A study of the relationship between societal influences and reading and mathematics achievement

Carol D. Mungo
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ABSTRACT

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B.A. SPELMAN COLLEGE, 1970  

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A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIETAL INFLUENCES  
AND READING AND MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT

Advisor: Dr. Claudette Williams

Dissertation dated May, 2002

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between select societal influences, such as family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school environment, and community involvement, and students' values on academic success. The seven questions asked in this research examined the relationship between multiple selected variables and students' academic achievement. The review of literature focused on societal influences impacting values and academic achievement.

This study investigated two dependent variables—student values and academic achievement (in reading and mathematics)—as they relate to six independent variables—the societal influences. The data are presented and analyzed with respect to each of the research questions/hypotheses formulated, and the findings of each are reported. A questionnaire was developed by the researcher to collect responses to address the questions prepared to guide this study. The study was conducted in four middle schools.
in the Atlanta Public Schools System. Of the four middle schools selected, two were classified as high socio-economic status (SES) and two as low SES. The students, in those schools who were chosen to respond to this questionnaire, were randomly selected. Questionnaires were taken to the four middle schools to be administered by school personnel.

All null hypotheses were answered from the data gathered. All twelve hypotheses were tested utilizing Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient to determine the correlation between the variables. There were two significant correlations found between the variables. There were significant correlations between family structures and student academic achievement in mathematics. ANOVA was also used to compare the effects of societal influences on student academic achievement in reading and mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Data from the ANOVA revealed that there was a significant difference in school and academic achievement in reading.

The results implied that school administrators address the significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in reading and mathematics. The researcher recommended that school personnel and family join forces to promote positive values and academic achievement.
A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIETAL INFLUENCES AND READING AND MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT

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

BY

CAROL DEAN STEWART MUNGO

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

MAY 2002
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

For years educators have articulated the need for improved academic achievement at all grade levels. Numerous studies have been conducted and educational reform movements organized to address this challenge. School systems have rewritten curriculum, restructured classrooms, tested teachers, increased standards, and demanded accountability. Despite these and other reform efforts, indications in many states, including Georgia, are that very little has changed regarding student academic achievement. It is prudent that educators look at other factors that contribute to low academic achievement.

Although changes are needed, some researchers have asserted that a good education begins at birth. Parents are the first and most significant teachers a child will ever experience. Because people and society are deviating from traditional values, many children are deprived of this experience. The traditional family has changed dramatically. A student who experiences parental neglect will not be interested in the daily lesson.

According to Whitehead (1992), social woes stem from hard evidence of family failure: the rising rate of juvenile crime, teen pregnancy, drug abuse and teen suicide, the growing number of babies born addicted to drugs, the dramatic increase in out of wedlock birth, the unprecedented rise in child poverty, and a divorce rate that ranks as one of the highest
in the world. These conditions affect family structure, home, school, and community. These conditions are also an indication of changing value systems. Do these changing value systems of parents and society affect students’ academic achievement?

Society, composed of many entities, including parents and educators, is responsible for meeting the needs of children. Cetron and Gayle (1991) reported that the landmark study "A Nation at Risk," taught Americans a lesson they could have learned with a brief visit to most any classroom in the land: It is becoming more challenging for schools to satisfactorily educate children. Students leave school unable to read, write, and calculate numbers effectively. Achievement scores from the National Assessment Educational Progress (NAEP, 1992) indicate that, in reading, 59 percent of fourth graders, 69 percent of eighth graders, and 75 percent of twelfth graders in the United States reached the “basic” level of achievement on the NAEP scale. This is the lowest level of performance. A smaller percentage reached the “proficient” level, 25 percent of fourth graders, 28 percent of eighth graders, and 37 percent of twelfth graders. Only 2 to 4 percent of students taking these examinations reached the “advanced” level. All other students scored below the “basic” level in reading, 41 percent of fourth graders, 31 percent of eighth graders, and 25 percent of twelfth graders.

Students scored even lower in mathematics. More than one-third of the students in all three grades did not reach the “basic” level of achievement on the NAEP Scale. At the “basic” level, 61 percent of fourth graders, 63 percent of eighth graders, and 64 percent of twelfth graders made these scores in mathematics. A smaller percentage scored at the “proficient” level, 18 percent of fourth graders, 24 percent of eighth graders,
and 16 percent of twelfth graders. At the “advanced” level, 2 percent of fourth graders, 2 percent of twelfth graders, and 4 percent of eighth graders achieved at the highest level. The results of this national standardized test strongly suggest a deficiency in students' academic achievement. Who’s responsible for this deficiency? Since there is a need for a change, one wonders if more research should include factors that influence students' values. Eitzen (1992) reports that problem children are socially created. Perhaps it is time to research societal influences—family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school and community—as they relate to academic achievement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationships that may exist among select societal influences, such as family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school environment, and community involvement as they impact academic success in reading and mathematics. In a comprehensive review of research, Hariman (1990) found enough evidence to say that when students receive help, they develop the good side of themselves and there is evidence of academic improvement. Hariman also found, “Educators have the opportunity to teach students principles in which they can assign values to assist in becoming more successful and responsible individuals. Students who value education will strive for excellence. Good test scores impact self-esteem and social behavior positively. Changing the value system of less motivated students to achieve constructive goals may impact life-long learning, in turn, having a positive influence on society.”
Background of the Problem

During the early stages of American history, education was the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, habits, values, or attitude (World Book, 1994). Families were often responsible for educating children, while working within their communities. When public schools were first established, parents and communities still had significant influence on the education and value system of their children. Schools and communities had a close-knit relationship and shared similar values.

As time passed, there was a transformation of the economy. According to Eitzen (1992), the standard of living for most families declined. Many families escaped this decline by having both spouses to work outside the home. This economic crisis put a strain on the American family. While some families were able to cope, others facing downward mobility, could not endure the stress. For example, marital separation and divorce divided families. Increasingly, parents fought depression, high levels of alcohol consumption, and spouse and child abuse. Children, so desperate for approval, found the increasing gap in material differences between themselves and their peers very stressful. They set out to raise their self-esteem and by acting tough, joining gangs, rejecting authority, experimenting with drugs and sex, and even running away from home.

When the child's family failed, he or she looked to the mass media—television, radio, video games, movies, and printed material—for relief. Children view many hours of adult advertisements, poor role models, violence, nudity, and foul language. John Leo (1996) contends that television executives claim that they are just "reflecting society," but they are shaping society and helping to maintain the coarse, confrontational attitudes
embedded in gutter talk. Years ago, critic Lionel Trilling wondered what would happen if the adversarial culture of artistic elite pervaded all of society. What exists now is a culture that celebrates impulse over restraints, notoriety over achievement, rule breaking over rule keeping and incendiary expression over minimal civility (Leo, 1996).

This negative behavior exists because the community is no longer taking responsibility for teaching values. Taffel (1992) explains that there is nowhere near the same community support and leverage that existed just a generation ago to teach positive values. More anonymous urban and bedroom communities have replaced close-knit neighborhoods; extended family may be a plane trip away, rather than a walk down the block; parents have limited time to spend with children because two-parent households have become two-income households; religious organizations have a decreasing impact on daily living. Teaching values, a task that used to be shared by a community of adults, is now in the hands of the parents.

Instead, with the many changes in society, few parents have either the time or the ability to teach their children everything they need to know to become an asset to society. Many parents are teenagers when their first children are born, meaning that children are trying to raise babies, and most times the teenage mother and baby have no support system. The teenage father often neglects his responsibility to the teenage mother and to the child. All of these issues culminate into the question: How will these children receive a positive value system?

According to Hanman (1990), in most states, school systems lack emphasis on teaching morals and values. They show a strong emphasis on test-taking skills and high
test scores. Students graduate thinking that being smart means looking out for self only. Many students are selfish and competitive. Their value systems do not promote generosity or a commitment to the well being of others. In some cases, students who lack academic achievement and have low self-esteem try to compensate by involving themselves in activities that do not promote positive values and behavior. For example, some students may lack the proper skills to read, write, or figure out simple mathematics problems and become involved in drug abuse, pregnancy, or dropping out of school. Students are the most important resource to school and society, raising the question: Is enough being done to protect this very important resource?

Statement of the Problem

There is tremendous concern among educators, parents, and society in general about the failure of students to achieve academic success. Despite research on a number of factors that influence academic success, some of which have been already identified in the literature, this problem still exists on a very high scale. There are a variety of factors that influence students' values and that may affect student achievement. Much of the research conducted on students' influence and academic achievement only included one or two influences—parental and socio-economic status of family. This study investigated family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school and community climate and its impact on academic achievement in reading and mathematics.
Significance of the Study

Some studies suggest that students' environment and socio-economic status influence students' academic achievement. These studies also suggest that home is the major factor in improving students' attitude, behavior, motivation, and self-esteem in school. These studies do not include the outside influences such as mass media, peer pressure, and community climate, which also affect students' values. The researcher has not found any other studies that investigate the wide range of variables that this study is examining. This study investigates the relationship that may exist between selected influences - family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school climate, and community climate, and seeks to understand how they impact academic achievement. Information gathered should enable this researcher to recommend pertinent suggestions to school systems. Administrators may be able to devise methods that will impact positive social behavior and higher test scores. These findings may also help administrators focus on key factors that will assist parents and community in becoming more involved in student academic achievement, and assist with influencing students' values and improving academic achievement. In addition, it is hoped that the findings of this research will generate further interest in this area among other researchers.

Research Questions

The questions asked in this research are designed to guide the direction of the study.
1. Is there a significant relationship between family structure and students' academic achievement in reading and mathematics?

2. Is there a significant relationship between peer pressure and students' academic achievement in reading and mathematics?

3. Is there a significant relationship between mass media and students' academic achievement in reading and mathematics?

4. Is there a significant relationship between socio-economic status and students' academic achievement in reading and mathematics?

5. Is there a significant relationship between school climate and students' academic achievement in reading and mathematics?

6. Is there a significant relationship between community climate and students' academic achievement in reading and mathematics?

Summary

Educational systems and scholars have recognized the need for improved academic achievement at all grade levels. Studies have been done on school curriculum, school climate, teachers, and administrators and have found that a correlation exists between these factors and student motivation and values. Studies also confirm that parents and community are responsible for meeting the needs of children. Both mass media and peer groups influence students through foul language, violence, and nudity. There is a tremendous concern among educators, parents, and society about the failure of students to achieve academic success, pointing to the need for more research in this area.
This study investigates the relationship that exists between selected influences—family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school climate, and community climate—and examines how they may impact students' values and academic achievement.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of literature highlights the prevalent viewpoints of current literature that examine societal influences on students' values and its impact on academic achievement. This section is established by research of the related variables in the study. Independent variables include family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school climate, and community climate. The review of literature will build the foundation for the assumption to be proven that societal influences impact students' values and students' values impact academic achievement, therefore, school systems should include teaching positive values to improve students' performance socially and academically.

The literature for this study is reviewed under the following headings:

Under the heading of Thoughts on Values, the following poem by Eyre & Eyre suggests if teachers and parents guide children in the direction of positive values, learning experiences will be more effective, leading to higher academic achievement in children.
Thoughts on Values

Sustenance and shelter... roof and raiment.

What else?

A chance! What do we owe a child?

The best chance we can give to begin and

To become,

A chance to get past rock and reef into the channel and direction and control
to survive the current.

What children need is a set of carefully crafted,
somewhat magical touchtones
which, in youth, transform into moorings,
giving first the security of place
and then giving growing vessels
a chance to be built strong in still water.

Later the touchtones transform again—
into paddle, rudder, and stern,
allowing fresh, new pilots to negotiate and navigate
the incredible current of adult life.

The magic touchtones that children need,
and that parents owe,
are values—
values that hold us, secure us, guide us.

“But,” come the echoes of folly and abdication,
“We shouldn’t impose our values on children . . . and anyway,
people can only learn by experience, by trial and error,
each person must discover his own values.”

As foolish this, as to say, “calculus must be rediscovered independently by each.”
True that experience is the teacher,
but it can be the experience of parents, and of the ages.

Forcing a child to rediscover the wheel of values
is withholding a lifeline
to a craft stripped of rudder and stern,
drastically increasing the chance of drowning. (Eyre & Eyre, 1993)

Background

“Although many of today’s students are a joy to work with in the classroom, some are not. Some children are angry, alienated and apathetic. A few are uncooperative, rude, abrasive, threatening and even violent. Some abuse drugs. Some are sexually promiscuous. Some belong to gangs. Some are sociopath. Why are some children such problems to themselves, to their parents, to their teachers, and to the community? Is the
cause biological—a result of flawed genes? Is the source pathological—a manifestation of personalities warped by harmful experiences? My strong conviction is that children are not born with sociopathic tendencies; problem children are socially created," Eitzen (1992) stated.

Supporting this view, the National School Safety Center reports the following statistics: (1) One in seven students is affected by bullying, (2) One in twelve students has stayed home from school out of fear of being hurt in school, (3) One in five students has feared being attacked going to or from school, and (4) One in eleven students has reported being a victim of a crime at school (Makesich, 1994).

A study by Moyers in 1995 examines an inner city Los Angeles high school, where a group of students discussed school violence, and were asked if there were any guns on their campus that day. Several students answered in the affirmative. When asked if they could obtain a gun in the next thirty minutes, their questions were "How much money do you have?," "Do you want a plastic gun?," and "Do you want Teflon-tipped bullets?"

After the notorious shootings at Columbine High School in Colorado, National attention has been drawn to school safety. The task of making society a safer place for young people continues to be tedious and tremendous. The words of wisdom, "It takes a village to raise a child," could be the key to society's woes, if the village is teaching positive values.

To develop a sense of right and wrong, a young child needs a moral framework—a positive set of values. A young child needs a clear and simple set of criteria that can be
used in any situation to tell if something is right or wrong. Before puberty a child needs to use a positive value system to make daily decisions. Several important changes occur when a child reaches puberty that makes this a particularly difficult time for him or her. A child's physical change is the most obvious - growth spurts, weight gain or loss, reshaping and developing of the body, hair growth in intimate places, and voice changing. The release of hormones causes the body to transform from that of a child to that of a young person with the physical functions of an adult. These hormones produce changes in emotions, feelings, and attitude, consequently, creating a need for independence and the desire for chances to make personal decisions. The youth's decisions will be based on various factors. These factors include family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school, and community. The success of the youth relies heavily on adequate preparation during formative years, like a house built on a good foundation.

The Influence of Family Structure

Sroufe (1995) quoted Art Linkletter that child rearing remains the most important thing we'll ever be called upon to do in our lives. You may never be president or win a Nobel Prize, but you're producing the future with your children. Families are the basic units of society. When you have weak families, you have a weak society.

Many children are growing up without hopes of enjoying the benefits of adulthood. Children are not learning the skills necessary to participate in the educational system or to make the transition into the working world. They are running the risk of not becoming responsible parents due to limited experience in a structured family life and lack the resources and skills to raise their own children.
At the same time, the bridge between achievers and non-achievers is widening. Many young people are functionally illiterate, disconnected from family and school, depressed, prone to criminal activities, and eventually becoming parents of unplanned and unwanted babies, thus suppressing their dreams. Research shows that some young people act in anti-social ways because they have lost their dreams, and society is responsible for that loss. Whitehead (1992) believes that these harmful trends are rooted in irresponsible adult behavior: mothers who take drugs, fathers abandon children, parents marry and divorce casually, or never marry at all. The consequences of families that neglect to love and guide their children are not limited to individuals, or children of individual families. These consequences affect the whole of society.

According to Eitzen (1992), a number of recent trends regarding the family suggest a lessening of family influence on children. Three million children between the ages of five and thirteen have no adult supervision after school. This study has found that these latchkey children are twice as likely to use drugs as those who come home from school to find an adult waiting.

Eitzen (1992) also found that more than one million children each year experience the divorce of their parents. It is estimated that sixty percent of today's five-year-olds will live in a single-parent family before they reach the age of eighteen. Ninety percent of these children will live with their mothers, which usually means that they will exist on a decidedly lower income than a two-parent family.

Gibson (1997) found that seventy five percent of parents blame society for drugs being sold and used in the nation's schools. Only fourteen percent of parents hold
themselves responsible for the nation's drug problem, and over half of all parents feel that they have no influence on whether their kids take drugs. In contrast to this parental denial, teens name drugs as their top problem and a surprising eighty-four percent would be willing to sign a pledge not to smoke, drink or use drugs for an entire year.

Translated? Kids are looking for adults who care. Gibson's (1997) research also shows that children from one-parent families differ significantly from the children of two-parent families with regard to school behaviors. Children from single-parent families are less likely to be high achievers; they are consistently more likely to be late, truant, and subject to disciplinary action, and they are more than twice as likely to drop out of school. The study has also shown a correlation between single parenting and low academic achievement. However, the presence of extended family members has been shown to overcome this problem in many instances.

A study by Ryan and Adams (1998) showed that a number of family characteristics like social support, parental depression, family dysfunction, hostile parenting, and child's academic skills interact in specific ways to produce positive or negative effects on achievement.

With certain family characteristics having a negative effect on children, many youth experience a time when keeping up with schoolwork is difficult. These periods may last several weeks and may include social problems as well as a slide in academic performance. It is a time when parents should be available to simply listen, suggest coping strategies, provide a supportive home environment, and encourage youth to participate in school activities (Pantleo, 1992).
Understanding the factors that may put an adolescent at-risk for academic failure will help parents determine if their teen is in need of extra support. Being aware of common problems can help parents know when it is important to reach out and ask for help before a “difficult time” develops into a more serious situation, according to the Journal of Educational Research.

Ryan and Adams (1998) suggest that when family problems appear it might be most helpful to intervene at the level of the whole family, so that the general patterns of dysfunction can be reduced. This will allow parents to adopt more helpful parenting practices and provide opportunities of the appropriate support for children. Benson (1999) noted that only 12 percent of a child’s time is actually spent in the classroom, therefore, the remaining 88 percent is away from the school environment and under parental supervision. In other words, the home environment is a significant factor in creating values to uplift academic achievement.

According to Riera (1995) first, parents must believe that if they spend the first 13 years of their child’s life teaching a positive set of values, a healthy way to express emotions, and the ability to make good decisions, some of their efforts will pay off. They will have helped their child to construct an “internal guidance system” with which to navigate adolescence. Second, parents must be confident that when their child becomes a teenager, he/she will begin to use that system in gathering the information necessary to
adjust his/her course, in order to move toward the target of independence and healthy living.

Not only does good parenting play a role in a child’s academic achievement, but also the development of self-control—a gradual and complex process, in which maturation develops in the youth’s capacity. Parents affect the development of self-control capacities through a process that is consistent with guided self-regulation. Sroufe (1995). This concept refers to a process in which parents provide support for unmastered skills through guidance and feedback. Along these lines, Schaffer (1996) points out that parents can help out at each phase of self-control development by (1) creating the external controls necessary before self-regulation is mastered, and (2) engineering the situations so that they are more readily controllable, given the nature of the strategies.

Harter’s (1997) study reported that adolescents low in self-control come from homes in which there was a high level of conflict, particularly about child-rearing values, parents neglected to teach their children, and parents demanded very little of their children, both in terms of household chores and school work. The study also reported that three central dimensions of parenting promote children's self-esteem: (1) acceptance of their children, (2) setting clearly defined limits for the child's behavior, and (3) allowing individual expression and respecting the child's unique personality and point of view. Consequently, self-esteem in childhood has been related to mental health later in life, for example a lack of self-esteem has been related to social dysfuctions and mental pathologies like depression and anxiety (Harter, 1997). The relation is not always straightforward as overly high self-esteem has also been found to be dysfunctional in peer
relations, but the bulk of the evidence suggests that a positive sense of self is psychologically healthy.

A poll by *U.S. News and World Report* (1996) showed that mothers and fathers are clearly feeling the strain of balancing the demands of work and family. Also, The National Parenting Association in New York conducted a poll of 500 parents, with kids at home, finding that 86 percent of fathers and 73 percent of mothers hold jobs, 1 in every 5 parents works two jobs and only 1 in 6 mothers is a stay at home parent. As a result, 84 percent of today's parents believe their roles are tougher than those of their own mothers and fathers. Also, 53 percent of the parents say employers do little or nothing to help families.
The Family Continuum

The Family Continuum depicts the degree to which a family promotes skills needed for loving and responsible relationships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dysfunctional Families</th>
<th>Loving, Functional Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Self-destructive behavior</td>
<td>• Self-loving behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confused attitudes regarding sexuality</td>
<td>• Healthful attitudes toward sexuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Irresponsible and harmful drug use</td>
<td>• Healthful attitudes and practices regarding drug use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Difficulty communicating and expressing feelings in healthful ways</td>
<td>• Healthful ways to express feelings and to communicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confused value system</td>
<td>• Faith and moral values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inadequate decision-making skills</td>
<td>• Responsible decision-making skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inadequate coping skills and reliance on instant gratification</td>
<td>• Coping skills with the ability to delay gratification when necessary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Figure 1. The Family Continuum (Meeks Heit Books, 1998)
The Influence of Peer Pressure

Peer pressure can be good if it encourages children to do something positive, but it is bad if it causes children to go against their positive values. Children sometimes give in to pressure from their peers to do something they do not want to do because they are looking for the approval of others.

Eitzen (1992) stated, “The very idea of peer pressure strikes fear in the hearts of many parents. Images of their children following the crowd rather than remaining independent thinkers is enough to start any parent lecturing children about good judgment. But what many parents overlook is that sometimes peer influence can be instructive - and even healthy. Children interact in this social dynamic with their peers because it teaches them how to get along in the world. Children must have a good value system to help them make the necessary judgment to determine when it is beneficial to go with the flow and when it is critical to walk away.”

Also according to Swartz (1996), violence among youth, especially in schools, is one of American society’s most pressing concerns. It is also a source of controversy. While no recent nationwide study of the real extent of youth violence is available, small scale and regional studies indicate that youth violence is increasing. In addition, youth, like adults, are now more frequently using guns instead of fists to settle disputes. Youth violence has also been thought to be an urban public school problem and a consequence of poverty and family dysfunction. Stable suburban and rural communities are now experiencing it, as are private schools.
Dobson's (1998) surveys indicate that most prevalent type of youth crime is theft and the most common type of violence are fistfights, bullying and shoving matches, all of which impact academic achievement. Dobson also reported that whenever a youngster moves into a new neighborhood or a new school district, he or she often has to fight, either verbally or physically, to establish him or herself in the hierarchy of strength. In a group of children, there is usually a top dog who bosses everyone else around. At the bottom of the heap, there is also a little defeat pup that takes the brunt of everyone's abuse. Each child between those extremes usually knows where he or she ranks in relation to the others.

Also, a study presented at the American Psychological Association (APA) Annual Convention looks at the familial and environmental factors that may contribute to bullying behavior. The researchers divided the students into three groups: those who engaged in little or no bullying behavior, those who reported moderate levels of bullying and those who reported excessive amounts of bullying behaviors. Those who reported the highest bullying behavior were also most likely to report "significantly greater levels of forceful parental discipline, viewing of television violence, misconduct at home and in the community, and fighting." They also spent less time with adults, had fewer adult role models and fewer positive peer influences. Thirty-two percent of them lived in a stepfamily household and 36 percent lived in a single parent household. They also had a higher level of exposure to gang activity and easier access to guns.

Eitzen (1992) contends that children, dependent on peer approval, often find the increasing gap in material difference between themselves and their peers intolerable.
This may explain why some bully, act tough, join gangs, reject authority, experiment with drugs and sex, or run away from home.

In addition, more drugs are available to children and the pressure to try them is more intense. For this reason, parents must promote values to maintain a healthy body and mind. Parents and peers can be the biggest influence in a youth's decision not to use drugs. They must have awareness, the courage to communicate, and persistence to influence behavior.

In a large number of cities, youth gangs have become more common. Often, members of rival gangs attend the same school. Many times violence from the streets involving drugs and fights overflow into schools. In some instances, violence starts with a small number of students and other students bring weapons to school for protection.

In some cases, the adult perception of peers as having one culture or a unified front of dangerous influences is inaccurate. More often than not, peers reinforce family values, but they have the potential to encourage problem behavior as well. Although the negative peer influence is constantly emphasized, more can be done to help youth experience the family and the peer group as mutually constructive environments.

Trump (1991) concludes that Inglehart's theory is equally as important as the hypothesis: "to a large extent, one's basic values reflect the conditions that prevailed during one's pre-adult years" (Inglehart, 1990). In other words, the environmental conditions that exist when one is growing up are seen as crucial in determining the psychological need level, in which one fixates, and the type of values one holds most
Values are different for different people. Some decisions are made based on individual values.

The Influence of Mass Media

Prior to television, the opportunity to see remote geographical regions, different cultural practices, and different people around the globe typically did not occur in the lives of many people. This rich medium delivers its message—the sight and sound of "being there"—and requires little in the way of literacy skills or other forms of learning that come with age (Kunkel & Roberts, 1990).

Generally, the mass media can be divided into two broad categories: print media, which consist of newspapers, magazines, and books and electronic media, consisting of radio, recordings, television, video, and film. Also, any understanding of the mass media cannot be complete without mentioning advertising. While advertising is not technically media, it serves as a support system for the mass media.

Through the medium of some books, magazines, newspapers, television, radio, music, talk shows, computer games, and Internet, youth have been exposed to the ills of society. School officials are not only concerned with an increase in violence, but also what seems to be a growing disrespect for life among youth. Tulane University researchers found that 20 percent of students at suburban high schools near New Orleans felt it was okay to shoot someone who had stolen something from them.

In a national poll conducted by Easterlin and Crimmins (1991), over one thousand adults were asked what are the most positive or negative influences on children today. Of
the five negative influences identified by respondents, four were mass media. Named were MTV, politicians, movies, television, and popular music. Developments in communication technology have greatly increased students' accessibility to the media. And so, while the public's concern mounts regarding the impact of the media on society, evident by the latest round in the public's discourse on media and violence, the students who sit in the classroom today are consuming more media than ever.

Consequently, children have considerable access to music. Popular music is easily shared, and taping music from the stereo or a peer's recording is relatively easy. Music is used to relax, escape, affect mood, and express healthy rebellion. It provides a source of commonality within the peer group. With advances in audio technology, adolescents can take their music with them virtually anywhere. Lull (1992) writes, "Popular musicians are loved, even worshiped for their ability to speak to their audiences." Moreover, Lull (1992) states, "An artist, whose only contact with the audience is through the sale of millions of compact discs and tapes, communicates 'personally' with each listener." In a newspaper article in the Atlanta Journal on "What's the Industry's Responsibility?," Tommy Henderson, A & R Manager of LaFace Records, stated, "As a parent, I care about what my child hears and sees. It is up to the parents to monitor what their kids listen to. I don't really like the blatant vulgarity but it's out there because it comes down to dollars. If somebody's going to buy it, somebody's going to sell it."

The American Psychological Association Commission on Youth and Violence's (1993) report, Violence and Youth, represents still one more acknowledgment of the link
between media violence and aggression. An entire volume of the report deals with televised violence and its effect on adolescents. Conflicting research results and politics resulted in an ambiguous summary, despite the fact that researchers found a causal relationship between viewing television violence and aggression.

According to Davies (1993), the National Institute of Mental Health concluded that the research question was no longer whether but how violence on television leads to aggressive behavior. The APA acknowledged that television violence could cause aggressive behavior.

Eitzen (1992) emphasizes the influence of the media, particularly the messages surveyed by television, by the movies, and by advertising. These media outlets glamorize materialism, violence, drugs and alcohol use, hedonistic lifestyles, and easy sex. The messages children receive are consistent. They are bombarded with materialism and consumerism, with what it takes to be a success, with the legitimacy of violence and with what it takes to be cool.

Easterlin and Crimmons (1991) state that there is a high influence the media plays in the lives of children and it will continue to expand. Media presence is a fact of life—one that cannot be ignored. As a result, there exists controversy over the need for media literacy in schools. It would be a mistake to underestimate the tremendous amount of learning that is taking place in this media world. This level of learning is so great that mass media can legitimately be described as affecting a "re-schooling of society." For all of these reasons, it is necessary for educators to help students become critical users of the
media if they are going to be the best students and the most informed citizens that education wants them to be.

Schwartz (1996) promotes out-of-school programs, either independently operated or school-sponsored, to keep youth constructively engaged when families are unavailable and to provide them with attention from caring adults and good role models. They also keep youth away from negative influences on the street and television and video violence. Programs can also offer educational enrichment, assistance with schoolwork, and help develop positive values.

The Influence of Socio-Economic Status

In the 1950s the typical family consisted of three children and one paycheck, due to the father working and the mother staying at home. When the standard of living for most families declined, weekly wages fell 14 percent between 1973 and 1986. Also, during the same years, the already low wages for black men in poor areas dropped 50 percent. Many families escaped this decline by changing to a dual income household. The typical family then had one or two children and two paychecks. This meant that more women are working outside the home. Over 50 percent of mothers with children under age six work outside the home and about 70 percent of mothers, with children between the ages of six and seventeen, are in the workplace. As a result, more and more children are being raised in families in which the parents have less and less time for them (Eitzen, 1992).
In addition, the mortgage payments of homeowners in 1970 took 17.9 percent of the families' income. In 1986 mortgage payments took 29 percent of median family income. As a result, there was a decline of home ownership, a basic element of the American dream.

Inglehart (1990) claims that the environment conditions, especially levels of economic and physical security, are the primary determinants of the values that shape the social and political outlook of individuals. Poverty, often fed by racial discrimination, says the APA, lays "a foundation of anger and violence." In addition, the APA states that many violence-prone students are from single parent families. In many cases, one parent, who often works over-time to support the family, is unable to supervise an unruly teenager. Over 70 percent of all juvenile court cases involve children from single parent families.

Trump (1991) states that more than any other aspect of the economy, the personal economic circumstances of young people and their families influence their subjective perception of material security, and hence their values.

According to Sweet and Singh (1994), children living in poverty watch more television than average—some up to seven hours a day. By the time a poor child graduates from high school, he or she may have watched as many as 22,000 hours of television.

Sweet and Singh (1994) also found that socio-economic status (SES) has a large and pervasive influence over children's school achievement. SES had a strong and direct impact on the level of social support perceived by parents, on the level of parental
depression, on the tendency to use hostile parenting practices, on the child's academic skills, and on the level of achievement attained by the children.

Furthermore, Henry (1997) conducted a linear regression analysis to isolate effect on achievement of socio-economic status, race, and residence type. The residence type considers whether a child lives with a single parent, both parents, a guardian or in a foster home. The analysis showed residence type has minimal effect on a child's academic achievement. Race is more likely to have an effect, but poverty is more than twice as likely to have an effect on a child's achievement scores. Across the race spectrum, white pupils' score higher than black pupils, and pupils of other races are placed somewhere in between. Across the socio-economic spectrum, pupils who pay full price for lunch score higher on tests than those who qualify for free lunches, and scores of those who qualify for reduced-priced lunches fall in between.

Research by Quattrociocchi (2000) revealed that when parents are involved in their children's education and learning, children achieve more and are motivated to succeed. Quattrociocchi's studies confirm that families of higher socio-economic backgrounds with higher levels of education are more likely to have increased parental involvement. However, that does not condemn children of economically disadvantaged families to failure in any way. The studies also indicate that what parents do at home have twice as strong an influence on children's achievement as does the family's socio-economic status. School or teacher intervention may be the support these families need to help their children succeed.
The Influence of School

The function of schooling in society is multi-faceted. In addition to helping children acquire basic reading, writing, mathematics, and other subject skills, schooling promotes good reasoning and the ability to seek out information. It also helps develop positive social skills. Above all, schools are the primary institutions in society for instilling a love of accomplishment and encouragement of lifelong learning—important for individual success and for the continuation of a democracy (Ramey & Ramey, 1994).

Parental involvement is also widely accepted as a factor in school achievement. In some instances, however, schools have been slow to form partnerships with poor parents and families of color. When the social distance between families and the school prevents parents from providing support, the child's emotional resilience and motivation to learn are compromised. The task for schools is to find a way to resolve the conflicts and to engage parents in support of the school and the curriculum. It will also mean integrating culturally specific preferences into the school organization. Schools must provide the student with a sense of belonging.

Meanwhile, some researchers feel that what is taught in the home, in either the positive or the negative sense, can be far more influential on children than what is taught in the schools or in any other institution. Parents have the first four to five years of teaching their children before public schools actually teach them. Parents have the potential to be a drastically more influential force (both by example and by concept) during at the first fourteen or fifteen years of life (Eyre & Eyre, 1993).
In spite of the belief in conditioning through negative reinforcement, many educators are acutely aware that punishment and threats are counterproductive. Making children suffer in order to alter their future behavior can often elicit temporary compliance, but this strategy is unlikely to help children become ethical, compassionate decision makers. Punishment, even if referred to as consequences, tends to generate anger, defiance, and a desire for revenge. It also models the use of power rather than reason, and tears at the important relationship between adult and child. Teachers who make a point of rewarding children induce them to learn or comply with an adult's demand. As with punishment, the offer of rewards can elicit temporary compliance in many cases. Unfortunately, carrots turn out to be no more effective than sticks at helping children to become caring, responsible adults or lifelong self-directed learners (Henry, 1997).

Kohn's (1993) studies have found that behavior modification programs are rarely successful at producing lasting changes in attitudes or even behavior. When the reward stops, students usually return to the way that they acted before the rewards began. Kohn has also discovered that children whose parents make frequent use of rewards tend to be less generous than are their peers.

Extrinsic motivations do not alter the emotional or cognitive commitments that underlie behavior, at least not in a desirable direction. A child promised a treat for learning or acting responsibly has been given every reason to stop doing so when there is no longer a reward to be gained (Kohn, 1993).
Research and logic suggest that punishment and reward are not opposites, but two sides of the same coin. Both strategies amount to ways of trying to manipulate student's behavior. Students ask, "What do you want me to do, and what do I get for doing it?" Neither strategy helps the student to really understand, "What kind of person do I want to be?" Rewards are not helpful at enhancing achievement or fostering good values.

One of the most important lessons a young person can learn is that he/she have options, and teachers, counselors, and principals are in many cases the only persons to convey that message. For many young people, the only way to escape poverty is through education—an education good enough to enable the student to succeed at a higher educational institution, or start a business, or go into public service.

The school does not create jobs and it cannot erase the damage done by many societal influences. Schools focus on the reason they exist—the education of the children shown by test scores. The problem is what should be included in the education. Schools need connections to the community. The geographic area served by a school broadens in the middle and high schools, and these schools are located at a greater distance from a student's home community. In defining their own community, schools must recognize the unique strengths of diverse, multiethnic, and multiracial school populations in both rural and urban settings. They must implement strategies to provide multiple opportunities for the larger community.

Equally important, when the social distance between families and the school prevents parents from providing support, the child's emotional resilience and motivation to learn are compromised. The task for schools is to find a way to resolve the conflicts
and to engage parents in support of the school and the curriculum. The major themes of school improvement are the strengthening of teacher skills, the systematizing of the curriculum, the improvement of organizational structures, and the involvement of parents and other citizens in a school/community partnership. Underlying these major themes are a school climate and culture that are of utmost importance in either supporting or destroying the opportunity for these four themes to function successfully.

The key individual for providing instructional leadership in a school is the principal. The National Association of Secondary School Principals' Handbook on Effective Instructional Leadership lists the following traits of successful instructional leaders:

1. They hold high expectations for teachers and staff.
2. They spend a major portion of their day in working with teachers and improving the instructional program.
3. They work in identifying and diagnosing instructional problems.
4. They are deeply involved in the school's culture climate to influence it in positive ways.

The principal's instructional leadership behavior has influence on the internal structure of the school. A school's internal structure includes its instructional practices, organizational structure, climate, and culture. It is in the design, development, implementation, and interaction of these internal structures that the principal has opportunity for maximum influence on the student outcome. This is detailed in Figure 2 that shows a model of instructional leadership.
A Model for Instructional Leadership

Figure 2. Instructional Leadership Role of the Principal (Ubben & Hughes, 1997).
The model is divided into four sets of factors that influence student's values and achievement. The outer circle consists of the external structures: expectations, values, and beliefs that influence a principal's behavior. The second circle shows the leadership behaviors and forces exhibited by the principal. The third circle identifies the internal structures created within the school by both principal and staff. The fourth circle is the focal point of the school, the student outcomes.

A principal's beliefs about the ability all children to learn are very important. In Blumberg and Greenfield's (1990) findings of the most effective schools, principals of effective schools strongly believe and are committed to the ability of all children to learn regardless of race, social conditions, or gender. These values and beliefs are very important because staff members will key into what they believe the principal considers important. This has a very strong influence on the establishment of a school's culture.

Schools have been asked to act as instruments of social change by taking on more and different responsibilities. Schools have tried to be responsive to the social, political, and economic problems of society. This was possible at one time, but changes in society have been too overwhelming in family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic conditions, and community for schools to act alone.

The Influence of the Community

Children who come from poor and marginalized communities are especially in need of schools that can provide stability and support. Taffel (1992) explains that there is nowhere near the same community support and leverage to teach values that existed just a
generation ago. More “anonymous urban and bedroom communities” have replaced
close-knit neighborhoods; extended family may be a plane trip away rather than down the
block, and religious organizations have less impact on daily living than they once did.
Teaching values, which used to be a task shared by a community of adults, is now almost
exclusively the job of a child’s parents. Some children socialize in communities in which
physical aggression and macho behavior are valued. These children sometimes have
considerable difficulty learning to suppress such behavior in school, just as children more
conservatively socialized may feel deeply threatened by open aggression in the school.
Both the children who are tolerant of high levels of aggressive behavior and those who
are not undoubtedly acquired their dispositions through the normal developmental
process of identification with the values and behavior of family and friends. The point is
not whether a high level or a low level of aggression is more desirable, but that different
communities see the acquisition of a particular level as a normal accomplishment.
Schools, by valuing children who display low aggression, set the stage for conflict with
children and families who do not believe that physical docility reflects competence and
efficacy (Bowman, 1994).

Moreover, it is very important that communities provide a safe, supportive,
nurturing environment for adolescents as they grow up. At the same time, families must
provide limits and expectations for all members to live by. The community that an
adolescent lives in has a major impact on whether she or he will pay more attention to
adults or to other young people. Meese (1999), from his study of several hundred youths
in several communities: a rural area, a poor inner-city neighborhood with many minority
residents, and an upper-middle class suburb, reports that sweeping conclusions cannot be drawn as if they were all alike. Urban youth faced with conflicting standards of family, school and social agencies were apt to reject all these values and create their own, often among peers. Suburban and rural youth, however, were more likely to have values very close to those held by the important adults in their lives. They might question adult values, but they wanted consistent rules and standards they could evaluate.

Furthermore, communities must take an active role in school decision-making. Families must find a variety of ways to participate and adopt new roles for participation in community activities. Communities influence a principal's behavior by their willingness to contribute resources to the school in the form of volunteering or financial support. Parents and community volunteers may contribute their time to a project in the school's program that could carry influence. These projects involve decision-making about band, athletics, tutorial, and other activities. Parents and students self-esteem will increase in the school and in the community.

Meese (1999) also found that more than 70 percent of local students act on convictions, stand up for beliefs, and are optimistic about their future. However, the study found that only 17 percent of students said adults in the community value youth, and only 27 percent said they feel they are given useful roles in the community.

Summary

The review of literature highlights current literature that examines the relationship of societal influences on student values. The societal influences are family structure,
peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school climate, and community involvement. The literature indicates that societal influences shape the value systems of students. It also indicates that societal influences not only shape the value systems of students, but also increase students' academic achievement.
CHAPTER III
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter describes the theoretical framework of the variables that are investigated. It describes the relationship between the selected variables in the investigation, defines variables, states the hypothesis and the null hypothesis, and presents the limitations of the study.

Relationship Among the Variables

This section explains the variables investigated and how they relate based on theory and literature that address students' value systems and students' academic achievement. There are six independent variables that were researched in conjunction with the dependent variable. These independent variables are societal influences—(1) Family Structure, (2) Peer Pressure, (3) Mass Media, (4) Socio-economic Status, (5) School, and (6) Community. Figure 3 is a representation of the investigation undertaken.
Independent Variables

SOCIETAL INFLUENCES

- Family Structure
- Peer Pressure
- Media
- Socio-economic Status
- School
- Community

Dependent Variable
Student’s Academic Achievement

Figure 3. Diagrammatic Representation of Research
This model suggests that a student's achievement can be influenced by his/her values. Family structures, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school and community influence his/her value system. Although there are other variables that can and do relate to one's values, these variables selected for investigation in this study have far more implications for academic success.

Wentzel (1989) found a significant positive relationship between students' grade point average and their efforts to be dependable and responsible. The study also found that failure to conform to the social standards of the classroom characterized students who made low grades. Wentzel's study found a significant positive relationship between classroom competence, social skills, and academic ability. The study of students, in fourth through sixth grades, indicated a positive correlation between social skills and grade point average. There is empirical evidence suggesting that there is an association between misbehavior in school and poor academic performance.

Moreover, a study by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications reveals that (1) in cartoons children see a mean and dangerous world in which people are not to be trusted and disputes are legitimately settled by violence, and (2) children who see so much violence become desensitized to it. The powerful and consistent message from television is reinforced in the movies children watch and in the toys that are created from their characters. American values and the messages sent by the mass media go hand in hand. The values transmitted to the individual in American society via television is of the self made person, one who has achieved money, position, and privilege through his or her own efforts in a highly competitive system. Economic
success, as evidence of material possessions, is the most common indicator of who is and who is not successful. Also, Eitzen (1992) found that economic success has come to be the common measure of self-worth claimed. Many young people try to attain this self-worth illegally by committing crimes such as selling drugs, prostitution, robbery, theft, murder, and other violent acts. These actions are usually a part of the community in which they live.

In all communities, however, there is an informal system of influence that affects daily life. The nature of the system may vary from community to community, but there will be a way in which community leaders will exert influence on the direction of those decisions to be made that affect the community. The school administrator needs to be aware of this influence system, understand how it works in his or her community, and be able to communicate with it.

In a pluralistic community, the schools must serve many publics, each with its values and orientations. In such a setting the role of the school administrator often becomes that of mediator of conflicts between various competing pressure groups. The administrator must remain neutral and be able to work successfully with many groups.

From the previous discussion, it is evident that the variables selected from the study do impact students' values and academic achievement. What is not known is if the relationship between these variables will be true for the population being studied or the extent to which these relationships may vary according to the statistical applications. This research is, therefore, undertaken to provide answers to some of the questions associated with societal influences and students' values as they may impact academic achievement.
Definition of Variables

This study will investigate two dependent variables as they relate to six independent variables, which are primarily societal influences. The following definitions describe the variables as they are used in this study.

Dependent Variables

*Students' Value System*: The standard of the students' actions and the attitudes of their heart and mind that shape who they are, how they live, and how they treat other people.

*Students' Academic Achievement*: The students' total score in reading and mathematics received on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Independent Variables

*Family Structure*: Refers to the existence of one parent or two parents in a household. The influence of family on students’ decision-making.

*Peer Pressure*: Influence of students’ friends on morals.

*Mass Media*: The means of communication (radio, newspaper, television, magazine, etc.) aimed at the widest possible audience.

*Socio-economic Status*: The level of income of families as determined by the public index. The ways of maintaining economic level.

*School*: Place for teaching and learning.

*Community*: People living in the same place and subjected to the same laws. People of any district or town.
Null Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are presented:

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between family structure and student reading achievement.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between family structure and student mathematics achievement.

HO₃: There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and student reading achievement.

HO₄: There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and student mathematics achievement.

HO₅: There is no significant relationship between mass media and student reading achievement.

HO₆: There is no significant relationship between mass media and student mathematics achievement.

HO₇: There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and student reading achievement.

HO₈: There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and student mathematics achievement.

HO₉: There is no relationship between school and student reading achievement.

HO₁₀: There is no significant relationship between school and student mathematics achievement.
HO_{11}: There is no significant relationship between the community and student reading achievement.

HO_{12}: There is no significant relationship between the community and student mathematics achievement.

Limitations of the Study

The condition under which this investigation proceeds offers a number of limitations. Among the limitations are the following:

1. Only a select number of independent variables considered to be related to students' values were chosen for the study.

2. The findings of this study cannot be generalized and are specific to the population studied; however, inferences can be made to similar populations.

3. The assumption is that respondents will answer the survey truthfully. There is no means to determine if the respondents will be truthful in their responses.

Summary

The focus on this chapter is to present the relationship among the variables, and explain the variables under investigation, as well as, how they relate to other theory and literature which address societal influences with students' values and academic achievement. These variables were selected because the literature indicates their primary role in society. The null hypothesis focuses on the statistical analysis of the data with respect to each null hypothesis and its respective findings in their original order. A number of limitations are also identified.
CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The major purpose of this study was to examine variables that relate to students' values and academic achievements in selected public middle schools. The factors of each of the independent variables were investigated. The data are presented and analyzed with respect to each of the research questions and hypotheses formulated and the findings of each will be reported. This chapter will include the following: (1) research design, (2) description of the setting, (3) sampling procedures, (4) working with human subjects, (5) description of the instrument, (6) data collection procedures, and (7) statistical applications.

Research Design

This research was descriptive in nature and quantitative in design. A questionnaire was developed by the researcher to collect responses to address the questions prepared to guide this study. By identifying and explaining the relationship between the variables, the researcher can rationalize and have a better insight into the understanding of these factors that relate to societal influences on academic achievement.
Description of the Setting

This study was conducted in four middle schools in the Atlanta Public Schools System. Middle schools consist of grades six, seven and eight. The Atlanta school system is located in the inner perimeters of metropolitan Atlanta, which consists of Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, and Gwinnett counties. The Atlanta Public school system has a mixture of cultures, incomes, peer groups, types of media, family structures, communities, and school leaders.

According to the Atlanta Public Schools Overview, in 1995-1996 the number of students enrolled in the city of Atlanta public schools was approximately 58,750 students. The schools are divided into kindergarten through fifth grade in elementary school, sixth through eighth grades in middle school, and ninth through twelfth grades in high school.

Of the sixteen middle schools in the Atlanta Public Schools system, four schools were used in the study. This represents approximately 25 percent of the total number of schools servicing the middle school student age group. Final selection of these schools was made based on low and high incomes classification in terms of their total number of free and reduced priced meals participants. Two schools were chosen from each socio-economic level to participate in this study.

Sampling Procedures

The population of the study consisted of middle school students enrolled the Atlanta Public Schools system. From the total number of middle schools, approximately 25 percent was selected. Of the four middle schools selected, two were classified as high
socioeconomic status (SES) and two as low SES. Family structure is another factor that was monitored to be sure of a representative sample. The sample was representative of the student population of the Atlanta Public Schools. The students who were chosen to respond the questionnaire were randomly selected, thereby making the subjects a random sample.

Working with Human Subjects

This study was conducted with the permission of the Atlanta Public School system. Subjects used in this study were informed that the collected data would be used in a dissertation; with individuals remaining anonymous and only group data would be reported. The subjects' participation in this survey was voluntary, and the collected data were kept confidential. Subjects were continuously told not to write their names on the survey. This measure was used to help set the respondents at ease and that they would honestly and completely answer all questions.

Description of the Instrument

The instrument in this study was developed by the researcher because no other instrument was found to address all the variables as they were used in this study. The independent variables: family structure, peer pressure, mass media, socio-economic status, school, and community were developed on a single questionnaire. The independent variables assisted in measuring influence on academic achievement. Items measuring the variables in this study were developed after reviewing the literature and
examining previously developed questionnaires of a similar nature. Each variable required a single answer to be indicated from a prescribed response mode.

According to Borg and Gall (1983), validity is achieved when the instrument measures the variable it is intended to measure. In order to achieve a standard of validity, the instrument was developed, assessed by an expert panel of educators and pilot tested. An item-to-scale analysis was also computed to establish reliability of the instrument.

Data Collection Procedures

Questionnaires were taken to four middle schools to be administered by administrators and teachers. Respondents were informed that their survey results would be used to help determine influences on students’ academic achievement. A target person was selected by the principal at each school to monitor the distribution of the questionnaires. The instrument was color coded, white for sixth grade, yellow for seventh grade, and blue for eighth grade. In order to ensure the efficient collection of data, the instruments were also numbered to assist data collectors with the coding of students’ ITBS scores in reading and mathematics on each questionnaire. The participants were assured that only school data would be reported, not individual or class data.

Administrative Procedures

After the researcher was granted permission to conduct the research in a school system, the researcher requested a letter from the Educational Leadership Chairperson to present to Atlanta Public Schools. The letter informed the Atlanta Public School’s Research and Evaluation Office of the researcher’s status at Clark Atlanta University. The
Educational Leadership chairperson requested that Atlanta Public Schools support the respondent by giving permission to conduct research. The researcher submitted the letter and a copy of her prospectus requesting the voluntary participation of students in the research. The Atlanta Public School Research and Development Department wrote a letter of approval. In order to ensure the euthenics of the request, all letters were presented to the school administrators along with a letter requesting of consent to be signed by parents of participating students. All letters giving students permission to participate in survey are filed at each school.

Statistical Applications

Preceding the collection of data, the questionnaires were coded to ensure efficiency. After the questionnaires were returned to researcher, the response data were subjected to statistical analysis. As the study analyzed correlation between two or more variables, the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation was used. In addition to this, descriptive statistics including the means and percentages were used to facilitate more comprehensive analysis and presentation of data. The level of significance for accepting or rejecting the hypothesis was set at the 0.01 level.

Delimitations

The researcher did not place any boundaries on the study. Research is limited to data collected from the 332 questionnaires administered by the researcher. Answers to questionnaires are based on student experiences that could be positive or negative. In addition, scores used for analysis are limited to reading and mathematics.
Summary

This chapter examined the methods and procedure utilized in determining variables that affected students' values and academic achievement in selected public middle schools in the Atlanta Public Schools system, including societal influences which are defined as the following: (1) family structure, (2) peer pressure, (3) mass media, (4) socio-economic status, (5) school, and (6) community were investigated. Demographic data of age, gender, race and school type will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, and analysis in terms of the correlation between variables was conducted through the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation.
CHAPTER V
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of the study was to investigate the correlation between societal influences and student values and their effect on academic achievement. The investigation examined responses given by middle school (6th, 7th, and 8th grades) students in the Atlanta Public School system. The independent variables were selected societal influences, namely: (1) Family Structure, (2) Socio-Economic Status, (3) Peer Pressure, (4) Mass Media (5) Community, and (6) School. The dependent variables were Academic Achievement in Reading and Mathematics.

The data, displayed in tabular form, were explained through accompanying narratives. Tables included in this chapter show the data and findings. Each hypothesis is restated, followed by a data table that illustrates how the data are statistically analyzed, the outcome, and their significance. Tables are then followed by a statement which indicates if the hypothesis is accepted or rejected and why.

The independent and dependent variables were subjected to an inferential statistical procedure, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. All null hypotheses are answered from the data gathered. To test the hypotheses, 332 students from four different middle schools were asked to answer the Societal Influences...
Questionnaire that was developed for this investigation. The 65 items on the questionnaire assessed behaviors related to independent variables in Table 1.

Table 1

**Questionnaire Items Related to the Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Item #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td>Chronological age attained at last birthday</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gender</td>
<td>Male or female</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Race</td>
<td>A group linked by nationality</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Grade Level</td>
<td>Present grade level</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Family Composition</td>
<td>Make up of family</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mother’s Education</td>
<td>Levels of education</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Family Structure</td>
<td>Make up and influence of family</td>
<td>7-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Socio-Economic Level</td>
<td>Influence on income</td>
<td>17-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Mass Media</td>
<td>Influence of television, videos, music, and video grams on values</td>
<td>36-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Community Composition</td>
<td>Make up of the community and influence on students</td>
<td>46-55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. School Climate</td>
<td>School’s influence on students</td>
<td>56-65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic Data

Table 2 displays demographic data (grade, sex, age, ethnic group, mother’s education, and household members) relative to participants in the four middle schools in the Atlanta Public Schools system.
### Table 2

**Demographics of the Sample of Respondents in the Societal Influences on Students’ Achievement Study (N=332)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>% Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (years)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>65.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnic Group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>% Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mother's Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>72.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical School</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Live With</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Only</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Only</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and Father</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandparent</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>94.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive statistics such as means and frequency distribution were also used to analyze demographic data relating to the independent and dependent variables. Table 2 shows that a total of 179 or 53.9% of the participants were female, while 153 or 46.1% were male. There were more female respondents than male respondents to the survey.

Of the 332 respondents of the survey, 17 or 5.2% are 11 years old, 94 or 28.3% are 12 years old, 107 or 32.2% are 13 years old, 102 or 30.7% are 14 years old, and 12 or 3.6% are 15 years old.

Of the 332 respondents of the survey, 303 or 91.6% were African American. African Americans represent the majority of the population of the Atlanta Public Schools.
students. Represented in this survey, 3 or .9% Asians, 12 or 3.6% Hispanic, 8 or 2.5% white, and 6 or 1.8% other.

In terms of mother’s education of the respondents, 146 or 43.9% graduated high school, 82 or 24.6% attended high school, 58 or 17.4% attended technical school, 21 or 6.3% attended college, 14 or 4.2% attended middle school, and 12 or 3.6% participated in graduate level of education.

In terms of who respondents of the survey live with, 103 or 31.0% live mother only, 12 or 3.6% live with father only, 121 or 36.4% live with mother and father, 79 or 23.8% live with grandparent, and 17 or 5.2% live with other.

Null Hypotheses

$H_{01}$: There is no significant correlation between family structure and student academic achievement in reading.

The outcome of the analysis of data collected to test this hypothesis is presented in Table 3. There was a significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in reading. The data computation yielded a correlation of .168 and which is significant at the .01 level.
Table 3

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Family Structures on Student Academic Achievement in Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Structure</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>332</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 3 show the results of testing hypothesis one. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Family Structure in relationship to student achievement in reading was .168 with a level of significance of .011. Since there is a significant relationship to Family Structure at the .01 level, this hypothesis was rejected.

HO2: There is no significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Statistical outcomes relative to this hypothesis are presented in Table 4. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed to determine the correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in mathematics. There was a significant correlation between family structure and student academic achievement in mathematics as the data computed yielded a correlation of .159 and a significant value of .016. These values are identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 4

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Family Structure and Student Academic Achievement in Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.159</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 4 show the results of testing hypothesis two. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Family Structure in relationship to achievement in mathematics was .159 with a level of significance of .016. Since there is a significant relationship to Family Structure at the .01 level, this hypothesis was rejected.

HO3: There is no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in reading.

Statistical outcomes relative to this hypothesis are presented in Table 5. In the Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation testing, there is no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in reading. The data computed yielded a correlation of .039 and a significant value of .556. These values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 5

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Socio-Economic Status and Student Academic Achievement in Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Status</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.556</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 5 show the results of testing hypothesis three. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Socio-Economic Status in relationship to achievement in reading was .039 with a level of significance of .556. Since there is not a significant relationship to Socio-Economic Status at the .01 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

HO₄: There is no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

The outcome of the analysis of data collected to test hypothesis 4 is presented in Table 6. There was no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in mathematics as the data computation yielded a correlation of .007 and a significant value of .914. These values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Socio-Economic Status and Student Academic Achievement in Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Status</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.914</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 6 show the results of testing hypothesis four. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Socio-Economic Status in relationship to achievement in mathematics was .007 with a level of significance of .914. Since there is not a significant relationship to Socio-Economic Status at the .01 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

HO₅: There is no significant correlation between peer pressures and student academic achievement in reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Statistical outcomes relative to this hypothesis are presented in Table 7. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed to determine the correlation between peer pressures and student academic achievement in reading. There was no significant correlation between peer pressure and student academic achievement in reading. The data computation yielded a correlation of .070 and a significant value of .287. These values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 7

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Peer Pressures and Student Academic Achievement in Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Pressure</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 7 show the results of testing hypothesis five. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Peer Pressure in relationship to achievement in reading was .070 with a level of significance of .287. Since there is not a significant relationship to Peer Pressure at the .01 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

HO₅: There is no significant correlation between peer pressures and student academic achievement in mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Statistical outcomes relative to this hypothesis are presented in Table 8. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed to determine the correlation between peer pressures and student academic achievement in mathematics. There was no significant correlation between peer pressures and student academic achievement in mathematics. The data computation yielded a correlation of .039 and a significant value of .560. These values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 8

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Peer Pressures and Student Academic Achievement in Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Pressure</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.039</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.560</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>332</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 8 show the results of testing hypothesis six. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Peer Pressure in relationship to achievement in mathematics was .039 with a level of significance of .560. Since there is not a significant relationship to Peer Pressure at the .01 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

HO7: There is no significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

The data collected to test this hypothesis are presented in Table 9. In this table, data show there was not a significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in reading. The computation yielded a correlation of -.058 and a significant value of .380. These values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 9

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Mass Media and Student Academic Achievement in Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mass Media</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 9 show the results of testing hypothesis seven. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Mass Media in relationship to achievement in reading was -.058 with a level of significance of .380. Since there is not a significant relationship to Mass Media at the .01 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

HO₇: There is no significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

The outcome of the analysis of data collected to test this hypothesis is presented in Table 10. There was not a significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in mathematics. The data computed yielded a correlation of -.038 and a significant value of .565. These values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 10

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Mass Media and Student Academic Achievement in Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mass Media</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 10 show the results of testing hypothesis eight. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Mass Media in relationship to achievement in mathematics was -.038 with a level of significance of .565. Since there is not a significant relationship to Mass Media at the .01 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

H09: There is no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Statistical outcomes relative to this hypothesis are presented in Table 11. Pearson’s Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed to determine the correlation between community and student academic achievement in reading. There was no significant correlation between communities and student academic achievement in reading. The data computation yielded a correlation of -.043 and a significant value of .513. The values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 11

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Community and Student Academic Achievement in Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-.043</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.513</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>332</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 11 show the results of testing hypothesis nine. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Community in relationship to achievement in reading was -.043 with a level of significance of .513. Since there is not a significant relationship to Community at the .01 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

HO10: There is no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

The data collected to test this hypothesis are presented in Table 12. In this table, data show there was no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in mathematics. The computation yielded a correlation of -.053 and a significant value of .427. These values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 12

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between Community and Student Academic Achievement in Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>-.053</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 12 show the results of testing hypothesis ten. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for Community in relationship to achievement in reading was -.053 with a level of significance of .427. Since there is not a significant relationship to Community at the .01 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

HO_{11}: There is no significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

The data collected to test this hypothesis are presented in Table 13. In this table, data show there was no significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in reading. The computation yielded a correlation of -.065 and a significant value of .840. These values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 13

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between School and Student Academic Achievement in Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.840</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 13 show the results of testing hypothesis eleven. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for School in relationship to achievement in reading was .065 with a level of significance of .840. Since there is not a significant relationship to School at the .01 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

$H_{012}$: There is no significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Statistical outcomes relative to this hypothesis are presented in Table 14. Pearson’s Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed to determine the correlation between school and student academic achievement in mathematics. There was not a significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in mathematics. The data computation yielded a correlation of .072 and a significant value of .965. The values are not identified to be significant at the .01 level.
Table 14

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation Between School and Student

Academic Achievement in Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data reported in Table 14 show the results of testing hypothesis twelve. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient for School relationship to achievement in reading was .072 with a level of significance of .965. Since there is not a significant relationship to School at the .05 level, this hypothesis was accepted.

ANOVA Analysis

The data reported in Table 15 show the results of the analysis of variance of family structure between groups and within groups in reading and math.
Table 15

Correlation Between Family Structure and Student Achievement in Reading and Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>12.873</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.437</td>
<td>1.939</td>
<td>.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>769.756</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>3.319</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>769.629</td>
<td>330</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>10.917</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.459</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>815.437</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>3.576</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>826.354</td>
<td>330</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The $F$ probability of reading is 1.939 with .146 significance. The $F$ probability of math is 1.526 with .220 significance. Reading and math are both lower than the accepted .05 level. Therefore, there was no significant difference in family structure and academic achievement in reading and mathematics. The hypotheses were accepted.

Table 16 displays the results of the analysis of variance of peer pressure between and within groups in reading and mathematics.
Table 16

Correlation Between Peer Pressure and Student Achievement in Reading and Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>8.113</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.056</td>
<td>1.214</td>
<td>.299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>761.517</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>3.340</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>769.69</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>3.340</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>7.358</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.679</td>
<td>1.024</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>818.996</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>3.592</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>826.354</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>3.340</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The F probability of reading is 1.214 with a significance of .299. The F probability of mathematics is 1.024 with a significance of .361. Reading and math are both lower than the accepted .05 level. These results show there were no significant difference in peer pressure and students' achievement in reading and mathematics. The hypotheses were accepted.

Table 17 shows the results of the analysis of variance of socio-economic status between and within groups in reading and mathematics.
Table 17

Correlation Between Socio-Economic Status and Student Achievement in Reading and Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>6.908</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.454</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td>.358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>76.721</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>3.345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>769.629</td>
<td>330</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>5.838</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.919</td>
<td>.811</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>820.516</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>3.599</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>826.354</td>
<td>330</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.446</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The F probability of reading is 1.033 with a significance score of .358. The F probability of mathematics is .811 with a significance of .446. The reading and mathematics scores are both lower than the .05 level of probability for significance. The results show that there were no significant difference in socio-economic status and students' achievement in reading and mathematics. The hypotheses were accepted.

Table 18 shows the results of the analysis variance of mass media between groups and within groups in reading and mathematics.
Table 18

Correlation Between Mass Media and Student Achievement in Reading and Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>3.367</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.683</td>
<td>.501</td>
<td>.607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>766.263</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>3.361</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>769.629</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>3.361</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>6.177</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.088</td>
<td>.859</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>820.177</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>3.597</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>826.354</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>3.597</td>
<td>.425</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The F probability for reading is .501 with a significance score of .607. The F probability for mathematics is .859 with a significance score of .425. The reading and mathematics scores are both lower than the accepted .05 level. Therefore, there was no significant difference between mass media and students' achievement in reading and mathematics. The hypotheses were accepted.

Table 19 displays the results of the analysis of variance of school between groups and within groups in reading and mathematics.
Table 19
Correlation Between school and Students' Academic Achievement in Reading and Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups (Combined)</td>
<td>162.821</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.427</td>
<td>1.780</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linearity</td>
<td>63.801</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>63.801</td>
<td>20.924</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviation</td>
<td>99.020</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.414</td>
<td>1.120</td>
<td>.317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>606.777</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>3.049</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>769.598</td>
<td>329</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups (Combined)</td>
<td>148.852</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.962</td>
<td>1.146</td>
<td>.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linearity</td>
<td>56.645</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>56.645</td>
<td>16.664</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviation</td>
<td>92.207</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.180</td>
<td>.935</td>
<td>.565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>676.457</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>3.399</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>852.309</td>
<td>329</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The F probability for reading is 1.780 with a significance score of .011. Therefore, the significance score is higher than the accepted .05 level. There was a significant difference in school and students' academic achievement in reading. The hypothesis was rejected.

The F probability for mathematics is 1.460 with a significance score of .068 that is lower than the accepted .05 level. There was no significant difference in school and students' achievement in mathematics. The hypothesis was accepted.
Table 20 shows the results of the analysis of variance of community between groups and within groups in reading and mathematics.

Table 20

**Correlation Between Community and Students' Achievement in Reading and Mathematics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ANOVA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sum of Means Squares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between</td>
<td>1.603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>767.995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>769.598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between</td>
<td>3.261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>822.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>825.309</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The F probability in reading is .237 with a significance score of .789. The F probability in mathematics is .450 with a significance score of .638. The reading and mathematics scores are both lower than the accepted .05 level of probability. Therefore, there was no significant difference in community and student's achievement in reading and mathematics. The hypotheses were accepted.

**Summary**

In Chapter V there were twelve hypotheses that analyzed data. All twelve hypotheses were tested utilizing Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient and
the Analysis of Variance to determine the correlation between the variables. There were two significant correlations found between the variables in Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The two significant correlations were between family structures and student academic achievement in reading and mathematics. Hypotheses one and two were rejected. Data from the ANOVA analysis revealed that there was a significant difference in school and students' academic achievement in reading. This hypothesis was rejected.
CHAPTER VI
FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study investigated the correlation between societal influences and student values and student academic achievement in reading and mathematics through empirical means, using 332 middle school students in the Atlanta Public School system. Research was conducted to find related literature on variables. A questionnaire was developed, tested and used to collect data. The Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation was used to test the data. A display of the correlation between the independent and dependent variables was presented in table format in Chapter V.

Findings

The findings are based on the researcher’s analysis of hypotheses that have been addressed through the data. The following findings emerged as a result of testing the 12 hypotheses of this study using the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation at the .01 level of significance.

H0₁: There was a significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in reading.

Hypothesis 1 was rejected. There was a significant correlation between family structure and student academic achievement in reading.
HO$_2$: There is no significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in mathematics.

Hypothesis 2 was rejected. There was a significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in mathematics.

HO$_3$: There is no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in reading.

Hypothesis 3 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in reading.

HO$_4$: There is no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in mathematics.

Hypothesis 4 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in mathematics.

HO$_5$: There is no significant correlation between peer pressure and student academic achievement in reading.

Hypothesis 5 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between peer pressure and student academic achievement in reading.

HO$_6$: There is no significant correlation between peer pressure and student academic achievement in mathematics.

Hypothesis 6 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between peer pressure and student academic achievement in mathematics.

HO$_7$: There is no significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in reading.
Hypothesis 7 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in reading. This study found that mass media did not influence academic achievement in reading.

HO_7: There is no significant correlation between mass media on student academic achievement in mathematics.

Hypothesis 8 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in mathematics.

HO_8: There is no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in reading.

Hypothesis 9 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in reading.

HO_9: There is no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in mathematics.

Hypothesis 10 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in mathematics.

HO_10: There is no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in mathematics.

Hypothesis 11 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in reading.

HO_11: There is no significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in mathematics.

Hypothesis 12 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in mathematics.

HO_12: There is no significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in mathematics.
Hypothesis 12 was accepted. There was no significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in mathematics.

Conclusions

Conclusions are interpretive in nature. The first conclusions are drawn from the outcomes of the hypotheses that were tested and are enhanced by literature.

**HO₁:** There was a significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in reading.

The first hypothesis found that there is a significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement. Family structures did influence student academic achievement in reading. Children of single parents may experience inconsistent parenting styles, decreased time spent with a parent, and less social control than children of two parent families. Entwisle and Alexander (1996) find that mothers in two-parent families have higher expectations in terms of school achievement for their children than mothers in one-parent-families. Their expectations seem to be borne out since children in one-parent families tend to receive lower grades than children of two parent families. Ryan and Adams (1998) also found that a number of family characteristics (social support, parental depression, family dysfunction, hostile parenting, and child's academic skills) all interact in specific ways to produce positive or negative effects on achievement. Based on this statement the researcher found several studies (Eitzen, 1992; Moyers, 1995; Whitehead, 1992; Gibson, 1997) that demonstrated significant correlation between family structures and academic achievement. Campbell (1996) also found in his study on
student achievement that home environments have been linked to cognitive development and academic performance, with suggestions that family factors exert influence on language and literacy learning. Family structure does influence academic achievement in reading.

\[ \text{HO}_2: \text{ There was a significant correlation between family structure and student academic achievement in mathematics.} \]

The second hypothesis found that there is a significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in mathematics. This study indicated that family structures did have influence on student academic achievement in mathematics. Children in two-parent families fare better than single-parent children, with children of divorce having the most problems (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). Research has also shown that children living with two biological parents are less likely to have problems than children living with one biological parent and one step parent (Astone & McLanahan, 1991). Indicators of child well-being associated with divorce or single parent status include low measures of academic achievement in reading and mathematics. These children repeat grades, have an increased likelihood of dropping out of high school, early childbearing, increased levels of depression, stress, anxiety, and aggression (Amato, Loomis, & Booth, 1995). Thus, family structure influences academic achievement in mathematics.

\[ \text{HO}_3: \text{ There was no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in reading.} \]
The third hypothesis was accepted because the data revealed that there is no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in reading. This study indicated that a student’s socio-economic status has no influence on achievement in reading. In a study of first graders in Baltimore, MD, Entwisle and Alexander (1995) show that the differences in achievement scores from the beginning of the summer to the end of the summer is associated with family resources. Over the winter months, the families’ economic status does not affect achievement on standardized tests.

\[ H_{O4}: \text{There was no significant correlation between socio-economic status} \]
\[ \text{on student academic achievement in mathematics.} \]

The fourth hypothesis was accepted because the data revealed that there was no significant correlation between socio-economic status and student academic achievement in mathematics. This study indicated that the socio-economic level of students does not influence their academic achievement in mathematics.

\[ H_{O5}: \text{There is no significant correlation between peer pressures and} \]
\[ \text{student academic achievement in reading.} \]

The fifth hypothesis was accepted because the data indicated that there was no significant correlation between peer pressure and student academic achievement in reading. The National Center for Policy Analysis reports that while most educators believe peer pressure has an impact on children’s achievement, few studies have been done to prove that belief. However, a recent Heritage Foundation study found that
negative peer pressure is a factor in lower test scores. This study’s findings indicated that peer pressure did not influence academic achievement in reading.

\(\text{HO}_6:\) There is no significant correlation between peer pressures and student academic achievement in mathematics.

The sixth hypothesis was accepted because no significant correlation was found between peer pressure and student academic achievement in mathematics.

\(\text{HO}_7:\) There is no significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in reading.

The seventh hypothesis was accepted because the data showed that there is no significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in reading. This study indicated that mass media does not influence academic achievement in reading. In attempting to explain why no significant correlation was reported, the researcher was unable to find related research to support the hypothesis.

\(\text{HO}_8:\) There was no significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in mathematics.

The eighth hypothesis was accepted because the data showed that there is no significant correlation between mass media and student academic achievement in mathematics.

\(\text{HO}_9:\) There was no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in reading.

The ninth hypothesis was accepted because it was found that there is no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in reading.
$H_{0.10}$: There is no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in mathematics.

The tenth hypothesis was accepted because the data revealed no significant correlation between community and student academic achievement in mathematics. This study indicated that where a student lives does not have an influence on student academic achievement in mathematics.

$H_{0.11}$: There is no significant correlation between school and student academic achievement in reading.

The eleventh hypothesis was accepted because it was found that there is not a significant correlation between the four public schools and student academic achievement in reading. Eyre and Eyre (1993) in their study of student values and achievement contend that what is taught in the home, in either the positive or the negative sense, can be far more influential on children than what is taught in the schools or in any other institution. Schools function successfully with the support of home. School alone does not influence student academic achievement in reading.

$H_{0.12}$: There is no significant correlation between schools and student academic achievement in mathematics.

The twelfth hypothesis was accepted because the data revealed that there was no significant correlation between the four urban schools surveyed and student academic achievement in mathematics.
Implications

The above findings warrant the following implications:

1. This study suggests that administrators and teachers should address those factors that pertain to positive values that will ultimately increase achievement in reading and math.

2. This study also suggests that parents should address those factors that pertain to positive values that will ultimately increase achievement in reading and mathematics.

3. The data from this study suggest that the school and the community should join forces and promote positive values to gain academic achievement in reading and mathematics.

4. Since there is a relationship between school and student academic achievement in reading, administrators and teachers should implement strategies that will increase student individualized reading time.

5. Since there was a correlation between family structure and student academic achievement in reading and mathematics, administrators should provide workshops for parents.

6. The data from this study indicate that administrators and teachers should allow students to apply their knowledge of positive values in the school setting.

7. This study further suggests that school personnel need to be aware of what factors influence values and student academic achievement.
8. Perhaps more attention in educational research should be focused on societal influences and values.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings of this study:

1. Since only two of the variables were rejected in Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient Correlation, it is recommended that further studies be done to identify other variables, such as student/teacher attendance and student/teacher stress, that influence student achievement.

2. Staff development activities should be provided for administration, teachers, and parents to address those factors that pertain to positive values that will increase academic achievement.

3. The Analysis of Variance show the relationship between school and academic achievement in reading; it is recommended to provide programs to enhance reading skills, such as book clubs, tutorials, mentoring, and library partnerships.

4. Administrators and teachers should reward students for displaying positive values.

5. The school administration should provide opportunities during the year for parent involvement.

6. The school should provide every opportunity to become a part of the student's extended family.
Summary

This final chapter is the culminating synthesis of the research. The findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations were addressed. The data analysis, along with the review of literature, found that there is a correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in reading and mathematics. These results implied that school administrators should address the significant correlation between family structures and student academic achievement in reading and mathematics. The researcher recommended that school personnel and family join forces to promote positive values and academic achievement.
January 27, 1998

Dear Parent(s):

Re: Student Values and Academic Achievement Survey

I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Department at Clark Atlanta University. For my dissertation, I am studying the "Relationship between Societal Influences On Student Values and Academic Achievement" in a sample of Metropolitan Atlanta schools. Researchers speculate that there is a relationship between societal influences and student values which directly affects the quality of the students' academic performance.

In order for this information to be meaningful, it is necessary for me to survey a representative sample of students. I believe that your school represents the uniqueness and size that fit the criteria for this study. Thus, I am soliciting your assistance by requesting formal approval to survey your child at school. This information will be strictly confidential and used for research purposes only, with individuals remaining anonymous and group only information being reported.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in this most important matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 404-752-0769 (W) or 770-474-5037 (H).

Sincerely,

Carol Mungo

__________ Yes, my child may participate in the survey.

__________ No, my child may not participate in the survey.

__________________ Parent's Signature
QUESTIONNAIRE

Please take a few minutes to fill out this form. You are asked to answer each question truthfully. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Directions
1. Do not write your name.
2. Answer all questions.
3. Bubble only one answer for each question.

SECTION 1

1. Age
   (a) 11 years old
   (b) 12 years old
   (c) 13 years old
   (d) 14 years old
   (e) 15 years old

2. Sex
   (a) Female
   (b) Male

3. Race
   (a) African American
   (b) Asian
   (c) Hispanic
   (d) White
   (e) Other

4. Grade Level
   (a) 6th Grade
   (b) 7th Grade
   (c) 8th Grade

5. Lives with
   (a) Mother only
   (b) Father only
   (c) Mother and Father
   (d) Grandparent
   (e) Other

6. Mother’s Highest Level of Graduation
   (a) Middle School
   (b) High School
   (c) Vocational School
   (d) College
   (e) Post Graduate

R _______ M _______
## SECTION 2

*Read carefully and bubble only one answer for each question.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. My family’s rules are clear</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My family’s rules are fair</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I feel free to talk to my family about anything</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Members of my family share in activities together</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. My family supports me when I make a decision</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Members of my family communicate well with each other</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. My family helps me to overcome challenges</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Members of my family encourage each other to do well</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. My family provides a clear understanding of what is expected</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. My family trusts me</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I share my room with more than two people</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. My family has to use food stamps</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I have to receive a free or reduced price lunch at school</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I have to live near a bus route, because we do not have a car</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. My family has to use credit cards</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I use my home computer to do homework</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. My family has to wait for a check before buying groceries</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. My mother looks for bargains at the Goodwill Store</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I share clothes with other family members</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I work to help earn money for my family</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Most of my friends have been suspended from school</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Most of my friends will shoplift at the mall</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Most of my friends will go to an x-rated movie</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>My friends make good grades in school</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>My friends get into fights</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Most of my friends experiment with drugs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Most of my friends will skip school</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Most of my friends talk about joining a gang</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>My friends' advice is as good as my parents' advice</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>I try to get the types of clothes I see on TV</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>I try to behave like kids I see on TV</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>I try to think like some of the stars on TV</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>I imitate artists on music videos</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>I practice fighting techniques I see on video games</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>I repeat movie quotes that have curse words</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>I have tattoos and piercing as seen on videos</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>I make my hairstyle similar to popular stars and artists</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>I sing songs with curse words</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>I do the dances like the ones on music videos</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>People stand on street corners in my community</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>People in my community seem to go to work every day</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>My community has a neighborhood watch</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>People openly sell drugs in my community</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>My community leaders visit my school from time to time</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.</td>
<td>Policemen have to come to my community to keep order</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.</td>
<td>Food vendors deliver orders in my community</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.</td>
<td>People walk outside at night in my community</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.</td>
<td>My community has a program for youth</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55. People write graffiti on the walls in my community</td>
<td>56. I feel safe at my school</td>
<td>57. My teacher expects me to do well in school</td>
<td>58. Our school staff cares about students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
January 29, 1998

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that Mrs. Carol Mungo is a student in good standing in the Department of Educational Leadership. Mrs. Mungo has successfully completed her oral presentation of her dissertation proposal entitled: "A Study of the Relationship Among Societal Influences, Student Values, and Academic Achievement." She is now asking for your assistance in helping her to obtain data relevant to her research. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

William H. Denton, Ph. D.
Chairman
Educational Leadership

WHD/mht
Ms. Carol Mungo  
Cascade Elementary School  
2326 Venetian Drive, SW  
Atlanta, Georgia 30311  

Dear Ms. Mungo:  

Your request to conduct research within the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) was reviewed by the Research Screening Committee in accordance with the guidelines. Your proposal entitled “A Study of the Relationship between Societal Influences on Student Values and Academic Achievement” was approved under the following conditions:  

1. Your study is confined to four APS schools. You must report the names of the schools to the Department of Research and Evaluation prior to beginning your study.  

2. You must obtain the approval of each of the principals of the schools selected for your study. Principals have the final approval on whether a research study is conducted in their schools. If a principal does not approve of your study, you may select a comparable APS school as a replacement.  

3. Students, parents, teachers, and other APS staff members can participate in your study only on a voluntary basis.  

4. The confidentiality of students, teachers, other APS staff members, the schools, and the school system must be ensured. Pseudonyms for people and the schools, as well as references to APS as “a large urban school system,” are required in the title and text of your final report before publication or presentation outside of APS.  

5. Your study requires parental permission. A signed parental permission letter must be on file at the school prior to involving students in your research study. Students whose parents refuse to allow their children to participate must be dropped from your sample. The parental permission letter included with your proposal materials must be revised to include the name of the student, the name of the school, and a line for the date directly under or beside the line for the parent’s signature. The principal of each school is required to keep the original parental permission letters for the students enrolled in that school on file in his or her office. You may be provided with copies for your files.  

6. Activities related to your research study must not interfere with the instructional program at the school or with the state and local testing programs.
Ms. Carol Mungo  
March 20, 1998  
Page 2

7. Achievement test data for individual students cannot be provided, except in a blind or aggregate format.

8. Data collection for your study must be completed by the end of the 1998 calendar year.

9. If changes are made in the research design or in the instruments used, you must notify the Department of Research and Evaluation prior to beginning your study.

This letter serves as official notification of the approval of your proposed research study, pending the above conditions. Remember that a copy of the results of your completed study should be submitted to the Department of Research and Evaluation. Please contact me at (404) 827-8186 if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Nancy Emmons, Ph.D.  
Researcher

NJE:sm - #9412

xc: Dr. Nancy Amuleru-Marshall
BIBLIOGRAPHY


