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Factors Affecting African-American Enrollment and Intent to Enroll in an Advanced Placement Program in a Suburban High School

Dana L. Pugh

Clark Atlanta University, dana.pugh@students.cau.edu

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ABSTRACT

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

PUGH, DANA L.

B.S. TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY, 1988

M.A. JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY, 1998

FACTORS AFFECTING AFRICAN-AMERICAN ENROLLMENT AND INTENT TO
ENROLL IN AN ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM IN
A SUBURBAN HIGH SCHOOL

Committee Chair: Trevor Turner, Ph.D.

Dissertation dated May 2017

It was a goal of this study to identify factors affecting African-American enrollment and intent to enroll in an advanced placement program and other select variables such as prior course work, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perception, and student self-efficacy. Pearson correlations, ANOVA, Post Hoc and regression tests were used to analyze the data that had the greatest significance on African-American enrollment in an advanced placement program. The researcher concluded that teacher expectations, peer affiliation, and student intent to enroll have the greatest significance on African-American enrollment in an advanced placement program. Recommendations were suggested for classroom teachers, educational leaders, and future researchers.

FACTORS AFFECTING AFRICAN-AMERICAN ENROLLMENT AND INTENT TO
ENROLL IN AN ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM IN
A SUBURBAN HIGH SCHOOL

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

BY

DANA L. PUGH

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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I would like to thank God for blessing me each day. He provides the guidance and foundation upon how to live my life.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The Need for Advanced Placement Coursework

Following World War II the general public began to notice the gap between secondary and higher educated citizens. There was a demand for a better educated citizenry. At this point, the general public felt that this trend needed to be addressed in order to make an effective change on educating the masses at a higher level. Some of the changes suggested were to develop a college-level curricula and standards at the high school level.

Responding to the need for a better-educated populace, the Ford Foundation created the Fund for the Advancement of Education (College Board, 2003). The Ford Foundation provided the resources for two studies to be conducted on ways to improve the educational populace. Two studies were commissioned and recommendations were provided to the Ford Foundation. In two studies supported by the fund, educators recommended that secondary schools and colleges work together to avoid repetition in course work at the high school and college levels and to allow motivated students to work at the height of their capabilities and advance as quickly as possible (College Board, 2003).

One study, conducted by educators from three elite prep schools—Andover, Exeter, and Lawrenceville—and three of the country’s most prestigious colleges—Harvard, Princeton, and Yale—urged schools and colleges to see themselves as “two halves of a common enterprise” (College Board, 2003).

A second study by the Committee on Admission with Advanced Standing formulated a plan for developing college-level curricula and standards that could be instituted at the high school level (College Board, 2003). In 1952, a pilot program was launched introducing advanced placement courses in 11 initial subjects (College Board, 2003). The program began to move ahead in the 1955-1956 school year and the College Board was asked to oversee the administration of this new program. This was the beginning of the College Board Advanced Placement Program.

Student enrollment and success on advanced placement (AP) exams have been used as indicators for college success. The advanced placement program is viewed as a way to prepare students for college. Despite the push for more students to enroll in advanced placement, African-American enrollment and success appear to be stagnant.

The AP Program has grown to be the premier program advancing educational excellence in secondary schools across the United States (College Board, 2003). Rigorous AP classes are advertised as a way to benefit students in multiple ways. The rigorous courses not only introduce students to college-level academics, they offer an opportunity to amass credits before high school graduation – ostensibly saving money on college in the long run (Sheehy, 2012). However, these benefits appear not to entice more African-American students to enroll in AP classes. Black and Hispanic students often fail to enroll in AP classes because they lack the academic preparation necessary to undertake

college-level work, and most of the funding available in the 1990s failed to address this issue (Klopfenstein, 2004).

Extent of the Problem

A report by the Commission on the Future of the Advanced Placement Program (Freedman et al., 2001) reported the following:

- Although there has been growth in African-American student enrollment in AP classes, students in urban, rural, and poor areas are still underrepresented.
- The number of qualified teachers for AP courses is limited.

There is a concern about equity in the AP classroom across the country. Teachers are critical in making recommendations for students to enroll in Advance Placement classes. Forty-three percent of American high schools do not offer AP courses (Hansen, 2005). There is a concern regarding the cost of AP exams for students. Growth demands greater resources for high schools to support AP instruction; the more students taking the exams, the greater the cost for schools (Hansen, 2005). Information provided by the College Board is used to track the course offerings for African-American students in schools across the nation. The College Board issued a report in 2011 that stated the vast majority of black high school students in that class of graduates with potential to do well never enrolled or were left out of an AP course. The report also stated that perhaps the school did not offer the college prep courses. This puts black students at a decisive disadvantage when seeking college enrollment.

Similarly high numbers of students identified as Hispanic or Latino (70.4%) were also not accessing the AP courses (Abdul-Alim, 2012). It is a concern that the lack of

opportunities to participate in a rigorous curriculum could have a negative impact on African-American students as they transition the postsecondary study.

Moreover, there could be a long-term impact on African-American students not only in preparation for postsecondary work. However, the lack of preparation for a college curriculum could hinder African-American students' opportunities to enter the college of their choice. It is becoming increasingly competitive to enroll in colleges. In its 2011 State of College Admission Report, the National Association for College Admission Counseling found that grades in college preparatory courses were the top factor that colleges considered in admission decision (Abdul-Alim, 2012). This is not to say that black students are not admitted to college because they lack AP courses, but the lack of AP courses could impact the success of African-American students. The lack of preparation for college-level work could have a financial burden upon African-American students as well. Students may have to take a lower level course prior to starting their core work on the college level which means paying for additional classes and fees for a longer period of time.

While one reviews the lack of African-American students taking AP classes, the issue of teacher planning has to be explored. Are there enough teachers trained to teach on the level necessary to prepare high school students for the rigor of a college curriculum? If not, it is the responsibility of the administrative staff to identify talent within the disciplines of teaching and seek teachers to become trained to teach AP classes. The local school must also review the process on how students are identified and scheduled to take AP classes.

Statement of the Problem

There is an underrepresentation of African-American students in AP courses and participating in AP exams. African-American students are not selecting AP courses at the high school level as a part of their educational experience. This appears to be a nationwide issue. A new analysis of test-taking data finds that in Mississippi and Montana, no female, African-American, or Hispanic students took the advanced placement exam in computer science (Heitin, 2014). The article stated that only six of eight African Americans had taken and passed the computer science AP exam. A College Board spokeswoman stated she was not surprised by the findings because unfortunately, computing courses have historically been dominated by white, male students (Zarate & Pachon, 2006). It raises the question of what AP courses are being offered and how many sections. Schools serving low-income students (schools which also happen to be high African-American populations in most cases) offer significantly fewer AP courses than more affluent communities (Zarate & Pachon, 2006).

There is a matter of providing training for teachers in order to offer quality AP courses. It is essential to have a skilled AP teaching core. In raising the number of AP courses offered in a school, it is important to monitor the quality of AP courses offered. African-American students need equal opportunity to quality instruction that the AP courses provide in order to be successful on the AP exam. If equity is the desired outcome, we must ensure that students have similar opportunities to participate in courses with rigorous teaching methodologies and not simply increase the number of AP courses on their transcripts (Hallet & Venegas, 2011).

Some students may not feel prepared to take the AP classes based upon their education course work in their prior years before high school. African-American students are in some instances not enrolled in the more rigorous course work on the elementary or middle school level. They have not been identified as gifted students, therefore are not prepared in their earlier years to take challenging advanced placement course work.

It is important to provide clear guidance to students when they are contemplating their course work at the high school level. This is also an important time to educate parents of students about taking challenging course work. Parents need to be informed about the benefits of their child taking an AP class in preparation for postsecondary work. Parents as well as students need to be well informed about the critical role AP classes could play in determining postsecondary education choices.

Furthermore, there is the concern with the cost of taking AP exams and some African-American students may not participate in taking AP exams because of the cost for each exam. The cost for each exam is \$91 dollars. However, some students may be able to get a fee reduction in cost, depending upon meeting the necessary eligibility criteria.

Table 1 presents data on grade level of students in AP classes for the 2013-2014 school year by education level.

Table 1

Grade Level of Students in AP Classes, 2013-2014

Ethnicity	Total Students	Percentage of Population	12th Grade	11th Grade	10th Grade	9th Grade
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	21.42%			1	2
Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander	69	49.64%	13	27	15	14
Black or African American	160	15.25%	37	55	40	27
Mexican or Mexican American	7	6.60%	1	3	1	1
Other Hispanic, Latin, or Latin American	18	7.00%	2	6	5	5
White	295	28.69%	65	109	71	49

Table 2 shows the percentage of students taking at least one AP class by ethnicity and compared to the 2011 national average. Figure 1 illustrates GHS verses national average of students in AP classes.

Table 2

Students Taking At Least One AP Class by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	National Average	Georgia High School (GHS)	
	2011	2011	2015
Black	9.40%	6.36%	13.91%
White	59.70%	14.25%	17.00%

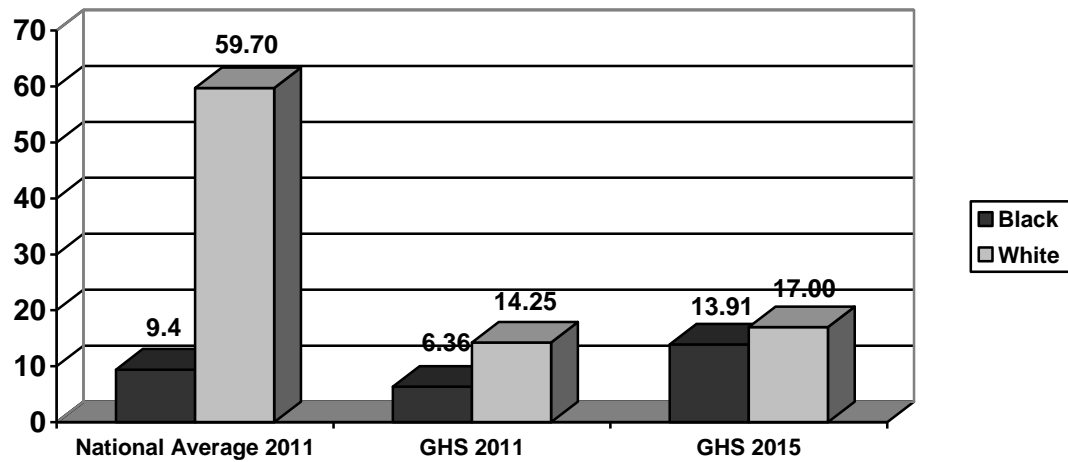


Figure 1. GHS verses national average of students in AP classes.

Purpose of the Study

This study examines factors that might be critical in affecting enrollment and persistence of African-American students in AP classes. These factors include prior course work, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perceptions, and student self-efficacy on African-American student enrollment and intent to enroll in the advanced placement program for grades 9 through 12 in one select high school in a metropolitan Atlanta school district. Findings from this study provide guidance as to which factors impact African-American student behaviors to increase enrollment in an advanced placement program. The role of counselors in the high school is an independent variable to be examined in this study. School counselors can be a vital piece of the college-readiness puzzle for high school students, but many counselors are bogged down with tasks that do not allow them to put their skills to work (Sheehy, 2012). Among those tasks are: encouraging students to take AP courses, helping students through the college application and financial aid process, and connecting

students with community resources to help them succeed both during high school and after graduation (Sheehy, 2012).

Localizing the Problem

The high school used in this research study is located in the metro Atlanta area. The school system has an enrollment of 174,000 students and the district is one of the largest school systems in the state of Georgia. One out of 10 public school students attend school within the district. The school is located in the southeast portion of the county in a middle class neighborhood. There are 2,814 students enrolled in the high school. Each year on average, 35% of the students receive free/reduced lunch benefits. The racial profile of the school is 40% black/African American, 9% Hispanic, 42% white, 5% Asian, and 4% multiracial.

The school's African-American enrollment and test participation in AP courses do not reflect the student body population. The school's advanced placement course enrollment points earned on the Results Based Evaluation System (RBES) was 74.26% of the target goal. In concert with its core beliefs and commitments and in extension of its Theory Action for Change to Improve Student Achievement (Policy BAA), the school district's Board of Education sets forth in policy its belief that district leaders must manage performance within flexible parameters that balance accountability with empowerment according to the needs and performance of individual schools. The school district has developed an accountability system for improving schools called the Results-Based Evaluation System (RBES). RBES fairly and systematically measures a school's progress, providing a process for clearly communicating expectations and reviewing,

monitoring, and evaluating school performance (Metro Atlanta Public School System, 2008). As applied to schools through annual Weighted School Assessments, RBES promotes continuous improvement through the identification of strengths and weaknesses, and acts as a vehicle to communicate the school's performance (Metro Atlanta Public School System, 2008).

The advanced placement test participation points earned was 50.38% of the target goal for the school. There is a gap of African-American representation in AP classes and test participation in this school. The most recent AP School Summary by student demographics for 2014 shows a significant difference in the number of total exams taken between the black and white students. Black students took a total of 243 AP exams. For the same year, white students took a total of 477 AP exams. Looking even further into which students are taking AP exams, the 2014 AP School Summary shows 160 black students took the exams. Meanwhile, there were 297 white students to take AP exams. Again, here the difference in African-American students taking AP exams in comparison to white students is abundantly clear.

Research Questions

- RQ1: Is there a significant relationship between prior course work and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?
- RQ2: Is there a significant relationship between teacher expectations and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?
- RQ3: Is there a significant relationship between student self-efficacy and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

- RQ4: Is there a significant relationship between student academic motivation and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?
- RQ5: Is there a significant relationship between peer affiliation and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?
- RQ6: Is there a significant relationship between counselor advisement and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?
- RQ7: Is there a significant relationship between teacher perception of African-American student preparation for an advanced placement program and student enrollment in an advanced placement program?
- RQ8: Is there a significant relationship between African-American students' intent to enroll and enrollment in advanced placement courses?

Significance of the Study

This study adds to the literature of leadership for education as well as advances the research on African-American students' enrolment in advanced placement courses. This study provides valuable guidance to the administrators as it looks for ways to increase access, participation, and success of African-American students on AP exams. This study also assists with implementing programs to identify African-American students prior to entering high school who show potential for AP exam success. Information from this study will assist administrators in identifying barriers that are preventing African-American students from enrolling in advanced placement courses. It

provides information on ways to increase African-American student participation in advanced placement exams.

Summary

Leadership has a significant impact on the direction of a school. For this reason, it is imperative that schools have a strong leadership team. Marzano (2003) stated an administrator's influence has a substantial effect on student achievement and engagement. Administrators have a direct impact on select variables such as prior coursework, teacher expectations, academic motivation, and counselor advisement that have a direct impact on advanced placement enrollment or intent to enroll in advanced placement classes.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews relevant literature related to the independent variables of the study and the dependent variables, African-American student advanced placement course enrollment, and African-American student intent for advanced placement course enrollment. In addition, the chapter highlights important studies related to an advanced placement program and African-American students. The literature is reviewed under the following headings: Advanced Placement Access, Teacher Expectations, Academic Motivation, Peer Affiliation, Counselor Advisement, Teacher Perception, Student Self-Efficacy for Advanced Placement Courses, African-American Student Advanced Placement Enrollment, and Advanced Placement Program and African-American Students.

Prior Coursework

The College Board (2014) stated promoting equity and excellence in education is the cornerstone of the College Board's mission. Having access to advanced placement courses is essential to increasing the number of African-American students who enroll in advanced placement courses. Hiring and training an adequate number of teachers dedicated to teaching advanced placement courses is an obstacle for many schools. In order to improve access and equity for African-American students in advanced placement courses, schools must overcome two critical factors (Hallet & Venegas, 2011).

points out the two factors are offerings of advanced placement courses in urban and rural schools and access to the courses already being offered by existing programs. It is not enough to only increase the course opportunities, but the quality of the course is important as well. If equity is the desired outcome, we must ensure that students have similar opportunities to participate in courses with rigorous teaching methodologies and not simply increase the number of AP courses on their transcripts. If African-American students are not provided the same quality as all students, their chances of being successful on advanced placement exams could be compromised. It could also negatively impact their success in college coursework. Students are expected to have a certain knowledge base after completing an AP course.

There are other roadblocks to improved African-American participation in AP courses. The College Board (2014) reported that the overall expansion of advanced placement has nearly doubled; they also report that African-American students were the most underrepresented group in both advanced placement classroom and in population of successful advanced placement exam takers. The College Board mentioned two roadblocks in particular as being used to limit access to advanced placement courses: grade point average and teacher recommendations.

Hallet and Venegas (2011) stated if equity is the desired outcome, administrators must ensure that students have similar opportunities to participate in courses with rigorous teaching methodologies and not simply increase the number of advanced placement courses on their transcripts. The concern centers in the school of thought that the curriculum is lessened and rigor is lowered.

Teacher Expectations

Another key component to increase African-American enrollment and intent to enroll in AP courses is teacher expectations. The most compelling research on teacher expectations was done more than 40 years ago by Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson. Published in 1968, *Pygmalion in the Classroom*, has held up over the years. Teachers were given students randomly selected from a class list. The students were given an intelligence quotient (IQ) test. When all students were retested at the end of the school year and again two years later, a significant number of those identified as low achieving made unusual intellectual and performance gains and maintained them over time. What was the mechanism of these gains? Yatvin (2009) stated teachers' expectations of student success, and their unconscious communication of those expectations, made all the difference. Yatvin reported it appears that teachers signaled their faith in students' potential through smiles, nods of approval, more opportunities to ask and answer questions, and a kindly tone of voice.

Good teachers create a culture of high expectations and partnerships with their students. Newton and Winches (2013) reported this tenacity, concern, and love for each student are obvious, yet are linked directly to unyielding aspirations for each student.

Academic Motivation

Cushman (2014) shared her equation on motivation: $V \times E = M$ (Value times Expectancy equals Motivation). If students value an activity and expect to be successful, they will be motivated. Tomlinson (2014) declared that teachers are crucial to motivation,

and they should tune in to students' unspoken questions in three concentric circles of their school lives to help build self-motivation:

- **The personal sphere** – Does the teacher see me? How does the teacher see me?
- **The social sphere** – Do I belong here? Am I valued? Do I have something meaningful to contribute?
- **The academic sphere** – Is this stuff worth my time? Can I do what is asked of me?

Wrzesniewski and Schwartz (2014) found people can have two possible motives for engaging in an activity: internal and instrumental. Wresniewski and Schwartz reported after all, in terms of effect, students get internal satisfaction from doing well in class and are rewarded with good grades (instrumental).

Usher and Kober (2012) summarized four dimensions to motivation:

- **Competence** – The student believes he or she has the ability to complete the task.
- **Control and autonomy** – The student can see a direct link between his or her actions and an outcome and has some choice about whether or how to undertake the task.
- **Interest and value** – The student has some interest in the task or sees value in completing it.
- **Interpersonal rewards** – Completing the task produces a sense of belonging to a classroom or other desired social group or approval from a person of social importance.

Usher and Kober stated at least one of these dimensions must be satisfied for a student to be motivated.

Peer Affiliation

Fryer (2005) found from his research that negative peer pressure directed at African-American and Hispanic students who work hard and do well in school is definitely a factor in racially-integrated public schools, but hardly exists in private schools and in predominantly African-American public schools. Fryer wrote that most studies of academic achievement find little or no benefit of attending a private school for white students, but quite large benefits for African-American students. Fryer also stated may be that blacks attending private schools have quite a different peer group.

Counselor Advisement

Woods and Domina (2014) reported high school counselors with manageable caseloads play an important role in college planning, information-gathering, and college-preparatory behavior among juniors and seniors (including taking SAT or ACT)—and the rate at which students enroll in four-year colleges. Woods and Domina found that students in schools with high counselor caseloads are less likely to speak to their counselors, less likely to formulate and act on college plans, and less likely to attend four-year colleges.

McDonough (2006) reported counselors, when consistently and frequently available and allowed to provide direct services to students and parents, can have a positive impact on students' aspirations, achievements, and financial aid knowledge. McDonough found one common thread running through the research evidenced on the

school's role in structuring students' aspirations and actual college preparatory opportunities. That common thread is that guidance and counseling staff can help establish a school's college culture.

Teacher Perception

Schermerhorn, Hunt, and Osborn (2005) defined perception as “the process through which people receive, organize and interpret information from their environment” (p. 100). The Metro Atlanta Public School System's No Child Left Behind legislation brought attention to educators in terms of the achievement gap with African-American students. Low African-American enrollment in advanced placement courses has been a point of contention for decades. Enrollment that does not reflect school populations across America is indicative of a bigger picture surrounding educational inequalities (Taliaferro & DeCuir-Gunby, 2008). Teacher perceptions and expectations of students from low-income and minority backgrounds are thought to have a great impact (Campbell & Silver, 1999; Oakes & Lipton, 1999). Findings from a long-term ethnographic study in a high school concluded that differences in racial achievement are accepted among teachers, but are never talked about (Pollock, 2001). Too often, minority students' math opportunities are limited because of others' perceptions of their ability to do mathematics. School and teacher practices that hold minority students back from doing advanced mathematics abound (Walker, 2003). Teachers' perceptions of their students and what those students are capable of affect the type of curriculum, instruction, and assessment teachers offer (Walker, 2003). There are some teachers who may not recommend students for advanced placement for the wrong reasons. One example is a

teacher not recommending an African-American student for advanced classes in order to use the student as a role model in the general class setting for other African-American students. Teachers and school administrators must think beyond pervasive assumptions that peer-group influences among underrepresented students are largely negative. Teachers should tap into the supportive networks that many minority students actually possess (Walker, 2003).

Student Self-Efficacy

Usher and Pajares' (2008) research pointed to four sources of self- efficacy which are mastery experiences, comparing oneself to others, encouragement from others, and emotional and physiological states. Usher and Pajares found that the first source, mastery experiences, was by far the most influential across all studies, all domains, and all types of students.

Sagor (2008) reported personal efficacy is a deep-seated belief in our own abilities. According to Sagor, adults must instill in children the “Little Engine That Could” spirit (I think I can, I think I can): if they work long and hard enough and apply creativity, they will succeed.

Hopeful thinking combines future thinking with a sense of agency or efficacy (Lopez, 2013). After controlling for other variables (previous grades, IQ, and psychological status), researchers have found that hope boosts a student's school achievement by 12% (Lopez, 2013). Drawing on research from around the world, Lopez found that students who are hopeful about the future have three characteristics that set them apart from students who are not:

- They are excited about something in the future. This is part of a hopeful mindset that gets these young people excited about the future and their future selves.
- Hopeful students have good school attendance. Lopez and colleagues at Gallup studied student absenteeism in a Nebraska high school and found a close correlation between excellent attendance and hope.
- Hopeful students are engaged. They are psychologically invested in what is happening around them and eager to get something out of classes and other activities.

Studies have shown that a person's positive expectations for the future are tightly correlated with academic and life success (Lopez, 2013).

Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature on practices and select variables that affect African-American enrollment in advanced placement courses. The literature reported that there has been increasing amounts of money invested, privately and at all levels of government, to expand the AP Program nationwide, but there has been little detailed research regarding the effect of this money on the access and participation of traditionally underserved students (Klopfenstein, 2004). Schools saw a growth with students taking AP courses over the years. However, there continues to be a concern about the few AP courses offered to African-American students. There is concern about the low number of African-American students taking the AP courses and AP exams. Increased state and federal funding, which reduces the cost to AP exam fees for students, caused a minor increase in AP enrollment among African-American students. This result is not surprising

given that participation in advanced courses depends first and foremost on a student's prior academic experience (National Research Council, 2002).

There are recommendations that schools offer a variety of AP courses; offering a wide variety of AP courses may appeal to a larger student body. The goal in this would be to increase the AP access and participation.

One has to look for the barriers that may be a cause for the lack of African-American students participating in AP courses. Teacher recommendation is a part of the selection of courses that students take at the high school level. It could have a negative impact on African-American students because of assumptions by the teachers. Educators often assume that African-American students are not prepared for the rigor of AP coursework (Theokas & Saaris, 2013). There is a concern that including more African-American students in AP coursework would reduce the rigor of the course. This line of thinking results in African-American students not being encouraged to take the AP course. It could also result in counselors not recommending African-American students to enroll in the more rigorous coursework.

The grade point average (GPA) of the student may be an issue when selecting AP courses for study. Some students may feel as if they do not have a strong enough GPA to participate in the tougher coursework. Only in recent years have educators in large numbers considered opening AP courses to all interested students, rather than limiting enrollment to those with top grades and teacher recommendations (Broad Prize, 2013).

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework focuses on the independent variables, which include teacher perception of student's preparedness, peer affiliation, teacher expectations, academic motivation, prior course work, and counselor advisement and how they may be related to the dependent variables of advanced placement enrollment and retention and African-American student intent to enroll in advanced placement classes.

The framework that guided this study is Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Needs Theory. In Maslow's Theory, there are five areas that focus on the human needs and their importance. The research reviews the physiological needs (basic), safety needs (protection), social needs (affection), esteem needs (self-respect), and self-actualization (one's potential) (see Figure 2). Based upon Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, students would need to have these areas met prior to them beginning to reach a high level of achievement. School employees must understand Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory in order to assist students as they work to reach their full potential. It is important to provide students with opportunities in school to assist with helping them reach self-actualization.

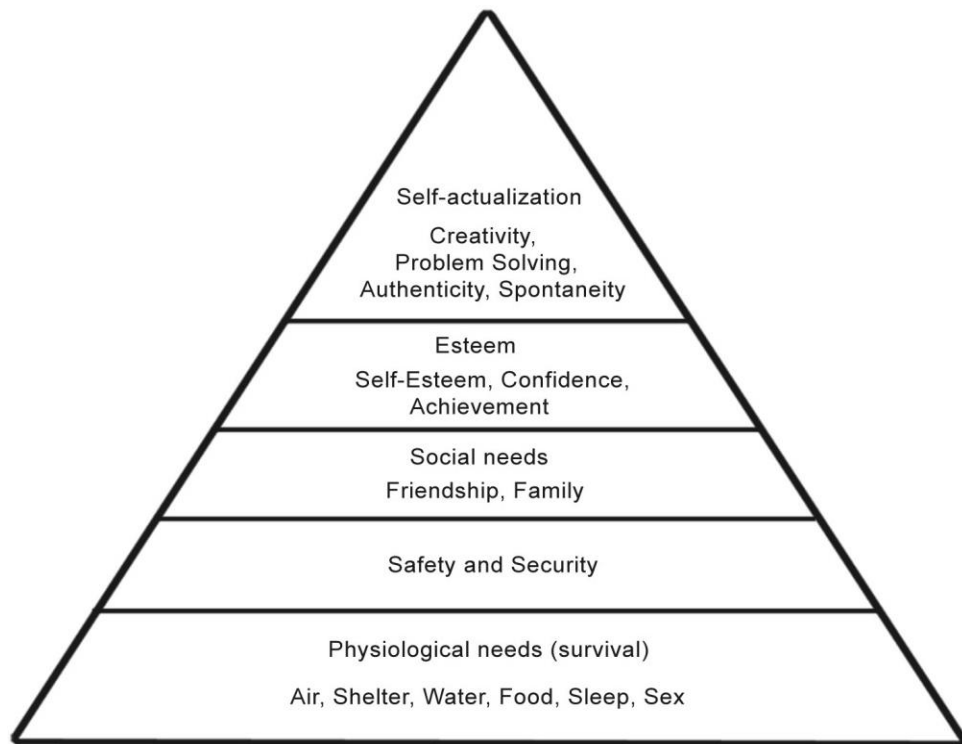


Figure 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

Another theory demonstrated in this study is Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1994). Albert Bandura, a Stanford psychologist stated people's belief about their abilities has a profound effect on those abilities (Goleman, 1995). Bandura reported that ability is not a fixed property; there is a huge variability in how you perform (Goleman, 1995). Bandura (1994) reported that people's beliefs about their efficacy can be developed by four main sources of influence: cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection process (see Figure 3). Bandura stated the most effective way of creating a strong sense of efficacy is through mastery experiences.

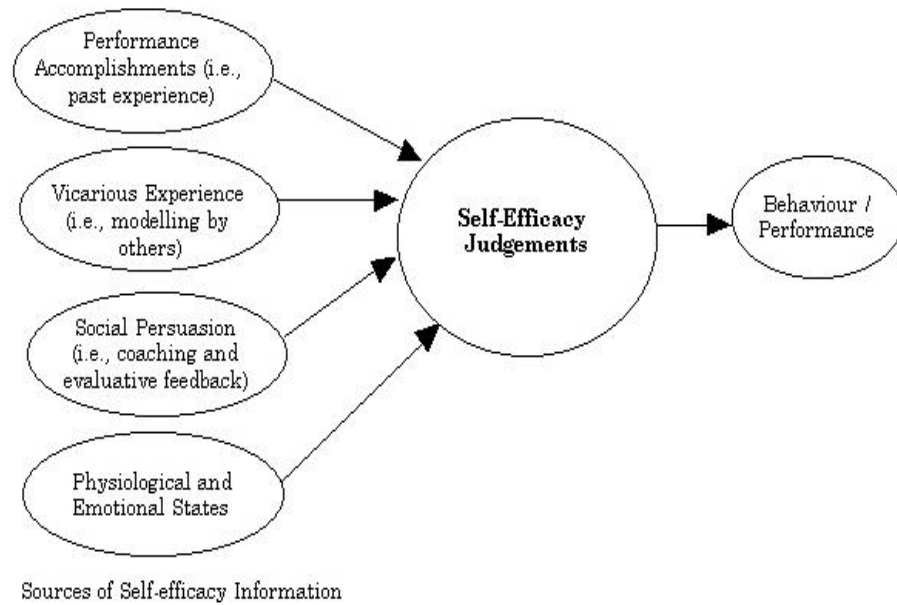


Figure 3. Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory.

David McClelland's Human Motivation Theory may be used to identify factors that influence students (see Table 3). McClelland followed up the work of Abraham Maslow with a book published in 1961, *The Achieving Society* (McClelland, 1961). He identified three motivators that he believed we all have: a need for achievement, a need for affiliation, and a need for power (McClelland, 1961).

One can use these motivators to craft or design the student schedule, ensuring a better fit for class selection. McClelland's theory can help teachers identify the dominant motivators of students in their class.

Table 3

McClelland's Human Motivation Theory

Dominant Motivator	Characteristics of this Person
Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a strong need to set and accomplish challenging goals. • Takes calculated risks to accomplish their goals. • Likes to receive regular feedback on their progress and achievements. • Often likes to work alone.
Affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to belong to the group. • Wants to be liked, and will often go along with whatever the rest of the group wants to do. • Favors collaboration over competition. • Doesn't like high risk or uncertainty.
Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to control and influence others. • Likes to win arguments. • Enjoys competition and winning. • Enjoys status and recognition.

Definition of Variables**Dependent Variables**

Advanced placement enrollment: Advanced placement enrollment and retention, in this study, refers to whether students take the advanced placement class or not.

African-American student intent to enroll in advanced placement classes:

African-American student intent to enroll in advanced placement classes, in this study, refers to the number of African-American students who indicated they would take an advanced placement class.

Independent Variables

Teacher perception: Teacher perception, in this study, refers to the teachers' perception of the students' preparation for advanced placement classes.

Prior course work: Prior course work, in this study, refers to the students' perception of the usefulness of coursework in preparing them for advanced placement Programs.

Student self-efficacy: Student self-efficacy, in this study, refers to the way students feel about their preparation to pass an advanced placement class.

Academic motivation: Academic motivation, in this study, refers to the drive students have to be successful in class.

Peer affiliation: Peer affiliation, in this study, refers to the friends students associate with inside and outside of school.

Teacher expectations: Teacher expectations, in this study, refer to the teachers' perception of African-American students' ability to earn a passing grade in an advanced placement course.

Counselor advisement: Counselor advisement, in this study, refers to the guidance counselors provide on course selection for students to parents and students.

Relationship among the Variables

The researcher hypothesizes that there is a significant relationship between the independent variables and African-American student enrollment in advanced placement courses in a metro Atlanta school (see Figure 4).

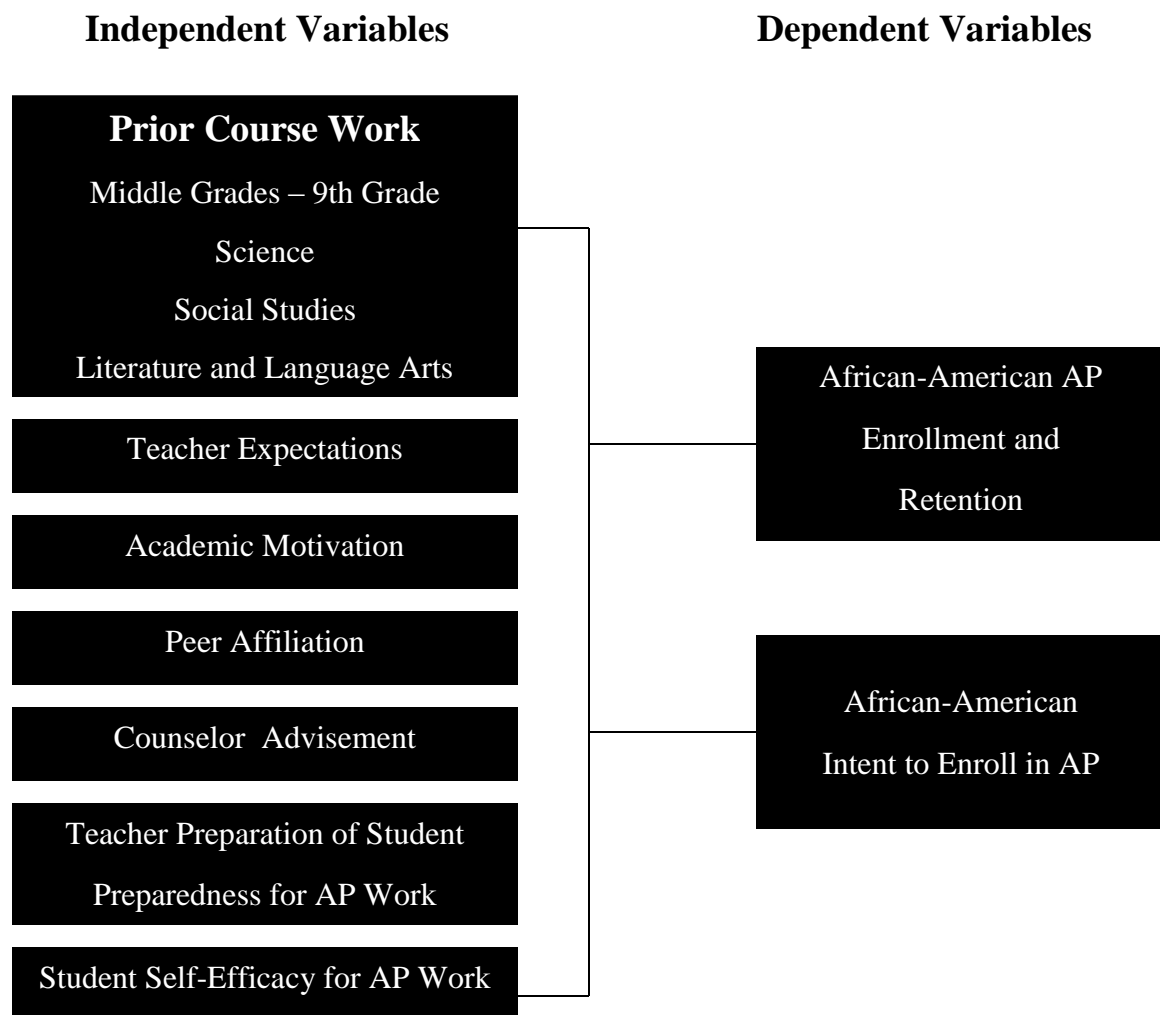


Figure 4. Relationship among the variables.

Summary

This study can assist school administrators with identifying specific factors that will help support student enrollment in advanced placement courses in local schools. This aids in understanding which theoretical frameworks support positive relationships between student-teacher, teacher-counselor, and parents-school. Despite the limitations in this study, facilitating strong guidance and counseling programs will result in growing numbers in AP courses for minority students.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter gives background information of the school used to explore the relationship between AP course enrollment of minority student and prior year course work, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perception, and student self-efficacy which have been found to effect minority student enrollment in AP courses for grades 9-12 in a suburban Atlanta school. In addition, the survey instrument used in the study is included.

Research Design

A quantitative approach was used to explain how the effects of prior coursework and select variables affect minority student enrollment in AP courses for grades 9-12 in a suburban Atlanta school. This study used a quantitative approach to parallel the AP course enrollment of African-American students with their level of peer affiliation, academic motivation, teacher expectations and counselor advisement in the local school.

A qualitative approach was used in the study as well. This study used a qualitative approach to parallel the AP course enrollment and select teacher variables through interviews.

Description of the Setting

The research site was established in 2000. It began with an enrolment of 1,508 students in 2000 and saw an increase to over 2,772 in 2005. By 2008, the school's

population reached 3,210 students. The community has a diverse range in education and demographics. The school district where the research site is housed is similar to neighboring large urban school districts. Located in the metro Atlanta area, the district serves an ethnically and socioeconomically diverse population of 174,000 students. The district has 134 schools and the population continues to grow. The school's mission currently is focused upon "First Comes Learning."

The setting for this study is in a grade 9 through 12 high school in northeast Georgia. Fifty-nine percent of the staff members at this school have obtained an advanced degree (see Figure 5).

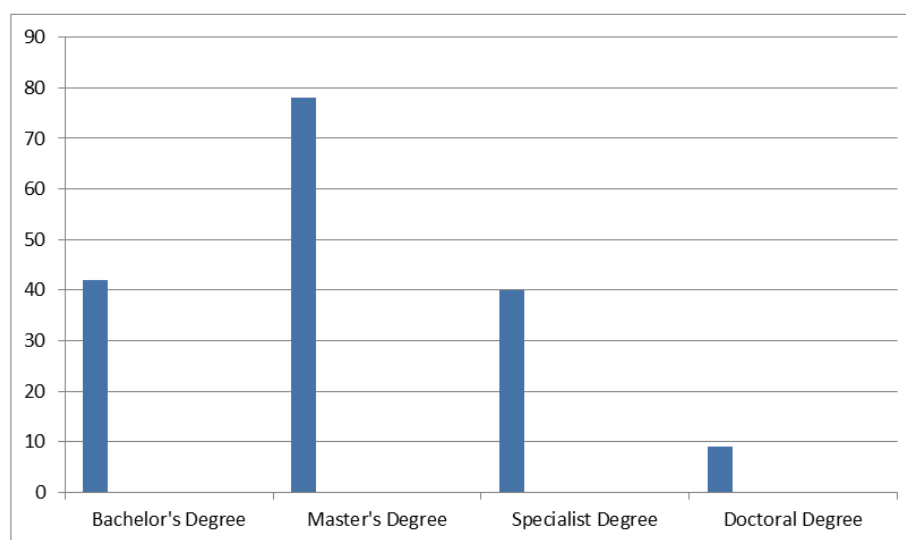


Figure 5. Number of faculty by certification level.

The years of experience for teaching faculty are presented in Figure 6. Over half of the teaching staff has more than six years of classroom experience. Thirty teachers have been at the research site since the school opened.

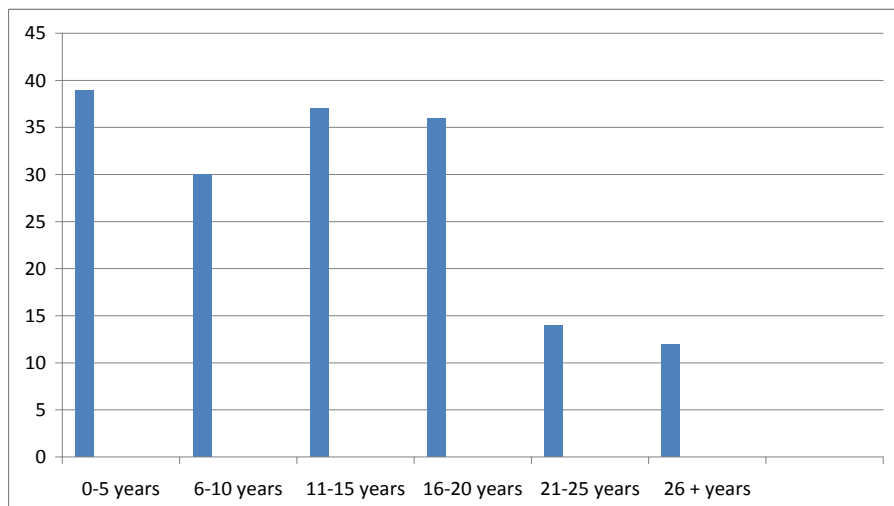


Figure 6. Teachers' years of experience, 2013-2014.

There is a strong sense of pride within the staff regarding the school. The administrative team at Success High School consists of one principal and 10 assistant principals.

The student population at the research site is somewhat diverse. The district in which the school is located has a demographic of (a) African American 43%, (b) Asian/Pacific Islander 6%, (c) Hispanic 12%, (d) Multiracial 4%, and (e) white 35% (District Accountability Report, 2014). Students enrolled in Success High School participate in a host of extracurricular activities to encourage student involvement. There are also a variety of support services provided for students in order to help students participate and enroll in challenging coursework. Table 4 includes the historical enrollment demographics of students at Success High School.

Table 4

Historical Enrollment Demographics

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Enrollment	2,632	2,730	2,819
Asian	5%	6%	6%
Black/African American	41%	41%	43%
Hispanic	10%	10%	12%
Multiracial	4%	4%	4%
White	40%	38%	35%
Special Education	12%	11%	11%
English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	1%	1%	2%
Free/Reduced Lunch	39%	38%	38%
Average Attendance	97%	97%	97%

Participants/Location of Research

The sample selection for this study includes public school teachers and students at the high school level. The participants in this study are classroom teachers whose primary concentration is language arts. Student participants in this study are at the high school level in grades 9 through 11. The sample consists of 10 language arts teachers. The sample of students consisted of all African-American students in 10 language arts classes, grades 9 through 11.

The survey was conducted at the research site. There was a level of confidentiality among the survey applicants to maintain integrity. All surveys were kept in a secured location and the researcher did not have access to the surveys until the survey was closed.

Sampling Procedures

“A survey design provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (Creswell, 2014, p. 155), and in this study the researcher used convenience sampling. The researcher used this process of sampling due to the convenience and availability of the subjects at the research site.

Instrumentation

The instrument used to measure minority student enrollment in AP courses was the county created course enrollment system. The dependent variable, the intent to enroll in AP classes, and the independent variables, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, and student related variables were measured through a researcher-created survey for the students. Interviews were used to determine the independent variables—teacher expectations of students and teachers perceptions of students for AP work. Table 5 shows the alignment of the variables and survey questions.

Table 5

Alignment of the Variables and Survey Questions

Variable	Research Questions	Survey Questions
Dependent Variables		
AP Enrollment		1-3
AP Intent		4-5
Independent Variables		
Prior Coursework	Is there a significant relationship between prior course work and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?	6-9

Table 5 (continued)

Variable	Research Questions	Survey Questions
Independent Variables		
Teacher Expectations	Is there a significant relationship between teacher expectations and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?	10-13
Academic Motivation	Is there a significant relationship between academic motivation and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?	14-16
Peer Affiliation	Is there a significant relationship between peer affiliation and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?	17-20
Counselor Advisement	Is there a significant relationship between counselor advisement and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?	21-24
Teacher Perception	Is there a significant relationship between teacher perception and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?	25-27
Student Self Efficacy	Is there a significant relationship between student self-efficacy and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?	28-30

Limitations of the Study

As with any research, there are certain factors that are beyond the researcher's control. Although this is a quantitative study, there is one research instrument being used in this study. The results may be skewed with the information being provided by the participants. Also, the researcher works at the investigative site and is the direct supervisor for the teacher participants. The researcher also is the direct authority figure for the student participants. Lastly, this study was conducted at one site, so there is limited generalization.

Data Collection Procedures

The following lists the procedures taken in this study:

1. Obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board at Clark Atlanta University.
2. Obtained approval from the local school district to complete research.
3. Teachers completed a questionnaire regarding their perceptions of what type of student should enroll in an advance placement class, as well resources needed to teach an advanced placement class.
4. Students completed a survey instrument that measured their perceptions regarding prior coursework, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perception, student self-efficacy and intent to enroll and enrollment in an advance placement course.
5. Surveys were obtained from students to assess effects of counselor advisement and other select variables on minority student enrollment in advanced placement courses.
6. The estimated time for students to complete the survey was 15 minutes.
7. Time taken to complete interviews with teachers was approximately 20-30 hours.

Summary

This study will help schools identify specific factors that will help African-American student enrollment and participation in AP programs in the local high school. Success School Systems continue to seek ways to improve access and test participation

for students on AP exams. The importance of the AP student enrollment and test participation is noted as a part of each high school evaluation performance. If the school district is seeking to improve access to and participation of AP exams, then it must seek ways to increase the African-American student involvement

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this study was to examine factors affecting enrollment and intent to enroll in an advanced placement program of African-American students in a metropolitan Atlanta school. The independent variables for the study included prior course-work, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perception, and student self-efficacy. The dependent variables were African-American students' enrollment and intent to enroll in an advanced placement program.

Both quantitative and qualitative measuring procedures were explored for this study. Data were collected through student surveys and teacher interviews. The student surveys were administered at the research site, by the language arts teachers to capture student perception pertaining to prior course-work, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perception, and student self-efficacy. A survey instrument was given to the students through traditional paper-pencil format.

Teacher interview questions were provided and conducted at the research site. There were 19 language arts teachers interviewed in grades 9, 10, and 11. Brief written responses and observations of teachers were used in this study. The most common theme from teachers to identify students for the AP program was teacher recommendation.

Teachers were also in agreement that prior coursework is an indicator of student enrollment and success for advanced placement program. In addressing the disposition of students enrolled in the AP program, teachers keyed in on self-motivation and independent learner as a quality of the student. When asked what resources and support necessary to teach AP classes, teachers voiced a need for College Board and Gifted Certification training. When asked what resources and support are necessary to teach advanced placement students, teachers stated creativity and smaller class size as a need.

Survey Participants

As seen in Table 6, surveys were administered to 159 students—69 males and 87 females. Three students did not respond to the gender selection.

Table 6

Student Participants by Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	69	43.4	44.2	44.2
	Female	87	54.7	55.8	100.0
	Total	156	98.1	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.9		
Total		159	100.0		

Students were distributed among grades 9, 10, and 11 (see Table 7). There were 80 from 9th grade, 33 from 10th grade, and 41 from 11th grade; 5 students did not respond to the question.

Table 7

Student Participants by Grade Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	9th Grade	80	50.3	51.9	51.9
	10th Grade	33	20.8	21.4	73.4
	11th Grade	41	25.8	26.6	100.0
	Total	154	96.9	100.0	
Missing	System	5	3.1		
Total		159	100.0		

Table 8 indicates ethnicities of the student sample. Out of this group, five students did not indicate ethnicity.

Table 8

Student Participants by Ethnicity

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 (African American)	62	39.0	40.3	40.3
	2 (White)	52	32.7	33.8	74.0
	3 (Asian)	14	8.8	9.1	83.1
	4 (Hispanic)	12	7.5	7.8	90.9
	5 (Other)	14	8.8	9.1	100.0
	Total		154	96.9	100.0
Missing	System	5	3.1		
Total		159	100.0		

Overview of Data Collection and Analysis

The correlation analysis data were used to determine the relationship between the student enrollment and intent to enroll in an advanced placement program and the independent variables. The data analysis of this study used the value of 0.05 to measure the level of significance (see Table 9). Data were presented to answer the eight research questions identified in Chapter IV. The findings are presented in tabular format for this study and the narratives that follow.

Table 9

Correlations: Independent and Dependent Variables

		Aframenrol	Aframintent	Priorcrswk	Teachexpect	AcademicMot
Aframenrol	Pearson Correlation	1	.352**	.007	-.214*	-.116
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.949	.035	.255
	N	98	86	96	97	98
Aframintent	Pearson Correlation	.352**	1	.036	.013	-.105
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		.707	.895	.268
	N	86	114	113	113	114
Priorcrswk	Pearson Correlation	.007	.036	1	.396**	.435**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.949	.707		.000	.000
	N	96	113	149	147	149
Teachexpect	Pearson Correlation	-.214*	.013	.396**	1	.598**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	.895	.000		.000
	N	97	113	147	157	157
AcademicMot	Pearson Correlation	-.116	-.105	.435**	.598**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.255	.268	.000	.000	
	N	98	114	149	157	159
PeerAff	Pearson Correlation	-.112	.053	.132	.078	-.090
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.272	.575	.111	.330	.260
	N	98	113	148	156	158
CounselAdvise	Pearson Correlation	.040	-.071	.216**	.182*	.096
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.699	.453	.009	.023	.230
	N	96	113	147	155	157

Table 9 (continued)

		Aframenrol	Aframintent	Priorcrswk	Teachexpect	AcademicMot
TeachPerPrep	Pearson Correlation	-.128	-.083	.354**	.689**	.660**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.210	.383	.000	.000	.000
	N	98	113	148	156	158
StudentSelfEff	Pearson Correlation	-.127	-.104	.314**	.499**	.593**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.212	.270	.000	.000	.000
	N	98	114	148	155	157
		PeerAff	CounselAdvise	TeachPerPrep	StudentSelfEff	
Aframenrol	Pearson Correlation	-.112	.040	-.128	-.127	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.272	.699	.210	.212	
	N	98	96	98	98	
Aframintent	Pearson Correlation	.053	-.071	-.083	-.104	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.575	.453	.383	.270	
	N	113	113	113	114	
Priorcrswk	Pearson Correlation	.132	.216**	.354**	.314**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.111	.009	.000	.000	
	N	148	147	148	148	
Teachexpect	Pearson Correlation	.078	.182*	.689**	.499**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.330	.023	.000	.000	
	N	156	155	156	155	
AcademicMot	Pearson Correlation	-.090	.096	.660**	.593**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.260	.230	.000	.000	
	N	158	157	158	157	
PeerAff	Pearson Correlation	1	.114	-.099	.014	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.156	.218	.860	
	N	158	156	157	156	
CounselAdvise	Pearson Correlation	.114	1	.146	.068	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.156		.070	.402	
	N	156	157	156	155	
TeachPerPrep	Pearson Correlation	-.099	.146	1	.516**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.218	.070		.000	
	N	157	156	158	156	
StudentSelfEff	Pearson Correlation	.014	.068	.516**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.860	.402	.000		
	N	156	155	156	157	

Research Questions

RQ1: Is there a significant relationship between prior course work and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

The Pearson Correlation test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between prior coursework and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program. The level of significance was .949. Therefore, there is no significant relationship.

RQ2: Is there a significant relationship between teacher expectations and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

The Pearson Correlation test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between teacher expectations and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program. The level of significance was .035. Therefore, there is a significant relationship.

RQ3: Is there a significant relationship between student self-efficacy and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

The Pearson Correlation test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between student self-efficacy and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program. The level of significance was .212. Therefore, there is no significant relationship.

RQ4: Is there a significant relationship between student academic motivation and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

The Pearson Correlation test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between academic motivation and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program. The level of significance was .255. Therefore, there is no significant relationship.

RQ5: Is there a significant relationship between peer affiliation and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

The Pearson Correlation test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between peer affiliation and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program. The level of significance was .272. Therefore, there is no significant relationship.

RQ6: Is there a significant relationship between counselor advisement and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

The Pearson Correlation test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between counselor advisement and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program. The level of significance was .699. Therefore, there is no significant relationship.

RQ7: Is there a significant relationship between teacher perception of African-American student preparation for an advanced placement program and student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

The Pearson Correlation test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between teacher perception and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program. The level of significance was .210. Therefore, there is no significant relationship.

RQ8: Is there a significant relationship between African-American students' intent to enroll and enrollment in advanced placement courses?

The Pearson Correlation test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between intent to enroll and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program. The level of significance was .001. Therefore, there is a significant relationship.

A Regression was done to determine which variables had a greater impact on enrollment (see Table 10). The data on the regression shows that African-American intent to enroll had the greatest impact on actual enrollment. The variable with the next biggest impact is peer affiliation.

Table 10

Model Summary: Regression of African-American Enrollment

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	Df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.352 ^a	.124	.113	.84131	.124	11.583	1	82	.001
2	.409 ^b	.167	.147	.82511	.044	4.251	1	81	.042

a. Predictors: (Constant), Aframintent

b. Predictors: (Constant), Aframintent, PeerAff

Enrollment in advanced placement classes was further examined using demographic variables. An analysis of variance was done to determine if there was any difference based on grade level. Table 11 shows a very strong significant difference among grade levels and enrollment.

Table 11

ANOVA: African-American Enrollment (aframenrol) by Grade Level

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	16.205	2	8.103	13.174	.000
Within Groups	57.201	93	.615		
Total	73.406	95			

In order to determine exactly where the differences lie, a Scheffe Post Hoc test was done (see Table 12). The Scheffe Post Hoc test shows the significant difference in enrollment between grades 9 and 11, and 10 and 11.

Table 12

Multiple Comparisons: Scheffe Post Hoc Test

Dependent Variable: Aframenrol

(I) Grade Level	(J) Grade Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
9	10th Grade	-.15136	.18871	.726	-.6208	.3181
	11th Grade	.84615*	.19856	.000	.3522	1.3401
10	9th Grade	.15136	.18871	.726	-.3181	.6208
	11th Grade	.99752*	.20856	.000	.4787	1.5164
11	9th Grade	-.84615*	.19856	.000	-1.3401	-.3522
	10th Grade	-.99752*	.20856	.000	-1.5164	-.4787

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Enrollment was further examined by ethnicity (see Table 12). Based on an analysis of variance test, the table shows there is no significant difference.

Table 13

ANOVA: African-American Enrollment (aframenrol) by Ethnicity

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.554	4	.639	.826	.512
Within Groups	71.864	93	.773		
Total	74.418	97			

Students in the sample were asked about their intent to enroll (see Table 14).

Intent was examined by ethnicity and the significance of intent was no different among students enrolled in AP courses.

Table 14

ANOVA: African-American Intent to Enroll (aframintent) in AP Courses

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11.245	4	2.811	1.727	.149
Within Groups	175.835	108	1.628		
Total	187.080	112			

Intent was further examined by grade level. There is a significant difference among grade levels and intent to enroll in advanced placement program (see Table 15).

Table 15

ANOVA: African-American Students' Intent (aframintent) to Enroll in AP Courses by Grade Level

Aframintent by Grade Level					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	62.501	2	31.251	25.422	.000
Within Groups	133.990	109	1.229		
Total	196.491	111			

Table 16 shows the Scheffe Post Hoc results. Grade 9 shows a significant higher intent to enroll in AP classes than grades 10 and 11, with a mean score of 5.3889 compared to 3.8387 and 3.9630, respectively.

Table 16

Scheffe Post Hoc Test: African-American Intent to Enroll in AP Classes by Grade Level

Scheffe ^{a,b}			
Grade Level	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
10	31	3.8387	
11	27	3.9630	
9	54		5.3889
Sig.		.898	1.000

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Purpose of the Study

This study examined factors effecting enrollment and persistence of African-American students in AP classes. The selected variables assumed to affect African-American student enrollment and persistence in AP classes include prior coursework, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perceptions, and student self-efficacy. A student survey was created to identify students' perceptions regarding prior coursework, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perceptions, and student self-efficacy. Teachers were interviewed and provided written responses to questions to help gather and identify teacher perceptions regarding which students should enroll in an advanced placement program.

Research Methods

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in this research study. The quantitative portion of the research focused on the possible relationships that may exist between prior year coursework, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perception, and student self-efficacy African-American student enrollment, and intent to enroll in an advanced placement program. The research design required the use of correlation, ANOVA, and regression tests of the

research questions. The researcher analyzed the data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to answer the research questions. The qualitative portion of the research consisted of an interview and written questions with language arts teachers to focus on teacher perceptions on the type of student that should enroll the advanced placement program and methods used to identify such students.

Findings

As a result of the analysis from Chapter V, the researcher has concluded the following findings to the research questions that guided the study.

RQ2: Is there a significant relationship between teacher expectations and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

The research findings from the correlation revealed that teacher expectations had a significant relationship on African-American enrollment in the advanced placement program.

RQ5: Is there a significant relationship between peer affiliation and African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program?

The research findings from the regression test indicated that peer affiliation had the greatest impact on African-American enrollment in the advanced placement program.

RQ8: Is there a significant relationship between African-American students' intent to enroll and enrollment in advanced placement courses?

The research findings from the correlation indicated student intent to enroll in an advanced placement program had a significant relationship on African-American enrollment in the advanced placement program.

Significant Findings

At the research location, intent to enroll had the overall greatest impact on African-American student enrollment and intent to enroll in the advanced placement program. The variable with the next biggest impact was peer affiliation. At the research location, teacher expectations had an impact on African-American enrollment in the advanced placement program.

The most common theme from teachers to identify students for the advanced placement program was teacher recommendation. Teachers also were in agreement that prior coursework is an indicator of student enrollment and success for the advanced placement program. In addressing the disposition of students enrolled in the advanced placement program, teachers keyed in on self-motivation and independent learner as a qualities of the student. When asked what resources and support were necessary to teach advanced placement classes, teachers voiced a need for College Board and Gifted Certification training.

Implications

This study was conducted to ascertain the factors affecting African-American enrollment and intent to enroll in an advanced placement program. The findings indicate teacher expectations, student intent, and peer affiliation have a greater impact on African-American enrollment in an advanced placement program.

First, research done more than 40 years ago by Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson discussed the impact of teacher expectations. Published in 1968, *Pygmalion in the Classroom*, has held up over the years. Yatvin (2009) stated teacher expectations of

student success and their unconscious communication of those expectations, made all of the difference. The findings suggest that teachers who have high expectations have an impact upon which course selections a student makes when enrolling in classes at the high school level. This is further supported by the interviews that teacher recommendation should be the main criteria for selecting students into an advanced placement program. Administrators must foster an environment that promotes high expectations for all students. One way to accomplish promoting a culture of high expectations for all students is through academic class competitions. Class competitions reward the grade level with the highest grade point average each six weeks for extrinsic motivation. Administrators must provide teachers, department chairs, and counselors training on course selections for students. This training will help teachers, department chairs, and counselors recognize students with potential to enroll in an advanced placement classes.

Secondly, the analysis of the data revealed that student intent to enroll has a significant impact on African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement class. Studies have shown that a person's positive expectations for the future are tightly correlated with academic and life success (Lopez, 2013). It is important to gain further knowledge of what practices encourage African-American students to enroll in advanced placement classes. This is further supported by the interviews with teachers that self-motivation should be a part of the disposition of students in order to be successful in an advanced placement class. Administrators must review student class selection at the beginning of the school year. Department chairs and administrators must study course selection by students and the teacher assigned to teach advanced placement classes. Also,

the matriculation process from middle to high school should highlight opportunities students have to enroll in an advanced placement program.

The findings in this study revealed that peer affiliation was very significant in African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program. Fryer (2005) in findings from his study stated that negative peer pressure directed at African-American students who work hard to do well in school is definitely a factor in racially-integrated public schools. This negative peer pressure could discourage African-American students from enrolling in an advanced placement class. This is further supported by the interviews with teachers that prior course work is an indicator of student enrollment and success in the advanced placement program. Students tend to select classes their peer group selects. Administrators must host informational meetings for students and parents that highlight the benefits of the advanced placement program. This would allow the school to appeal to each individual family to make course selections that are best for their student.

Lastly, the findings in this study indicated that as students begin their high school career in the ninth grade, they are more apt to enroll in an advanced placement class. However, as students matriculate through high school to the 10th, 11th and 12th grades, their enrollment in advanced placement classes begin to decrease. It is the responsibility of schools to educate students and parents on the benefits of an advanced placement program. Hosting seminars to highlight the academic benefits and financial benefits for college to families may assist in maintaining African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations to this study included the following: analyses were limited to a single public high school in one metropolitan area; there was a single instrument to collect data on independent variables that was self-reported; and the researcher worked at the research site.

Recommendations

Recommendations are provided for educational leaders and teachers that influence educational policy and future researchers.

Recommendations for Educational Leaders

- Educational leaders must provide training for teachers on how to identify students to enroll in advanced placement classes.
- Educational leaders must provide training for counselors, teachers, and administrators to identify African-American students for advanced placement programs.
- Educational leaders that have a more diverse advanced placement program should share with other educational leaders best practices taking place in their schools to identify students.
- Educational leaders must provide professional development on the significance of teacher expectations on student academic achievement.
- Educational leaders must foster an intellectual climate that encourages all students to strive toward academic excellence.

- Educational leaders should monitor counselors to include in their conversation with ninth-grade parents a discussion of advanced placement enrollment and its implications.

Recommendations for Classroom Teachers

- Teachers must seek additional staff development to work with gifted and talented students.
- Teachers must seek opportunities to learn the expectations of an advanced placement classroom.

Recommendations for Further Research

- Research should be conducted into the sociology of peer groups.
- Future research should include teacher expectations on student learning and academic course selection.
- A wider sample of several high schools should be included in future research.
- Parental involvement in advanced placement programs should be investigated.
- Future research should include student interviews regarding advanced placement programs.

Summary

It was a goal of this study to identify factors affecting African-American enrollment and intent to enroll in an advanced placement program and other select variables such as prior course work, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, teacher perception, and student self-efficacy. This

study revealed through the use of correlation, ANOVA, construct validity, and regression tests based upon survey results the variables that have the largest significance on African-American enrollment in an advanced placement program. The researcher concluded that intent to enroll, peer affiliation, and teacher expectations have the greatest significance on African-American student enrollment in an advanced placement program.

Recommendations were made for educational leaders and classroom teachers.

APPENDIX A

Student Survey on Advanced Placement Enrollment

All responses will be kept confidential

Please complete the response that is most accurate.

Gender: M___ F___

Grade Level: 9___ 10___ 11___

Ethnicity: African American___ White___ Asian___
Hispanic___ Other___

Please respond to each of the following statements by placing a checkmark in the blank underneath the response that represents your answer: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

1. Are you currently enrolled in an advanced placement course? Yes___ or No___
2. How many advanced placement courses are you taking? 1-3 ___ 4-6 ___ 7-9 ___
3. Which advanced placement courses are you taking?
Math___ Language Arts___ Science___ Social Studies___
4. Do you intend to take an advanced placement course? Yes___ or No___
5. Which advanced placement course do you intend to take?
Math___ Language Arts___ Science___ Social Studies___

	Strongly				Strongly
Prior Coursework	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree

6. Classes taken prior to high school prepared me for advanced placement classes.
 7. Prior academic skills prepared me for advanced placement classes.
-

Prior Coursework	Strongly			Strongly	
	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree
8. Honor classes prepared me for advanced placement classes.					
9. Accelerated classes prepared me for advanced placement classes.					
10. My teacher expects me to take challenging classes.					
11. My teacher has high expectations of me.					
12. My teacher is concerned about my grades.					
13. My teacher is a partner in my education					
Academic Motivation					
14. My teacher motivates me to learn.					
15. I am motivated by good grades.					
16. I believe that I have the ability to do well in advanced placement classes.					
Peer Affiliation					
17. My peers influence which classes that I take in school.					
18. My peers influence me to take a less challenging class.					
19. My peers take the same classes as I do in school.					
20. My peers pressure me to not do well in school.					
Counselor Advisement					
21. My counselor meets with me frequently.					

	Strongly				Strongly
Counselor Advisement	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree
22. My counselor advises me on which classes to take.					
23. My counselor provides post high school guidance information.					
24. My counselor is available when I need them.					
Teacher Perception					
25. My teacher believes I can do well in school.					
26. My teacher believes that I can perform difficult task.					
27. My teacher believes that I can be successful in their class.					
28. I believe that I am capable to succeed in more challenging classes.					
29. I believe that I will be successful in advanced placement classes.					
30. I am hopeful about my future.					

APPENDIX B

Teacher Interview Questions

1. What is your highest degree earned?
2. Are there students who should be in advanced placement program who are in your general education class?
3. What should be the disposition of students to be successful in advanced placement classes?
4. What traits should be most important in determining which students should enroll in advanced placement classes?
5. What methods are used to identify students for participation in the advanced placement program?
6. How effective are the methods used to identify students for participation in the advanced placement program?
7. Which methods of identifying students for the advanced placement program should have the most influence?
8. What resources and supports are necessary to teach advanced placement classes?
9. What resources and supports are necessary to teach advanced placement students?
10. Is prior coursework an indicator of student enrollment and success for advanced placement program?

APPENDIX C

Survey Permission Form

May 1, 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school is asking our students grades 9-11 to participate in an advanced placement survey. The survey will be given to obtain useful information from students about their feelings and perspective about advanced placement program.

Questions on the survey will include prior course work, teacher expectations, academic motivation, peer affiliation, counselor advisement, and teacher perception.

Your child's participation in this survey will help to determine the next steps in improving and sustaining a successful advanced placement program. An effective advanced placement program will have a positive impact on student achievement.

This survey will be anonymous and confidential. The survey will be a paper and pencil survey. Students will not have to include any personal information. The privacy of the student is protected. The survey should take 5-10 minutes to complete.

If you choose to have your student to opt out to this survey please respond via email to Dana Pugh at dana_pugh@gwinnett.k12.ga.us

Please respond by May 23, 2016

APPENDIX D

Teacher Interview Agreement

May 1, 2016

In order to determine the needs of the advanced placement program, we are conducting an interview of the language arts teachers in grades 9-11. Your response to the interview questions is crucial in providing the necessary information to have useful classes and activities for the program.

The purpose of this interview/survey is to determine what resources and training are needed to improve instruction in the advanced placement program. Also, what methods are used to identify students who are in the advanced placement program.

We are asking teachers to participate in a voluntary interview that will last 5-10 minutes regarding the advanced placement program on or before May 27, 2016.

I voluntarily agree to participate in an interview about the advanced placement program.

Teacher's Signature

Date

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