AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

_____Michelle L. Redmond_____ for the _____Master of Science_____

in _____Psychology_____ presented on_____August 8, 2001_____

Title: Self-Concept, Hope, and At-Risk Urban Boys and Girls Participating

in Youth Programs

Abstract approved: _____

This study investigated the relationship of multidimensional self-concept and hope for

African-American urban youth. The participants were 35 boys and girls ranging in age

from 13 to 18 years old. All of the youth were from a metropolitan city in Kansas. The

youth were given two scales to measure their multidimensional self-concept and their

future hopes and goals. The results indicated that urban youth who are members of an

urban youth program showed little difference in their global self-concept and hope

compared to those youth who do not participate in an urban youth program. The results

also showed that boys had higher gain scores than girls for the Hope Scale and certain

subscales for the Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale.

SELF-CONCEPT, HOPE, AND AT-RISK URBAN BOYS AND GIRLS

PARTICIPATING IN YOUTH PROGRAMS

———

A Thesis

Presented to

the Department of Psychology and Special Education

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

———

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

———

by

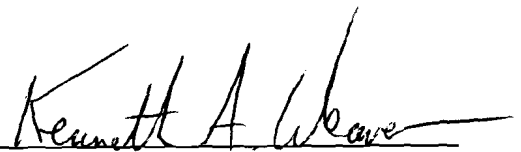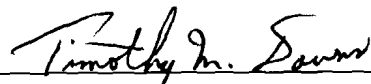Michelle L. Redmond

August 2001

Approved for the Department of
Psychology and Special Education

Approved by the Graduate Council

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Kenneth Weaver my committee chair, for his time, dedication, encouragement and guidance with this thesis project. I would also like to thank the other member of my thesis committee, Dr. Nathaniel Terrell for his time, help and willingness to serve on my thesis committee. I would also like to thank all of the youth and youth organizations that allowed me to occupy their time in the effort to collect data for this project. Your help and willingness to participate is greatly appreciated. Finally, I would like to thank my family for their help and support as I completed this thesis project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This literature review focuses on the effects of urban youth programs and the

urban environment on urban youth's self-concept and hope. These variables interact in

how they affect at-risk urban adolescents. The perceptions of self, the perceived level of

hope, and the environment contribute to the self-concept of African-American

adolescents.

Urban Youth

Violence, underemployment, poverty, crime, inadequate schools, low academic

performance, and lack of employment are stressors for many youth in urban

environments (Bell Kaplan, 1999; Hellrigegel & Yates, 1997; Voelkl, Welte, &

Wieczorek, 1999). How these problems affect their self-concept and hope is important

to examine. People viewing urban environments as disadvantaged communities assume

that "inner city" youth are without hope, have no motivation, and possess low self-

concepts compared to those who live in more prosperous suburban communities (Curtis,

1998; Jackson, Reddick, & Dubes, 1995). However, urban youth have demonstrated

resiliency when dealing with the obstacles of the inner city (Winfield, 1991; Wood,

Hillman, & Sawilosky, 1996).

Urban boys and girls appear to deal with the stressors in the urban environment in

different ways because of racial socialization. For African-Americans, racial

socialization is the process through which parents teach their children to negotiate a

duality of cultures at an early age. African-American youth learn to balance their group

identity, spirituality and collective survival, along with the realities of racism and

inequality in the mainstream society (White & Parham, 1990; Winfield, 1991). During racial socialization, African-American girls are reared with a greater emphasis on their racial pride and identity. In contrast, African-American boys are reared to deal with hostile environments, racism, and discrimination, as African-American boys and men tend to experience greater hostility and discrimination compared to African-American girls and women (Thomas & Speight, 1999).

Any youth regardless of ethnicity, background, and environment can be at-risk for low academic performance, behavior problems, or no-employment prospects. However, the probability of becoming at-risk increases for urban minority youth who already are experiencing stressors (e.g., poverty, discrimination, etc.). Inadequate environments do not automatically produce inadequate people, though youth with behavioral, academic, and social problems are more at-risk. The profile of an at-risk urban adolescent can include low academic performance, a display of behavioral problems, an impoverished home, and limited resources. However, not at-risk urban adolescents come from impoverished homes yet have little or no behavioral problems and demonstrate medium to high academic performance. What differentiates the two groups are the perceptions each holds for themselves, their resiliency, their motivation, and the overall ability to cope with the urban environment (Bell Kaplan, 1999; Health & McLaughlin, 1993).

Self-Concept

For at-risk urban youth, self-concept research has produced mixed findings. The discrepancy is due to the type of self-concept that is being measured. Examining the self-concept of African-American urban youth requires a multidimensional approach in order to get a true assessment; thus, traditional global self-concept is not enough to get an

accurate picture of self-perceptions. Therefore, global self-concept must be examined in conjunction with other types of concepts such as academic, competence, and social.

Global Self-Concept. Regardless of the type of self-concept being measured, it is viewed as an important developmental variable that "helps to influence future behavior" (Purkey as cited in Jackson et al., 1995, p. 683). Global self-concept is "an individual's perception of self which is formed through interactions with others, and resulting in one's behavior...based upon these interactions" (Coates, 1985, p. 320).

Gender is an uncertain factor in global self-concept research for minority youth. Castenell (1980) reported that eighth grade White and African-American boys rated higher on the Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory compared to White and African-American girls. However, Mayo-Booker and Gibbs (1997) found no difference in the level of self-concept between African-American girls and boys as measured by the Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.

Academic Self-Concept. Academic self-concept centers on the individual's perceived general academic ability. For African-American urban adolescents, global self-concept has little influence in the level of academic achievement (Trusty, Watts, & Gaik-Lim, 1995; Mayo-Booker & Gibbs, 1997). Mboya's (1986) study of African-American adolescents found no relationship between global self-concept as measured by the Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory, and academic achievement ($r = .06$). However, academic self-concept did have a significant relationship with their level of academic achievement ($r = .46$), based on scores from the California Achievement Test and the Self-Concept of Academic Ability measure (Mboya, 1986).

For African-American urban youth academic self-concept is dependent on racial identity and resiliency. Boyd (1987) found that African-American children with high levels of academic self-concept had a high regard for members of their racial group. According to Thomas and Speight (1999) African-American youth with a low racial identity are also found to have lower levels of academic success in school, leading to low academic self-concepts.

Resiliency is the ability to thrive in difficult times while believing you can overcome the obstacles. Gordon (1995) reported that based on scores from the High School Assessment of Academic Self-Concept, the more resilient African-American adolescents demonstrated a higher academic self-concept, while the less resilient had a lower academic self-concept. Low resilience was based on low socioeconomic status, high stress, and low reported academic achievement. The variables that provided the resilient adolescents with a high academic self-concept were self-control, family support, and environmental support. Self-control is how much control one believes they have over abilities and situations in their lives. The youth with higher academic self-concepts had an internal locus of control (Rotter, 1972), which means that they look inward for approval and validation while believing they control their outcome. Adolescents who believe in their abilities are willing to set higher goals which can eventually lead to stronger competencies.

Competence Self-Concept. The meaning of competence in regards to self-concept is the ability to work through obstacles, solve problems and deal with achievement and failure. Competency or self-efficacy is a persons' belief in success and the confidence to overcome problems (Bracken, 1992) According to Bandura (1986),

self-efficacy affects all social, behavioral, and academic behaviors. The way people perceive behaviors are determined by how they view their competence in dealing with the environment. Miller (1993) states that individuals can possess the skills, talents, and capabilities to achieve and thrive in any area, but without the belief in their abilities, failure is a probable outcome. For example, in a longitudinal study on psychosocial development, Macron (1997) found that low-income inner city youth had moderately high perceptions of self on autonomy, initiative, industry and identity, as measured by the Erikson Psychological Stage Inventory. This indicates that these particular youth obtained some belief in their abilities to be competent in urban environments.

Social Self-Concept. Social self-concept results from interactions with family, peers, and friends. Social self-concept is the measure of the acceptance and/or failure of those interactions (Bracken, 1992).

Gordon (1995) found two types of social support to be valuable for African-American adolescent, environmental and familial supports. Environmental support is defined as support systems in the community, peers, and friends. Knowing environmental and family supports are present enhances self-concept for African-American youth. Kern (1995) also reported family support to be a factor in the enhancement of self-concept in African-American youth. Family support was measured by the Social Network Record (SNR), which looks at the duration of the social networks, how many people are a part of the network, the amount of contact among members of the network, and the distance between the individuals connected within the social network (Coates, 1985). Connell, Spencer and Aber (1994) found that family support does enhance self-worth in African-American adolescents. In Coates' (1985) study, middle

class African-American adolescents who scored high on self-concept also rated their social network of friends, parents, and extended family more favorably. In gender differences, Trusty et al. (1995) found African-American girls to have higher scores on social confidence compared to African-American boys, as measured by the Self-Observational Scales. These studies all reveal that family and other social networks are important variables in the level of self-concept (Newman, Myers, Newman, Lohman, & Smith, 2000; Seidman et al., 1999).

Measuring Self-Concept

This thesis research follows the Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976) model of a multidimensional self-concept approach rather than one-dimensional. Multidimensional self-concept is composed of several areas that are part of a person's self-worth and environment. Multidimensional comes from a hierarchical model, affecting a person's behavior and environment. The hierarchical model used by the instrument in this study is based on a global self-concept encompassing six sub-areas (Bracken, 1996). Bracken identifies these areas as a) social or how one operates in society, work, school, etc.; b) family or how a person operates in the family unit, c) competence or how one looks at achievement, and failure; d) affect or the validation that comes from others; e) physical views about body image, health, and athletic prowess; and f) academic or the perception of a person's academic abilities. These areas help determine how people feel about their self-worth.

Several scales measure self-concept from a multidimensional perspective. One of these scales is the Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale (MSCS). The MSCS measures an individual's global self-concept and perception of self. The MSCS contains 150

Likert-type items (from 1 SA "strongly agree" to 5 SD "strongly disagree"), asking such

questions as "I wish I could be someone else," "I always get in trouble," and "I am proud

of myself" (Butler, 1999, p. 96). The MSCS has six subscales: social, family,

competence, affect, physical, and academic. Each of the subscales has 25 items. The six

subscales can be administered individually or in conjunction with other instruments. The

MSCS is the self-concept measure that was administered in the current study.

Other self-concept scales used in the research cited in this chapter include the

following. The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) matches global self-concept and a

person's sense of self (Bracken, 1996). The TSCS also measures internal and external

self-concept. The TSCS has 100 items (e.g., I try to understand the other person's point

of view), and eight subscales: family, identity, satisfaction, behavior, physical, moral-

ethical, personal, and social. Items are responded to by selecting one of five response

choices ranging from completely false to completely true. The administration of the

TSCS takes 20 minutes and can occur in a group or individual setting (Roid & Fitts,

1991).

The Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory has 50 items for the self-esteem scale

and 8 for the lie scale. The answers are set up as either "Like Me" or "Unlike Me." The

school form was designed for children 8 to 15 years old (Adair, 1984). The Harter Self-

Perception Profile for Children (SPPC) measures self-concept and self-worth in children

(Bracken, 1996). The six subscales on the SPPC include scholastic competence, social

acceptance, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioral conduct and global

self-worth. Each sub-scale contains six items that are rated from 1 (least positive self-

perception) to 4 (most positive self-perception) (Bracken, 1996). There is also a Harter

Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA), which consists of the same six subscales as the SPPC with additional scales on job competence, close friendship, and romantic appeal. The SPPA is rated the same as the SPPC. The SPPA was designed for 9th thru 12th grade students. The High School Assessment of Academic Self-Concept is a scale designed to measure the high school experience in the domains of social, personal, extracurricular, and cognitive.

The Self-Concept of Academic Ability (SCAA) is used to measure academic self-concept in secondary school age students. The inventory asks respondents to rate their academic ability against that of their peers. The SCAA has eight items, 4 items cover present academic ability, and while the other four cover future academic ability. The SCAA is rated on a scale from 1 to 5 with 40 total points possible (Mboya, 1986). The Erickson Psychological Stage Inventory (EPSI) is also used to measure self-perception. It is a 72-item test on a five point Likert scale that measures psychosocial development based on Erickson's stages of development. There are six subscales on the EPSI: Trust, autonomy, initiative, industry, identity, and intimacy. Each subscale contains six positive statements and six negative statements (Macron, 1997). The Social Network Record (SNR) is a self-report inventory that measures the characteristics of respondents' social contacts with family and or friends (Coates, 1985). The SNR has six major subscales: size, durability, frequency, multiplicity, proximity, and density; and six network group (family and friends) subscales: quality of closeness, size of chum group, closeness resource, emotional resource, material resource, and support satisfaction (Coates). The SNR is rated by the description the respondent gives based on the checklist grid, graph, and questionnaire. The Self Observational Scales (SOS) is a 60 item self-report measure

of self-concept. The SOS consists of seven subscales: Self-acceptance, self-security, social confidence, self-assertion, peer, teacher, and school affiliation (Trusty et al., 1995). Items on the SOS are answered either yes or no.

All of the aforementioned scales are used by researchers to determine the level of self-concept in African-American children and adolescents. More scales are available; however, they do not traditionally fit the mainstream idea of a global self-concept when examining cultural groups (Mayo-Booker & Gibbs, 1997).

Hope as It Relates to Motivation

The motivational level of at-risk youth has been sparsely investigated throughout the literature (Gordon, 1995). Ford (1987) asserted that individuals have a personal agency belief system, which allows them to self-evaluate their ability to achieve and set goals. The goals a person sets can be used to evaluate what choices individuals are willing to make, to determine how committed they are to reaching those goals. Competence requires a certain belief in how well one can achieve, while goals are building blocks to personal achievement. In order to attain and build on achievement, an individual has to be motivated (Ford, 1994; Miller, 1993; White & Parham, 1990). Thus, goals, competence, and motivation are all interrelated

Ford's (1987) 10 different motivational patterns reflect the goals a person has and are ranked as follows from lowest to highest: hopeless, discouraged, antagonistic, accepting, self-doubting, vulnerable, fragile, tenacious, modest, and robust. Those individuals who hold very low expectations and are not motivated to reach their goals are considered hopeless. In contrast, individuals who strongly believe in their ability to achieve their goals are robustly motivated. In Gordon's (1995) resiliency study, the

resilient African-American adolescents tended to display a tenacious motivational pattern, while the non-resilient had a vulnerable motivational pattern.

If motivation is a measure of goals and abilities (Gordon, 1995), then having low motivation indicates a lack of hope (Ford, 1987; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993). A lack of hope, however, is a transient experience. For example, after at-risk urban youth participated in a ropes course, they demonstrated greater hope when administered Snyder et al.'s (1991) "Hope Scale" (Robitschek, 1996). The scale measures future hope and goals and how to reach those goals. Robitschek's findings indicate that hope of at-risk urban youth can be increased, in this case from participating in the program, but the increase may not persist. Therefore, it is crucial, as stated by the Rev. Jesse Jackson, to "keep hope alive" for African-American urban adolescents (Frady, 1996, p. 39).

Urban Youth Programs

Since the "War on Poverty" movement in the 1960s, the Federal Government has attempted to improve the lives of at-risk urban adolescents by instituting a variety of programs such as Job Corps, Upward Bound, Neighborhood Youth Corps, Pro-100, and the Street Academy program. Urban youth programs can be day programs offered in community centers or residential programs. They are frequently co-sponsored with post-secondary institutions.

Urban youth programs can play a vital role in the development and maintenance of adolescent self-concept and motivation by elevating and maintaining hope. Several studies have documented the effectiveness of various urban youth programs in raising youth competence. According to Bluechart (1995), a partnership between the Continuation Options Re-Entry Education Alternative High School (CORE) and the

University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada successfully raised the self-worth of the CORE students, as measured by the Harter Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents. CORE is an alternative high school for adolescents who were not successful in the mainstream high school setting. The University of Regina set up a wellness program that provided university facilities, recreational activities, and referral services for CORE students. The university students were group leaders participating in trips and working with the youth through the wellness program. CORE students built their social skills through small group projects, leading group discussions, and from working with other faculty and staff members. Other youth programs have had similar results in improving self-concept. Gilleland (1996) reported that gifted and regular students had similar scores on the Harter Self-Perception Profile after participating in a talent identification camp or a tennis camp, respectively.

Upward Bound, a part of the federally funded TRIO programs, was established to help low-income students matriculate to college. Butler (1999) studied 57 African-American adolescent boys to see if participation in an Upward Bound summer program raised self-concept. The experimental group included the participants, while the control group did not participate. Participants' self-concept increased far greater than the non-participants' based on the pre/post scores from the Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale. Meyers and Moore (1997) similarly found that Upward Bound students increased their level of academic achievement, while raising their academic expectations for the future. McCormick and Williams (1971) found that Upward Bound participants who demonstrated a positive self-concept also displayed a higher level of aspiration. The level of aspiration relates to motivation by believing in one's ability and achieving goals

(McCormick & Williams). Upward Bound participants appeared to be more hopeful about the future.

According to Hudson (1997), youth development is an important aspect of many urban youth organizations. The development centers around helping youth become more prepared to function in adulthood. A key aspect of youth development is competence about health, social, personal, and career issues.

Effective urban youth programs successfully raise participant's level of self-concept. Such programs also must include clear goals and objectives, dedicated staff and youth that are allowed to "take ownership" of the program. Programs including these aspects improve urban youth participant's progress in academic work, self-concept and competence (Heath & McLaughlin, 1993). An effective urban youth program should increase self-concept and level of motivation. Two programs that can provide environmental support in the urban community are Upward Bound and the Boys and Girls Club.

Urban Environment

With the two types of youth programs used in the present research identified, it is important to understand the environments where these programs are housed and the dynamics of urban life. Although the urban environment has been plagued with drugs, gangs, violence and poverty for decades, current changes taking place in the inner city are reducing crime and drug use through new economic development (Curtis, 1998; Rubinetti, 1996).

Nevertheless, in many urban environments, resources are still not available to promote economic development. As jobs and homeowners move away from the city, the

economy of the inner city declines (Sloan, Jason & Addlesperger, 1996) disenfranchising the community and the people living there (Kendall, 1996). The urban community is not as connected to the resources that help communities thrive such as adequate schools, quality health care, and meaningful employment (Anderson, Dyson, & Grandison, 1998).

Poverty is a continuing problem in the inner city. The percentage of female-headed households that are under the poverty line is 38.7% (Sloan et al., 1996). These households have a 75% chance of raising children who will also live at or below the poverty line as adults (Rankin, 1998). Another problem of urban life is the strained relationship between the police and community. Inner city areas are heavily policed, a source of contention at times for law-abiding residents (Curtis, 1998). Living in an urban environment tests the resilience of its residents.

Summary

At-risk urban youth can have high hope and self-concepts. Urban youth programs do enhance self-concept and motivation. Urban youth programs can be viewed as environmental support, which is a variable for increasing self-concept. Research has linked motivation to goals, abilities, and hopefulness (Gordon, 1995). This study examined whether participation in an urban youth program makes a difference in African-American youth's global, academic, social, and competence self-concepts and hope.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: At-risk urban youth program participants will have a higher global self-concept and more hope than non-participants.

Hypothesis 2: The correlation between scores on the family and competence subscales and the Hope Scale will be significantly positive.

Research Question 1: Is there an interactive relationship between global and academic self-concepts, and Hope for African-American urban adolescents?

Research Question 2: Will male and female at-risk urban youth regardless of group differ on global, academic, competence, and social self-concept and hope?

CHAPTER 2

METHODS

Participants

The target population for this research project involved three groups of urban youth. The first group contained youth that were members of an urban youth program, the second group attended a local urban high school and were members of the base club, and the third group of youth were members of a church youth group. Those youth that were not part of an urban program served as the control group.

There were 35 participants ranging in ages from 13 to 18 years old, with a total of 17 boys and 18 girls in the study. The participants were all African-American adolescents from a lower middle to low socioeconomic status.

To produce a sample of convenience, the researcher contacted the staff at the urban youth program, the church youth director and the principal of the school to get permission to use their students. The school counselor who was also the faculty sponsor for the base club was asked to select African-American students who qualified for free/reduced school lunch to participate in the study. The church's participants were selected by the director and basically consisted of all youth who were present for the pre/post-test administrations. For the criterion groups, the staff at Upward Bound was asked to select those adolescents who had been in the program for at least six months.

Research Design

This study used a 2 x 3 between subjects causal-comparative design to examine intact groups of at-risk urban youth. The first independent variable was Gender: boys or girls, and the second independent variable was Group with three levels: Upward Bound,

control at-risk, and control not at-risk   The one criterion group was those at-risk urban

adolescents who are currently participating in an urban youth program. The two

comparison groups were at-risk urban adolescents who were not participating in a youth

program and urban adolescents who are not at-risk. The dependent variables were the

gain scores (i.e. posttest-pretest) on the Global Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale;

scores on the Social, Academic, Family, and Competence subscales; and gain scores on

the Hope Scale.

To control for extraneous variables, the researcher used adolescents that qualified

for free/reduced lunch and come from a low socioeconomic households. To ensure that

control group participants were not involved in any urban youth programs, the

participants were given a note card and instructed to put their name, school and any

programs they were involved in on the card.

Instruments

This study used two measurements to measure the self-concept and hope of the

participants, respectively. The Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale (MSCS) examined

six domains of self-concept of the urban participants; the Hope Scale was used to

measure agency and pathway goals of the urban youth participants. The

Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale and the Hope Scale are valid with African-

American adolescents (Hlongwane & Basson, 1990; Robitschek, 1996).

The MSCS was created using a behavioral construct, basing self-concept on past

behavior, actions, and perceptions. MSCS is measuring the real self, not the ideal self

(Bracken, 1996). This scale has 150 questions with 6 subscales that have 25 questions

each. The subscales are rated on a likert scale from 1 to 4 points with a total possible raw

score of 100. The validity of the MSCS is reported as .97 with the test-retest reliability being .90, and the reliability reported as .97-.99 (Bracken, 1996). The subscales have a reported internal consistency of .87 to .97. Scores on the MSCS are $\underline{T}$-scores derived from standard scores, and percentile rankings based on the norm average. The MSCS was normed in 4 regional areas of the U. S. based on a national representation of race, and gender. The norming group age ranged from 9 to 19 years of age. A third grade reading level is required to complete and understand the MSCS (Bracken, 1996). The administration of the MSCS takes around 15 to 20 minutes in an individual or a group setting (Butler, 1999). Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale relates well with finding multiple dimensions of self-concept in African-American Adolescents (Butler, 1999).

The Hope Scale measures how goal directed people are and how well they are able to cope. This scale is designed to measure the level of hope a person has (Snyder et al., 1991). The Hope Scale has two subscales, agency and pathway. Agency examines how determined an individual is in a goal directed way; pathway examines how people will try to meet their goals. Therefore, this scale measures a person's determination in achieving goals. There are 12 items on the Hope Scale; 4 items measure pathway with a score range of 4 to 16, 4 items measure agency with a score range of 4 to 16, and 4 items are filler questions (Snyder et al.). An example of each is as follows "I can think of many ways to get out of a jam" (pathway), "I energetically pursue my goals" (agency), and "I worry about my health" (filler). The Hope Scale is scored based on four different responses: 1 definitely false, 2 mostly false, 3 mostly true, or 4 definitely true. The Hope Scale has only been normed on a racially mixed college population, with a reliability of .74 to .84 (Snyder et al., 1991).

Procedures

After permission was granted from the Human Subjects Review board, the youth program, the secondary school, and the church were contacted, and dates were set for the pretest administration. The two scales were administered on separate days to each group, once at the end of January and again at the end of February into middle March. The attempt was to examine self-concept and hope over the Black History month time period, to see what effect this cultural event has on the concepts of urban youth and their hope. To ensure accurate collection of the data, the researcher, a 27-year-old African-American woman was the only data collector for both the criterion and comparison groups. Having one data collector helped control for any extraneous variation.

The researcher collected data at the urban youth organizations and in an available classroom in the school. All three administrations were in a group setting with the participants filling out the scales. Each administration consisted of the Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale and the Hope Scale. The completion of the items normally took no longer than 30 minutes; however some participants took longer to read or go through the survey increasing the time of administration.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The researcher used separate 2 x 3 analyses of variance (ANOVA) to analyze the

gain scores (i.e., posttest-pretest) from the Multidimensional Self–Concept Scale and the

Hope Scale. Means and standard deviations are presented in Tables 1 through 8.

Correlations between scores on the Hope Scale and two subscales, family and

competence were also computed.

Global Self-Concept

Global Self-Concept is the total perception that a person has of his or her self.

For this study the main effect of Gender was not significant for global, $F(1,29) = .21$, $p >$

.05, while the main effect for Group was also not significant $F(2,29) = 1.37$, $p > .05$.

There was no significant interaction between Gender by Group $F(2,29) = .43$, $p > .05$.

Family Self-Concept

Family self-concept is the way a person perceives their family. The main effects

for Gender and Group were not significant, $F(1,29) = 1.04$, $p > .05$ and $F(2,29) = .76$, $p >$

.05, respectively. There was not a significant interaction for Gender by Group, $F(2,29) =$

.55 $p > .05$.

Social Self-Concept

The main effect of Gender and Group were not significant for this variable, F

$(1,29) = .07$, $p > .05$ and $F(2,29) = .74$, $p > .05$, respectively. The Gender by Group

interaction also was not significant, $F(2,29) = .06$, $p > .05$.

Academic Self-Concept

The main effects of Gender and Group were not significant for

academic self-concept $\underline{F}(1,29) = .01$, $\underline{p} > .05$ and $\underline{F}(2,29) = .25$, $\underline{p} > .05$, respectively. There was no significant interaction between Gender and Group $\underline{F}(2,29) = .64$, $\underline{p} > .05$ for academic self-concept.

Competence Self-Concept

The main effects of Gender and Group were not significant $\underline{F}(1, 29)= .05$, $\underline{p} > .05$ and $\underline{F}(2,29) = .03$, $\underline{p} > .05$, respectively. There was no significant interaction for Gender by Group $\underline{F}(2,29) = .34$, $\underline{p} > .05$.

Hope Scale

The main effects of Gender and Group were not significant for the Hope Agency subscale, $\underline{F}(1,29) = .60$, $\underline{p} > .05$ and $\underline{F}(2,29) = 2.10$, $\underline{p} > .05$, respectively. The interaction for Gender by Group was also not significant $\underline{F}(2,29) = 2.76$, $\underline{p} > .05$. The main effects for the Hope Pathway subscale were not significant $\underline{F}(1,29) = .82$, $p > .05$ and $\underline{F}(2,29) = .67$, $p > .05$, respectively. The interaction for Gender by Group was also not significant $\underline{F}(2,29) = 2.80$, $\underline{p} > .05$.

Correlations

Hope pathway, which again is the measure of how one achieves goals, was positively correlated with the pre/post-test results for the competence subscale ($\underline{r} =.46$) and ($\underline{r} =.38$), respectively. There was no correlation with the family subscale. Hope agency, which measures determination was positively correlated with the pre/post-test scores for the competence subscale ($\underline{r}=.36$) and ($\underline{r}=.40$), respectively and the pre/post-test family subscale ($\underline{r}=.50$) and ($\underline{r}=.47$), respectively.

Hypothesis 1 and 2

For Hypothesis 1 there was no significant difference between participants and non-participants for global self-concept $\underline{F}$ (2, 29) = 1.37, $\underline{p}$ > .05. While there were some mean difference on the Hope Scales, there were no significant differences between participants and non-participants $\underline{F}(2,29)$ = 2.10, $\underline{p}$ > .05 and $\underline{F}(2,29)$ = 2.80, $\underline{p}$ >.05, respectively. Going by the results of the data analysis, the first hypothesis was not supported by the data. Although, the data did show that there was some support for a difference in the amount of hope or participants vs. non-participants. Hypothesis 2 asked, whether there would be a significant correlation between family, competence and hope. The data as presented above under the correlation section shows that Hypothesis 2 was proven true.

Research Question 1 and 2

For Research Question 1 there was no significant interactive relationship between the variables global, academic, and hope. For Research Question 2, there were differences between the genders for the following variables: global, competence, academic, social, and hope. The differences were based on gain score means between urban boys and girls (See tables 1-7).

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for Global Self-Concept Gain Scores by Gender

and Group

	Upward Bound			CAR			CNAR			Total		
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Boys	6	5.67	5.39	6	.17	8.45	5	2.20	7.56	17	2.71	7.71
Girls	6	5.33	5.85	5	3.80	5.22	7	1.71	1.98	18	3.50	4.51
Total	12	5.50	5.37	12	1.82	7.08	11	1.92	4.80	35	3.11	5.88

Note. CAR= Control at-risk and CNAR= Control not at-risk.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Family Self-Concept Gain Scores by Gender and Group

	Upward Bound			CAR			CNAR			Total		
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Boys	6	7.67	13.71	5	1.81	14.81	6	-1.83	6.24	17	2.59	11.95
Girls	6	6.50	8.53	5	5.86	6.41	5	5.80	9.04	18	6.06	7.43
Total	12	7.08	10.90	12	4.17	10.90	11	1.64	8.25	35	4.37	9.90

Note. CAR= Control at-risk and CNAR= Control not at-risk

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Social Self-Concept Gain Scores by Gender and Group

	Upward Bound			CAR			CNAR			Total		
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Boys	6	-2.50	7.01	5	1.52	9.90	6	1.83	14.18	17	-.24	10.30
Girls	6	-2.50	6.69	7	-2.14	4.88	5	1.60	2.88	18	-1.22	5.17
Total	12	-2.50	7.98	12	-1.25	7.06	11	1.72	10.19	35	-.74	7.97

Note. CAR= Control at-risk and CNAR= Control not at-risk

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Academic Self-Concept Gain Scores by Gender
and Group

	Upward Bound			CAR			CNAR			Total		
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Boys	6	.83	3.61	5	6.00	6.16	6	2.40	3.97	17	2.41	6.90
Girls	5	4.00	13.70	7	2.00	5.29	5	1.00	9.53	18	2.77	8.34
Total	12	2.42	9.70	12	3.67	5.77	11	1.64	7.23	35	2.60	7.57

Note. CAR= Control at-risk and CNAR= Control not at-risk

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations for Competence Self-Concept Gain Scores by

Gender and Group

	Upward Bound			CAR			CNAR			Total		
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Boys	6	1.83	2.71	5	4.20	8.64	6	.67	9.33	17	2.11	7.10
Girls	5	2.83	3.71	7	1.85	8.53	5	3.80	12.05	18	2.72	8.04
Total	12	2.33	3.41	12	2.09	8.27	11	2.09	10.21	35	2.42	7.48

Note. CAR= Control at-risk and CNAR= Control not at-risk

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for Hope Agency Gain Scores by Gender and

Group

	Upward Bound			CAR			CNAR			Total		
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Boys	6	2.33	2.88	6	-.60	1.67	5	.16	1.17	17	.71	2.31
Girls	5	.17	.75	5	.57	1.90	7	-.20	.83	18	.22	1.31
Total	12	1.25	2.30	12	8.33	1.83	11	-1.92	1.00	35	.46	1.85

Note. CAR= Control at-risk and CNAR= Control not at-risk

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations for Hope Pathway Gain Scores by Gender and

Group

	Upward Bound			CAR			CNAR			Total		
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Boys	6	.50	1.52	5	1.20	1.10	6	.50	1.52	17	.46	1.85
Girls	5	1.17	1.17	7	-1.0	1.0	5	.60	2.70	18	.17	1.86
Total	12	.83	1.34	12	-8.33	1.51	11	.55	2.02	35	.43	1.63

Note. CAR= Control at-risk and CNAR= Control not at-risk

Table 8

<u>Correlations Between Hope, Family, and Competence for African-American</u>

<u>Urban Youth</u>

					(n=35)			
Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Family Pre	--	.81**	.63**	.74**	.50**	.19	.31	.15
2. Family Post		--	.47**	.63**	.46**	.25	.24	.16
3. Competence Pre			--	.87**	.36*	.29	.29	.46**
4. Competence Post				--	.40*	.29	.28	.38*
5. Hope agency Pre					--	.58*	.73*	.52**
6. Hope Pathway Pre						--	.70**	.64**
7. Hope Agency Post							--	.70**
8. Hope Pathway Post								

*p < .05

**p < .01

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

This study examined self-concept in relationship to hope in at-risk urban youth to see if at-risk urban youth participating in urban programs would be more hopeful and have higher self-concepts than those urban youth that were non-participants. This study also investigated whether participating in an urban youth program raised the level of hope for urban youth. A positive relationship was expected to exist between self-concept and hope. By following past studies it was anticipated that self-concept would be high. Specifically, this study tested the following hypotheses and research questions: (a) At-risk urban youth program participants will have a higher global self-concept and more hope than non-participants; (b) The correlation between scores on the family and competence subscales and the Hope Scale will be significantly positive; (c) Is there an interactive relationship between global and academic self-concepts and hope for African-American urban adolescents? (d) Will male and female at-risk urban youth regardless of youth program differ on global, academic, competence, and social self-concepts and hope? A discussion of the research findings regarding these hypotheses and research questions will be followed by the limitations of the study and future research.

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 was not supported by the data as presented in the previous chapter. In this study, global self-concept was not higher for those youth in an urban program vs. urban youth with no program affiliation. Other literature has found a difference in global self-concept when examining the differences between program participants and non-participants (Butler, 1999). However, these programs examined self-concept over a longer period, which might indicate that time could be an important

variable. Other studies have also found that urban programs can increase self-concept in urban youth. The results of this study did not show a decrease in self-concept, instead that there was no significant change in self-concept. These results also support the notation that self-concept can be the same for all urban youth with little variation as found by Mayo-Booker and Gibbs (1997). Self-Concept literature also tells us that self-concept can produce mixed results when researching African-American youth. With no significant differences present the results from the current study do hint to the fact that global self-concept possibly is not the most effective form of self-concept to examine for African-American youth. Mayo-Booker and Gibbs (1997) believe that racial self-concept is a better predictor of African-American youth's overall self-perception and perhaps further studies should examine racial self-concept and hope.

Hypothesis 2. Past research has found that African-American adolescents that display signs of resiliency have variables in their lives such as family and environmental support (Gordon, 1995). Resiliency is similar to competence in that they both involve overcoming obstacles and being able to thrive. Competence, like resiliency can be directly related to motivation and achieving your goals (Ford, 1994, Miller, 1993 & White & Parham, 1990). In this study, it was found that there was a positive correlation between family self-concept, competence self-concept, and hope agency and pathway for urban youth. Gordon suggests that resilient students are more motivated and depend on the strengths of their environment and families. It is clear that from these correlations that the relationships that exist in other studies for African-American urban students also exist in this particular study. Family is traditionally an important factor in African-American culture (White & Parham, 1990). There is a relationship with how African-

American urban youth feel about their families and how that has a positive correlation with their determination (hope agency) for reaching their goals. Therefore, African-American urban youth may very well believe in themselves as other studies have shown (Macron, 1997).

Research Question 1. There was no significant relationship among global self-concept, academic self-concept and hope. Past literature has provided evidence of there being a positive relationship between academic achievement and academic self-concept, but the same relationship does not exist with global self-concept and achievement (Mboya, 1986). Mayo-Booker and Gibbs (1997) also discovered racial self-concept, rather than global self-concept to be a better predictor of achievement for African-American adolescents. This lack of relationship was replicated in this study. Once again, global self-concept fails to be the most accurate predictor for achievement with African-American urban youth.

Research Question 2. There were differences between the genders for this study. African-American girls tended to have higher total gain scores for academic, global, and competence, while African-American boys had higher total gain scores on social self-concept and hope. Past studies have found boys to have higher academic and global self-concepts (Castenell, 1980). However, Mayo-Booker and Gibbs (1997) discovered that African-American girls had higher self-concept compared to African-American boys, which wasn't anticipated. The mean differences seem to indicate that that the boys in this current study are more determined to reach their goals as a group. Perhaps the girl's gain scores show that the testing over the Black History month period had a greater effect on their academic self-concept, perception of self, and their ability to solve problems.

Limitations

One limitation of this study was the small size of the sample. The number of

participants originally started out as 64. The sample was also restricted to one

geographic location, making it difficult to generalize the results to other African-

American urban populations. Another limitation of this study was the non-random

selection of urban youth participants. The adolescents were formed into intact groups,

and the researcher was looking for certain criteria making random sampling difficult.

Generalizing these findings to other urban youth groups or programs must be done

cautiously.

An additional limitation that occurred in this study was the time that each

administration would take. The researcher estimated that both surveys would take no

longer than 30 minutes to complete for the average adolescent. However, there was no

preparation for those adolescents with behavior problems, learning difficulties or other

concerns who needed longer than 30 minutes. Four students exceeded the time limit by

10-15 minutes. The surveys themselves were all on a 6th grade reading level, however

they appeared to be more intimidating to some students than to others. Future studies like

this one should consider only giving certain subscales or a shorter version of the entire

scale if available.

Future Research

Further research is needed to explore a competency model that is geared toward

urban youth and that has some focus on self-concept that is culture specific. Competence

tells a researcher a great deal about how determined an individual might be, what kind of

problem solver they are and how they can handle their environment. Therefore, a study

on the impact of competence, hope and family should be done to explore that relationship

for urban youth.

REFERENCES

Adair, F. L. (1984). Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. In D. J. Keyser & R. C. Sweetland (Eds.), Test Critique: Vol. 1. (pp. 226-232). Test Corporation of America.

Anderson, J. F., Dyson, L., & Grandison, T. (1998). African-Americans, violence, disabilities, and public policy: A call for a workable approach to alleviating the pains of inner-city life. The Western Journal of Black Studies, 22, 94-109.

Bandura, A. (1986). Social foundations of thought and action. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bell Kaplan, E. (1999). "It going good": Inner-city Black and Latino adolescents' perceptions about achieving an education. Urban Education, 34, 181-213.

Bluechart, M. (1995). Building bridges between a university and an alternative high school. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, 66, 39-42.

Boyd, S. F. (1987). Black children's level of aspiration in relation to self-esteem. (Doctoral dissertation, Adelphi University, 1987). Dissertation Abstracts International, 48, 01B

Bracken, B., A. (Ed.). (1996). Handbook of self-concept. New York: John Wiley & Sons, INC.

Butler, S. K. (1999). The effect of an Upward Bound program on the self-concept of adolescent African-American males (Doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut, 1999). Dissertation Abstracts International, 60, 04A

Castenell, L. A. (1980). Achievement motivation: An area-specific analysis. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, 1980) Dissertation Abstracts International, 41, 11A.

Coates, D. L. (1985). Relationships between self-concept measures and social network characteristics for Black adolescents. Journal of Early Adolescence, 5, 319-338.

Connell, J. P., Spencer, M. B., & Aber, J. L. (1994). Educational risk and resilience in African-American youth: Context, self, action, and outcomes in school. Child Development, 65, 493-506.

Curtis, R. (1998). The improbable transformation of inner-city neighborhoods: Crime, violence, drugs, and youth in the 1990s. Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, 88, 1233-1273.

Ford, M. E., & Ford, D. H. (Eds.). (1987). Humans as self-constructing living systems: Putting the framework to work. Hillside, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Ford, D. Y. (1994). Nurturing resilience in gifted black youth. Roper Review, 17, 80-85.

Frady, M. (1996). Jesse: The life and pilgrimage of Jesse Jackson New York: Random House.

Gilleland, E. D. (1996). Self-concept in adolescents: A comparison of gifted and non-gifted students. (Doctoral dissertation, North Carolina State University, 1996) Dissertation Abstracts International, 56, 10-B.

Gordon, K. A. (1995). Self-concept and motivational patterns of resilient African-American high school students. Journal of Black Psychology, 21, 239-255.

Heath, S. B., & McLaughlin, M. W. (Eds.). (1993). Identity and inner city youth: Beyond ethnicity and gender. New York: Teachers College Press.

Hellriegel, K. L., & Yates, J. R. (1997). Collaboration between correctional & public school systems for juvenile offenders: A case study. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL. (Educational Resources Information Center Document Reproduction Service No. ED 408 396)

Hlongwane, H. H., & Basson, C. J. (1990). Self-concept enhancement of Black adolescents using transactional analysis in a group context. School Psychology International, 11, 99-108.

Hudson, S. D. (1997). Helping youth grow. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance, 68, 16-18.

Jackson, M. H., Reddick, K. B., & Dubes, R. G. (1995). Self-Concept correlates between at-risk and not at-risk ninth grade students. Psychological Reports, 76, 683-687.

Kendall, J. (1996). Creating a culturally responsive psychotherapeutic environment for African-American youth: A critical analysis. Advances in Nursing ,15, 11-28.

Kern, M. T. (1995). The relationship between social support, self-esteem, and high-risk behavior in African-American adolescents. Dissertation Abstracts International, 56, 4B.

Macron, R. A. (1997, April). Influences on psychosocial development of inner-city early adolescents. Poster presented at the meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Washington DC. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 407 471).

Mayo-Booker, A., & Gibbs, M. (1997). Racial and global self-concept effects on African-American achievement Chicago, IL: Presented at the annual convention of

the American Psychological Association. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 413 390).

Mboya, M. M. (1986). Black adolescents: A descriptive study of their self-concepts and academic achievement. Adolescence, 83, 689-695.

McCormick, K. M., & Williams, H. J. (1971). Effects of a compensatory program on self-report, achievement and aspiration level of disadvantaged high school students. Journal of Negro Education, 34, 47-52.

Meyers, E. D., & Moore, T. M. (1997). The national evaluation of upward bound: Summary of the first year impacts and program operation. Executive Summary. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education (ERIC Document Reproduction Service ED 414 850).

Miller, P., H. (1993). Theories of developmental psychology (3rd ed.). New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.

Newman, B. M., Myers, M. C., Newman, P. R., Lohman, B., & Smith, V. L. (2000). The transition to high school for academically promising urban low-income African-American youth. Adolescence, 35, 1-45.

Rankin, B. H. (1998). Neighborhood poverty, family characteristics, and commitment to goals: The case of African American adolescents in the inner city. Journal of Family Issues, 19, 769-789.

Robitschek, C. (1996). At-risk youth and hope: Incorporating a ropes course into a summer jobs program. The Career Quarterly, 45, 163-169.

Roid, G. H. & Fitts, H. W. (1991). Tennessee Self-Concept Scale Revised Manual. Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services.

Rotter, J., B., Chance, J., & Phares, E., J. (Eds.). (1972). <u>Applications of a social</u> <u>learning theory of personality.</u> New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Rubinetti, F. (1996). Empathy, self-esteem, hopelessness, and belief in the legitimacy of aggression in adolescents exposed to pervasive community violence. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland College Park, 1996). <u>Dissertation</u> <u>Abstracts International, 57,</u> 10B.

Seidman, E., Chesir-Teran, D., Friedman, L., J., Yoshikawa, H., Allen, L. & Roberts, A. (1999). The risk and protective functions of perceived family and peer microsystems among urban adolescents in poverty. <u>American Journal of Community</u> <u>Psychology, 27,</u> 211-230.

Sloan, V. J., Jason, L. A., & Addlesperger, E. (1994). Social networks among inner city minority women. <u>Education, 117,</u> 194-199.

Shavelson, R. J., Hubner, J. J., & Stanton, G. C. (1976). Self-Concept validation of construct interpretation. <u>Review of Educational Research, 46,</u> 407-441.

Snyder, C. R., Harris, C., Anderson, J. R., Holleran, S. A., Irving, L. M., Sigman, S. T., Yoshinobu, L., Gibb, J., Langelle, C., & Harney P. (1991). The will and the ways: Development and validation of an individual-differences measure of hope. <u>Journal of</u> <u>Personality and Social Psychology, 60,</u> 570-585.

Thomas, A. J., & Speight, S. L. (1999). Racial identity and racial socialization attitudes of African-American parents. <u>Journal of Black Psychology,25,</u> 152-170.

Trusty, J., Watts, R. E., & Gaik-Lim, M. (1995). Multidimensional self-concepts and achievement in African-American middle school students. <u>Education, 115,</u> 522-530.

Voelkl, E. K., Welte, J. W., Wieczorek, W. F. (1999). Schooling and delinquency among White and African-American adolescents. Urban Education, 34, 69-88.

White, R., & Parham, T. A. (1990). The psychology of Blacks: An African American perspective (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Winfield, L. F. (1991). Resilience, schooling, and development in African American youth: A conceptual framework. Education and Urban Society, 24, 5-14.

Wood, P. C., Hillman, S. B., & Sawilosky, S. S. (1996). Locus of control, self-concept, and self-esteem among at-risk African-American adolescence. Adolescence, 31, 597-604.

Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

Dear_____,

       I am requesting your permission to test your child_____, for a research project that will take place this spring.

       The Department of Psychology & Special Education at Emporia State University does believe in the protection of human subjects that participate in research projects. This project is for educational reasons only, and the information that your child provides will help to add to the growing knowledge of the perceptions of self in urban adolescents. If at anytime your child feels the need to withdraw from this project he/she may do so without any consequences.

       In this study your child will be asked to complete two scales, the Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale and the Hope Scale. After the administration your child will be free to ask the researcher any questions about the study.

       "I have read the above stated information and I understand that I am under no obligation to participate in this study. I also understand that my lack of participation will not prejudice me. I have been allowed to ask questions of the researcher with regards to this study and I understand the risk (if any) involved, as well as the procedures that are to take place in the study."

_____

Signature of Parent(s)/Date

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

The Department of Psychology and Special education at Emporia State University does believe in the protection of human subjects that participate in research projects. This project is for educational reasons only, and the information that you provide will help to add to the growing knowledge of the perceptions of self in urban adolescents. If at any time you feel the need to withdraw from this project he/she may do so any consequences.

In this study you will be asked to complete two scales, the Multidimensional Self-Concept Scale and the Hope Scale. These scales will be given twice, once in January and once in February. After the administration you will be free to ask the researcher questions about the study.

"I have read the above information and I understand that I am under no obligation to participate in this study. I also understand that my lack of participation will not prejudice me. I have been allowed to ask questions of the researcher with regards to this study and I understand the risk (if any) involved, as well as the procedures that are to take place in this study."

_____   _____

Signature   Date

I, Michelle L. Redmond, hereby submit this thesis to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available for use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author.

_____
Signature of Author

9-1-01
Date

Self-Concept, Hope, and At-Risk Urban Boys
and Girls Participating in Youth Programs
Title of Thesis

_____
Signature of Graduate Office Staff Member

_____
Date Received