culture determines to a large extent who we are as individuals, it is difficult to disagree with that premise. However, the present study was not concerned with racial differences on personality measures. Rather, this study sought to determine whether specific personality differences were associated with achievement of one particular group, black males. Whereas Grossack (1957) found differences between the personality scores of black and white males that he presumed were related to race, the present findings suggest differences in personality scores among black males as a group that may be attributable to culture.

Grossack (1957) found that Southern black males scored higher on Deference and significantly lower on

Autonomy than did males in the normative sample. According to the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule Manual (Edwards, 1954), the normative sample consisted of students between the ages of 15 and 59 who were enrolled in liberal arts courses at colleges and universities throughout the country. There was a regional bias in the school sample, however, with Midwestern schools representing the greatest number and Southern schools representing the smallest number. The race of those who comprised the normative sample was not specified.

Table 19 shows the mean Autonomy and Deference scores of the males in the normative sample, in Grossack's sample, and the remedial subjects in the present study. This table shows a mean Deference score for the present study sample that is appreciably lower than that of Grossack's subjects and quite close to that of the normative sample. In fact, Grossack anticipated a decline in Deference scores as a result of desegregation and the resultant breaking down of caste barriers. The fact that the subjects of the present study are Northerners rather than Southerners might also explain the difference in Deference scores between Grossack's sample and the present one. On the other hand, the mean Autonomy score of the present sample approximates that of Grossack's sample and as such is

Table 19

Means and Standard Deviations of Autonomy and Deference Scores for EPPS Normative Sample, Grossack's (1957) Sample, and Present Remedial Sample

	Sample		
	Normative	Grossack	Present
Autonomy	14.34 (4.45)	10.90 (3.97)	11.18 (3.60)
Deference	11.21 (3.59)	14.32 (3.49)	11.57 (3.34)

appreciably lower than the mean of the normative sample. The stability of the Autonomy score over time (since 1957) and across distance (in the North as compared to the South) in and of itself could be construed as support of the premise that dependency as measured by the Autonomy and Deference subscales of the EPPS is based in the culture of those of African descent. However, the personality scores of study subjects born and raised in Africa and the Caribbean provide additional evidence.

Five African-born remedial subjects, residents in the United States for an average of 4.20 years (SD=1.30) at the time of this study, scored lower on Autonomy and higher on Deference than did the 55 American-born remedial subjects with scores on these subscales. However, t-test results summarized in Table 20 show that neither the difference on Autonomy nor on Deference is significant. Nonetheless, the direction of the differences supports the contention of greater dependency among Africans. Considering that the difference on Autonomy approaches significance (p=.12) for such a small number of African subjects, there is the possibility that with a larger number of African subjects a significant difference would be found. Also, the fact that these African subjects were immigrants who had lived in the United States for a period of time,

Table 20

t-Test Results Comparing
African, Caribbean, and American Remedial Subjects
on Autonomy and Deference

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t	df	p
AUT	African	5	9.00	5.43	-1.58	58	.12
	American	55	11.75	3.55			
AUT	African	5	9.00	5.43	-0.94	38	.36
	Carib.	35	10.60	3.28			
AUT	Carib.	35	10.60	3.28	1.54	88	.13
	American	55	11.75	3.55			
DEF	African	5	12.80	3.83	1.04	58	.30
	American	55	11.16	3.32			
DEF	African	5	12.80	3.83	0.48	39	.63
	Carib.	36	12.03	3.31			
DEF	Carib.	36	12.03	3.31	-1.22	89	.23
	American	55	11.16	3.32			

KEY
AUT = Autonomy
DEF = Deference
Carib. = Caribbean

albeit brief, means that they had been exposed to and presumably affected by the American culture. Africans in Africa might in fact score significantly differently than Americans.

Remedial subjects born in the Caribbean who had been in the United States for an average of 7.17 years (SD=6.43) at the time of this study scored higher on Autonomy and lower on Deference than did the African subjects, albeit not significantly so (see Table 20). As did the African-born subjects, the Caribbean-born subjects scored lower on Autonomy and higher on Deference than did the American-born subjects. These differences were not significant, but, again it is presumed that the Caribbean subjects' personality scores reflect their birth culture as well the American culture in which they currently live. Table 5 shows that when the scores of the Africans and the Caribbeans were combined, there was a significant difference between the Autonomy scores of the foreign-born and the American-born subjects (p=.03), but no difference between the groups on Deference.

A related finding is worthy of note. As shown in Table 3, the age at which the foreign-born immigrated to the United States was related to their Deference scores (r=.29, p=.03). Thus, the older a subject was when he entered the United States, the higher his Deference

score tended to be. This finding lends further support to the contention that culture affects personality because the later in life an individual leaves his home country to come to the United States, the longer he has been influenced by his native culture.

Finally, based on their percentile rankings on the Autonomy and Deference subscales, foreign-born subjects were more likely to be classified as dependent. Whereas the foreign-born made up 40% of the sample, they comprised 58% of those classified as dependent.

At this juncture, it bears repeating that this research does not subscribe to the premise that dependency is a negative personality trait. Rather, the researcher presumes no value judgement and allows that any differences that may be found are just that, differences, but suggests that these difference may be associated with other variables. In addition, an overriding qualification to this research and discussion is the fact that test scores are not tantamount to behavior. Paper and pencil tests are acknowledged as expedient devices with limitations; subjects' scores are not presumed equivalent to behavior.

The above findings of personality differences across cultures are analogous to those of Hsieh, Shybut, and Lotsof (1969) regarding the locus of control of Chinese people. These researchers found that

Chinese-Americans were more external than Americans, but less external than Chinese people in China. The researchers attributed these findings to cultural differences that exist between the East and the West. It is likewise posited that the Deference and Autonomy scores of Africans and Caribbeans are more reflective of the African communal norm than the scores of American-born subjects. The scores of the African-American subjects are also presumed to reflect this cultural base, but to a lesser extent because the American-born have been influenced from birth by both the dominant American/Western culture and that of their African ancestors.

With regard to the locus of control scores of subjects in the present study, the findings contradict the literature regarding the externality of black people (Castenell, 1983; Coleman, et al, 1966; Lessing, 1969; Ogletree, 1976). The mean for the remedial subjects in this sample was 9.31 (SD=3.1729) as compared to a mean of 8.15 (SD=3.88) for males in the original normative sample and a mean of 10.87 (SD=4.02) for a more recent normative sample (Celini & Kantorowski, 1982). Thus, although the black males in this study scored more externally than did the males in the original normative sample, the present study subjects scored more internally than did the males in the contemporary

normative sample.

Overall, the significant findings of this study tend to support the research hypotheses. Although the only differences found between teaching assistants and remedial subjects were on the Autonomy subscale of the EPPS and a difference score, Independence, that included Autonomy in its calculation, several findings for remedial subjects supported the research hypotheses. As hypothesized, among remedial subjects, more internal subjects were higher achievers and those who were more dependent upon their peers were lower achievers. The relationship between Deference and achievement was not as straightforward, however. Deference was correlated with pre-test scores in the expected negative direction, but positively correlated with score gain, that is in the direction opposite to the one hypothesized. It is suggested that the apparent discrepancy may be related to specific problems encountered by black males within the educational system. It must be noted that correlations in this study, even when significant, were relatively low. The strongest correlation between personality and achievement variables for remedial subjects as a group was that between "Politics" and reading pre-test scores ($r=-.35$). The strongest correlation for remedial subjects when they were divided into a younger, 21 and under, and older, 31 and over,

age group was that between locus of control and post-test scores for the older subjects (r=-.56). Thus, differences in the achievement of this study sample were only minimally explained by any single variable investigated in this study. Even when combined, the most predictive variables, the "Politics" locus of control category, Peer Group Dependence, and Deference, explained only 26% of the variance. Therefore, variables other than those examined here account for most of the variance in the achievement of the remedial subjects studied.

In summary, the findings indicate that personality variables generally correlated with achievement are not as readily associated with the achievement of black males. This conclusion is based on the finding that black male teaching assistants, some of whom had completed college and entered graduate school, differed from black males enrolled in remedial courses on only one of four personality variables that other researchers have found to be correlated with achievement. Achieving black males scored higher on the Autonomy subscale of the EPPS than did their lower-achieving peers, but the groups did not differ on Deference, locus of control, or Peer Group Dependence. While high and low achieving black males did not differ on total locus of control, they differed on "Respect," a locus of control category

that seems to reflect feelings of powerlessness in social relationships. Although, teaching assistants scored more externally on this category than did remedial subjects, teaching assistants' "Respect" scores were positively correlated with Autonomy suggesting that rather than feeling powerless in social interactions, these subjects were self-motivated and self-assured. These findings coupled with the findings that teaching assistants who found the academic situation the least predictable scored higher on Deference and Peer Group Dependence suggests that academically successful black males are independent yet flexible enough in their social interactions to maintain peer ties and to make constructive behavioral adaptations to an educational system that they perceive as arbitrary. Lower achieving black males, on the other hand, appear to be less autonomous, to exhibit a peer orientation, to feel powerless within the political system, and to be unable to make a positive adaptation to a frustrating academic environment.

Limitations of the Study

The validity of the present research findings may have been affected by the following:

(1) There was a limited range of achievement among subjects. Even the achieving control group included community college students, some of whom were not that far removed from the academic problems of the target group. In addition, despite their relatively poor academic preparation, the target group was motivated for academic success as indicated by their desire to pursue a college education. The lack of distance between the two comparison groups probably minimized differences between the poorly achieving students and the better achieving comparison group. The small number of comparison subjects might also partially explain the paucity of statistically significant differences.

(2) Approximately 36% of the potential subjects actually returned completed and usable surveys. Although this return rate is relatively high for survey research, it nonetheless represents a high self-selection factor; and,

(3) This study, like all studies using objective measures, was subject to the limitations of paper and pencil, self- reports.

Recommendations for Future Research

As this research sample was limited to black male freshmen enrolled in remedial courses, expansion of the study population in the following ways would be of interest:

(1) the inclusion of females and males of other racial and ethnic groups in order to determine the impact of gender and race on the variables studied;

(2) the inclusion of upper-classmen to allow for the use of GPA as an achievement variable;

(3) the inclusion of high school dropouts and students who are functioning satisfactorily or better in selective colleges; and,

(4) the inclusion of a larger number of older students to study further the differences found to exist between younger and older students.

In addition to expanding the study sample, it is suggested that subjects be interviewed in order to obtain a richer understanding of the relationship between achievement and the personality variables in question. The following might be assessed in the interviews: personality, possibly utilizing projectives such as the Thematic Apperception Test; family history, especially parental autonomy-granting behavior; and, academic history, including school experiences, extra-curricular activities, and attitudes toward school.

Summary and Conclusions

This study sought to determine whether autonomy and internality were associated with the academic achievement of lower income, black male college students. Study subjects consisted of black male freshmen enrolled in remedial courses at an urban community college and a comparison group of black male college upper-classmen and college graduates employed as teaching assistants at the same college. The remedial subjects and the controls differed on the Autonomy subscale of the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS), Independence, a difference score that included Autonomy, Deference, and Pseudoautonomy in its calculation, and "Respect," one of five locus of control categories identified from the Rotter's I-E Scale. As hypothesized, the achieving comparison group scored higher on Autonomy and Independence. However, the comparison group scored more externally on "Respect" when greater internality was hypothesized. Teaching assistants and remedial subjects did not differ on the Deference subscale of the EPPS, total locus of control scores, or Peer Group Dependence.

The achievement of remedial subjects as measured by reading test scores and high school averages were correlated with the personality variables as follows. Locus of control and Peer Group Dependence were

correlated with achievement in the hypothesized direction; internality was associated with higher achievement and greater dependence upon peers was associated with poorer achievement. Whereas Autonomy was not correlated with the achievement of remedial subjects, Deference was correlated but in contradictory ways. Deference was negatively correlated with reading pre-test scores as hypothesized. However, Deference was positively correlated with gain in reading score such that higher Deference scores were associated with greater gain. And, finally, regression analysis showed that attitudes toward the political system as assessed by Rotter's I-E Scale were the most predictive of remedial subjects' achievement.

Overall, the results suggest that lower-achieving inner-city black male college students are more likely to harbor feelings of powerlessness vis-a-vis the political system and to exhibit a peer group, rather than an individualistic, orientation. Higher achieving black males, on the other hand, exhibit a sense of personal autonomy. It is suggested that black males encounter special problems within the educational system because of negative reactions to their race and sex and that academically successful black males make behavioral adaptations that facilitate achievement whereas the academically less successful are less responsive to the

academic situation or make less advantageous adaptations. It is concluded that because of the problems faced by black males within the educational system, the autonomy that is associated with the academic success of others must be tempered with deference in order for black males to succeed within the educational system. The testing of the present research hypotheses with groups that differ by race, by gender, and by level of academic achievement are recommended in order to corroborate the research conclusions.

Appendix A

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	Remedial Subjects (N=98)		Teaching Assistants (N=19)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Age				
17	4	4.1	0	
18	10	10.2	0	
19	21	21.4	0	
20	11	11.2	0	
21	9	9.2	4	21.1
22	4	4.1	0	
23	3	3.1	2	10.5
24	2	2.0	1	5.3
25	5	5.1	4	21.1
26	3	3.1	1	5.3
27	1	1.0	2	10.5
28	2	2.0	0	
29	2	2.0	2	10.5
30	2	2.0	1	5.3
31	2	2.0	0	
33	3	3.1	0	
34	3	3.1	0	
35	1	1.0	0	
37	1	1.0	1	5.3
38	3	3.1	0	
40	2	2.0	1	5.3
42	1	1.0	0	
44	1	1.0	0	
46	1	1.0	0	
48	1	1.0	0	
Mean		24.22		26.26
Standard Deviation		7.42		5.15
Maternal education				
Less than 8th grade	7	10.0	0	
Some high school	8	11.4	4	23.5
High school graduate	37	52.9	4	23.5
Some college	15	21.4	4	23.5
College graduate	2	2.9	2	11.8
Graduate school	1	1.4	3	17.6
Missing	28	*	2	*

*Missing values are excluded from percentages.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
(continued)

	Remedial Subjects (N=98)		Teaching Assistants (N=19)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Paternal education				
Less than 8th grade	6	10.2	3	21.4
Some high school	9	15.3	3	21.4
High school graduate	31	52.5	2	14.3
Some college	7	11.9	3	21.4
College graduate	5	8.5	1	7.1
Graduate school	1	1.7	2	14.3
Missing	39	*	5	*
Household Head(s)				
Mother only	30	31.9	4	21.1
Father only	1	1.1	0	
Mother and Father	38	40.4	9	47.4
One male & one female	5	5.3	2	10.5
Female other than mother	9	9.6	0	
Male other than father	2	2.1	0	
Multiple females	4	4.3	1	5.3
Multiple males & females	5	5.3	3	15.8
Missing	4	*	0	
Number of Children in Family				
1	8	9.5	3	16.7
2	11	13.1	5	27.8
3	15	17.9	4	22.2
4	14	16.7	1	5.6
5	8	9.5	3	16.7
6	11	13.1	1	5.6
7	7	8.3	0	
8	5	6.0	1	5.6
9	4	4.8	0	
11	1	1.2	0	
Missing	14	*	1	*
Mean	4.44		3.22	
Standard Deviation	2.35		1.93	

*Missing values are excluded from percentages

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
(continued)

	Remedial Subjects (N=98)		Teaching Assistants (N=19)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Birth position relative to siblings				
Only child	8	9.2	3	16.7
Oldest child	27	31.0	6	33.3
Middle child	32	36.8	4	22.2
Youngest child	20	23.0	5	27.8
Missing	11	*	1	*
Country of birth				
Antigua	1	1.0	0	
Barbados	3	3.1	0	
Bahamas	1	1.0	0	
Dominican Republic	1	1.0	0	
Ghana	1	1.0	0	
Grenada	1	1.0	1	5.3
Guyana	1	1.0	0	
Haiti	12	12.4	2	10.5
Jamaica	12	12.4	0	
Liberia	2	2.1	0	
Nigeria	1	1.0	0	
St. Croix	1	1.0	0	
Senegal	1	1.0	0	
St. Vincent	2	2.1	0	
Trinidad	0		7	36.8
United States	57	58.8	9	47.4
Missing	1	*	0	

*Missing values are excluded from percentages.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
(continued)

	Remedial Subjects (N=98)		Teaching Assistants (N=19)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Age at immigration to U.S.				
4	0		1	11.1
5	1	2.9	1	11.1
7	2	5.7	0	
10	2	5.7	0	
11	2	5.7	0	
12	2	5.7	0	
14	1	2.9	0	
15	1	2.9	0	
17	3	8.6	1	11.1
18	3	8.6	0	
19	2	5.7	0	
20	0		1	11.1
21	2	5.7	1	11.1
22	3	8.6	0	
24	2	5.7	0	
25	1	2.9	0	
26	2	5.7	2	22.2
28	0		1	11.1
30	2	5.7	0	
31	1	2.9	1	11.1
32	2	5.7	0	
35	1	2.9	0	
Missing	6	*	1	*
Not Applicable	57		9	
Mean	19.43		19.78	
Standard Deviation	7.90		9.67	

*Missing values are excluded from percentages.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
(continued)

	Remedial Subjects (N=98)		Teaching Assistants (N=19)	
Years of U.S. Residency for Foreign Born	N	%	N	%
0	3	8.6	0	
1	2	5.7	0	
2	5	14.3	0	
3	4	11.4	2	22.2
4	1	2.9	1	11.1
5	2	5.7	1	11.1
6	3	8.6	2	22.2
7	2	5.7	0	
8	3	8.6	0	
9	2	5.7	0	
11	2	5.7	0	
12	3	8.6	1	11.1
16	0		1	11.1
18	1	2.9	0	
21	0		1	11.1
24	2	5.7	0	
Missing	6	*	1	*
Not Applicable	57		9	
Mean	6.74		8.44	
Standard Deviation	6.05		6.42	
High School Completion				
High school diploma	72	75.8		
General Equivalency Dip.	20	21.1		
Non-graduate	3	3.2		
Missing	3	*		
Not Applicable	0		19	

*Missing values are excluded from percentages.

Appendix B

Facsimile of Research Packet
Completed by Research Subjects

TO: Study Participants

FROM: Adrienne Faison

CONSENT FORM

You are being asked to participate in a study of black men's academic success. As a participant in this study you will be asked to respond to some questionnaires and to allow me to see your high school average and test scores at the end of the summer session.

The study questionnaires will take about 30 minutes to complete. You should know that all responses will be confidential and that all results will be based on groups rather than individuals. You should also be aware that your participation is voluntary and that you may withdraw from the study at any time without affecting your status in the _____ Program. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions that you will be asked. Your answers simply reflect your feelings about the issues raised.

Neither your name nor your social security number will appear on the questionnaires that you complete. You will be identified only by a code that you will choose now. Please take a moment to think up a self-identifying code that consists of three letters. Once you have decided on a code, please write it on the line below and in the top right-hand corner of each page of your questionnaire packet.

Code: _____

Your signature below will indicate that you have read this form and agree to participate as described. I appreciate your participation. Thank you very much.

Signature: _____

Social Security Number: _____

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