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Writing Apprehension of Black Students at a Private Historically Black Four Year Liberal Arts Institution

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Writing Apprehension of Black Students at a Private Historically
Black Four Year Liberal Arts Institution

Writing Apprehension of Black Students at a Private Historically
Black Four Year Liberal Arts Institution

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

By

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Abstract

      The purpose of this study was to determine the level of writing apprehension among first generation students at a Private Historically Black Institution. Participants were 103 college students from the central region of Arkansas at a Private Historically Black Institution of which 103 students responded to the survey completely. All of the respondents were administered the survey in four different sections of the freshman seminar courses. The survey consisted of a demographic section and the Writing Apprehension Test. The writing apprehension test was created by Daly and Miller (1975) to determine an individual's level of writing apprehension. Student's views, opinions or suggestions with regard to alleviating their writing apprehension level are also presented. Scores that range from fifty four to ninety are in the "normal" range. Students in this range do not experience significantly unusual levels of writing apprehension. However the closer the score is to the limit ranges the more apt the student is to experience behaviors or characteristics of the next range of scores. Scores that range from ninety-one to one hundred and twenty-four are in the "low" range. Students in this range experience low levels of writing apprehension and have no fear of writing. In addition, scores that are between twenty and fifty-four are classified as in the "high" range. Students in this range avoid writing as much as possible and experiences sever anxiety. According to the research findings almost 70% or 68.9% of the survey participants experienced "normal" writing apprehension, 10.6% experienced "low" writing apprehension while 20.3% experienced "high" writing apprehension. These findings are supported in the literature, statistical data analysis and themes. Based on the findings, the study presents some recommendations to alleviate this problem.

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Foreword

With over 10 years in the profession on blindness I have come to the conclusion that I wish that everyone in the world was blind. Because blind or visually impaired people are not prejudice, they judge people by their actions and their words. They determine if you are good, bad, worthy or unworthy by the content of your character as well as the fact that your actions and words run parallel to one another. They use what I call inner vision. This vision comes from within and connects with a person's very essence (the soul). Therefore, they use only their emotional intelligence to judge others not the hue in their skin or the lack thereof.

Chapter I

Introduction

During the past two decades there has been a growing concern with students who possess deficiencies in written communication skills, primarily because such a large percentage of students from low socioeconomic and minority or ethnic groups fall into this category. The fact of 'under-preparedness," regardless of its cause has barred this group from college and denied to them the many benefits that come with college training which is an atrocity (Dudley & Evans, 2001).

In addition, many first-time postsecondary students enter college unprepared for the demands of academic higher education coursework. While 70% of all students attend nonselective institutions increasingly large numbers of these students enroll in remedial classes (Kirst & Bracco, 2004). Students are considered as being unprepared for postsecondary education if they have to take courses that are not at the college level which do not count towards their degree and these classes prepare them for college level courses. According to the National Center for Education Statistics in 2008 nationwide, almost half, 50.4%, of all first time postsecondary students were required to take remedial courses in one or more subject areas (Malkus, & Sparks, 2013). Furthermore, of the 50.4% of first time postsecondary students who had to take remedial courses 48.8% were males and 51.6% were females (Malkus, & Sparks, 2013). Race or ethnicity also determined who took remedial courses with 46% of first time postsecondary White students taking remedial courses, followed by Asians at 46.7%, Mixed or Other races at 49.3% the Black and Hispanic at 60.2% and 61.5% respectfully (Malkus, & Sparks, 2013).

In addition, parent's education, socioeconomic status, high school types also determine whether a first time entering postsecondary student took remedial courses. In the area of parent's education level 57.7% of students whose parents had completed high school or less took remedial courses, followed by students whose parents had some college at 54.9% and students whose parents had at least a bachelor's degree at 41.1% (Palmer, Davis, Moore, &. Hilton, 2010).

In the area of socioeconomic status first time entering postsecondary students whose family income was less than $32,000 per year took remedial courses 58.2% of the time, students whose parents earned $32,000-$59,000 per year took remedial courses 51.1% of the time, students whose parents earned $60,000-$91,000 per year took remedial courses 45.6% of the time and students whose parents earned $92,000 or more took remedial courses 37.7% of the time as first time postsecondary students (Palmer, Davis, Moore, &. Hilton, 2010).

In the area of high school type 57% of students who did not have a high school diploma took remedial course. Students who attended a public high school took remedial courses 50.9% of the time. Foreign students who came to the United States for higher education took remedial courses 51.3% of the time followed by students who attended a certified private high school who took remedial courses 38.4% of the time as first time postsecondary students (Malkus & Sparks, 2013).

Effective writing skills are essential both in higher education as well as in the world of work that follows. One's ability to write in an effective manner is the single best predictor of success in course work during the freshman year of college (Alderman, 1999; Geiser & Studley, 2001). Gains in informative and analytical writing ability, moreover, are taken as a good indicator of the value added by postsecondary education (Benjamin & Chun, 2003). Finally,

today's businesses and industry compete in a knowledge-based economy, which places a premium on a literate workforce (Brandt, 2005). There is much concern about the academic preparation and skill level of students who come from a low socioeconomic background and are students of color. For those who seek admission to a college or university, having an inadequate academic background and low skill levels, such as reading, writing, and mathematics, frequently necessitate that these students must enroll in remedial classes at the postsecondary level (Kirst & Bracco, 2004). Consequently, low socioeconomic status, low academic achievement, and high disciplinary problems directly affect the academic preparedness of Black students and it disproportionately affects Black males the most. Moreover, these attributing factors cause Black students to be under prepared for college and thus cause the majority of Black students entering postsecondary education to enroll in remedial courses (Palmer, Moore, Davis, & Hilton, 2010). Students with high levels of writing apprehension consider writing to be unrewarding, and they will avoid classes with writing assignments if possible. Apprehensive students also choose academic majors that they believe will require less writing, while non-apprehensive students seek majors where more writing is required (Daly & Shamo, 1978). Furthermore according to Daly and Shamo (1976) the effect of writing apprehension continues after college. High apprehensive students tend to enter occupations that require less writing as a part of the job and therefore, Black, underprepared, college students will be the focus of this this Study.

<div align="center">Statement of the Problem</div>

Even though people disagree about the causes for the need of remediation as well as the best way to address students' needs that have to be remediated, they do not disagree about the fact that Black students are arriving on college campuses underprepared for college work. At colleges and universities across the nation Black students who have to be remediated,

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particularly, first time entering English students, struggle with the craft of writing (Grinnell, 2003).

In many cases underprepared Black students struggle with basic writing skill such as organization, grammar proficiency and spelling. These characteristics are associated with writing apprehension and continue to plaque first time entering postsecondary students who successful complete developmental English (Grinnell, 2003).

Writing apprehension is associated with the tendency of people to approach or avoid writing (Daly & Miller, 1975b). Highly apprehensive writers find writing unrewarding, or even punishing. Consequently, they avoid, whenever possible, those situations that require writing and when they must write they experience more than normal amounts of stress or anxiety. Thus anxiety is reflected in the behaviors that they display as they write, in the attitudes they express about their writing, and in their written products.

Parajes (2007) asserts that students who are underprepared often feel a great deal of writing apprehension. Underprepared often have writing apprehension due to low self-efficacy; which is the belief that they can write effectively. In addition, emotional states such as anxiety and apprehension impact efficacy beliefs, which in turn are directly related to the likelihood of a student resisting the act of writing. Furthermore, according to Pajares (2007) writing apprehension is often associated with the feedback that students receive from their teachers at school, especially the feedback that focuses strictly on the gap between student competency in written pieces and the form of writing desired by their teacher. Writing anxiety and apprehension are directly connected to a student's self-efficacy beliefs at both the elementary and secondary level. These beliefs are often a result of teacher behaviors that impact the self-beliefs of students,

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so that low confidence rather than the lack of ability can be responsible for the maladaptive academic behaviors, including writing apprehension (Pajares, 2005).

There is a problem with Black students who suffer from writing apprehension. This particular problem of apprehension needs to be identified and addressed if these students want to be very successful in college. The university and college writing centers are great places to address these issues. Writing centers allow students to be tutored by their peers in a non-stressful environment that fosters learning to write correctly far from the scrutiny of their professors (Grinnell, 2003). In addition students who have high writing apprehension should also write more often and practice basic writing skills to alleviate apprehension (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Wiltse, 2006).

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

The purpose for conducting the study was to determine the level of writing apprehension of Black students that are entering a Private Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Black students are often afraid to write due to several predetermined factors (e.g., socioeconomic status) that contribute to them being underprepared (Hughes & Demo, 1989). In addition to socioeconomic status; high school grade point average, test score, parental educational level and positive self-efficacy are some of the additional predetermined factors that lead to students being underprepared as well as academically unsuccessful (Grimes, 1997; Hagedorn, Maxwell & Hampton, 2001; Johnson & Aragon 2003). At HBCUs and community colleges many students are underprepared for college classes because of the open enrollment policies that are in place (DeAngelis, 1997). For the purposes of this research study the measurement of student writing apprehension was accomplished with the use of the Writing Apprehension Test (WAT) survey instrument.

Research Questions

The questions guiding this study were:

1. What is the profile of the Historically Black Institution respondents?

2. What is the writing apprehension of individuals?

3. Based on age and gender is there a difference in the level of writing apprehension?

4. Based on being a first generation students is there a difference in the level of writing apprehension?

5. What student services were most commonly identified by the case study institution participants?

Delimitations and Limitations

Delimitations are self-imposed parameters that the researcher places on the scope of a study. The current research only concentrates on the writing apprehension of entering first generation Black students. The study was also limited to one Historically Black institution located in Arkansas. The limitations of the research could not be totally controlled by the researcher although interventions were taken to minimize their potential impact. The study was limited by the number of students surveyed for this study. The study was further limited by the truthfulness of the students completing the survey instrument as well as the validity of the measurement of the Writing Apprehension Test.

Assumptions

This study was conducted with the following assumptions:

1. Most students attending HBCUS have a high level of writing apprehension.

2. The study assumed that students responded honestly to their particular writing problems on the WAT instrument.

3. The instrument used to measure writing apprehension was valid and reliable.

Significance

The significance of this study was to identify the factors that lead to a high degree of writing apprehension as well as the measures and strategies that can be implemented to assist Black students matriculating at HBCUS to become successful, confident writers. This study was also significant because it offered recommendations on and address concerns from students about how to alleviate some writing apprehension. For example, the institution might offer specific instruction to assist them with writing apprehension such as a writing center, tutoring, APA workbooks, etc.

Definition of Key Terms

Writing Apprehension (WA)**:** The high degree of anxiety some students experience when asked to write (Smith, 1984).

Writing Apprehension Test (WAT)**:** A test developed by Daly & Miller in 1975 that measures writing apprehension.

HBCU: A college or university that was originally founded to educate students of African American decent (Oxford dictionary, 2014).

Writing Apprehension Scale (WAS)**:** A scale that was designed to capture multiple dimensions of writing apprehension (Daly & Miller, 1975).

Black**:** Refers to a person of African descent living in the United States (Oxford dictionary, 2014).

Race: Refers to a person's physical appearance, such as skin color, eye color, hair texture, bone and jaw structure, etc.

Gender: The state of being male or female.

Socioeconomic Status (SES)**:** An individual or group's position within a hierarchal social structure. Socioeconomic status depends on a combination of variables including occupation, education, income, wealth, and place of residence. Sociologists often use socioeconomic status as a predictor of behavior (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

Family Educational History: The level of education that a person's father, mother, or siblings have.

Self-Efficacy: Student's confidence in their ability to accomplish specific writing tasks (Wiltse, 2001; Wiltse, 2002).

Underprepared : Students are considered as being unprepared for postsecondary education if they have to take courses that are not at the college level, which do not count towards their degree and theses classes prepare them for college level courses (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

First Generation College Student: Under graduate students who's parents never enrolled in post-secondary education (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

<div align="center">Conceptual Framework</div>

The four theories served as the guiding framework for this research are: Schlossberg's (1989) theory on mattering and marginality, Bandura's (1997) theory on self-efficacy, McCroskey (1992) personal report of communication apprehension (PRCA) and Phinney's (1990) model on ethnic identity development. These four theories are important because they each contribute to the mental development of Blacks and other ethnicities, which in turn impact the level of writing apprehension of first year students at HBCUs due to the fact the writing is a mental process.

Mattering and Marginality

Schlossberg (1989) theory on mattering and marginality argues that a sense of belonging is an influential factor in whether a student succeeds and develops in college. When an individual assumes a new role, especially if they are uncertain about their ability to succeed in their new role, they often feel a sense of being marginal. Marginality a sense of not fitting in, can lead to feelings of depression, irritability, and insecurity. Schlossberg noted that many students from minority groups see themselves as outsiders throughout their college years, while other students (new freshmen, who are members of the dominant group) might feel temporarily marginalized.

Feelings of marginality, in turn, can lead to a sense of not mattering. Schlossberg defined mattering as "our belief, whether right or wrong that we matter to someone else" (1989, p. 9). Building on a model introduced by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981), Schlossberg (1989) identified five components of mattering: (a) attention, a sense of being noticed by others; (b) importance, a feeling of being cared about; (c) ego extension, believing that another empathizes with ones successes and failures; (d) dependence, feeling needed; and (e) appreciation, a sense that one's efforts are valued by others.

Self-Efficacy

Banduras (1997) theory on self-efficacy states that in order for self-efficacy to develop, the individual must believe that they are in control and that the acts which are performed were done so intentionally. The power and will to originate a course of action is the key to future personal agency. Furthermore Bandura defines self-efficacy as the beliefs in ones capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given attainments.

Bandura identified four fundamental elements to developing self-efficacy. Performance accomplishments or mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal or social persuasion, and physiological or somatic and emotional states.

1. Performance accomplishments or mastery experiences; requires that the person achieve success in the face of adversity or with a task that is difficult or unrealistic. Performance accomplishments or mastery experiences are the most effective way to create a strong sense of efficacy. "Successes build a robust belief in one's personal efficacy. Failures undermine it, especially if failures occur before a sense of efficacy is firmly established" (Bandura, 1994a, p. 2).

2. Vicarious experiences; require that the person observes social models because this will also influence ones perception of self-efficacy. The most important factor that determines the strength of influence of an observed success or failure on one's own self-efficacy is the degree to which there is a similarity between the observer and the model. Seeing people similar to one-self succeed by sustained effort raises observers' beliefs that they too possess the capabilities to master comparable activities to succeed. By the same token, observing others' fail despite high effort lowers observers' judgments of their own efficacy and undermines their efforts. The impact of modeling on perceived self-efficacy is strongly influenced by perceived similarity to the models. The greater the assumed similarity the more persuasive are the models' successes and failures. If people see the models as very different from themselves their perceived self-efficacy influenced little by the models behavior and the results produced (Bandura, 1994a, p. 3).

3. Verbal or social persuasion; is "a way to strengthen a person's beliefs that they have what it takes to succeed" (Bandura, 1994a, p. 3). Verbal or social persuasion can provide a

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temporary boost in perceived ability. When it is effective in mobilizing a person's to action, and their actions lead to success, the enhanced self-efficacy may become more permanent. "People who are persuaded verbally that they possess capabilities to master given activities are likely to mobilize greater effort and sustain it than if they harbor self-doubts and dwell on personal deficiency when problems arise" (p. 3). This increases their chances of success. Unfortunately, "it is more difficult to instill high beliefs of personal efficacy by social persuasion alone that to undermine it since unrealistic boots in efficacy are quickly discomforted by disappointing results of one's efforts" (p. 3).

4. Physiological, or somatic and emotional states; stress and tension are interpreted as "signs of vulnerability to poor performance" (Bandura, 1994a, p. 3). Fatigue, aches and pains, and mood also affect perception of ability. Bandura notes, however, that it is not the intensity of the emotional or physical reaction that is important, but rather, how it is perceived and interpreted. People who have high self-efficacy may perceive affective arousal as "an energizing facilitator of performance whereas those who are best with self-doubts regard their arousal as a debilitator" (p. 3).

Phinney's Model of Identity Development

Jean Phinney (1990) maintains that the issue of ethnic identity is important to the development of a positive self-concept for minorities. Based on Eriksions theory (1968), Phinney's model is consistent with Marcias's identity development model (1980) and other ethnic identity models (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1993; Cross, 1991; Helms, 1993a).

The ethnic identity construct focuses on what people learn about their culture from family and community (Torres, 1996). Ethnic identity develops from shared culture, religion, geography and language of individuals who are often connected by strong loyalty and kinship, Theories of

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ethnic identity information examine how "individuals come to understand the implications of their ethnicity and make decisions about its role in their lives, regardless of the extent of their ethnic involvement" (Phinney, 1990).

As a part of the process of committing to an ethnic identity, minorities must resolve two basic conflicts that occur as a result of their membership in the non-dominant group. The first conflict involves stereotyping and prejudice on the part of the majority white population toward the minority group. Negative attitudes and prejudicial treatment pose a threat to the self-concept of the minority group. The second conflict involves a clash of value systems between the majority and minority groups and the manner in which the minority groups negotiate a bicultural value system. This issue, too, will influence the minority group's self-concept and sense of ethnic identity (Evans, Forney, Guido-Dibrito, 1998).

Phinney's model of ethnic identity development (1990) is made up of three distinct stages: diffusion-foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement. Minority groups who are able to actively explore their identity and resolve their inherent conflicts can develop and achieve identity. Those who fail to move through this process develop a diffused or foreclosed identity (Evans, et al., 1998).

Stage one: Diffusion-Foreclosure. Individuals in the first stage of ethnic identity development have not explored feelings and attitudes regarding their own ethnicity. There may be a lack of interest in examining ethnic feelings, or it may be seen as a nonissue that leads to diffusion. The individual may have acquired attitudes about ethnicity in childhood from significant others that lead to foreclosure. Those who accept the negative attitudes displayed by the majority group toward the minority group are at risk of internalizing these values. However, for the most part, this stage is marked by a disinterest in ethnicity (Evans, et al, 1998).

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Stage two: Moratorium. During the second stage of ethnic identity development (Phinney, 1990), the individual is increasingly aware of ethnic identity issues. Stimulated by an experience that causes an exploration, a new awareness causes an individual to examine the significance of her or his ethnic background. The experience may be harsh, such as an encounter with overt racism, or it may be more indirect, such as the gradual recognition, as a result of less dramatic incidents that the individual is perceived as "less" by the dominant culture. As a result of this awakening, the adolescent begins an ethnic identity search or moratorium. During this time, individuals seek more information about their ethnic or racial group while attempting to understand the personal significance of ethnic identity. This stage is characterized by emotional intensity, including anger toward the dominant group and guilt or embarrassment about their own past lack of knowledge of racial and ethnic issues (Evans, et al, 1998).

Stage three: Identity Achievement. In the final stage of ethnic identity development, the person in the non-dominant group achieves a healthy bicultural identity. Individuals resolve their identity conflicts and come to terms with ethnic and racial issues. As individuals accept membership in the minority culture, they gain a secure sense of ethnic or racial identification while being open to other cultures. The intense emotions of the previous stage gives way to a calmer and more confident demeanor (Evans, et al, 1998).

Communication Anxiety

The original conceptualization of communication anxiety was advanced by McCroskey in 1970; originally communication anxiety (CA) was viewed as an anxiety that dealt with anxiety based on oral communication. Currently CA is viewed as an individual's real or anticipated fear of communication with another person or persons. McCroskey (1981) stated that subsequent research on the oral context of CA gave birth to two other research efforts in the area of

communication apprehension. The first was research concerned with apprehension about writing. This research was conducted by Daley and Miller in the field of English and it dealt with writing apprehension. In order to measure an individual's apprehension to writing Daley and Miller created the Writing Apprehension Test (WAT) which was used in this research study. The WAT has been widely used and found to have a moderate correlation to CA. The second area of research that was explored was the apprehension of singing. Although, the articles on singing apprehension have received less attention than the articles on writing and speaking the test of singing apprehension (TOSA) has shown a low correlation to CA measures developed by McCroskey. In addition, in 1982 McCroskey developed a theory that addresses a person's willingness to communicate; this theory was called the personal report of communication apprehension (PRCA). The crux of PARC is to address an individual's apprehensiveness about speaking to others (McCroskey, 1992).

The four above mentioned theories as justification and validation for this study. Phinney's model of ethnic identity was chosen because it focuses on two identity conflicts the first conflict addresses negative stereotypes and prejudice. These stereotypes and prejudices exist within ethnic minorities because the more a person identifies with the majority white population the fewer members from one's own ethnic minority identify with the person.

African Americans who have high and low writing apprehension often move through Phinney's three stages of development but with opposite outcomes. A person with low writing apprehension is often seen by his or her ethnic minority group as attempting to be like the white majority population and they are often ostracized and experience racism within their ethnic minority group. African Americans with high writing apprehension often experience little to no racism within their ethnic minority group due to the fact that they fit in but they experience

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difficulties with fitting in to a collegiate system because writing is a big part of academia and they often associate their inability to write sufficiently with being discriminated against by their professors.

The second theory that was selected to validate this research was self-efficacy. This theory was selected because it directly affects one's ability to successfully complete tasks especially those tasks that are seen as difficult. Self-Efficacy requires that four needs are met the first is successful performance, the second is vicarious performance, the third is verbal persuasion, and the fourth is emotional arousal. Often times these four needs are not met within minority (first generation college students) groups when it comes to education. This is due to the fact that their parents are not college educated and they have no idea as to how to assist the student with their work or how to successfully encourage the student to do well. This theory is also important to the study because it states that in order to have high self-efficacy one must see someone from their same situation be successful and well as become motivated by their success. African Americans who have high writing apprehension often experience this because they have no one to guide their writing activities, they have no physical examples of people who are good writers, they have not been successful with writing in the past and they receive no encouragement so they are not motivated to write. In fact, writing to these people is often times seen as a task that causes high anxiety.

The third theory that was selected to validate this research was Schlosberg's theory of Mattering and Marginality. This theory was selected because it examines the relationship between mattering and feeling marginal as well as how the lack thereof could make first generation students unsuccessful in a college setting. This is critical to the study due to the fact that first generation students often feel marginal when entering college because they are

assuming a new role and they are unsure if they will be successful in that role. In turn their sense of mattering is affected as well because they are just one of the new freshmen on campus, they feel unimportant and not cared about, they often feel that no one cares about their success or failures; they feel that they are not needed and they feel that their efforts are not appreciated or valued by others.

Finally, I chose McCrokey (1981) Communication Anxiety and the PARC Assessment were selected because the fear or apprehension of speaking or communication with a person or group of people has a moderate correlation to writing anxiety and they both deal with one's ability to communicate. Interestingly, the CA addresses an individual's anxiety to communicate in the area of speaking while the WAT addresses an individual's anxiety to communicate in the area of writing; these modes of communication (writing and speaking) are both cerebral processes that require thought and thus cause anxiety to individuals' who feel inadequate about their ability to communicate.

In summary, Phinney's (1990) model Ethnic Identity, Bandura's (1997) theory Self-Efficacy McCroskey's (1981) Communication Anxiety and PARC Assessment and Schlosberg's (1989) theory on Mattering and Marginality comprised the conceptual framework for this study because they examine how a person's mental psyche and their sense of belonging determine how successful they are in life as well as how successful they are in academia. Furthermore, these theories are important to writing apprehension and first generation African American students because without a sense of belonging (mattering and marginality), coupled with an inability to communicate effectively (communication anxiety), belief in self (self-efficacy), and identifying with one's culture (ethnic identity) one will not persist or have the desire to be successful in writing.

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Chapter Summary

Chapter I provided a discussion of first time postsecondary Black students entering colleges and universities' who are traditionally underprepared, and have writing apprehension problems. Several theories were combined to establish a conceptual framework including ethnic identity, self-efficacy, and mattering and marginality. These theories taken together help explain writing apprehension. In addition, this chapter presented the research questions used to guide the study; limitations and delimitations, significance and key terms.

Chapter II

The Review of Related Literature

The review of literature begins with the of importance of, socioeconomic status, and then moves to a pertinent discussion of research regarding writing apprehension, self-efficacy beliefs and academic performance and self-efficacy beliefs and writing performance. Further review of the literature reviews research in the areas of writing apprehension's correlation to writing achievement, self-efficacy and writing apprehension, strategies to eliminate writing apprehension, gender issues in writing, , and finally academic self-efficacy and ethnic identity.

Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic status (SES) is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation, and is normally conceptualized as the social standing or class of an individual or group. When viewed through a social class lens, privilege, power, and control are emphasized. Further, an example of SES as a continuous variable reveals inequalities in access and distribution of resources. SES is relevant to all realms of behavior science, including research, practice, education, and advocacy (American Psychological Association, 2013).

Low SES and it correlates, such as lower education, poverty, and poor health affect society as a whole. Inequalities in wealth and quality of life are increasing in the United States and globally, and despite these challenges, behavioral and other social science professionals possess the tools necessary to study and identify strategies that could help to alleviate these disparities at both the individual level and the societal levels. Variance in socioeconomic status, including disparities in the distribution of wealth, income and access to resources, affects everyone (American Psychological Association, 2013).

According to the American Psychological Association (2013), SES, race and ethnicity are closely related. Research has shown that race and ethnicity in terms of stratification often determine a person's socioeconomic status. Subsequently, communities are often separated by SES, race and ethnicity. These communities commonly share the characteristics of developing nations: low economic development, poor health conditions, and low educational attainment.

Research conducted by the American Psychological Association (2013) found that socioeconomic status affects a wide range of factors that impact the lives of many minorities including African Americans. African American children are three times more likely to live in poverty than Caucasian children (Costello, Keeler, & Angold, 2001). Minorities are more likely to receive high cost mortgages. African Americans receive high interest mortgages 53% of the time compared to 18% for Caucasians (Logan, 2008). Also, according to Rodgers (2008) unemployment rates for African Americans are typically double those for Caucasians. African American men working full time earn 72% of the average earnings compared to their counterparts and 85% of the earnings of Caucasian women.

Despite dramatic changes, large gaps remain when minority education attainment is compared to Caucasians (American council on Education, 2006). African Americans are more likely to attend high poverty schools than Asian Americans and Caucasians (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007). In 2010 blacks had the third highest dropout rate at 8% compared to 5.1% for Caucasians and Asian Americans who drop out at 4.2% per year (Kim, 2011). In addition to socioeconomic realities that may deprive students of valuable resources, high achieving African American students may be exposed to less rigorous curricula, attend schools with fewer resources, and have teachers who expect less of them than they expect from their similarly situated Caucasian counterparts (American Psychological Association, 2013).

Writing Apprehension

The term "writing apprehension" was coined by Daly and Miller (1975a) to describe an individual's tendency to respond favorably or unfavorably toward writing situations. Their research was based on communication apprehension, a state that affects a large proportion of the population. Prior studies in communication apprehension have shown that highly apprehensive people tend to choose occupations that they perceive as requiring little communication (Daly & McCrosky, 1975), tend to be less inclined to achieve in general (Giffin & Gilam, 1971), and tend to have lower self-concepts than others (McCrosky & Daly, 1974).

In addition, Daly and Miller (1975a) developed a measure of self-reported writing apprehension (WA) (i.e., fear of, or extreme anxiety about, writing) that has been the primary survey instrument used in studies of writing apprehension (Bennett & Rhodes, 1988; Charney, Newman, & Palmquist, 1995; Daly, 1978). Daly and Miller (1975a) initially identified 63 questions representing possible sources of writing apprehension. The items were developed to measure anxiety about writing in general, evaluation of writing by various groups, writing milieus, self-evaluation, and worth of writing.

Some people appear unusually fearful or hesitant about writing and avoid writing situations whenever possible. "In classroom situations," wrote Daly and Miller (1975a), "individuals who consistently fail to turn in compositions, who do not attend class when writing is required, and who seldom enroll voluntarily in courses where writing is known to be demanded" (p. 244).

The reluctance or resistance highly apprehensive students show toward writing was the subject of Hayward's (1991) research. She wrote that there is no single profile of a resistant writer, but many of the resistant writers in her study exhibited two distinctly different reactions:

either fight or flight. When instructors suggested that they modify some part of their papers, they reacted with open defiance and hostility toward the instructor, or with withdrawal, usually resulting in incomplete or hastily completed work, lack of revising, absenteeism, or refusal to interact in the class.

According to Scott and Rockwell (1997) writing apprehension involves "anxiety associated with writing situations, a tendency to avoid such situations, frustration, and low productivity while writing (p. 47). In addition, it also involves "relatively enduring tendencies to dislike avoid or fear writing" (Daly, 1985, p.44).

Imperative to note is that beginner or basic writers do not see themselves as writers, but as people outside the context of the academy. Eggers (1982) suggested that these students "do not see themselves as writers; they will not need writing in their future jobs, nor as writers in their classes for which they write papers, exams and reports. According to Shaughnessy (1977), the basic writer "both resents and resists his or her vulnerability as a writer. He or she is aware that they leave a trail of errors behind as they write. They can usually think of little else while they are writing. But they don't know what to do about it" (p. 7).

Daly and Miller (1975a) explained that writing apprehension can produce problems for those so afflicted with high levels of it. When enrolled in (mandatory) freshman courses, these individuals often behave in a manner familiar to instructors: they skip classes, turn in papers late or not at all, they sit in the back of the class, and they talk or otherwise behave oppositionally. Therefore, according to Daly and Miller (1975) writing apprehension is both a learned (i.e. condition through repeated negative experiences with writing) and a specific response to a certain stimulus: the writing assignment. This phenomenon is also referred to as composition anxiety, writing anxiety, and writing block (Onwuegbuzie, (2001).

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According to Popovich and Masse (2005) individuals may be classified as apprehensive about writing when their anxiety about writing is stronger than their anticipation of any positive outcome from having done so. Mabrito (1991) provided an even more comprehensive definition by stating that writing apprehension was actually a collection of behaviors that include avoidance of writing, perception of writing as unrewarding, fear of the evaluation of ones writing, and anxiety about having others read ones writing.

Self-efficacy Beliefs and Academic Performance

Bandura (1977, 1982, 1986) suggested that self-efficacy beliefs are strong predictors of related performance, and that the confidence people bring to a specific task plays a strong role in their success or failure to complete that task. In the area of academic achievement, most researchers agree that academic self-efficacy beliefs are related to and predictive of academic performance. After a meta-analytic investigation of 36 studies using 4,998 subjects, Multon, Brown, and Lent (1991) concluded that self-efficacy was related to academic performance, although the variance recorded differed depending on the specific characteristics of the studies, such as the time period during which the variables were assessed, students' achievement status, subjects' age, and the type of performance measure used.

Wood and Locke (1987) examined the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and the grades of college students and found that even when the ability was controlled, the effect was moderate but significant (.27). They suggested that one reason for such a moderate relationship may have been that self-efficacy was assessed two months before the outcome measure. Lent, Brown, and Larkin (1984) found that the self-efficacy beliefs of students participating in a science and engineering 10-week career planning course were related to their grades and persistence during the following year. Higher self-efficacy students received higher grades and

persisted longer in related majors. In addition, Lent et al. obtained SAT scores, high school rank, and previous college grades as measures of academic aptitude to correlate this construct with self-efficacy beliefs. They found that self-efficacy and aptitude were moderately correlated but concluded that the precise nature of that relationship required additional study.

Self-efficacy Beliefs and Writing Performance

Few researchers have explored the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on writing, but those who have generally agree that the two variables are related. Shell, Murphy, and Bruning (1989) studied the relationship between self-efficacy/outcome beliefs and reading/writing performance. They constructed a measure of writing self-efficacy consisting of two scales. The first attempted to assess students' confidence that they could successfully perform specific writing skills (e.g., correctly punctuate a passage); the second sought to discover their confidence to successfully complete specific writing tasks (e.g., a letter, a term paper). Shell, Murphy, and Bruning (1989), also constructed a measure of writing outcome expectations that asked students to rate the importance of writing for achieving various life goals (e.g., getting a job, being financially secure), with both measures were administered to 153 undergraduates. Writing samples in the form of 20-minute essays were obtained and evaluated by two expert raters using holistic assessment methods (interrater r= .75). The researchers identified a significant relationship between writing performance and writing skills self-efficacy (.32) but not between performance and writing task self-efficacy (.17) or outcome expectations (.13).

McCarthy, Meier, and Rinderer (1985) defined writing self-efficacy as students' self-evaluation of their own writing skills, constructed an instrument that identified and defined 19 writing "skills," and asked students to indicate with a "yes" or "no" whether they could demonstrate the skill (e.g., "Can you write sentences in which the subjects and verbs are in

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agreement?"). They administered the instrument, an anxiety measure, a questionnaire to assess

locus of control orientation, and a cognitive processing inventory. Writing performance was

measured from student essays by four expert raters (interrater r= .92). Due t irregularities in the

first study, a second study was completed (with the same subjects), and the researchers found

that only writing self-efficacy, what Shell, Murphy, and Bruning (1989) operationalized as

writing skills self-efficacy, was related to writing performance on the first study, but self-

efficacy and writing anxiety correlated with performance on the second. The relationship

between self-efficacy and performance was a moderate .33, a low but significant correlation in

line with the findings.

Writing Apprehension and Writing Performance

McLeod (1987) argued that because writing is as much an emotional and cognitive

activity, affective components strongly influence all phases of the writing process. She urged

researchers to explore writing anxiety (specifically writing apprehension) and other affective

measures with an eye toward developing a "theory of affect" to help students understand how

their affective processes inform their writing. Writing apprehension, a construct created by Daly

and Miller (1975a) that describes a form of writing anxiety, has already received much attention.

The work of Daly and associates (Daly, 1978; Daly & Miller, 1975a, 1975b; Daly & Wilson,

1983; Faigley, Daly, & Witte, 1981) has been instrumental in this area.

Daly and Miller's Writing Apprehension Measure (1975a) is an empirically based,

standardized self-report instrument intended to measure an individual's level of writing

apprehension. The original measure consisted of 63 items that dealt with respondents'

perceptions of their anxiety about writing, and included statements about their beliefs, likes and

dislikes, and attitudes about evaluations by self, peers, teachers, and professionals. A Likert-type

scale format was employed using five possible choices from strongly agree to strongly disagree. All items with factor loadings above .60 were selected to compose the initial instrument, with these 26 items accounting for 46 % of the total variance (Daly & Miller, 1975a). The obtained reliability of the measure was .940, the test-retest reliability for over a week was .923, and the mean score was 79.28 with a standard deviation of 18.86 (Daly & Miller, (1975a). Studies lasting over three months have produced test-retest reliability coefficients of greater than .80 (Daly, 1985).

After constructing the Writing Apprehension Test, Daly and Miller (1975b) administered it to 246 undergraduates to identify the relationship between apprehension and a host of measures that included verbal aptitude (SAT scores), writing self-efficacy (under the guise of "perceived likelihood of success in writing" and measured with two questions), willingness to take writing courses, and reported success in previous writing courses. Significant correlations were found between writing apprehension and SAT-verbal scores (.19), success expectation (.59), and willingness to take additional writing courses (.57). They also found that males were significantly more apprehensive than females and that apprehension was related to self-reported previous success in writing courses.

Writing apprehension has been studied by several researchers in regard to teachers' levels of apprehension. Claypool (1980) found a significant negative correlation between a teacher's level of apprehension and number of writing assignments made. Highly apprehensive high school teachers assigned only an average of seven writing assignments per year as compared to 19.9 assigned by low apprehensive teachers. One study found a positive relationship between a teacher's apprehension level and concern that students use Standard English (Gere, Schuessler, & Abbott, 1984). However, a large number of researchers have suggested that a teacher's

emphasis on rule rigidity and "perfectionism" make students fearful of writing and can actually result in "blocked" writers (Rose, 1980; Newkirk, 1979). Little causal research has been conducted to determine whether highly apprehensive teachers tend to transfer their feelings onto students by doing the same kinds of "conventions" that made them apprehensive in the first place (Kaywell, 1987).

Other studies have found that writing apprehension is related to writing aptitude and to writing performance (e.g., Daly, 1978; Faigley, Daly, & Witte, 1981), although both aptitude and performance have been measured in different ways and correlations have varied. Faigley et al. (1981) found that the relationship was significant when writing performance was measured using a standardized test but not necessarily when an essay was used (only one of two samples was significant). McCarthy et al. (1985) failed to find a relationship between writing apprehension and either writing self-efficacy or performance in the first of her studies.

Writing apprehension's Correlation to Writing Achievement

Several studies have indicated that apprehension is associated with writing performance. In a survey of elementary and secondary teachers, poor skill development was the most common reason cited for writing apprehension (Daly, 1979). High apprehensives write compositions with fewer words, convey less information, use less qualification, use lower levels of language intensity, and have less command over usage and written conventions when compared with low apprehensives (Book, 1976; Daly, 1977; Daly & Miller, 1975c; Faigley, Daly & Witte, 1981; Garcia, 1977; Reed, Vandett, & Burton, 1983). Measures written by high apprehensives were rated significantly lower in quality than those written by low apprehensives (Book, 1976; Daly, 1977; Daly & Miller, 1975c). Causality has not been proven in any of these studies; writing

apprehension does not necessarily cause poor writing nor does poor writing cause writing apprehension.

Results from a study by Marx (1991) confound the issue even further. In a study of over 200 freshman composition college students, developmental and advanced students expressed many of the same attitudes about writing, while the middle group stated attitudes more expected from students of lower ability.

In 1978, Daly conducted research on 3,000 undergraduates enrolled in a basic composition course in order to detect the actual skill or competency differences that exist between high and low apprehensive writers. Respondents completed the Writing Apprehension Measure and a multiple-choice test of writing skill designed to assess knowledge about mechanics and grammar. Daly found that high apprehensives did not perform as well on the test of writing skill as low apprehensives. In every case, the direction of the means favored the low apprehensive.

One hundred ten undergraduates were the subjects in Faigley, Daly, and Witte's 1981 study of the effects of writing apprehension on writing competency and performance. Differences again favored the low apprehensives in all but two measures (paragraph pattern and sentence pattern subtests). The subjects took the Test of Standard Written English, the English Composition Test, the SAT verbal test and vocabulary subtest, and the language mechanics and paragraph comprehension sections of the McGraw-Hill Reading Test.

In the writing performance portion of the study, highly apprehensive individuals wrote significantly shorter narrative-descriptive compositions that were rated as less syntactically mature or fluent than the compositions of their low apprehensive counterparts (Faigley, Daly, & Witte, 1981). Interestingly, there was no effect for apprehension on argumentative essays. The

authors concluded that highly apprehensive writers have less command over use and writing conventions and are unable to develop ideas as well as low apprehensives.

Walker (1992) completed a study to determine whether audience adaptation activities would affect writing apprehension and writing achievement. The study was conducted with 400 eighth-grade students, who participated in 15 activities designed to increase their awareness of audience as they wrote, an emphasis also often suggested as a benefit of peer response groups. Walker found no significant difference between the experimental and comparison groups in the amount of change in writing apprehension from the beginning to the end of the 13-week study. The experimental group exhibited a significant increase in writing achievement while the change for the comparison group was not significant. There was no significant difference in post achievement for differing initial levels of writing apprehension, and approximately 15 % of the eighth graders were classified as highly apprehensive. The study suggested that increasing an awareness of audience will significantly increase writing achievement, but not decrease writing apprehension.

Self- efficacy and writing apprehension

Bandura (1986) wrote that the richness and complexity of human behavior cannot be explained simply in terms of environmental forces and external reinforcements, because individuals possess a self-system that enables them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings, and actions. This self-system includes the abilities to symbolize, learn from others, plan alternative strategies, self-regulate behavior, and self-reflect. Human behavior is the interplay between this self-system and external-environmental source of influence.

In addition, Bandura (1986) also contended that individuals use self-referent thought to mediate between knowledge and behavior. Knowledge, skill, or prior performance, he believed,

are often poor predictors of subsequent performance, for the belief people hold about their abilities and about the outcome of their efforts powerfully influence the ways in which they will behave. Furthermore, bandura (1986) believed that self-efficacy, "people's judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (p. 391), is the most influential arbiter in human agency. This self-efficacy helps to explain why people's behavior may differ markedly even when they have similar knowledge and skills.

Self-efficacy beliefs differ from outcome expectations, "judgment of likely consequences [that] behavior will produce" (p.31). Outcome expectations are related to self-efficacy beliefs precisely because these beliefs in part determine expectations. Individual's successes in particular enterprises anticipates successful outcomes. Student's confident n academic skills expect high marks on related papers and exams; academic researchers confident in their writing expect their articles will be well- received by publishers and by the research community. Both expect the quality of their work to reap personal and professional benefits. The opposite also holds true for those who lack confidence. Students who doubt their academic ability see a low grade on their paper and exams even before they begin the exam; researchers who believe that they are poor writers expect a rejection letter before mailing the manuscript (Pajares & Johnson, 1993).

Bandura (1986) also suggested that because the outcomes people expect are the result of the judgment of what they can accomplish, outcome expectations are unlikely to contribute to predictions of behavior. Therefore, under normal circumstances, behavior is largely determined by self-efficacy beliefs rather than by outcome expectations because individual's assessments of their capabilities are basically responsible for the outcome they expect. This interplay may well

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be more complex and deserve further scrutiny, but it is consistent with the view of the researchers who argue that the potent affective, evaluate, and episodic nature of beliefs make them a filter through new phenomena are interpreted (Albason, 1979; Calderhead & Robinson, 1991; Eraut, 1985; Goodman, 1988; Nisbet & Ross, 1980; Nespor, 1987, 1992; Posner, Strike, Hewson, & Gertzog, 1982; Rokeach, 1968; Schommer, 1990; Underhill, 1988).

According to Pajares and Johnson (1993), one area that has received little attention but has important implications for understanding human motivation and performance involves the self-efficacy beliefs related to academic outcomes such as writing. Most individuals learn as youngsters to write, and they grow to become writers with differing levels of expertise. Researches have established the relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance, and have found that between writing efficacy and writing performance there are varying results (Pajares & Johnson, 1993).

Student ownership in writing is important in the learning process. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as the "belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required produce given attainments" (p. 3). Students perceive themselves to be competent writers to the extent that they can imagine the reasons to proceed in their writing, the potential positive feedback, effects and results that writing can produce in clarifying their own ability to execute the task (Flower, 1989). Bandura (1997) also underscored the importance of both self-efficacy beliefs among students and the use of creative rather than formal kinds of writing when he wrote:

> Research on the development of writing proficiency further clarifies how efficacy beliefs operate in conjunction with other self-regulatory influences in the mastery of [writing]…Instruction in creative writing builds students' a sense of efficacy to produce

written work and to themselves to do it…A sense of efficacy to regulate writing activities affects writing attainment through several paths of influence. It strengthens efficacy beliefs for academic activities and personal standards for the quality of writing considered self-satisfying (p. 232).

Bandura suggested that there should be movement away from teacher-centered classrooms and toward supportive environments that increase both self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation in students. This idea also runs parallel to composition theorists who believe that students must be free to make their own "mistakes" in a supportive environment on the way to creating meaning (Flowers, 1979; Rose, 1995; Pajares, 2005).

Researcher a like Pajares and others have expanded on Bandura's work in the study of self-efficacy, not limited to, but including, the relationship between writing apprehension and self-efficacy beliefs students. According to Pajares, Johnson & Usher (2007), self-beliefs including writing apprehension is a promising are of research informing writing instruction. Pajares (2005) also found that there is only "modest" research concerning self-beliefs about writing in both the field of composition studies and from self-efficacy researchers (p.141). In addition, emotional states such as anxiety and apprehension impact efficacy beliefs, which in turn are directly related to the likelihood of a student resisting the act of writing. Furthermore, according to Pajares, Johnson & Usher (2007), writing apprehension is also often associated with the feedback that students receive from their teachers at school, especially the feedback that focuses strictly on the gap between student competency in written pieces and the form of writing desired by the teacher.

According to Pajares (2005) anxiety and apprehension are directly connect to a student's self-efficacy beliefs at both the elementary and secondary level. These beliefs are often a result

of teacher behaviors that impact the self-beliefs of students, so that low confidence rather than the lack of ability is often responsible for the maladaptive academic behaviors, including writing apprehension (Pajares, 2005). Also, student confidence is not only affected by the direct interaction between the student and the instructor, but vicariously through the experience of other students and the behavior and attitude of the instructor.

Wachholz and Etheridge (1996) found that highly apprehensive writers believe that the ability to produce is an innate quality rather than a process that can be learned; highly apprehensive writers seemed to be teacher dependent, had a sense of isolation regarding their writing self-efficacy beliefs and lacked involvement in commitment.

Procrastination, inability to organize materials, an over-adherence to perfectionism, and impatience at the editing and proofreading stages are several causes of writing apprehension suggested by Cope (1978). Cope believed that effective treatment of writing apprehension cannot begin until the cause has been established. Once the cause of a student's writing apprehension has been found, teachers should spend time with their students on writing as process, time-management, and organizational skills.

In a study netting somewhat unusual results, Powers, Cook, and Meyer (1979) found that compulsory writing caused apprehension. Their study included students enrolled in a basic college level composition course, half under the impression that the course was compensatory and the other half believing it was a regular course. Both groups were given five to six compositions to write. The papers received typical teacher-only feedback. The students in the compensatory section had a significant increase in apprehension; the other group also had an increase but not at a significant level. These findings were unusual because they were not consistent with other findings. Fox (1980) conducted a study in which students were also forced

to write, but they experienced a decrease in apprehension. Smith (1984) noted that "it seems far more likely that the method of evaluation, not compulsory writing, was responsible for the increase in writing apprehension" (p. 4) since other studies with compulsory writing show decreased apprehension.

According to research conducted on writing apprehension and writing difficulties there are two basic approaches. The first approach correlates writing apprehension with a variety of factors, such as writing performance and quality of writing product (Daly, 1977; Daly & Miller, 1975a), performance on standardized writing tests (Daly, 1978; Daly & Miller, 1975b) perceived intensity of the writing environment (Bennett & Rhodes, 1988), gender differences (Daly, 1979; Daly & Miller, 1975b), and willingness to write as well as expectations about writing (Daly & Miller, 1975b).

The second approach focused on the cognitive aspects of a writer's block. According to Rose (1980, 1984) five forms or categories of behavior exists for student who have writers block: lateness, premature editing, complexity of material, attitudes towards one's writing, and pure blocking. Rose also discussed the effects of rigid rules, that when applied inappropriately, result in blocking.

Daly (1979) suggested that there are ways to reduce writing apprehension. For example, an instructor helping a student through each step of the composition process and encouraging multiple drafts (to reduce the importance of the "final draft"), along with the instructor making clear the evaluation criteria and providing supportive feedback, can be beneficial to a student who experiences high levels of writing apprehension.

There are several measuring instruments that exist to examine writing apprehension and blocking behavior. The earliest and most familiar instrument is Daly and Miller's (1975a)

Writing Apprehension Test (WAT). The original document was a twenty-six item questionnaire, 13 items with positive polarity and 13 with negative polarity, scored on a five point Likert-type scale, that asks the subject to agree or disagree with statements about writing like "I look forward to writing down my ideas" or "Expressing my ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time." The questionnaire produces a single score that can be taken as an index of writing apprehension. This instrument reveals a negative correlation between high apprehension scores and the willingness to write (Walsh, 1986). Although high apprehension scores are generally associated with basic writers, some basic writers have been found to have low apprehension scores (Minot & Gandle, 1991).

Strategies to Eliminate Writing Apprehension

Based on the logic that a positive attitude about writing is a desirable characteristic and highly apprehensive individuals should be helped to lose some of their unhealthy anxiety about writing, some researchers have focused on the modification of writing apprehension. Daly (1985) suggested that modifications usually take one of two forms: examining the effects of educational programs, such as a particular writing course, on writing apprehension and identifying and testing various strategies aimed at alleviating writing apprehension.

In a landmark study in 1980, Fox investigated the effects of two methods of writing instruction on writing apprehension and writing quality. One method of instruction was set up as a workshop format where there was free writing, structured peer group activities in response to writing, language problem-solving exercises, and instructor-student conferences. The other method of instruction was more traditional. Students received instructor lectures about writing, participated in teacher-led question/answer and discussion periods, did structured writing activities, and receive evaluation by the instructor exclusively. Both groups showed a significant

decrease in writing apprehension. However, Fox found that the student-centered workshop approach reduced apprehension significantly more than the conventional teacher-centered approach. There were no significant differences in terms of writing quality for either group.

Pfeifer (1981) studied the effects of peer evaluation and personality on writing anxiety and the writing ability of college freshman. She found no significant effect in regards to peer evaluation on either writing anxiety or performance, and she noted that students with identical apprehension levels did not necessarily produce the same quality of writing. She attributed this difference in quality to personality differences. Pfeifer concluded that reducing writing anxiety did not necessarily improve writing ability.

Thompson (1979) studied freshman college writers to determine if her language study approach decreased writing apprehension and improved writing ability. The approach, which included discussions of procrastination, standard English and dialects, the history and formation of language, and the connection between reading and writing, resulted in decreased apprehension and increased writing ability. Thompson suggested that if students discover their own "personal writing rhythm" then they will be less apprehensive about writing.

Weiss and Walters (1980) designed formative writing tasks to answer two questions: "how well am I learning something, or how well can I express something being learned?" (pp. 4-5). They sought to find out whether an increase in the number of traditional writing tasks or an increase in the number of nontraditional writing tasks in content courses would also increase apprehension. Formative writing tasks were assigned in 15 classes where five were used as control classes. Apprehension levels in 11 of the 15 experimental classes decreased, but not significantly, and writing apprehension levels decreased more for the experimental classes than the control classes, but not significantly.

As Smith (1984) and Hillocks (1986) pointed out, little quantitative research has been conducted on the effectiveness of specific instruction in reducing writing apprehension. Teachers should seek to help those students who are highly apprehensive about writing, although some apprehension is probably necessary to write an acceptable paper. In a study of professional adults, Aldrich (1982) found that 49 out of 89 people reported negative feelings about writing. She concluded that the number of negative responses to her questionnaire "seem to indicate that dread and apprehension are probably preventing otherwise competent people from approaching writing tasks confidently" (p. 300). The goal of writing teachers should be to decrease writing apprehension and increase writing ability at the same time.

Free writing, writing whatever comes to mind for five minutes, was the focus of Sorensen's (1993) study. Working under the supposition than an increase in ungraded writing opportunities would bring about a decrease in writing apprehension and an increase in writing fluency, Sorensen's subjects wrote freely for five minutes five times per week. She noted that writing apprehension soon decreased, composition quality for highly apprehensive subjects increased, and results were mixed for fluency, supporting two of her hypotheses.
Gender issues in Writing.

The topic of gender difference in composition courses centered around the questions of whether women or men write differently, are evaluated differently, are hardwired differently to produce different work. Recent scholarship has focused on what kind of writing exactly is demanded by the academy. Brody (1993) suggested that to write well in Western culture means to reproduce stylistic virtues considered manly: coherence, clarity, forcefulness, practicality, and truthfulness. Bad writing is often characterized by faults coded as feminine: vagueness, excessive ornamentation, timidity, lack of purpose, and deliberate deceit. Academic writing still

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centers on "manly" attributes of writing. Brody advised that gender-coded valuation of style must be resisted if women and men are to develop richer stylistic capabilities.

Catno (1990) located the division between male and female discourse even deeper and suggested that the American myth of the self-made, self-contained male is opposed to the interpersonal, dependent female. In composition pedagogy, he felt that the rhetoric of authentic, expressive prose embodies the myth of self-making which has as its goal to free the writer to experience a true self. For example, much research has suggested that men write personal narratives in which they are heroic agents struggling for independent achievement. Women's narratives, in contrast, depict the protagonist as and agent among several, struggling to establish connection or to sort out competing loyalties (Kraemer, 1992).

Flynn (1988) argued that the type of attention on individual achievement as is found in the academy (which is naturally a reflection of its male-dominated structure and hierarchy) runs counter to women who value collaboration and organized knowledge in networks. When in freshman composition courses, both males and females, argues Flynn, should be exposed to gender materials and women should be encouraged to compose in ways consistent with their gender rather than be forced into traditionally male ways of composing.

A study by Thonus (1996) sought to answer two questions: do female tutors as institutional representatives employ the same interaction and pragmatic feature in their language as male tutors. Thonus responded that "only small variations in certain behaviors are evident in the data (p. 26). The second question asked if the higher status in some way mitigated the effect of gender differences. The answer to the question was that the genders' language "is probably more alike that it is different" (p. 26) and that in the framework of the tutorial relationship "gender differences play only a minor role" (p. 26).

Hunzer (1994) indicated that students prefer tutors of their own gender. Although the sample size was fairly small (n = 39), the study found that "male tutors are perceived as being assertive, directive, and task-centered. The female tutors are perceived as being caring, supportive, deferent, and self-expressive" (p. 12). The researcher hypothesized that "gender stereotypes permeate and can subsequently affect the outcome of the tutorial situation "(p. 13).

Even a cursory glance at research on gender differences, issues and politics in written discourse reveals many of the issues and problems that researchers grapple with; similarly, research regarding race and writing can be found to be just as numerous, contradictory and challenging.

Meier, McCarthy, P. S., & Schmeck (1984) conducted a study, for example, that found that women, in general, were better writers than men, and Whites were better writers and had higher efficacy than Blacks. The researchers suggested that that perhaps sex and race form collector variables around how students organize information about self and the world. Also (Meier, McCarthy, P. S., & Schmeck, 1984) found that strong efficacy expectations, low anxiety, internal locus of control, and deep processing rather than the effects of race related to better writing.

Leader (1991) questioned the assumption that writer's block and writing difficulties are internal conditions, but that, perhaps, at some point, externally imposed impediments, such as prohibitions related to class, sex, and race, become internalized. Deming and Gowen (1990) examined the writing processes and products of 19 male and female college freshmen basic writers in a university and 33 male and female freshmen basic writers in a junior college. Results indicated that both groups of students, male and female, alike, had difficulty meeting the demands of college prose.

Academic Self-efficacy and Ethnic Identity

Academic self-efficacy stems from Bandura's concept of self-efficacy in 1977. The notion of academic efficacy refers to a belief that an individual can and will meet the demands of an academic environment. When academic efficacy increases, academic achievement will increase as well. Ethnic identity refers to how an individual perceives the knowledge, traditions, and history of their particular group (Hughes, Witherspoon, Rivas-Drake & West-bay 2009). Ethnic identity has received much attention in the last decade and a half as the U.S. has become increasingly culturally diverse (Spencer, 1990). One reason is that a strong identification with an ethnic background has been consistently linked to a host of beneficial outcomes, such as greater self-esteem and higher academic achievement (Phinney, 2003).

Fordham and Ogbu (1986) suggested a cultural-ecological framework of ethnic minority achievement. They asserted that the oppressive conditions under which African Americans immigrated to the U. S. has created a collective group identity that rejects institutions dominated by the oppressive mainstream culture. To Fordham and Ogbu, the education system is one of those institutions that African American youth may reject. Fordham (1988) expanded this theory by proposing that African American youth who seek to be high achievers must minimize their connection to their ethnic identity in order to embrace values that are consistent with mainstream academic success. According to this theory, an understanding of ethnic identity and its influence on academic achievement and self-efficacy can assist teachers and educational institutions to better understand African American students. Hackett et al. (1992) investigated the impact of ethnicity and social cognitive factors on academic achievement in engineering students. The results indicated that academic self-efficacy was the strongest predictor of academic

performance. Student interest, positive outcome expectation, and faculty encouragement were positively correlated to academic self-efficacy.

Smith et al., (2009) examined the role of racial-ethnic identity on self-perception, and academic achievement and behavior among African American elementary students. The results suggested that an increased affiliation with an individual's own racial group is related to elevated levels of emerging racial identity. In addition, a significant relationship was found between academic competence and racial identity, that led the authors to believe that African American children may associate internalized racial identity with academic success. These results suggest that there is a direct relationship between racial identity and competence related academic performance in African American students in early and middle elementary school. Our study seeks to examine whether this relationship is similar in college aged students.

Anglin and Wade (2007) studied the racial identity and adjustment to college in black students at predominantly white institution (PWI). They found that other group orientation (belief that an individual embraces their own black racial identity but is able to make a connection with other racial and cultural groups) was positively correlated with adjustment to college. Gainor and Lent (1998) explored the relationship between math self-efficacy and outcome expectations. They found that math self-efficacy and outcome expectations were both significant predictors of math related interest in Black college students. Self-efficacy and outcome expectations also predicted math intentions regardless of racial identity attitudes. Lent et al. (2001) mentioned that outcome expectations are defined by the degree to which an individual anticipates success.

Several researchers have documented the stages or levels that a Black individual undergoes toward achieving a sound Black consciousness or racial identity. According to Sue

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(1981), Black consciousness levels and subsequent perceptions of the cause of their individual conditions determines how African Americans view themselves and the outside world. Therefore, it may be important for educators to identify a given African American student's location on the Black Consciousness continuum to competently address educational issues for that student.

Cross (1973) wrote that African Americans can progress in a linear sequential fashion through four distinctive stages of Black consciousness. Cross's four stages of Black consciousness are, in progressive order, pre-encounter, encounter, immersion, and internalization. Each of these stages is described by an individual's perceptions, feelings, and attitudes toward other African Americans, toward Whites, and toward the self.

Parham (1989) expanded on Cross's model and viewed the progression through these racial identity stages as cyclical rather than linear. Thus, a person may cycle back to a previous stage, stagnate, or move forward. In addition, life span development stages may interact with these ethnic identity stages to form different patterns of opportunity to confront ethnic identity issues.

Another stage model of Black consciousness was developed by Milliones (1980). Milliones's model was based on another four-stage model, but is more descriptive:

1. *Preconscious stage*. Individuals in this stage are not involved in growth along the Black Consciousness continuum and have internalized White racist stereotypes of African Americans. They are antagonistic toward enhancement of Black Consciousness and hold stereotypes of African American's as true.

2. *Confrontation stage*. In this stage, individuals see White people as enemies and hold strong anti-White sentiments. They intensely dislike the White culture and hold that

Black is good and White is evil. They may tend to engage in militant rhetoric with emotional intensity when discussing racial issues.

3. *Internalization stage*. In this stage individuals absorb the positive values of being African American and reduce anti-White feelings. These individuals have a more realistic understanding of and comfort with their ethnic identity. Their slogan is "Black is beautiful." They are proud to be African American, but are not patient with those who are less comfortable with being African American. Although they still hold a distrust of White people, they do not act on it.

4. *Integration stage*. In this stage, individuals are tolerant of other African Americans who are still in the less adaptive stages. They become active in the liberation of themselves and others. Individuals in this stage have a well-reasoned, empathetic, and adaptive attitude toward Blackness and the White culture. They do not generalize and do not hold negative opinions of either African Americans or Whites, but treat both equally. They know that both African Americans and Whites can be racist. These individuals are committed to fairness and justice for all oppressed people.

Researchers have investigated the relationships between Black Consciousness's, physical features of African Americans, and personality correlates of African Americans for over half a century (Clark & Clark, 1939). These studies attributed the negative aspects of African American life to either an alleged low self-esteem or to some aspect of the appearance of African Americans. Smith, Burlew, and Lundgren (1991) found a modest relationship between Black consciousness and overall physical appearance for African American, women and suggested that the dissatisfaction with physical appearance was indicative of the preconscious stage (Stage 1) of Black Consciousness. Oler (1989) wrote that the individuals in Stage 1 of Black Consciousness

who are in psychotherapy are likely to complain of being dissatisfied with their personal appearance and to have low self-esteem. Carter (1991) found that African Americans with Cross's Stage 1 attitudes (pre-encounter) were more likely to report global distress, anxiety, and paranoia. He argued that this behavior was related to being preoccupied with acceptance by Whites. All of these studies indicated that there may be differences in psychological functioning and behaviors of African Americans possessing different degrees (i.e., Stages 1, 2, 3, or 4) of Black Consciousness.

One personality trait that has been extensively investigated in African Americans and Whites is self-esteem. Self-esteem may be defined as the positive or negative self-feelings. According to Moeller (1994), efforts to improve academic performance in children have often centered around raising their self-esteem with programs like "Project Follow Through," a federal program with a self-esteem component, to assist Head Start children in Grades 1 through 3. He concluded, however, that such efforts are misplaced because research has indicated that increased self-esteem rarely leads to improved academic performance.

Studies in support of an ethnic self-esteem position have persisted into the 1990s when Chavira and Phinney (1992), in a longitudinal study of ethnic identity in African Americans, found that self-esteem and ethnic identity were significantly related to each other. In a study of 9th- 12th grade African American adolescents, McCreary, Slavin, and Berry (1996) found that the racial identity variable of attitude toward other African Americans was statistically correlated with both self-esteem and problem behaviors. They postulated that a positive attitude toward other African Americans helped them deal more effectively with stress, and therefore was associated with higher self-esteem and fewer problem behaviors. Hendrix-Wright (1981) found

that African American youth who had both a high racial identification and an external locus of control had the highest self-esteem in their sample.

There is increasing support for research indicating that African Americans have equal or greater self-esteem than Whites. For example, Tashakkori and Thompson (1991) found that African American adolescents have higher self-esteem than their White counterparts. Osborne (1995) also found that global self-esteem was higher for African American students than for White students in 8th- 10th-grade. Similar findings have been reported for African American children (Tashakkori, 1993). Hughes and Demo (1989) argued that social contact with Whites and the attitudes of Whites are generally unimportant to African American self-esteem. According to Baldwin (1984), the earlier conclusion that African Americans have low self-esteem was due to an erroneous utilization of a Eurocentric approach to conceptualize and explain the behavior of African Americans.

Unfortunately, although African American students consistently score higher than Whites on measures of general self-esteem as well as attributes of attractiveness and popularity, their mean scores in self-beliefs in school-related areas have been lower than those of Whites (Hare, 1985). These findings led Hare to suggest that African Americans might base their self-esteem on self-related information differently from that used by Whites. In a longitudinal study, Osborne (1995) found that as White students' progress from 8th - 10th grade, the correlations between self-esteem and academic outcomes remained stable. However, in African American boys and to a lesser extent in African American girls, the correlations between self-esteem and academic outcomes weakened. For example, for African American boys in Grade 8, the correlation between these two variables was .206, but for these same students in Grade 10 the correlation dropped to .081. Steele (1992) labeled this phenomenon the *disidentification hypothesis*. The

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hypothesis stated that the African American student begins a process of detaching self-esteem from academic outcomes as a protection against possible failure.

The differential weighting of self-beliefs in African Americans (compared with Whites) may also be rooted in the African world view (Baldwin, Brown, & Rackley, 1990). This value system is rooted in what Baldwin et al. referred to as the African (Black) consciousness construct. Baldwin et al. argued that virtually all the significant behavioral patterns in African Americans are accounted for by the African self-consciousness construct either in whole or in part. Baldwin (1987) suggested that understanding this construct is paramount to the proper assessment and understanding of African American behavior and psychological functioning in general. Black Consciousness can explain African American behavior in all areas of African American life, including the academic setting.

Efficacy is another personality trait that has been studied in African Americans. Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to perform a task, or more specifically, to execute a specified behavior successfully (Bandura, 1977). Wood and Locke (1987), and others, have found that academic self-efficacy is positively related to academic performance. Hughes and Demo (1989) noted that personal efficacy and self-esteem are generally positively correlated. However, they also noted that many African Americans have relatively high self-esteem but relatively low personal efficacy. They contended that appraisals by African American friends and family influence the self-esteem of African Americans more than appraisals by Whites. Hughes and Demo observed that although social prejudice has no influence on the self-esteem of African Americans, inequality and discrimination strongly influence their personal efficacy by depriving them of opportunities that would enable them to feel efficacious.

Researchers have shown that academic self-efficacy is predictive of ability to succeed at various academic achievements. Pajares and Miller (1994) found that self-efficacy not only mediated the effect of gender and prior experience on mathematics self-concepts, mathematics problem-solving performance, and the perceived usefulness of mathematics, but was also more predictive of the ability to solve mathematic problems. Post, Stewart, and Smith (1991) reported that mathematics/science self-efficacy was predictive of the consideration of occupations related to mathematics/science for African American male college students, but not for African American female college students. Hughes and Demo (1989) reported that being male and being older were also related to a greater sense of efficacy in African Americans and that these same variables were significant but weaker as influences to African American self-esteem. These studies are relevant because they show a relationship between gender, self-efficacy, and in some cases academic achievement among Whites and African Americans.

These discussions point to the importance of studying the relationships between the stages of Black Consciousness, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy in African Americans. Such a study is particularly important with regard to African American men. There has been vigorous debate since the late 1980s on the declining social, economic, and educational status of many young African American men in society (Garibaldi, 1992). Garibaldi has discussed the negative statistics of many African American men, such as high unemployment, high homicide rates (as both victims and perpetrators), frequency of incarceration, and low performance on many measures of educational achievement. A study examining the relationship between Black Consciousness, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy in African American men has implications for designing effective educational interventions.

Smith et al. (1991) found a positive relationship between Black consciousness and self-esteem in African American females. Chavira and Phinney (1992) also found that self-esteem and ethnic identity were significantly related in African American women. However, no study to date has explored the relationship between these two variables in African American men. Tashakkori (1993) has suggested that researchers should examine ethnicity and gender jointly when investigating predictors of self-esteem.

Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter was organized into 13 sections that dealt with the methodology and procedures: (1) a discussion of the survey research design methodology; (2) a discussion of the writing apprehension test; (3) A discussion of the demographic survey instrument used in the research; (4) the proposed research question used in the study; (5) a discussion of the hypothesis; (6) a discussion of the participant selection; (7) a discussion of the data collection strategies to used in the research study; (8) a discussion of the data analysis strategy employed; (9) a Discussion of the assumptions; (10) a discussion of the delimitations; (11) a discussion of the validity and reliability; (12) a discussion of the limitations of the study.

Survey Research Design Methodology

I employed the survey research design methodology. The survey research design methodology is important to this research study because it is an instrument that collects quantifiable data that can be used to explain relationships or the lack thereof.

Survey research is a popular design within the field of education. Survey research designs are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or entire population to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. In this procedure survey researchers collect quantitative, numbered data using questionnaires (e.g., mailed questionnaires) or interviews (e.g., one-on-one interviews) and statistically analyze the data to describe trends about responses to questions and test research questions or hypothesis. They also interpret the meaning of the data by relating results of the statistical test back to past research studies (Creswell, 2007).

Survey designs differ from experimental research in that they do not involve a treatment given to participants by the researcher. Due to the fact that survey researchers do not experimentally manipulate the conditions, they cannot explain cause and effect as well as experimental researchers can. Instead survey research studies describe trends in the data rather than offer rigorous explanations. Survey research has much in common with correlational research designs. Survey researchers often correlate variables, but their focus is directed more toward learning about a population and less on relating variables or predicting outcomes as is the focus in correlational research (Creswell, 2007).

Survey research design methodology is relevant to the research study as it allows the researcher to create an instrument that collects data and translates the data into a numerical form. The numbers of the data can then be input into a statistical program which will produce charts, graphs, and tables. These charts, graphs, and tables make it easy for the information to be understood by lay readers of the research study.

The Writing Apprehension Test

The research survey instrument that is chosen for the research study is writing apprehension test which was developed my Daly and Miller in 1975. This survey instrument measures subjects writing apprehension by using a Likert scale which is then calculated to explain the amount of an individual's writing apprehension (Appendix A).

The writing apprehension test developed by Daly and Miller has been used frequently in research to measure writing apprehension. The WAT instrument that I used was modified to 20 questions that focused on individual's attitude about their writing. The response is set on a five-point Likert scale of ranges from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). Daly and Miller (1975b) have reported a split-half reliability of .94 on the instrument. Scores on negative

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statements (those not reflecting apprehension about writing) are assumed and added to the base

of 78, the score if every response was neutral toward writing apprehension. The sum of scores on

positive questions (questions that reflect the presence of writing apprehension) are deducted. The

result of this calculation is the writing apprehension score. After adding the base of 78 to the

negative apprehension scores and deducting the positive apprehension scores, means and

standard deviations are calculated. A standard score at least one standard deviation above the

mean indicates a high writing apprehension level, a score of at least one standard deviation

below the mean, indicates a low level of writing apprehension.

The writing apprehension test is relevant to this research study as it allows the researcher

to collect quantifiable data that can be used to predict ones writing apprehension. The subjects

writing apprehension can thus be calculated and explained in numerical form.

Demographic Survey Instrument

The WAT coupled with the demographic survey instrument will create clear and concise

information about the subjects. This information will be used to correlate the inferences between

contribution factors of writing apprehension of the two research survey instruments. This data

will in turn validate the results and predict how factors relate and interact with one another.

A demographic survey instrument was developed for this study (see Appendix A) was

designed to gather information about each research participants gender, race, academic major,

classification, family income, and family educational history. This information was sought to

investigate the existence of relationships between these demographic characteristics and writing

apprehension. Relationships have been found between these demographic characteristics and one

or more of the factors investigated in this study in previous research. For example, age, gender,

ethnicity, and academic major have been found to be related to the cognitive style construct of

field dependence/ field independence (Bush & Coward, 1974; Copeland,1983; Faigley & Miller, 1990; Frank, 1986; Garner & Cole, 1986; Hyde, Geiringer & Yen, 1975; Koroluk, 1987; Perney, 1976; Witkin, 1950; Witkin, 1976; Witkin, Dyk, Faterson, Goodenough, & Karp, 1974; Witkin, Goodenough, & Karp 1967, Witkin, Moore, Goodenough, & Cox, 1977).Relationships have been found as well between writing apprehension and gender, academic major, and grade point average. (Bennett & Rhodes, 1988; Daly & Miller, 1975c; Daly & Shamo, 1978). In addition, relationships were found in previous research between the knowledge of writing essentials and gender and ethnicity (Daly, 1987; Engelhard, et. Al., 1991; Harris & Hansson, 1986, Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Torrey, 1977; Wolfram & Whiteman, 1971).

Proposed Research Questions and Data Analysis

1. What is the profile of the Historically Black Institutions respondents?

2. What is the writing apprehension of individuals?

3. Based on age and gender is there a difference in the amount of writing apprehension?

4. Based on being a first generation student is there a difference in the amount of writing apprehension?

5. What student services were most commonly identified by the case study institution participants?

Participant Selection

Participants for this research study were selected by using purposeful sampling methods. The participants ages will be 18- 35. They were attending the research site institution (Historically Black four year private liberal arts institution located in the central region of Little Rock Arkansas). The research participants were classified from freshman to senior as well as have undeclared majors or declared majors. According to Creswell (2007) purposeful sampling

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occurs when researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon. These survey instruments will be used to gather data to potentially validate or invalidate the hypotheses or research questions.

What is the profile of the institutions respondents?

The characteristics of the institutions respondents to the survey were as follows. There were a total of 103 respondents 83 were males and 20 were female. In the area of ethnicity 97 of the respondents were African American and 6 respondents were categorized as other. Of the 103 respondents 89 were between the ages of 18-21 while 14 of the respondents were 22 or older. In the area of income 77 of the surveys participants families had an income of $14,999 to $49,999 per year. Participant respondents were first generation and non-first generation students

Data Collection Strategies

Instructors of classes were given the WAT as well as the demographic survey instrument. The instructor then gave the provided the instruments to the participants and also gave them instructions on how to complete the survey instruments. The instructor then instructed the participants' to complete the survey instruments and return them at the end of the class. Instructors were then asked to remind participants to not put their names on the instrument because they will be numbered. The instructors then collected the surveys instruments and return them to the researcher to be scored and input into statistical software.

The data was collected by administering the survey instrument to students and calculating the level of writing apprehension using the instructions from the Writing Apprehension Test by Daly and Miller. The data was then put into an excel data base and then exported to SPSS for statistical analysis.

To ensure confidentiality of the participant's names were not required and numbers were assigned to each participant's survey instrument. The responses for each numbered survey were then calculated and input into excel the exported to SPSS.

<p style="text-align:center">Data Analysis</p>

Analyzing the data in this potential quantitative study means that the survey questions were analyzed, synthesized and the test scores were tallied then put into excel and exported to SPSS. Descriptive analysis was conducted and it produced a profile of the students who participated in the survey. This descriptive analysis also produced data that described the amount of students who have writing apprehension, the number of females and males who have writing apprehension, the first generation students' who have writing apprehension as well as the socioeconomic status of the survey respondents. The data of the open ended question was also coded so that the reoccurring themes could be compared and categorized with ease when typing the themes of the research findings. Saturation was accounted for by including all of the codes and all of the themes then combining the ones that are the same.

Validity and Reliability

To test the validity and reliability of the research the researcher conducted a descriptive analysis on the data collected from the subjects. The descriptive analysis allowed the researcher to observe the analysis of variance between the factors that are believed to cause writing apprehension.

Institutions Respondents Profile

The institutions respondents profile was as follows: Of the 103 respondents who participated in the study 83 were male or 80.6%. There were 20 female respondents or 19.4%. There were 97 Black respondents or 94.6% and 6 or 5.8% of the respondents who identified as other. The respondents reported that 77 or 74.8% of their income was 14,999 – 49,000, over 50,000 was16 or 15.5%, and 10 or 9.7% was unreported. Furthermore of the 103 respondents 45 or 43.7% were first generation students while 57 or 55.3% of respondents were non first generation students.

Writing Apprehension Ranges

Scores that ranged from fifty four to ninety were in the "normal" range. Students in this range do not experience significantly unusual levels of writing apprehension. However the closer the score is to the limit ranges the more apt the student is to experience behaviors or characteristics of the next range of scores. Scores that ranged from ninety-one to one hundred and twenty-four are in the "low" range. Students that were in this range experienced low levels of writing apprehension and had no fear of writing. In addition, scores that were between twenty and fifty-four were classified as in the "high" range. Students who were in this range avoided writing as much as possible and experienced sever anxiety. These students also selected classes, majors or jobs that will not require them to write at all or write as less as possible.

Writing Apprehension of Individuals

The writing apprehension of individuals' were as follows: The number of first generation respondents who completed the survey was 45 of the 45 respondents 28 or 62.2% of the respondents had normal writing apprehension, of the 45 respondents 4 or 8.9% had low writing apprehension, while 13 or 28.8% of the respondents had high writing apprehension. The number of non-first generation students who completed the survey was 57 of the 57 respondents 42 or 73.7% had normal writing apprehension, of the 57 respondents 7 or 12.3% had low writing apprehension, and 8 or 14.0% had high writing apprehension.

Writing Apprehension Based on Gender.

According to the data collected from the respondents the number of male respondents was 83 or 80.6% of the male respondents 58 or 69.8% of them had writing apprehension in the normal range, 7 or 8.4% of them had low writing apprehension, and 18 or 21.6% had high writing apprehension. The number of female respondents was 20 or 19.4% of the female respondents 13 or 65% of them had normal writing apprehension, 4 or 20% of them had low writing apprehension, while 3 or 15% of them had high writing apprehension. Furthermore, according to the data collected there was a significant difference in the amount of females and males who had low writing apprehension which was 20% and 8.45 respectively.

Based on being a First Generation Student is there a difference in writing Apprehension

Based on the data collected there was no difference in writing apprehension of first generation student and non-first generation students. Of the 103 respondents 45 were first generation students and 57 were non first generation students. The number of first generation students who had normal writing apprehension was 28 or 62.2%, the number of first generation

students who had low writing apprehension was 4 or 8.9% while the number of first generation students who had high writing apprehension was 13 or 28.8%.

Furthermore, based on the data collected of the number of non-first generation students who responded to the survey was 57, of the 57 respondents 42 or 73.7% of them had normal writing apprehension, 7 or 12.3% of them had low writing apprehension, and 8 or 14.0% of them had high writing apprehension.

Significant themes

The four significant themes that emerged from this study were the need for a writing center and writing tutors, classes designed for writing, better instructors and a better library. Based on the data collected from this study 7.7% of survey respondents felt that the institution should create a writing center to help alleviate writing apprehension. In addition, to the writing center 13.5% of students that completed the survey felt that the institution should add writing classes, while another 6.7% of students felt that the institution should hire instructors who are competent in the area of English, journalism or communication would help alleviate writing apprehension. Furthermore, another 6.7% of students felt that the institution should get the library fully stocked with books and resources instead of having a virtual library.

<center>Chapter Summary</center>

In summary, a total of 250 survey questionnaires were administered to three different sections freshman orientation classes at Historically Black Institution of the 250 questionnaires administered 103 were completed and returned. The demographic section of the questionnaire was designed to get an institutional profile of the respondents which included race, sex, income, and first generation or non-first generation student. The focus of the survey was to investigate the levels of writing apprehension of students attending this institution as well as to provide

suggestions on how to alleviate or improve the writing apprehension of students attending the

institution.

Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

This chapter was organized into 4 sections dealing with the data and results: (1)

Introduction; (2) a discussion of the summary of the study; (3) the data analysis; (4) and the

chapter summary. Furthermore, this section of the study gives descriptive statistical analysis of

the survey participants and the level of writing apprehension in the categories of all participants

who completed the study, writing apprehension based on age and gender, family education (first-

generation or non-first generation), and the significant student themes.

Study Summary

The term "writing apprehension" was coined by Daly and Miller (1975a) to describe an

individual's tendency to respond favorably or unfavorably toward writing situations in order to

provide empirical evidence on an attitude that affects writing behavior. Their research was based

on communication apprehension, which seriously affects a large proportion of the population.

Prior studies in communication apprehension have shown that highly apprehensive people tend

to choose occupations they perceive as requiring little communication (Daly & McCrosky,

1975), tend to be less inclined to achieve in general (Giffin & Gilam, 1971), and tend to have

lower self-concepts than others (McCrosky & Daly, 1974).

In addition, Daly and Miller (1975) developed a measure of self-reported writing

apprehension (WA) (i.e., fear of, or extreme anxiety about, writing) that has been the major

survey instrument used in studies of writing apprehension (Bennett & Rhodes, 1988; Charney,

Newman, & Palmquist, 1995; Daly, 1978). Daly and Miller (1975) initially identified 63

questions representing possible sources of writing apprehension. The items were selected to

measure anxiety about writing in general, evaluation of writing by various groups, writing milieus, self-evaluation, and worth of writing.

The survey was administered at a selected Private Historically Black Institution located in a Southern State. After IRB approval I spoke each instructor the freshman seminar courses. They granted the first 15 minutes of class to distribute the survey and collect the data. I explained the purpose of the study and gave each study participant a consent form. At the end of the course, the instructor collected them and returned them to the researcher. I targeted freshman seminar classes for survey instrumentation. Freshman seminar classes were selected because of the high first-generation college student attendance in those courses which are important to the study. Each of the four seminar sections had 40 students for total of 160. I received 103 surveys back for a response of 64%.

The scoring scale for the responses was as follows: Strongly agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1, Writing apprehension scores may range from twenty to one hundred and twenty-four. There are general observations that can be made score in certain ranges. Scores that range from fifty four to ninety are in the "normal" range. Students in this range do not experience significantly unusual levels of writing apprehension. However the closer the score is to the limit ranges the more apt the student is to experience behaviors or characteristics of the next range of scores. Scores that range from ninety-one to one hundred and twenty-four are in the "low" range. Students in this range experience low levels of writing apprehension and have no fear of writing. In addition, scores that are between twenty and fifty-four are classified as in the "high" range. Students in this range avoid writing as much as possible and experiences sever anxiety. These students also select classes, majors or jobs that will not require them to write at all or write as less as possible.

The purpose for conducting the study was to determine the level of writing apprehension of entering first generation Black students that are entering Private Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Black students are afraid to write due to several predetermined factors (e.g. socioeconomic status) that contribute to them being underprepared (Hughes & Demo, 1989). In addition to socioeconomic status; high school grade point average, test score, parental educational level and positive self-efficacy are some of the additional predetermined factors that lead to students being underprepared as well as academically unsuccessful (Grimes, 1997; Hagedorn, 2001; Johnson, 2003). At HBCU's and community colleges many students are underprepared for college classes because of the open enrollment policies that are in place (DeAngelis, 1997). For the purposes of this research study the measurement of student writing apprehension was accomplished with the use of the WAT survey instrument. The research questions guiding the study were as follows:

1. What was the profile of the Historically Black Institutions respondents?

2. What were the writing apprehensions of the individuals?

3. Based on age and gender was there a difference in the amount of writing apprehension?

4. Based on being a first generation student was there a difference in the amount of writing apprehension?

5. What student services were most commonly identified by the case study institution participants?

Data Analysis

The study examined writing apprehension of black students at a historically black

institution by utilizing the Writing Apprehension Test Questionnaire.

Research Question #1 What was the profile of the Historically Black Institutions respondents?

In this study, 80.6% of the respondents were male and 19.4% were female. The

percentage of Blacks in the study were 94.2% while 5.8% were other. For income, 74.8% of the

respondents had a household average income between $14,999-49,999 and 15.5% were over

50,000, while 9.7% did not report their household income. In this study 43.7% of respondents

were first generation students' while 55.3% of respondents were non first generation students.

Table 1.
Demographics of Survey Respondents

Personal Characteristics	n	Percent
Gender		
Male	83	80.6
Female	20	19.4
Race		
Black	97	94.2
Other	6	5.8
Income		
$14,999 – $49,999	77	74.8
Over $50,000	16	15.5
No response	10	9.7
Family Education		
First generation	45	43.7
Non-first generation	57	55.3

Research Question #2 What was the writing apprehension of individuals?

In This study almost 70% of all respondents experienced normal writing apprehension, meaning that they neither had high or low fears or anxiety about the writing process. Just over one-fifth (20.3%) did report high levels of apprehension with an average writing apprehension score between 20-53. and as shown in Table 2, just over 10% of all respondents had lower than normal writing apprehension levels, with an average score between 85-100. Overall, the range of scores was from 34 as the lowest reported writing apprehension score and 99 as the highest writing apprehension score for a respondent.

Table 2.
Writing Apprehension of all Survey Respondents

Survey Participants	n	Percent
Normal	71	68.9
Low	11	10.6
High	21	20.3

Research Question #3 Based on age and gender was there a difference in the amount of writing apprehension?

In this study 69.8% of the male respondents' experienced normal writing apprehension, while 8.4% experienced low writing apprehension and 21.6% experienced high writing apprehension. In contrast, the female respondents experienced writing apprehension at 65% while 20% experienced low apprehension and 15% experienced high apprehension, which is 5.4% decrease from the males.

In particular, this study indicates that 70.7% of respondents of both male and females between the ages of 18-21 experienced normal writing apprehension, while 7.8% experienced low writing apprehension and 21.3% experienced high writing apprehension. However, the respondents over 21, 57.1% experienced normal writing apprehension, while 28.5% experienced low writing apprehension and 14.2% experienced high writing apprehension for this group.

Table 3.
Writing Apprehension Gender

Gender	n	Percent
Males		
Normal	58	69.8
Low	7	8.4
High	18	21.6
Females		
Normal	13	65
Low	4	20
High	3	15

Table 4.

Writing Apprehension Based on Age/18-21

Age	n	Percent
18-21 years		
Normal	63	70.7
Low	7	7.8
High	19	21.3
22 years and over		
Normal	8	57.1
Low	4	28.5
High	2	14.2

Research Question #4 Based on being a first generation student was there a difference in the amount of writing apprehension?

In this study 62.2% of respondents who were first generation students' experienced normal writing apprehension, while 8.9% experience low writing apprehension and 28.8% experienced high writing apprehension. However when we look at the non-first generation variable, 73.7% of these students' experienced normal writing apprehension, while 12.3% experienced low writing apprehension and 14% experienced high writing apprehension.

Table 5.

What student services were most commonly identified by the case study institution participants?

Family Education	n	Percent
First Generation		
Normal	28	62.2
Low	4	8.9
High	13	28.8
Non-First Generation		
Normal	42	73.7
Low	7	12.3
High	8	14.0

Research Question #5 What student services were most commonly identified by the case study institution participants?

In this study the themes that were most prevalent throughout the 103 surveys writing prompt (In the space provided below, please provide your thoughts on what resources or services at the institution might provide to help you become a better and more confident writer) were institutional needs such as the need for a writing center that should be fully staffed with writing tutors, writing classes, better instructors, and better library. Likewise, 7.7% of survey respondents felt that the institution should create a writing center to help alleviate writing apprehension. In addition to the writing center 13.5% of students felt that the institution should add writing classes, while another 6.7% of students felt that instructors who are competent in the area of English, journalism or communication would help alleviate writing apprehension. While another 6.7% of students felt that the lack of library resources further exacerbated their lack of knowledge and anxiety in the area of writing.

Table 6.
Student Themes

Prevalent Themes	n	Percent
Writing Center	8	7.7
Writing Classes	14	13.5
Better Instructors	7	6.7
Better library	7	6.7
Other Themes	25	24.2
No Response	42	40.7

Chapter Summary

In summary, it is apparent that many students at this Historically Black Institution are first generation and low income. Also, many participants in the study were male. By gender, males have a higher writing apprehension than females. By age, those who are between the ages of 18-21 have "high" writing apprehension levels compared those who are age 22 and over. The writing apprehension of all respondents 68.9% experienced normal writing apprehension, while 10.6% experienced low writing apprehension and 20.3% of all respondents experienced high writing apprehension. In addition, the most significant themes in the open ended response section were the need for a writing center, writing tutors, creative writing classes, better library, better instructors, better English classes and writing manuals.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Daly and Miller (1975a) explain that writing apprehension can produce problems for those so afflicted with high levels of it. When enrolled in (mandatory) freshman courses, these individuals often behave in a manner familiar to instructors: they skip classes, turn in papers late or not at all, they sit in the back of the class, they talk or otherwise behave oppositionally. Therefore, according to Daly and Miller (1975) writing apprehension is both a learned (i.e. condition through repeated negative experiences with writing) and a specific response to a certain stimulus: the writing assignment. This phenomenon is also referred to as composition anxiety, writing anxiety, and writing block (Onwuegbuzie, 1999).

In conclusion, Fordham and Ogbu (1986) suggested a cultural-ecological framework of ethnic minority achievement. They assert that the oppressive conditions under which African Americans immigrated to the United States has created a collective group identity that rejects institutions dominated by the oppressive mainstream culture. To Fordham and Ogbu, the education system is one of those institutions that African American youth may reject. Fordham (1988) expanded this theory by proposing that African American youth seek to be high achievers must minimize their connection to their ethnic identity in order to embrace values that are consistent with mainstream academic success. According to the above theory, an understanding of ethnic identity and its influence on academic achievement and self-efficacy can assist teachers and educational institutions to better understand African American students. Hackett (1992) investigated the impact of ethnicity and social cognitive factors on academic achievement in engineering students. The results indicated that academic self-efficacy was the strongest

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predictor of academic predictor of academic performance. Student interest, positive outcome expectation, and faculty encouragement were positively correlated to academic self-efficacy.

Summary of the Study

The majority of surveyed students (78.8%) experienced writing apprehension that was either high or normal. Normal writing apprehension represents apprehension that is experienced by most people and it not significantly low or high in range. 21.2% of all students surveyed experienced low writing apprehension or little to no fear of writing. Likewise, of the 45 first generation students who responded to the survey 28 or 62.2% experienced normal writing apprehension, four or 8.9% experienced low writing apprehension, while 13 or 28.8% experienced high writing apprehension. In addition, of the 57 non-first generation students who responded to the survey 42 or 73.7% of the respondents had normal writing apprehension, seven or 12.3% experienced low writing apprehension while eight or 14% experienced high writing apprehension.

The writing apprehension of males who experienced normal writing apprehension was 58 or 69.8% while writing apprehension of females who experienced normal writing apprehension was 13 or 65%. Whereas, seven or 8.4% of males experienced low writing apprehension and four or 20% of females who responded to the survey experienced low writing apprehension. Finally, of the 83 males who responded to the survey 18 or 21.6% experienced high writing apprehension while of the 20 females who responded to the survey three or 15% experienced high writing apprehension.

The writing apprehension based on ages 18-21.

In this area there were 89 respondents in this category of the 89 respondents, sixty-three or 70.7% experienced "normal" writing apprehension. Whereas, seven or 7.8% experienced

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"low" writing apprehension and 19 or 21.3% experienced "high" writing apprehension. Finally, writing apprehension of respondents who were age 22 and over were as follows: There were 14 respondents and of the 14 respondents eight or 57.1% experienced "normal" writing apprehension, four or 28.5% experienced "low" writing apprehension and two or 14.2% experienced "high" writing apprehension.

Moreover, the writing apprehension of all individuals who responded to the writing apprehension survey was as follows: 71 or 68.9% of respondents experienced "normal" writing apprehension, while 11 or 10.6% of respondents experienced "low" writing apprehension and 21 or 20.3% of respondents experienced "high" writing apprehension.

Discussion

At historically black institutions in general most students come from either the inner cities or rural areas of the state in which both environments are generally low SES areas that have underperforming public school systems (Borman & Rachuba, 2001). In particular, these areas have schools that are equipped with instructors who are over worked and under paid which directly affects the lessons that are being taught. In fact, SES is relevant to all realms of behavior science, including research, practice, education, and advocacy (American Psychological Association, 2013).

In my experience as a product of the public school system in St. Louis often times African Americans are stereotyped and labeled as problems if too many questions are asked or if the information that the teacher has taught is challenged. Therefore, there is a culture of African American students who are afraid to ask questions to clarity on assignments. In addition, this fear impacts the student's academic self-efficacy or belief that they can achieve or complete

academic assignments. In Particular, academic self-efficacy refers to the notion or belief that one can and will meet the demands of one's academic environment.

In conclusion, writing apprehension of African American students is and has been effected by environmental factors such as SES, and stereotypes from instructors. These factors alone directly impact African American student's self-efficacy as well as their academic self-efficacy. In order to alleviate some writing apprehension students need to be able to have access to writing classes, tutors and writing centers staffed with competent writers that will be able to reinforce good writing skills such a sentence structure, content and conciseness of ideas. Also according to the research when individuals have positive self-efficacy, feel that they matter or fit with in the culture or sub culture (mattering and Marginality), have a positive ethnic identity (Phinney, 1990) and can effectively communicate (McCroskey, 1982). Writing apprehension should be at a minimum.

<div align="center">Recommendations</div>

For Practice

Based on the study findings this institution

1. Create a writing center

2. Develop courses that target writing in different writing styles and formats

3. Hire writing tutors who are either English or journalism majors or have degrees in these areas.

4. Require that APA format be used in all courses when writing research papers.

5. Based on the study findings, the case study institution should provide in-service training for faculty members to help them become better connected with student writing abilities.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. The study should be replicated at other Historically Black Institutions in order to build a national baseline data set of African American college student writing apprehension.

2. Future research may also expand on McLeod (1987) research that stated that people experience many emotional reactions toward writing and that writing is not only a cognitive process but also an emotional activity. This research also identified the most important emotions as writing apprehension, motivation to write (including a writer's goals, or writers expected outcome) and the person's belief about writing and their own skills as a writer.

3. The institutions professors and staff to more committed to student success so that students' take responsibility and become more committed to their own success as well.

4. The institution should also research ways to have faculty members mentor students.

5. Other communication apprehension instruments, such as the PRCA, should be used to build predictive correlations for students with higher writing apprehension levels and academic success.

<div align="center">Chapter Summary</div>

In summary, this chapter focused on and discussed the findings of the study as well as recommendation for practice and future research. Moreover, this chapter discussed factors that lead to writing apprehension such as SES and self-efficacy/academic self-efficacy, as well as the need for function writing center or tutors on campus as well as historically black institution campuses across the United States. As a product of a Historically Black College who has had the

opportunity to attend two different predominantly white institutions while complete my masters degrees as well as working toward completing my doctorate degree I often contrast and compare my collegiate experiences on both campuses. There are distinct differences; at a historically black institution you get a family atmosphere while at predominantly white institution the intimacy is not there. Also African Americans who attend historically black institutions may also experience low writing apprehension due to the fact that they feel safe (they are black attending an historically black institution) because they are in an environment where they are comfortable. However, the big difference is that at predominantly white institutions since they have been in existence longer the institution has had the opportunity to put in place programs that increase a student's chances of succeeding like the writing center or tutors; while at historically black institution often times the due to its infancy in comparison to predominantly white institutions in the world of higher education infrastructure is in disarray and due to financial problems programs are not in place that help facilitate student success (i.e., writing centers, writing classes, or writing coaches or tutors). This study sought to identify first generation Black students entering colleges and universities' who are traditionally underprepared, as well as identify those who have writing apprehension problems.

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Freshman Students Perceptions on Writing Questionnaire

Demographic/Personal Information

Instructions: Please check the box that most closely describes your current status:

1. **Gender**:
    - □ Male
    - □ Female

2. **Ethnicity** with which you must closely identify:
    - □ American Indian/Alaska Native
    - □ Hispanic/Latino
    - □ Asian
    - □ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    - □ Black/American American
    - □ White
    - □ Hispanic/Latino
    - □ Other

3. **Age** category:
    - □ Under 18
    - □ 26 – 30
    - □ 18 – 21
    - □ Over 30
    - □ 22 – 25

4. **Yearly family income** that comes closest to approximating your family   situation:
    - □ Under $14,999
    - □ $50,000 – $74,999
    - □ $15,000 – $24,999
    - □ $75,000 – $99,999
    - □ $25,000 – $34,999
    - □ $100,000 and over
    - □ $35,000 – $49,999

5. **First generation college student** – Are you the first person in your immediate family (mother, father, brother or sister) to attend college?
    - □ Yes
    - □ No

6. *Father's* **highest level of education**:
    - □ Some High school
    - □ Some college
    - □ High School graduate
    - □ College graduate

7. *Mother's* **highest level of education**:
    - □ Some High school
    - □ Some college
    - □ High School graduate
    - □ College graduate

8. **Type of high school** attended:
    □   Public   □   Other
    □   Private

9. **Classification**

□ Freshman   □ Sophomore   □ Junior   □ Senior

Perceptions of Writing

Instructions: The following questions assess your perceptions (beliefs) about writing. Carefully read each statement. Using the scale below, please write the number that most closely describes your belief about each statement.

_____

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**

_____

_____	1.	I avoid writing.
_____	2.	I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.
_____	3.	I look forward to writing down my own ideas.
_____	4.	My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a composition.
_____	5.	Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.
_____	6.	I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication.
_____	7.	I like to write my ideas down.
_____	8.	I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in writing.
_____	9.	I like to have my friends read what I have written.
_____	10.	I am nervous about writing.
_____	11.	People seem to enjoy what I write.
_____	12.	I enjoy writing.
_____	13.	I never seem to be able to clearly write down my ideas.
_____	14.	Writing is a lot of fun.
_____	15.	I like seeing my thoughts on paper.
_____	16.	Discussing my writing with others is an enjoyable experience.
_____	17.	It is easy for me to write good compositions.
_____	18.	I don't think I write as well as most other people do.

_____ 19.   I don't like my compositions to be evaluated.

_____ 20.   I am no good at writing.

<u>Resources and Services Needed</u>

<div style="border:1px solid black;">

Instructions: *In the space provided below, please provide your thoughts on what resources or services at the institution might provide to help you become a better and more confident writer.*

</div>

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

September 20, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO:	John McAllister
	John Murry, Jr.
FROM:	Ro Windwalker
	IRB Coordinator
RE:	New Protocol Approval
IRB Protocol #:	13-09-101
Protocol Title:	*Writing Apprehension of First Generation Black Students at a Historically Black Institution*
Review Type:	☒ EXEMPT ☐ EXPEDITED ☐ FULL IRB
Approved Project Period:	Start Date: 09/20/2013 Expiration Date: 09/19/2014

Your protocol has been approved by the IRB. Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. If you wish to continue the project past the approved project period (see above), you must submit a request, using the form *Continuing Review for IRB Approved Projects*, prior to the expiration date. This form is available from the IRB Coordinator or on the Research Compliance website (http://vpred.uark.edu/210.php). As a courtesy, you will be sent a reminder two months in advance of that date. However, failure to receive a reminder does not negate your obligation to make the request in sufficient time for review and approval. Federal regulations prohibit retroactive approval of continuation. Failure to receive approval to continue the project prior to the expiration date will result in Termination of the protocol approval. The IRB Coordinator can give you guidance on submission times.

This protocol has been approved for 150 participants. If you wish to make *any* modifications in the approved protocol, including enrolling more than this number, you must seek approval *prior to* implementing those changes.   All modifications should be requested in writing (email is acceptable) and must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact me at 210 Administration Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

210 Administration Building • 1 University of Arkansas • Fayetteville, AR 72701
Voice (479) 575-2208 • Fax (479) 575-3846 • Email irb@uark.edu

The University of Arkansas is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

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John W. McAllister
February 20, 2013

Study Title: "An explanation of writing apprehension of students in a private, Historically Black 4-year liberal arts institution"

Dear Arkansas Baptist College Institutional Review Board,

My name is John W. McAllister. I am a doctoral candidate in the college of Rehabilitation, Humans resources and Communication Disorders at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

I am conducting a research study as a part of the requirements of my degree in Higher Education (Administration), and I would like to invite you to participate.

I am studying writing apprehension as it relates to African American students at a Historically Black 4 – year liberal arts institution. If you decide to participate you will be asked to have at least 250 students complete a survey about writing apprehension called the "Writing Apprehension Test (WAT). This test was created in 1975 by Daly, J. A., & Miller M. D. I t is an instrument used to measure writing apprehension. Also there is a biographical data form attached that students will be asked to fill out as well. The survey and biographical data forms are totally anonymous as there are no names of students needed.

In particular I will ask questions about student's apprehension as it pertains to writing as well as some biographical data that will be anonymous as well. I would ask that instructors and administrators have students to fill out the surveys and return them by the end of the class period. The survey consists of 20 questions that are rated 1-5 (Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree =2; Are Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5). The data collected will be reviewed only by me and I will place the data in a statistical research program (excel or SPSS). Then the surveys will be destroyed.

Students may feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions. Students do not have to complete the survey if they do not wish to. Students who complete the survey probably won't benefit directly from participating in the study but it is my hope that others in the community/ society in general will benefit by understanding African American students fear of writing as well as how to address this fear to make students more comfortable with writing as it pertains to college research and assignments.

Participation is confidential. Study information will be kept in a secure location at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but the institutions identity will remain anonymous unless the institution consents to the use of its name. However, student's names will remain confidential as there is no place for their names nor are they asked to give their names at any point during the study.

Taking part in this study is the institutions decision. The institution does not have to participate in the study if it does not want to. The institution may also quit participating in the study at any time or decide and students may decide not to answer any question that they do not feel comfortable answering. Participation, non- participation or withdrawal will not affect grades in anyway.

We will be happy to answer any questions you may have about the study. You may contact me at and or my faculty advisor, Dr. John Murry at or if you have any questions or problems.

Informed Consent Form

Writing Apprehension of First generation Black students at a historically Black institution Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Principal Researcher: John W. McAllister

Faculty Advisor: Dr. John W. Murry, Jr.

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE:

You are invited to participate in a research study because you are classified as a freshman student taking a *Freshman Experience* class at an institution of higher education.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE RESEARCH STUDY:

Who is the Principal Researcher? John W. McAllister

 (office) or (cell),

Who is the Faculty Advisor? Dr. John W. Murry, Jr.

 (office) or (cell),

What is the purpose of this research study?

The purpose of this study is to explore and measure the writing apprehension in first generation students at a private historically Black College.

Who will participate in this study?

The students enrolled in *Freshman Experience* classes at the institution during 2013-2014 academic year.

What am I being asked to do?

Your participation will require you to complete the College Freshman Writing Survey. The survey contains several background (demographic questions) and questions concerning your feelings (perceptions) about writing. The survey will be completed in class and will take approximately 10 minutes. Subjects should understand that participation is voluntary; that they may refuse to answer any specific question as well as participants may withdraw at any time without penalty or prejudice.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?

No risks or discomforts are anticipated for participants.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

It is anticipated that the study will expand the body of knowledge on student perceptions about writing at the institution and provide a better understanding of writing services freshman students' desire.

How long will the study last?

The study will take place over a one year period (08-16-2013 thru 08-16-2014), but your involvement will be limited to completing the survey distributed in class.

Will I receive compensation for my time and inconvenience if I choose to participate in this study?
No, there is no monetary compensation for participation in this study.

Will I have to pay for anything?
No, there are no associated costs for your participation in this study.

What are the options if I do not want to be in the study?
You are free to decline to participate in this study or withdraw from it at any time.

How will my confidentiality be protected?
The principal researcher will keep all information confidential to the extent allowed by applicable state and federal law. The steps taken to ensure your confidentiality will be as follows. The survey instrument does not contain any identifying information such as name, social security number, or university ID number. Signed Informed Consent Forms will be separated from the completed surveys and both will be maintained in a locked filing cabinet. Information from the surveys will be placed on an Excel Spreadsheet on a computer containing password.

Will I know the results of the study?
At the conclusion of the study, you will have the right to request feedback about the results. You may contact the faculty advisor, Dr. John W. Murry, Jr., or principal researcher, John W. McAllister. You will receive a copy of this form for your files.

What do I do if I have questions about the research study?
You have the right to contact the faculty advisor or principal researcher to discuss any questions or concerns that you might have.

Procedure of Research.
1. The instructor will administer the informed consent and writing apprehension survey (WAT).
2. The surveys will be collected by the researcher.
3. The survey score will be computed and entered into a data base.
4. The data will be entered into SPSS and a one way ANOVA (analysis of variance test) will be conducted.
5. The results will be used to recommend suggestions as to how to alleviate writing apprehension.

You may also contact the University of Arkansas Research Compliance office listed below if you have questions about your rights as a participant, or to discuss any concerns about, or problems with the research.
Ro Windwalker, CIP
Institutional Review Board Coordinator
Research Compliance
University of Arkansas
ADMN 210
Fayetteville, AR 72701
 irb@uark.edu

I have read the above statement and have been able to ask questions and express concerns, which have been satisfactorily responded to by the researcher. I understand the purpose of the study as well as the potential benefits and risks that are involved. I understand that participation is voluntary**.** You may refuse to answer any specific question. Participants may withdraw at any time without penalty or prejudice. I understand that significant new findings developed during this research will be shared with the participant. I understand that no rights have been waived by signing the consent form.