THE IMPACT OF SELECTED ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF BLACK ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS

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ABSTRACT

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THE IMPACT OF SELECTED ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF ADULT BLACK FAMILY MEMBERS.

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The purpose of this study is to determine how selected environmental factors of the family of origin correlate with the educational levels of adult family members. The sample consisted of 71 Black adult family members who were administered the Moos' Environment Scale and the investigator's interview form for measuring educational level. The four null hypotheses presented were found not to be statistically significant at the .05 level. There were no statistically significant correlations between the family of origin environment levels of cohesion, independence, achievement orientation, and intellectual-cultural orientation. The findings of this study have the potential of sensitizing investigators to the

impact of selected environmental factors on the educational level of adult family members. The findings derived from this study seem to warrant that there is no statistically significant relationship between (a) family of origin environment level of cohesion and adult family members' educational level; (b) family of origin environment level of independence and adult family members' educational level; (c) family of origin environment level of achievement orientation and adult family members' educational level; and (d) family of origin environment level of intellectual-cultural orientation and adult family members' educational level.

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The Impact of Selected Environmental Factors on the Educational Level of Black Adult Family Members

Introduction

Throughout the history of American society, it has been generally assumed that people from affluent backgrounds tend to achieve more because they possess superior abilities due to their environmental or biological inheritance or both. Many would conclude that the "richness" of the family environment due to parental modeling, exposure to enriching experiences and materials, and other contributing factors determine the degree to which the children subsequently grow and develop educationally, occupationally and economically.

School counselors and educators have tended to operate on this assumption to some extent by recommending to parents that the presence of books, magazines and other educational and recreational materials in the home and their own modeling can have a positive influence on their own children.

Inasmuch as the majority of Black children grow up in "less than" affluent family environments, it can be safely assumed that many are deprived of these enhancing factors. This assumption is supported by the fact that only 4.8% of Black families in the United States had an income of $50,000 or more according to the United States Bureau of the Census Current Population Reports of 1984. After the family necessities have been provided, the economics of the average Black family suggest that it might be difficult to include many of the so-called "extras" in their budgets. Many Black children who succeed educationally, occupationally and economically do so despite the absence of these enhancing factors and possibly due to certain intangibles that are present in these families. Educationally and occupationally, the majority of Black children tend to have fewer positive models than children in the general population. The average Black individual who graduated from college in the 1960s probably became the first generation to achieve such status in his or her family (Billingsley, 1968). While many new opportunities are taking place,

the number of Black parents and family members who hold occupational positions that can serve as an incentive for younger family members is still relatively small.

Some of the revolutionary type activities of the 1960s tend to sensitize the investigator to the need for increasing her knowledge and understanding about her cultural origin and historical background. This interest was intensified when the investigator read The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy (Rainwater and Yancey, 1967). Since that time, the investigator has continued to pursue her interest in the Black family through progressive educational experiences.

Research Question

The research problem relative to the influence of the Black environment on the subsequent development of its members is: What is the relationship between the Black family environment of origin and the educational level of its adult members?

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine how the environment of the family of origin correlated with the achievement of its adult members. More specifically, the investigator was concerned with securing evidence that would answer the following questions:

1. Does the cohesion level of the family of origin environment correlate significantly with adult family members' educational level?

2. Does the independence level of the family of origin environment correlate significantly with adults family members' educational level?

3. Does the achievement-orientation level of family of origin environment correlate significantly with adult family members' educational level?

4. Does the intellectual-cultural level of origin environment correlate significantly with adult family members' educational level?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested. The .05 level of significance was used as the decision rule.

Hypothesis 1: There will be no statistically significant correlation between the family of origin environment level of cohesion and adult family members' educational level.

Hypothesis 2: There will be no statistically significant correlation between the family of origin environment level of independence and adult family members' educational level.

Hypothesis 3: There will be no statistically significant correlation between the family of origin environment level of achievement orientation and adult family members' educational level.

Hypothesis 4: There will be no statistically significant correlation between the family of origin environment level of intellectual-cultural orientation and adult family members' educational level.

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of this study will assist those in the helping professions as well as

parenting persons to identify and develop strategies for perpetuating those aspects of the environment of the family of origin that enhance achievement of adult family members. Specifically, this study is important for the following reasons:

1. It will provide additional information to parents, counselors, educators, ministers, researchers, and other helping professional practitioners regarding the impact of the environment of family of origin on family members' achievement behaviors.

2. It will be significant to prospective parents. It should enable them to realize the importance of incorporating certain enhancing aspects into the family environment for the future benefit of their children.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in conducting this study:

1. It was assumed that the level of education of an individual or family is the most important factor in estimating the achievement of individual family members.

2. It was assumed that Black and White family members share some common experiences because groups cannot completely isolate themselves from a society of which they are apart.

3. It was assumed that Black family members possess certain distinctive characteristics because of their historical legacy.

4. The Black population of Seattle, Washington, is relatively small when compared to other Black populations in urban areas. The sample was drawn from the church-attending Black population representing different protestant denominations. It was assumed that their responses to the environment of the family of origin were similar to those of the general Black church-attending population.

Limitations

The following limitations were considered when making generalizations from the findings of this study:

1. The focus of this study was primarily upon church-attending Blacks in an urban community.

Therefore, generalizations from this study should not be made to groups or situations that differ significantly.

2. Data of this study were of a self-report nature and are, therefore, dependent upon the accurate memory and honesty of the respondents.

Evolution of the Problem

A careful examination of the literature on the family environment and achievement status among ethnic groups revealed a widespread practice among researchers to equate achievement almost exclusively with educational achievement or level of performance on an assigned learning task. Several studies (Bond, 1972; Bowan & Howard, 1985; Castenell, 1984; Clark, 1983; Kerchoff, 1972) treated achievement as educational achievement or level to which students excelled in a skill, performance or test score evaluations.

This investigation required the writer to conduct a review of the literature in related areas of the family environment that are relative to the development of achievement. Some social scientists have recently come to accept the theory, earlier advanced by Sigmund

Freud, that the first five years in the life of a child are the most crucial, if not the controlling period of his or her development, emotionally, mentally, socially, and intellectually (Hall & Lindzey, 1970). A detailed examination of the determinants of achievement levels by McClelland indicated that something apparently happens in the family childhood beginning at least as early as the fourth or fifth year, which produces differences in achievement levels (McClelland, 1961).

Since the environment of the child during this stage of life is primarily the home, it may be said that most achievement levels are largely influenced by the family environment. This was evident in the early history during slavery as well as in more recent accounts of Black family life.

Absug (1971) viewed the Black family in the slave community as a functioning institution. It was in the family and/or surrogate family that the slave received affection, companionship, love, and empathy. Through the family its members learned how to avoid punishment, to cooperate with fellow slaves and maintain some

outward appearance of self-esteem. The socialization of the slave child was another important function of the slave parents. They lessened the shock of bondage on the child, inculcated in him/her values different from those the slaveowners tried to impart to the child. This represented another frame of reference for self-esteem besides the slaveowner's (Absug, 1971). Fantini and Weinstein (1968) described it thusly:

> From his birth the child's environment has a strong effect upon his development . . . The parents as the most important socializing agent shapes to a large extent the experiences the child receives from the neighborhood setting of the hidden curriculum, the subdivision of the family and the sibling and peer culture; for the extent to which the parents helps the child to understand these experiences has a significant learning consequence. The parent's own conscious and unconscious reactions to these environmental influences have far reaching learning outcomes for the child. (p. 55).

> As the child grows the neighborhood affects him more directly. The adults he sees (postmen, merchants, servants, maintenance men or bill collectors), their relationship to his parents and their roles in the neighborhood, all serve to shape his developing view of the world. (p. 58) The child defines himself in terms of what he is exposed to and how he is exposed to it . . . The adult models in the hidden curriculum . . . indoctrinate the child to the main-stream culture and he identified himself to it accordingly. (p. 59)

As a result of a cursory review of the literature, it was felt that the subject needed additional research attention.

Definition of Terms

For purposes of this study, the following terms were defined as they were used in this dissertation.

1. Family environment dimensions were operationally defined as scores on each of the following measures by Moos' Family Environment Scale (1984):

Relationship Dimension

1.1 Cohesion - the degree of commitment, help, and support family members provide one another.

Personal Growth Dimensions

1.2 Independence - the extent to which family members are assertive, are self-sufficient, and make their own decisions.

1.3 Achievement Orientation - the extent to which (such as school and work) are cast into an achievement oriented or competitive framework.

1.4 Intellectual - the degree of interest in cultural orientation, political, social, intellectual, and cultural activities.

2. Educational level - highest level of education completed. Achievement and education level will be used interchangeably.

3. Adult - a Black male or female between the ages of 30-64.

4. Black family a family of Afro-American descent.

5. Family of origin - the Black family adult members' locus of formative periods of growth and development.

6. Impact - a significant correlation existing between variables.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

The literature abounds with distinct negative features attributed to poor families, particularly the Black family that they are fatherless, matrifocal, unstable, disorganized and less likely to be a bulwark of achievement.

In keeping with the purpose of this study on the family environment and achievement status among adults, the review of the literature was centered around family environment and achievement. The literature review was organized around the following topics:

a. Historical Perspective of the Black family

b. Relationship Dimension of the family

c. Personal Growth Dimensions of the family

Historical Perspective of the Black Family

There have been numerous scholarly studies about the family, particularly the Black family. The focus, however, has been primarily on the pathological views

of the family. Some of these pathological views are partially the result of the absence of a theoretical approach guiding the studies in the collection of knowledge.

Specifically, the research on Black families has focused on the matriarchal qualities, child-rearing practices, and marital stability. To discuss the achievement status of Black family members, it is necessary to view the Black family from a historical perspective as well.

The study of the family in the United States began in the late nineteenth century when social Darwinism prevailed (Adams, 1975). This not only marked the beginning of a systematic approach to the family in general, but the Black family in particular. Prior to this time, the original interpretations about family life had been formulated by biblical history and Greek and Roman accounts (Farber, 1964). During this period, scholars began to apply Darwin's biological evolutionary scheme to changes within the family. The macranthropological scheme was that the

origin and the evolution of the family institution was based on primitive families. The idea was to search among primitive peoples for earlier forms of family. It was this search for primitive families which first drew attention to Black families (in the form of Australian Aborigine and African families) as objects of scientific investigations (Allen, 1978).

Social scientists basing their arguments on Darwin's work, traced the evolution of the family. They argued about whether original family relationships were monogamous or polygamous, and found evidence for both in historical documents and oral traditions. They were concerned with whether earlier forms of family structure had been matriarchal or patriarchal, and again found evidence for both. In their cross-cultural research for validating evidence, a basic premise was that Black families somehow constituted lesser forms on the evolutional continuum (Billingsley, 1968).

The Black family in the United States began with Anthony and Isabella, who were among the 20 original Blacks who were brought to Jamestown in 1619, one year

before the Mayflower. Later the couple was married, and in 1624 their son, William, became the first Black child born in America (Bennett, 1964).

According to Stampp (1956), slaves were not allowed to enter into binding contractual relationships. Since this would impose obligations on both parties and exact penalties for their violation, there was no legal basis for marriage among slaves. Slave marriages were at the discretion of the slaveowners. As a result, some marriages were initiated by owners and just as easily dissolved.

There were many instances where slaveowners ordered slave women to marry slave men after reaching puberty. Slaveowners preferred marriages among slaves on the same plantation, since the primary reason for mating among slaves was for future slave children. Children born to a slave woman on another plantation were viewed by the slave owner as his man's wasted seed. Yet, many slaves who were permitted to marry preferred to marry slave women on neighboring plantations. This permitted them to avoid witnessing

the assaults perpetrated on their loved ones. Sometimes, the matter was resolved by the sale of one of the parties (Blassingame, 1972).

Staples (1976) asserted that historians are divided on how many slave families were involuntarily separated by the slaveowners. Staples contended that despite the efforts of the slaveowners to maintain family stability, intervening events of the slaveowner's death, his bankruptcy, or lack of capital made the forced sale of slave family members necessary. It was believed that a married slave was less inclined to be rebellious than a non-married slave because he was concerned about his family. According to Staples there are few records indicating that slave owners separated their married slaves (Staples, 1976).

Blassingame (1972) described the family as the most important survival mechanism for the African slave. Blassingame continues by noting that there are some recorded instances where families lived together for 40 years or more. However, most of the slave

unions were dissolved by choice, death, or sale of one partner by the slaveowner.

Blassingame (1972) points out that, even though the male slave was often relegated to working in the fields and producing offspring, his role was very significant. There were some ways he could acquire the respect and self-esteem, from his family. Where possible, he could add to the meager meal by hunting or fishing; or, he could gain the respect of his fellow slaves by making furniture.

Frazier (1966) contended that slave children learned many valuable lessons from their parents. Some parents taught them submission as a method of avoiding pain, suffering, and death. They were instructed to fight slaveowners when their relatives were in danger. Some parents taught the child pride in his or her African heritage.

Staples (1976) noted that during the nineteenth century the strong role of Black women emerged. Males preferred their wives to remain at home, because a working woman was considered a mark of slavery.

Staples described this period as "the most racist era of American history;" Black men found it very difficult to work.

Staples (1976) further pointed out that what was important then, was not whether the husband or wife worked, but the family's will to survive in an era when Blacks were systematically deprived of educational achievement and occupational opportunities. Despite these obstacles, Blacks achieved in society educationally, occupationally and economically.

Evidence from Myrdal's comprehensive study of the Negro during the early 1940s, suggested that the Negro family is disorganized, unstable, and matriarchal (Myrdal, 1944). Myrdal's findings were corroborated with the earlier findings of Frazier's pioneer study of the Negro (Frazier, 1939). These findings were later supported by Moynihan (1966) and Hare (1984).

The Moynihan Report of 1965 created a national furor when it concluded that Black communities in the United States were deteriorating and at the center of this degenerative process lay the deterioration of the

Black family. The Black family is marked by female-headed households, high illegitimacy and absent fathers. It has been destroyed by slavery and left trapped in a "tangle of pathology" that impeded the achievement of its family members (Rainwater & Yancey, 1967).

The Moynihan Report generated much controversy, and in the process, stimulated some research stressing achievement of Black family members.

In 1966, Liebow conducted a participant-observation study of 24 street corner Black men. He concluded that the men had internalized American values for family role, but that the oppressive conditions of their environment prevented them from fulfilling these expectations. Several years later, Rainwater (1970) examined the matrifocal character of Black American and Caribbean families and concluded that matriarchal families interfered with the ability of Black males to develop normal heterosexual roles.

Jessie Bernard (1966) examined the evolution of Black family's stability from 1880 to 1963 and reported that the decrease in the proportion of Black infants

born out of marriage was related to two distinct lifestyles independent of social class. One lifestyle was directed toward the pursuit of pleasure and material consumption, while the other adhered to belief in acceptance of the Protestant ethic, which encourages men to strive to do their best and stresses intrinsic satisfaction. This approach, according to Bernard (1966), accounts for the decline in legitimate births among Blacks. Having failed to accept American norms of marriage, it was suggested by Bernard that the matrifocal family developed.

In the 1970s, Hill examined the strengths of Black families: strong religious orientation; strong work orientation; strong achievement orientation and kinship bond.

In 1986, approximately 20 years later, using demographic census data, Moynihan maintained his thesis concerning the Black family. In addition, he has suggested that all families are being impacted by a lost of stability. According to Moynihan, the overwhelming majority of families are headed by women

(89%), while 59% of all Black family groups with children are one parent situations.

Relationship Dimension

The research literature examined on the role of the parent in the socialization of the child primarily discusses the middle class White family, usually focusing on mothers, with little attention given to Black families. Among the studies focusing on the realm of color differences in child-rearing is the pioneer study of Davis and Havighurst in 1946. They reported few differences in the child-rearing practices of Negroes and White mothers in similar social class positions. Blau (1964) in a more recent study using a design similar to Davis and Havighurst, concluded that child-rearing practice was largely a function of exposure to expert information.

Kamii and Radin (1967), using direct observation of mother-child interaction in the homes and a card sorting method of studying child-rearing goals, found that middle and lower-lower class Negro mothers did not differ fundamentally in their goals but that they

did differ considerably in their socialization practices. Middle class mothers were found to gratify children's socio-emotional needs by using bilateral techniques (i.e., consulting, gently requesting, explaining, using psychological manipulations, sensitizing children to mother's feelings and preventing [reminding]) and to reward children for desirable behavior more often than lower-lower class mothers.

Lewis' study (cited in Billingsley, 1969) examined the attitudes and behaviors of 41 parental figures in 39 households and found a high degree of conformity to middle-class child-rearing practices among very-low-income Black mothers. Lewis further identified two patterns of family functioning with respect to the adequacy of child-rearing behavior in these low-income families. According to Lewis, one group of parents not only expressed great concern for their children's health, education, and welfare but also behaved in such a manner as to assure the care and protection of their children. A second group of parents also expressed concern for the welfare of the children, but

they appeared unable to behave appropriately; their verbalized concerns were accompanied by behavior that was inconsistent with their stated goals. Lewis' study (cited by Billingsley, 1969) proposed that these parents tended to use their children as scapegoats for the frustrations they experienced in their own lives. Dependent and low self-esteem, these parents seemed to resent their children's dependence on them. Lewis concluded that patterns of family function with respect to child-rearing patterns among low-income Black families varied. Some families functioned amazingly well, others functioned marginally well and others, yet, were characterized as being dysfunctional.

In a paper by Diane K. Lewis (1975), she concluded that conditions under which a family lives determined the socialization of the child. For example, in a matrifocal family in the inner city, where wider social pressures are crucial, a mother's expectations for and consequent behavior toward her sons may be quite different than in an equalitarian family in a small New England town.

A number of research studies specifically concerned with the effects of Black mothers in single-headed households suggested that many problems such as delinquency, homosexuality, low achieving and mental disorders were attributed to a father-absent environment. Parker and Kleiner's (1966) study of the characteristics of Negro mothers in a single-headed household stated:

> The Negro family in America has been frequently characterized as matri-centered, often with the father absent or having only peripheral spouse and parental role . . . Statistical studies have clearly demonstrated the widespread and increasing incidence of female-headed Negro families . . . (p. 94)

Parker and Kleiner further stated:

> . . .mothers in broken home situations have poorer psychological adjustments and lower goal-striving for themselves and their children than mothers from intact family situations. (p. 100)

Corroboration of these findings were reported in individual investigations by Hess and Shipman (1965), and Bee (1969). Hertzog and Sudia (1973) did not find these anticipated problems suggested by Parker and Kleiner (1966). Their study reported that any significant negative findings as relates to delinquency, male homosexuality, and low achievement among males in father absent homes had not been established.

A number of research studies (Barnes, 1983; Billingsley, 1970; Dietrich, 1975; Edwards, 1963; Moynihan, 1967; Staples, 1971; Tenhouten, 1970) specifically referred to three distinct patterns of family life, matriarchal, equalitarian, and patriarchal.

The pioneer study by Middleton and Putney (1960) controlled the variables of race, class, and employment of wives, and found two parent families to be equalitarians in decision-making (child care, purchase and living standards, recreation and role attitudes). He also found that husbands were more dominant among families with working wives than among those where the wives were not employed. In a similar study by Maxwell

(1968) involving a group of rural Black fathers' participation in family activities, he reported that their participation usually increased when the wife was employed outside of the home and there was less likely to be a joint effort in performance of household and social tasks.

Mack (1974), using Middleton and Putney's research design, but including an additional technique of her own, found that class differences far outweighed any racial differences.

The findings of Gutman (1976) and Scanzoni (1971), in separate studies, supported the positions of Middleton and Putney and Mack.

In one of the studies that compared Blacks to Blacks, Edwards (1963) found that Black Christian families in a North Carolina ghetto were equalitarians, while their counterpart, Black Muslim families in adherence to their religious commitments functioned patriarchally.

Another type of family organization among Black families is the matriarchal. Several resources on the

matriarchy were explored (Barnes, 1983; Billingsley, 1968; Frazier, 1966; Moynihan, 1967; McGhee, 1985). The leading proponent of the matriarch concept of the Black family is Moynihan. Moynihan based his thesis on the earlier sociological writings of Frazier on the Black family. The Moynihan Report of 1965 suggested that the level of achievement of Black Americans resides in the family organization:

> Obviously, not every instance of social pathology afflicting the Negro community can be traced to the weakness of family structure . . . It was destroying the Negro family under slavery that White America broke the will of the Negro people. Although, that will has asserted itself in our time, it is a resurgence doomed to frustration unless the viability of the Negro family is restored. (p. 30)

Rainwater and Yancey (1967), Tenhouten (1970), Berger and Simon (1974) and Dietrich (1975), in separate investigations have empirically criticized Moynihan's data and theoretical interpretations and

concluded that the empirical evidence does not provide adequate support for the conclusions of the Moynihan Report.

Despite the discrepancy of The Moynihan Report, Barnes (1983), in her examination of the three types of family organizations, concluded that there is evidence that matriarchy, patriarchy and equalitarian are present in the Black family. Her findings were consistent with the varied literature. The organization of the Black family is varied and is a function of education, occupation and amount of income.

It is a widely held view that the level of achievement status of family members can be attributed to pronounced differences in family organization. In an attempt to describe the organization of the American family, the review of literature mainly relies on the findings of Blood and Wolfe's Detroit Study (1969). Their findings suggested that familial behavior is greatly influenced by education, occupation, and amount of income, and that two parent family equalitarism is regarded as the ideal and modal pattern among middle

class American families, while matriarchy and patriarchy, primarily characterized Black, low-income and working class families.

There is a general agreement in several studies (Gnagey, 1968; Heilbrun, 1968; Hurley, 1962; Siegelman, 1965) that development towards achievement among family members is positively related to warm, accepting, supporting, understanding, and autonomy-granting parent-child relationships; and that extreme restrictiveness, authoritarianism and punitiveness without acceptance, worth, and love were found to be negatively related to the development of achievement. These studies also indicated that parental attitudes varied according to the sex of both parent and child.

Personal Growth Dimensions

McClelland (1961), in his examination of the determinants of achievement, concluded that higher achievement levels develop in families where there is an emphasis on the independent development of the individual. Hall and King (1982) wrote that children of middle-income Black families are likely to mature

at about the same rate as their White counterparts, but children from low-income Black families usually mature earlier because of the age at which they are required to assume major responsibilities. Hall and King further stated that young Black boys may have to work at odd jobs to help earn the family income. The oldest child, especially a girl who may be a pre-teen, is usually responsible for feeding and caring for younger siblings and older relatives in the home. These findings were supported in individual studies (Hill, 1972; Stack, 1970; Willie, 1974).

McClelland (1961) further suggested that if Blacks were to increase the need to achieve, they must adopt values of child-rearing patterns of White middle-class parents. According to McClelland, White middle-class children are socialized to be aggressive, independent, and individualistic. These findings are supported by the investigations of Kagan (1964). Lewis (1965), in an exploratory paper on socialization of children, suggested that Black parents socialized their children to be aggressive, emotionally expressive and independent.

Moore (1966) related parental child-rearing practices to the occurrence of independency and dependency in children's behavior. The results indicated that the use of physical punishment by the mother was positively related to dependency in boys but not in girls. Moore further reported that the more severe the demands and restrictions which mothers placed on their girls for mature behavior, the more the girls tended to be dependent. Crandall (1960), in studying the development of independence and achievement, found that children who behave independently with their mothers also tended to behave independently toward teachers. He noted that mothers who frequently rewarded achievement in their children were less nurturant and they were less acceptant and rewarding of help-seeking and emotional support-seeking. Independence training and the rewarding for achievement were positively related. Similar findings were noted by Baumrind (1972).

Few social scientists will deny the importance of family environment as a determinant of achievement orientation. However, there is considerable debate

over which variables are most important. Goode (1964) and Scanzoni (1967) agreed on the inconsistencies of social scientists in discussing family based determinants of achievement orientation. The disagreement among researchers over the nature of the family environment's impact upon achievement orientation generally centers around the kinds of parental behaviors and parent-children relationships. It has been well documented in several studies (Blau, 1964; Billingsley, 1969; Davis & Havighurst, 1946; Herzog & Sudia, 1973; Kamii & Radin, 1967; Lewis, 1975; Rainwater & Yancey, 1967) that the socialization of the child varies according to class, sex, and race of the family. The consensus in the literature agrees that class was the most important factor.

Moynihan (1965) concluded that a large segment of Black families were failing to instill its members with strong, positive orientations toward achievement in its young. He argued that the fundamental problem of the Black community was the destruction of the family structure which failed to provide Black youth

with appropriate orientations towards achievement and by doing, relegated them and their offspring to a continuing cycle of poverty and disadvantage.

According to the research findings of Hill (1971), one of the unheralded strengths of the Black family is the strong achievement orientation of low-income Black families. His findings were later supported by Scanzoni (1971) in a study that Black parents set and stress attainment of high goals during socialization. Hill further pointed out that college aspiration and plans of middle-income students tended to be higher than those of low-income families but the majority of low-income students (and their parents) have college aspirations. He asserted that since Blacks from low status families tended to outnumber those in middle status families, the number of Black students attending college often equals or surpasses the number attending college from middle-income families.

Lystad (1961) investigated family patterns and achievement aspirations of 100 urban Negroes over a two-generational time period. She concluded that achievement

aspiration varied according to social class; family patterns did not vary over the two generations studied. She further pointed out that aspirations of middle class status were characteristic for both middle and lower class individuals, but achievement status was not characteristic in the long run for either of these groups.

Several studies (Billingsley, 1971; Hill, 1971; Leslie & Johnson, 1965) noted the shortcomings of the methodology on the research of the literature on differences in child-rearing practice. Leslie and Johnson (1965) noted in a review of the research on class differences in child-rearing practices:

> The understanding tendency of many researchers in this area to stress statistically significant class difference after having generally reported the overall similarities seemingly has aided in the development of what may be unwarranted class image. We contend that this results not only from over-reliance on statistical difference without representative proportions, but from the uncritical use in secondary sources of these

> differences to the relative exclusion of all similarities and the researcher's quality statement . . . (p. 957)
>
> The uncritical acceptance by social scientists of current concepts of class-linked child-rearing patterns may result and render sterile future studies of the variations that exist in a complex society. (p. 957)

In another instance, Billingsley (1970) has noted that social science has failed and mistreated Black families in its approach. He has suggested the reasons for this failure are:

1. Few researchers view the Black family as an institution.

2. Social science is White, it has not taken Blacks seriously, it is generally limited to race relations, and Blacks are viewed as objects of assimilation.

3. Black scholars have either been ignored or mistreated.

4. Social science relies on statistical techniques and speculations which may not be reliable (Hill, 1968).

Hill (1968), in his widely acclaimed book, Black Families in White America, suggested that Black families might be studied as a social system, an ethnic subsociety and a family structure which he defined in two types: (1) incipient nuclear family (husband and wife), (2) simple nuclear family (husband and wife and children), (3) attenuated nuclear family (single parent and children), (4) incipient extended family (husband and wife and other relatives), (5) simple extended family (husband and wife, children, and other relatives), (6) attenuated extended family (single parent, children and other relatives), (7) incipient augmented family (husband and wife, and non-family members), (8) incipient extended augmented family (husband and wife, other relatives and non-relatives), (9) nuclear augmented family (husband and wife, children and non-relatives), (10) nuclear extended augmented family (husband and wife, children, other relatives and non-relatives), (11) attenuated augmented family (single parent, children and

non-relatives), and (12) attenuated extended augmented family (single parent, children, other relatives and non-relatives).

The study of Hauser and Sewell (1975) analyzed the effects of social origins on educational attainment, occupational achievement and earnings. Hauser and the effects of social origins on educational attainment, Sewell traced the educational, occupational, and earning histories of 1,070 young men who graduated from Wisconsin high schools in 1957 through their first ten years of post-secondary schooling, military service and labor force experience. They found that the achievement process was very complex and varied according to social origins and that the persistence of social position across generation is not inheritance. These findings were supported by Duncan and Featherman (1982), Sewell, Haller, and Porter (1969, 1970).

According to Sewell and Shah (1968), the role of parents, both as models to be emulated and in terms of the child's perception of parental expectations, is

very crucial to the future attainment of educational and occupational achievement. Sewell et al. (1970) using multivariate, cross-tabular, and regression analysis found that both father's and mother's educational achievement is generally high but the mother's education had a slightly larger dependent effect on the educational achievement of daughters. Sewell and Hauser (1975) noted that when there is a discrepancy in parents' educational attainment levels, the answer as to which parent's education has more effect on the child's achievement is contingent upon not only the sex of the child but also the child's intelligence level.

According to the literature, social scientists have paid little attention to the role of religious emphasis on the family. Among the social scientists emphasizing the important aspects of religious values is Blood. Blood (1974) viewed churches as the socializing agents which seek to shape the ethical conduct of children and govern family. According to Blood, when churches succeed, they have profound indirect effect on the behavior of those children throughout

their lives. Farber (1964) pointed out that the original interpretation of family interactions had been formulated by biblical history.

Lenski (1960) studied the influence of religion on secular institutions. He found that religious beliefs have an effect on strength of kinship bond, child-rearing, family solidarity, parental values and economic mobility. He further noted that when socio-economic factors are controlled, the more Negro Protestants resemble White Protestants in religious beliefs, child-rearing practices, family solidarity, parental values and economic mobility.

Walsh (1982) asserted that religion has been the major formal institution in American society which has been available to Blacks for support. He further suggested that it has been both a social and personal resource and that it has been a major source of achievement status and community support for Black families. These findings were supported by Hill (1971). Hill further suggested that religious emphasis is one of the strengths of Black families. He said that Blacks have been adept at using religion as a tool for

survival and achievement throughout their history in America. Hill further stated that during slavery, religion served as a stimulant for the numerous political rebellions that took place. Frazier (1966) noted that Blacks have learned to use religion as a survival tool.

Summary

The primary focus of this study is the family environment and achievement. The writer explored various studies and literature related to:

a. Early history of the Black family

b. Relationship dimensions of the family

c. Personal growth dimensions of the family.

The literature abounds with aspects of the Black family but there is a limited amount on achievement status as it related to the Black family. The literature attributed this to the lack of methodology as well as theoretical limitation on studying the family.

A summary of the related literature is found in the following statements:

1. Despite slavery, certain aspects of the family were maintained.

2. Socialization practices differ according to social status, however, the goals of achievement for family members are similar regardless of class.

3. Socialization practices have a positive effect on the achievement level of its family members.

4. Achievement is a very complex process and the family based determinant effects are disputed among researchers.

5. Achievement aspirations varied from one generation to another and are very similar regardless of social status.

6. Religion has been a citadel for the Black family since the beginning of slavery and has a tremendous impact on its achievement.

7. Black female-headed households are less likely to have members that achieve.

8. Male and female interaction with family members enhances achievement.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter describes the methods and procedures employed in this study. The major areas included were as follows:

a. Research design

b. Sample and selection procedure

c. Instruments

d. Procedures for implementing study

e. Analysis of data

Research Design

The research design for this study was correlational, which is a type of descriptive research. This design endeavored to determine the extent of relationships between variables, thus providing an increased understanding of a phenomena. The purpose for employing correlational research methodology in this study was exploratory. Correlational techniques permit an investigator to use relatively small samples. It can be assumed that if a relationship exists, it will be evident in a sample of moderate size, for instance 50

to 100 cases. Correlational studies are relatively easy to design and conduct. The value of such studies lies in the thoroughness with which the variables are selected and the selection of an instrument that is appropriate for the variables being considered (Ary et al., 1972).

In this study, the writer analyzed the variables inherent in the Black family environment and adult family members' achievement. Particular emphasis was placed on correlating the variables bivariately to determine the extent to which there were significant correlations between the environment of the family of origin and adult family members' achievement.

Sample

The sample for this study consisted of 100 family members randomly drawn from a pool of 530 family members who attended three predominantly Black Protestant churches in Seattle, Washington.

Selection Procedure

Based on the assumption that the Black church-attending population of Seattle was adequately represented

by membership in three predominantly Black Protestant churches, the pool for this study was generated from these combined populations. Membership directories from the three identifying congregations were obtained and those between 30 and 40 years of age were alphabetized as one group. Fro this pool of alphabetized individuals, 100 members were randomly drawn, employing a table of random numbers.

Setting

Metropolitan Seattle has an approximate population of 493,846. The White citizenry represents 80%; Blacks represent 9.5%; Asians and Pacific Islanders represent 7%; Spanish origin, 2.6%; American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleutians, 1.3%; and others, 2.3%. Seattle has the largest Black population in the State of Washington. It totals approximately 46,755 (Lane, 1986).

Many of the Black residents migrated to Seattle during World War II or shortly thereafter. These migrants were predominantly from the Southwest. They were employed primarily by Boeing Aircraft Corporation, the shipping industry, and the local school system.

Today, many of the residents are still employed in the previously mentioned areas as well as in other key industries.

Instruments

Two instruments were used in collecting data to assess the relationships between variables:

1. The Family Environment Scale (FES)
2. Demographic Interview Form (DIF)

The Family Environment Scale is a psychometric evaluative approach designed to assess the impact of family functioning. The Family Environment Scale contains 90 statements to be labeled "true" or "false" by the respondent. The set of responses characterize the family climate and its influence on behaviors. It provides a framework for understanding the relationships among members, the kinds of personal growth emphasized in the family and the family basic organizational structure.

Ten subscales make up the FES. Three subscales (cohesiveness, expressiveness, and conflict) are conceptualized as relationship transactions that are

taking place within the family. Five subscales (independence, achievement, cultural-intellectual active, recreational orientations, and moral-religious emphasis) refer to personal development or growth dimensions. Two subscales (organizations and control) refer to system maintenance dimensions. They provide information about the family structure and its roles (Moos & Moos, 1984).

The original form was administered to a sample of over 1,000 people in 285 families. The sample included many different types of families to ensure that the FES would be applicable to a variety of family settings. Families were recruited from three church groups, through a newspaper advertisement, and from contact with students at local high schools. An ethnic minority subsample was recruited in part from these sources and in part by Black and Mexican-American research assistants. A group of distressed families that were undergoing treatment was obtained from a psychiatrically-oriented family clinic and from a probation and parole department affiliated with a local correctional facility (Moos & Moos, 1984).

The normative data from Form R subscales were collected for 1,125 normal and 500 distressed families (the initial 285 families described above are included in these subsamples). The subsample for normal families included families from all areas of the country, single-parent and multigenerational families, families of all age groups (newly-married student families, families with preschool and adolescent children, families whose children had left home, and families composed of older, retired adults) (Moos & Moos, 1984).

The sample of normal families also included a group of 294 families drawn randomly from specified census tracts in the San Francisco areas. Test-retest reliabilities of individuals' scores for the ten subscales were calculated for 47 family members in nine families who took Form R twice within an eight-week interval between testings. The test-retest reliability coefficients are all in an acceptable range, varying from a low .68 for independence to a high of .86 for cohesion. Test-retest stability coefficients were also calculated for a four-month

interval on a sample of 35 families. Coefficients were relatively high for these time intervals (Moos & Moos, 1984).

For the purposes of this study, four subscales of Moos Family Environment were used; namely, cohesion, independence, achievement orientation and intellectual-cultural orientation.

Face and construct validity were determined through interviews gathered from structured interviews with members of different types of families: Caucasian, ethnic minority, "normal" and "clinic". Additional items were adapted from other Social Climate Scales developed by Moos. Comparison of mean scores for 42 "clinic" and 42 matched "normal" families indicated that the differences were consistent with expectations and provided some initial support for construct validity of the FES. The items comprising the scales do have face validity and do seem to represent the dimensions which they are supposed to measure according to Buros (1978).

The Demographic Interview Form (DIF) was developed by the investigator to meet specific purposes of this study. The DIF was discussed with the investigator's advisor. The advisor made suggestions on content, items to be included, and format. Through consultations and readings, it was decided that five major areas; age, sex, education, marital status, and religion of demographic information were essential to the DIF for identifying the achievement levels of the family members.

The Demographic Interview Form was administered to ten adult family members in a church in Seattle, Washington to help validate the instrument. The ten adult Black family members assisted the investigator in determining the most effective manner of asking particular questions to insure establishing and maintaining rapport. Unclear or offensive items were revised or discarded.

Face validity of the revised instrument was provided through follow-up interviews by the investigator with

the selected ten sample subjects. Face validity is the degree to which the relevance of the measuring instrument appears to measure (Anastasi, 1982).

Procedures for Implementing the Study

Implementation of the study required the following procedures:

1. Obtained permission from church officials to conduct the study.

2. Obtained directories from churches that included all adult church members who are between the ages of 30 and 64 years of age by families.

3. Randomly selected 100 participants from the target population.

4. Wrote letters briefly describing the purpose of the study, a statement of confidentiality, and a request for signed permission to participate in the study. A 70% return from participants was deemed minimally acceptable by the investigator.

5. Completed biographical interview forms in a person-to-person interview with each participant.

6. Distributed the Family Environment Scale to participants in person. Provided a stamped self-addressed envelope for the Family Environment Scale to be returned by mail following the interview.

7. Follow-up telephone calls were made by the investigator to encourage participation and to determine the progress on the completion of the Family Environment Scale.

8. Analyzed and synthesized all data collected from the target population in accordance with the predetermined method.

9. Incorporated data analysis into the final dissertation.

Analysis of Data

The procedure for collecting, statistically treating, and present the data for this study were as followed:

Collection of Data

The investigator met with each prospective participant individually at a place and time that was

mutually convenient. At this meeting three activities were carried out:

1. The prospective participant was provided an overview of the study and the confidential manner in which materials would be handled and presented in the dissertation.

2. The participants were interviewed individually employing the biographical data form to obtain the necessary demographic data.

3. The Moos' Family Environment Scale was explained and a stamped self-addressed envelope was provided for returning the completed scale.

Statistical Treatment

The data were bivariately analyzed. Scattergrams were completed where appropriate to determine the type of correlational procedures required. Hypothesis one through four were analyzed employing bivariate procedures. Coefficients of determination were employed for evaluating the predictive power of each correlation coefficient. Two tailed test of significance was used to determine the level of significance.

Chapter Four

Presentation and Analysis of Data

In this chapter, the writer has presented and analyzed the major variables collected from the use of the Demographic Interview Form (DIF) and selected variables on Moos' Family Environment Scale (FES). Particular emphasis has been placed on correlating the variables between the previously mentioned variables on the instruments to determine the extent to which there was a significant relationship in family of origin determinants and achievement.

The major purpose of this research was to determine whether or not any one of the hypothesized selected variables of the Family Environment Scale and educational level could be associated. As mentioned in Chapter Three, scattergrams were to be completed to help determine the appropriate correlation procedure and the direction and strength of the correlation. Based upon the scattergrams, sampling procedure, type of data, and sampling size, the Pearson product-moment coefficient of correlation

was selected as most appropriate for analyzing the data used in this study.

Guilford and Fruchter (1978) offered these three suggestions. Pearson assumes that the scores have been obtained by independent pairs, each pair being unconnected with other pairs; the two variables correlated are continuous; and the relationship between the two variables are rectilinear.

The most important requirement is the third, the rectilinear, a straight-line regression. This can often be determined by inspection of the scatter diagram. If the distribution of cases within the diagram appears to be elliptical, without any indications of a clear bending of the elipse, the chances are that the relationship is rectilinear. Even if it is slightly bent, the departure from a straight-line relationship may be so small that r is still a good index of correlation (Guilford and Fruchter, 1978).

Valen offered these suggestions:

In determining the correlation method to employ in a study of how to interpret the findings of a

> correlation study, you give consideration to several factors: the size of the sample, the distribution of the scores, whether the variables are linearly or curvilinearly related, whether the variables are continuous, dichotomous, or dichotomized, and whether the variables are measured on nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio scales (Van Dalen, 1973).

Ary and others explain the need for caution in interpreting coefficient of correlation in the following manner:

> Correlation does not necessarily indicate causation; the size of the correlation is in part a function of the variability of two distributions to be correlated; and the correlation coefficients should not be interpreted as an absolute sense (Ary, Jacobs, and Rasavieh, 1985).

Pearson product-moment coefficient of correlation was used to test the four null hypotheses that none of the variables under study were associated and that any observed r_s values differed from zero only by chance.

Findings from this statistical procedure are reported in Tables 1-8, and suggest that although there might be no association between the five variables, there is within this sample some association between any two of them.

The organization of the data collected and used in conducting this investigation were specifically designed to make associations and analyses in the following areas:

1. The correlation between family of origin environment level of cohesion and adult family members' achievement status.

2. The correlation between family of origin environment level and independence and adult family members' achievement status.

3. The correlation between family of origin environment level of achievement orientation and adult family members' achievement status.

4. The correlation between family of origin environment level of intellectual-cultural orientation and adult family members' achievement status.

Data Analysis

The participants in this study were seventy-one randomly selected Black adult church-attending family members from one hundred randomly selected family members, constituting members from three predominantly Black Protestant churches in Seattle, Washington. The entire sample was not utilized because some of the participants did not complete the scales and demographic interview forms.

The summary of the analysis of the data including means for each variable, and the standard deviations on the selected subscales of Moos' Environmental Scale and the correlation coefficient of each variable with educational level from the seventy-one church-attending Black family members of the three predominantly Black Protestant churches in Seattle, Washington are presented in Tables 1-8, under the respective subtest scale captions.

The data analyses are presented according to null hypotheses one (1) through four (4).

Cohesion and Educational Level

$1H_O$: There will be no statistically significant correlation between the family of origin environment level of cohesion and adult family members' educational level.

According to Moos, cohesion is a relationship dimension and is referred to as the degree of commitment to which family members provide help and support to one another.

A description of cohesion scores were categorized relative to educational level. The results obtained are shown in Table 1.

The raw scores on the Cohesion Subscale of Moos' Family Environment Scale obtained by the 71 Black adult family members ranged from a low of 1 to a high score of 9, with a mean score of 7.35 as shown in Table 1. The national norm on Cohesion Subscale of the Family Environment Scale indicated a mean of 6.61 (Moos and Moos, 1984); thus, showing a different of .74 of a point between the mean score made by the 71 Black adult church-attending family members and the national norm.

Table 1

Cohesion by Educational Level

Educational Level	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Doctorate	2	8.00	.00
Masters	15	7.67	1.18
Bachelors	18	7.72	1.53
Some College	18	7.11	2.08
High School Graduate	18	6.89	1.68
Less than High School	0	0.00	0.00
Total	71	7.35	1.65

The results obtained when cohesion was correlated with educational level are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Correlation Between Cohesion and Educational Level

Variables	r	$100r^2$
Educational Level Cohesion	-.2099	4.4

Specifically the findings of the family dimension suggested that the family of origin level of cohesion provided a low negative (r=.-2099) correlation with educational level of its adult family members. This negative correlation means that an increase in cohesion tends to accompany a decrease in educational level.

The correlation coefficient (r=-.2099) obtained was not statistically significant at the .05 level. When the correlation coefficient was interpreted according to the variance, the coefficient of determination was r^2=.0441, which indicated that 4.4% of the variance in cohesion was predictable from the educational level or, alternatively, 4.4% of the variance in educational level was predictable from cohesion.

Independence and Educational Level

$2H_O$: There will be no statistically significant correlation between the family of origin environment level of independence and adult family members' educational level.

According to the Moos, independence is considered a personal growth dimension and is referred to as the extent to which family members are assertive, self-sufficient and have a tendency to make their own decisions.

A description of independence was categorized relative to educational level. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Independence by Educational Level

Educational Level	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Doctorate	2	6.00	1.41
Masters	15	7.47	.64
Bachelors	18	6.33	1.65
Some College	18	6.33	1.28
High School Graduate	18	7.22	1.48
Less than High School	0	0.00	0.00
Total	71	6.79	1.40

The raw scores on the Independence Subscale of the Family Environment Scale obtained by the 71 Black adult church-attending family members ranged from a low of our to a high of 9, with a mean score of 6.79, as shown in Table 3. The national norm on the Independence Subscale of the FES indicated a mean score of 5.96 (Moos and Moos, 1984); thus, showing a

difference of .83 of a point between the mean score made by the 71 Black adult church-attending family members and the national norm.

The results obtained when independence was correlated with educational level are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Correlation Between Independence and Educational Level

Variables	r	$100r^2$
Educational Level		
Cohesion	.0034	.001

The family of origin level of independence when correlated with educational level provided a low correlation (r=.0034) which was not statistically significant at the .05 level. Only .001% of the variance in independence could be predictable from educational level, or alternatively, .001% could be predictable from independence.

Achievement Orientation and Educational Level

$3H_O$: There will be no significant relationship between the family of origin environment level of achievement orientation and adult family members' educational level.

According to Moos, the goal orientation dimensions are the extent to which activities (such as school and work) are cast into an achievement oriented or competitive from work by family members.

A description of achievement orientation scores were categorized relative to educational level. The results are shown in Table 5.

The scores on the Achievement Orientation Subscale of the Family Environment scale obtained by the 71 Black adult church-attending family members ranged from a low of 3 to a high of 9, with a mean of 6.75. The national norm on the Achievement Orientation Subscale of the Family Environment Scale indicated a mean score of 6.37 (Moos and Moos, 1984), showing a difference of .38 of a point between the mean score made by the 71 adult church-attending family members and the national norm.

Table 5

Achievement Orientation by Educational Level

Educational Level	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Doctorate	2	7.50	.70
Masters	15	6.80	1.26
Bachelors	18	6.78	1.66
Some College	18	6.83	.79
High School Graduate	18	6.50	1.30
Less than High School	0	0.00	0.00
Total	71	6.75	1.26

The results obtained when Achievement Orientation was correlated with educational levels are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Correlation Between Achievement Orientation and Educational Level

Variables	r	$100r^2$
Educational Level		
Cohesion	-.1077	1.16

The family of origin level of achievement orientation and adult educational level provided a low negative correlation (r=.1077). This negative correlation means that an increase in achievement orientation tends to accompany a decrease in educational level. When the correlation coefficient was interpreted according to the variance, the coefficient of determination was r^2=.01160, which indicated that 1.160% of the variance in achievement orientation can be predictable from educational level or, conversely, 1.160% of the variance in educational level can be predictable from achievement orientation.

Intellectual-Cultural Orientation

$4H_O$: There is no significant correlation between the family of origin environment level of intellectual-cultural orientation and adult family members' educational level.

Consistent with Moos, Intellectual-Cultural Orientation is the degree of interest in social, political, and intellectual activities of family members. A description of Intellectual-Cultural Orientation scored were categorized relative to educational level. The results obtained are shown in Table 7.

The raw scores on the Intellectual-Cultural Orientation Subscale of the Family Environmental Scale obtained by the 71 Black adult church-attending family members ranged from a low of 1 to a high of 9 with a mean score of 6.77. The national norm on the Intellectual-Cultural Orientation Subscale of the Family Environment Scale indicated a mean score of 5.10 (Moos and Moos, 1984); thus, showing a difference of

1.67 between the mean score made by the 71 Black adult church-attending family members and the national norm.

Table 7

Intellectual-Cultural Orientation by Educational Level

Educational Level	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Doctorate	2	6.00	.00
Masters	15	6.80	2.27
Bachelors	18	6.83	1.69
Some College	18	6.83	2.00
High School Graduate	18	6.72	2.02
Less than High School	0	0.00	0.00
Total	71	6.77	1.92

The results obtained when Intellectual-Cultural orientation was correlated with educational level is shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Correlation Between Intellectual-Cultural Orientation and Educational Level

Variables	r	$100r^2$
Educational Level		
Cohesion	.01195	.014

The family of origin level of intellectual-cultural orientation and adult educational level provided a low correlation (r=.01195). The correlation coefficient (r=.01195) was not statistically significant at the .05 level. Only .014% of the variance in intellectual-cultural orientation can be predictable from adult educational level, or alternatively, .014% of the variance in education can be predictable from intellectual-cultural orientation.

These findings suggested that the selected variables of family environment: cohesion, independence, achievement orientation and intellectual-cultural orientation when

correlated with educational level provided low or no systematic association. There were no statistically significant correlations at the .05 level.

The final summary, findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations are presented in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five

Findings, Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

This chapter presents a summary of the purpose of the study, the research design, participants, instruments, definitions and literature review. In addition, the findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research study are also presented.

Purpose

This study was designed to determine if selected variables of family origin correlated with the educational level of adult family members. The following hypotheses were concluded:

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant relationship between family of origin environment level of cohesion and adult family members' educational level.

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant relationship between the family of origin environment level of independence and adult family members' educational level.

Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant relationship between the family of origin environment level of achievement orientation and adult family members' educational level.

Hypothesis 4: There is no statistically significant relationship between the family of origin environment level of intellectual-cultural orientation and adult family members' educational level.

Research Design

The research design for this study was correlational. This design endeavored to determine if a relationship existed between the selected variables of family environment and adult educational level of adult family members. Coefficients of determination were used to indicate the proportion of variance in one variable which may be said to be predictable from the other variable.

Participants

The participants consisted of 71 Black adult males and females between the ages of 30 and 64, who attended

three predominantly Black Protestant churches in Seattle, Washington.

Instruments

There were two data-gathering instruments used in this study: Moos' Family Environment Scale (FES) and the Demographic Interview Form (DIF) constructed by the investigator.

Moos' Family Environment Scale was used for the purpose of measuring the factors of family environment, cohesion, independence, achievement orientation, and intellectual-cultural orientation of the participants. The Demographic Interview Form was the investigator's instrument for securing data for assessing educational level of participants.

Findings

Several findings evolved from this study:

1. The cohesion level of family environment was not statistically related to adult family members' educational level at the .05 level.

2. The independence level of family environment was not statistically related to adult family members' educational level at the .05 level.

3. The achievement orientation level of family environment was not statistically related to adult family members' educational level at the .05 level.

4. The intellectual-cultural orientation level of family environment was not statistically related to adult family members' educational level at the .05 level.

Conclusions

Based on the statistical and descriptive analyses, the following conclusions appear to be warranted:

1. There was no statistically significant relationship between the family of origin environment level of cohesion and adult family members' educational level.

2. There was no statistically significant the family of origin environment level of independence and adult family members' educational level.

3. There was no statistically significant relationship between the family of origin environment level of achievement orientation and adult family members' educational level.

4. There was no statistically significant relationship between the family of origin environment level of intellectual-cultural orientation and adult family members' educational level.

Implications for Counselors

Most social scientists and school counselors have maintained that families whose members demonstrate high levels of cohesion, independence, achievement-orientation, and intellectual-cultural orientation are more likely to succeed educationally. The findings in this study suggested that there is no "ideal" family environment for assuring high levels of educational achievement. There appears to be no universal method for producing high achievers. In general, each family will encourage achievement in accordance with the family's particular lifestyle and knowledge. Conversely, families whose members do not demonstrate high levels of cohesion,

independence, achievement orientation, and intellectual-cultural orientation may or may not succeed educationally.

First, evidence in this study suggested the necessity of strong counselor involvement in the identification of achievement goals and active engagement in facilitating achievement goals. Second, the data suggested that the challenge facing counselors is to elicit more parental involvement in understanding cohesion, independence, achievement orientation, and intellectual-cultural orientation. This is essential in raising the consciousness of parent-school commitment to create or renew aspiration levels of individuals entrusted to the home and school environments. Finally, this study provided basic family information on selected environmental factors which agencies, parents, counselors, and others will find useful in understanding some of the variables of family environments and others will find useful in that do not have a statistically significant impact on the educational levels of adult family members.

Recommendations

These recommendations are submitted in accordance with the findings, conclusions and implications of this study. There is not enough good empirical research carefully documented on the cohesion, independence, achievement orientation and intellectual-cultural levels of multicultural families. Little attention has been focused on the family functioning of ethnic groups and its impact on the aspiration levels of family members.

Secondly, more studies on family environmental factors of cohesion, independence, achievement orientation and intellectual-cultural orientation relative to family functioning are needed to provide clearer understandings of motives and attitudes of high and low achievement behaviors.

As the investigation proceeded through the data analysis for this research study, several questions for further research becomes apparent. Social scientists, educators, and counselors need more and better assessment and diagnostic tools to help measure adequately the levels of cohesion, independence, achievement orientation

and intellectual-cultural orientation. Secondly, comparative longitudinal studies which analyze family environmental factors and the achievement process throughout the individuals' life span should be investigated.

By increasing the research knowledge on family environments of different ethnic families counselors will be about to understand the aspiration levels of all ethnic groups (Blacks in particular). As a result of gaining understanding, social scientists, educators, family practitioners, parents and counselors have an opportunity to develop more strategies and programs for assisting in the development of high and low achievers and learn more about what different ethnic groups learn in the family environment and how they learn it.

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Dear Respondent:

I am currently enrolled at Atlanta University as a doctoral candidate in the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Exceptional Student Programs in the School of Education.

At this point I am completing my dissertation and would greatly appreciate your assistance and cooperation in completing the study. Information that pertains to my research study on the achievement status of Black family members as it relates to factors of the family environment is scarce. To help increase the knowledge in the above area, your response to a Biographical Information Form and Questionnaire will be appreciated. Your responses will be kept confidential and the data will be interpreted as group information only. Please see the attached sheet.

I will contact you for other details in one week form the above date by phone to schedule an interview at our mutual convenience.

Please return the informed consent in the enclosed envelope. Your timely response will be greatly appreciated. If you need additional information or have questions, please feel free to contact me at the numbers below.

(206) 324-3580 Home, (206) 329-4674 Church

Sincerely yours,

Yvonne Snowden-Reece

Enclosure

Informed Consent

I _____ voluntarily consent to participate in the study entitled, "The Impact of Selected Environmental Factors on the Educational Level of Adult Family Members." I understand that this study is to determine if the environment of family of origin correlates with the educational level of its adult members; that is, what factors of the family environment are helpful or harmful to current adult achievement status. I will be interviewed and then I will be asked to complete a paper and pencil questionnaire. There is little risk involved with these procedures other than the possible discomfort resulting from thinking about my feelings. I understand that I may make further inquiries concerning the procedure if needed.

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and to stop participating in the project at any time. By signing this informed consent, I have not waived any of my rights or released this institution from liability from negligence. Any problems I have can be discussed with Dr. R. Green, Chairman of the Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology, and Exceptional Student Program, School of Education at Atlanta University.

_____ _____

Date Signature of Respondent

_____ _____

Date Signature of Interviewer

DEMOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW FORM

The information supplied by you will be regarded as confidential. Please, therefore, attempt to answer each item as accurately and honestly as possible.

DIRECTION: Please answer the following questions by a check ( ) in only one category.

Please Do Not Write Your Name On The Form

1. Your Age:

(1) _____ 30 - 34
(2) _____ 35 - 39
(3) _____ 40 - 44
(4) _____ 45 - 49
(5) _____ 50 - 54
(6) _____ 55 - 59
(7) _____ 60 - 64

2. Your Sex:

(1) _____ Male (1) _____ Female

3. Your Education:

(1) _____ Doctorate
(2) _____ Masters
(3) _____ Bachelors
(4) _____ Some college
(5) _____ High school graduate
(6) _____ Less than high school

Scoring of the educational level is a very simple task. Each educational level is assigned a score: (1) doctorate, a score of 1; (2) master's, a score of 2; (3) bachelors, a score of 3; (4) some college, a score of 4; (5) high school diploma, a score of 5; and (6) less than high school, a score of 6.

4. Your Marital Status:

(1) _____ Married (4) _____ Divorced
(2) _____ Single (5) _____ Widowed
(3) _____ Separated

5. Your Religious Denomination:

(1) _____ Baptist
(2) _____ Methodist
(3) _____ Other (Write In) _____

68. In our family each person has different ideas about what is right and wrong.
69. Each person's duties are clearly defined in our family.
70. We can do whatever we want to in our family.
71. We really get along well with each other.
72. We are usually careful about what we say to each other.
73. Family members often try to one-up or out do each other.
74. It's hard to be by yourself without hurting someone's feelings in our household.
75. "Work bef . . . play" is the rule in our family.
76. Watching T.V. is more important than reading in our family.
77. Family members go out a lot.
78. The Bible is a very important book in our home.
79. Money is not handled very carefully in our family.
80. Rules are pretty inflexible in our household.
81. There is plenty of time and attention for everyone in our family.
82. There are a lot of spontaneous discussions in our family.
83. In our family, we believe you don't ever get anywhere by raising your voice.
84. We are not really encouraged to speak up for ourselves in our family.
85. Family members are often compared with others as to how well they are doing at work or school.
86. Family members really like music, art and literature.
87. Our main form of entertainment is watching T.V. or listening to the radio.
88. Family members believe that if you sin you will be punished.
89. Dishes are usually done immediately after eating.
90. You can't get away with much in our family.

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

FORM R

RUDOLF H. MOOS

INSTRUCTIONS

There are 90 statements in this booklet. They are statements about families. You are to decide which of these statements are true of your family and which are false. Make all your marks on the separate answer sheets. If you think the statement is *True* or mostly *True* of your family, make an X in the box labeled T (true). If you think the statement is *False* or mostly *False* of your family, make an X in the box labeled F (false).

You may feel that some of the statements are true for some family members and false for others. Mark T if the statement is *true* for most members. Mark F if the statement is *false* for most members. If the members are evenly divided, decide what is the stronger overall impression and answer accordingly.

Remember, we would like to know what your family seems like to *you*. So *do not* try to figure out how other members see your family, but *do* give us your general impression of your family for each statement.

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1 Family members really help and support one another

2 Family members often keep their feelings to themselves

3. We fight a lot in our family

4 We don't do things on our own very often in our family

5 We feel it is important to be the best at whatever you do

6 We often talk about political and social problems

7 We spend most weekends and evenings at home

8 Family members attend church, synagogue, or Sunday School fairly often

9 Activities in our family are pretty carefully planned

10 Family members are rarely ordered around

11 We often seem to be killing time at home

12 We say anything we want to around home

13 Family members rarely become openly angry

14 In our family, we are strongly encouraged to be independent.

15. Getting ahead in life is very important in our family

16 We rarely go to lectures, plays or concerts

17 Friends often come over for dinner or to visit

18. We don't say prayers in our family

19 We are generally very neat and orderly

20 There are very few rules to follow in our family

21 We put a lot of energy into what we do at home

22. It's hard to "blow off steam" at home without upsetting somebody

23 Family members sometimes get so angry they throw things

24 We think things out for ourselves in our family

25 How much money a person makes is not very important to us

26 Learning about new and different things is very important in our family

27 Nobody in our family is active in sports, Little League, bowling, etc

28 We often talk about the religious meaning of Christmas, Passover, or other holidays

29 It's often hard to find things when you need them in our household

30 There is one family member who makes most of the decisions

31. There is a feeling of togetherness in our family.

32 We tell each other about our personal problems

33 Family members hardly ever lose their tempers

34 We come and go as we want to in our family

35 We believe in competition and "may the best man win"

36 We are not that interested in cultural activities

37 We often go to movies, sports events, camping, etc

38. We don't believe in heaven or hell

39 Being on time is very important in our family.

40 There are set ways of doing things at home

41 We rarely volunteer when something has to be done at home

42 If we feel like doing something on the spur of the moment we often just pick up and go

43 Family members often criticize each other

44 There is very little privacy in our family

45 We always strive to do things just a little better the next time

46 We rarely have intellectual discussions

47. Everyone in our family has a hobby or two

48 Family members have strict ideas about what is right and wrong

49. People change their minds often in our family.

50. There is a strong emphasis on following rules in our family.

51 Family members really back each other up.

52 Someone usually gets upset if you complain in our family

53 Family members sometimes hit each other.

54 Family members almost always rely on themselves when a problem comes up.

55. Family members rarely worry about job promotions, school grades, etc.

56 Someone in our family plays a musical instrument

57 Family members are not very involved in recreational activities outside work or school.

58 We believe there are some things you just have to take on faith.

59 Family members make sure their rooms are neat

60 Everyone has an equal say in family decisions

61 There is very little group spirit in our family

62 Money and paying bills is openly talked about in our family.

63. If there's a disagreement in our family, we try hard to smooth things over and keep the peace.

64. Family members strongly encourage each other to stand up for their rights.

65. In our family, we don't try that hard to succeed

66. Family members often go to the library

67 Family members sometimes attend courses or take lessons for some hobby or interest (outside of school)

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

DIRECTIONS

Look at your test booklet and check the Form printed on it here

Form R___ E___ I___

Please provide the information requested below

Your Name _____ Age. _____

Address _____ Sex: M F
(optional)

Please indicate your position in the family (check one)

Mother (wife)___ Father (husband)___ Son or Daughter___

Other___ (Please specify) _____

Today's Date _____ Other _____

Now, please read each statement in your booklet and then, in the boxes on the other side of this sheet, mark T (true) if you think the statement is true of your family, and F (false) if the statement is not true of your family.

Use a heavy X, as in the example. Please use a pencil with an eraser, not a pen. Be sure to match each number in the booklet with each one on this sheet.

EXAMPLE ONLY

T	X	
F		X

Designed by Rudolf H. Moos
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START HERE

T / F	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	T / F
T / F	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	T / F
T / F	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	T / F
T / F	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	T / F
T / F	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	T / F
T / F	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	T / F
T / F	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	T / F
T / F	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	T / F
T / F	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	T / F

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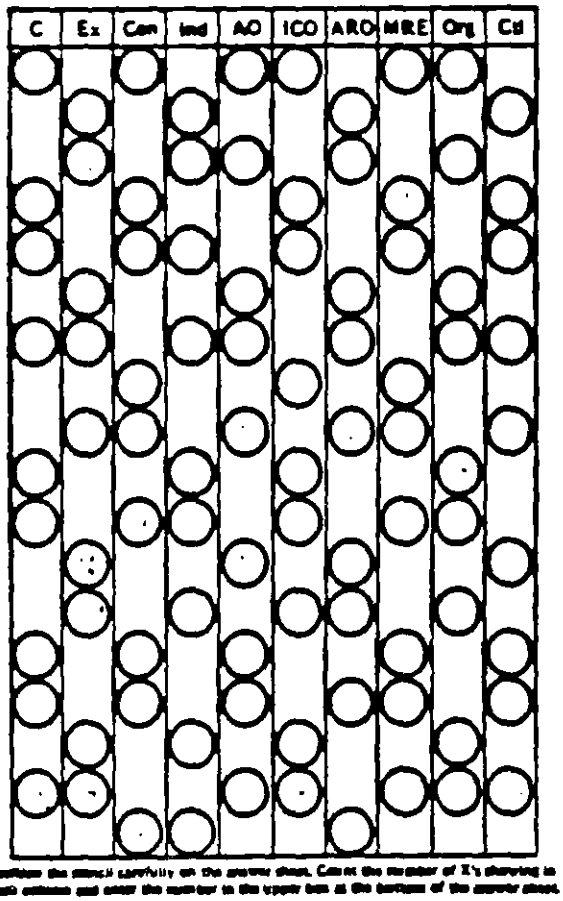
FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE