

A STUDY OF SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING  
DISABILITIES AT SELECTED HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND  
UNIVERSITIES

by

Kevin Buchanan Williams

(Under the Direction of Cecil Fore, III and Derrick P. Alridge)

ABSTRACT

This study examined the levels of self-determination skills of a select sample of African American students with learning disabilities who attend two selected Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCU), and who are enrolled in a learning disability (LD) program or disability services at their school. The study was an extension of the current literature base that has examined self-determination skills at the university level (L. Y. Peterson, 2004; Rasheed, 2005; Sarver, 2000). This study is the first study examining self-determination skills of students with learning disabilities in the Historically Black College or University setting. The investigator employed survey research methods to complete this study. The researcher administered a demographic survey to gain basic background information on the participants. Participants were also administered a revised copy of the Adolescent Version of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale originally created by Wehmeyer (1995) and revised by Rasheed (2005) for use in higher education settings. The Arc's Self-Determination Scale is a 72- item self-report instrument with total scores ranging from 0-148 and with higher scores representing higher levels of self-determination skills. The Arc's Self-Determination Scale has four sub-domains: Autonomy,

Self-Regulation, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization. The researcher combined the two instruments and administered them during the end of the fall semester 2006 academic year to students enrolled in disabilities services or learning disability centers at two HBCUs. A total of 83 students participated in this study. Results from this study indicate the majority of the students in the study had at least a minimal level of overall total self-determination skills. The total self-determination scores and scores in the sub-domains do indicate that there is a need for academic interventions to improve the self-determination skills of this population. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was found to be statically significant for student classification and grade point average (GPA) as it related to Self-Regulation domain scores. A regression analysis revealed that both student classification and GPA were significant predictors for Self-Regulation sub-domain scores.

INDEX WORDS: Learning Disabilities, Self-Determination, Historically Black Colleges and Universities

A STUDY OF SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING  
DISABILITIES AT SELECTED HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND  
UNIVERSITIES

by

Kevin Buchanan Williams

B.A., Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, 1995

M.P.H., Morehouse School of Medicine, 1998

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Georgia in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ATHENS, GA

2008

© 2008

Kevin Buchanan Williams

All Rights Reserved

A STUDY OF SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING  
DISABILITIES AT SELECTED HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND  
UNIVERSITIES

by

Kevin Buchanan Williams

Major Professors: Cecil Fore, III  
Derrick P. Alridge

Committee: Jerome Morris  
Judith Preissle  
Rueben C. Warren

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso  
Dean of the Graduate School  
The University of Georgia  
May 2008

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation in its entirety to the loving memory of the following persons: my little brother Brandon Charles Williams, my best friend Kareem Barak Martin, my Grandmother Mabel Knuckles and Grandfathers Charles D. Knuckles and Dr. Edward B. Williams. I also would like to dedicate this dissertation to the Bishop Edgar Amos Love Bridge Builders Program, a joint effort between Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and the Institute for Faith-Health Leadership at Interdenominational Theological Center for the support of my research. In particular, I would like to highlight the support of the following individuals from the Bishop Edgar A. Love Bridge Builder Program: Mr. George Grace, Dr. Rueben Warren, Dr. Ernest Alema-Mensah, Mr. Sandy D. Maclin, Jr., Dr. Miriam Burnett, and Mrs. Laila Johnson.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my loving wife, Shamita M. Williams and son, Dakarai B. Williams. I also would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents Sharon A. Williams and Dr. Joseph W. Williams, Sister Joron Murray, and in-laws Beverly Morgan and Donald Morgan.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my committee members who were more than generous with their expertise and precious time: Dr. Jerome Morris, Dr. Judith Preissle, and Dr. Rueben Warren. To Dr. Derrick Alridge and Dr. Cecil Fore, III, co chairs of my doctoral committee; thank you both for your belief in me and your guidance. I am grateful to the University of Georgia College of Education, Department of Workforce Education, Leadership and Social Foundations for their commitment to helping with my professional development. I thank Ken Goyen and his staff from the University of Georgia, Department of Housing, Family and Graduate Housing. I would also like to thank Virginia Benjamin and Jermaine King with the University of Georgia Library Services for being extremely helpful throughout my studies at the university. I would like to thank Kat Farlowe for dissertation formatting. I extend my gratitude to the Graduate and Professional Scholars Association and its members, particularly Dr. Dwayne Wright, Dr. Leon Banks, and advisor Dr. Maurice Daniels provided uplift in immeasurable ways. I thank Dr. Tim Akers of Morgan State University for his support even before I began my research.

Dr. Michael Wehmeyer and Dr. Saleem Rasheed were very kind for granting me permission to use The Arc's Self-Determination scale which was developed by Dr. Wehmeyer and modified for college students by Dr. Rasheed. Special thanks are extended to the following persons at both universities which help me collect and provide access to data collection: Dr. Peter Millet, Mrs. Patricia Scudder, Mr. Steven McCray, Ms. Layla Bonner, Dr. Richard Gragg, III, Dr. Perry Brown, Dr. Nathaniel Holmes, Ms. Donna Shell, Dr. Shereitte Stokes IV, and Mr. Morton Talmadge.

The greatest appreciation is extended to the students who participated at both schools in this research project. I wish them well and thank them for their time.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	x
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xii
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
Overview of Learning Disabilities .....	3
African Americans and Learning Disability .....	5
Statement of the Problem .....	8
Purpose of the Research .....	9
Research Questions .....	9
Significance of the Study .....	10
Delimitation of the Study .....	11
Definitions of Terms .....	12
Origin of Research Topic .....	14
Summary .....	18
2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	20
Barriers and Enablers for People with Learning Disabilities .....	20
Post-Secondary Students with Learning Disabilities .....	24
African Americans, Special Education and Post-Secondary Education .....	27

Self-Determination and Learning Disabilities.....	35
Summary .....	40
3 METHODS .....	47
Population.....	48
Descriptive Information on the Sample.....	50
Setting and Program Services .....	52
Instruments and Materials .....	57
Data Collection.....	58
Data Analysis .....	60
4 RESULTS .....	62
5 DISCUSSION.....	80
Implications for Practice .....	87
Limitations of the Study.....	88
Recommendations for Future Research .....	89
REFERENCES .....	92
APPENDICES .....	102
A Recruitment Flyer School 1 .....	103
B Recruitment Email School 1 .....	104
C What exactly is Self-Determination?.....	105
D Recruitment Flyer School 2 .....	106
E Recruitment Email School 2.....	107
F Demographic Information Sheet.....	108

G	Permission to Use ARC’s Self-Determination Scale Instrument Designed by Dr. Michael Wehmeyer .....	109
H	Permission to Use ARC’s Self-Determination Scale Instrument Modified by Dr. Saleem Rasheed.....	110
I	ARC’s Self-Determination Scale Instrument Designed by Wehmeyer, Modified Version by Dr. Saleem Rasheed.....	111
J	Institutional Review Board Approval University of Georgia.....	121
K	Institutional Review Board Approval Tennessee State University School 1 .....	122
L	Institutional Review Board Approval Florida A&M University School 2.....	123
M	Descriptive Results for Gender.....	124
N	Summary of Regression Results .....	126
O	Components of The Arc’s Self-Determination Scale .....	129

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Post Secondary Students with Learning Disabilities .....	28
Table 2: African American Special Education and Post-Secondary Education .....	36
Table 3: Self-Determination and Learning Disabilities .....	41
Table 4: Gender, N, and Percent of Total Sample .....	50
Table 5: Race, N, and Percent of Total Sample .....	51
Table 6: Class, N, and Percent of Total Sample .....	51
Table 7: Income, N, and Percent of Total Sample .....	52
Table 8: GPA, N, and Percent of Total Sample .....	53
Table 9: Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for Freshman and Junior student classifications Groups' ASDS Combined Self Regulation Scores.....	69
Table 10: Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for Freshman and Senior student classifications Groups' ASDS Combined Self Regulation Scores.....	69
Table 11: Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for Junior and Senior student classifications Groups' ASDS Combined Self Regulation Scores .....	69
Table 12: Correlations between GPA and ASDS Total and Four Sub-Domains' Scores .....	70
Table 13: One-Way ANOVA Results for ASDS Total Scores among Income Levels .....	71
Table 14: Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for ASDS Total Scores.....	71
Table 15: One-Way ANOVA Results for Autonomy Scores among Income Levels.....	72
Table 16: Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for Autonomy ASDS Scores .....	72

Table 17: One-Way ANOVA Results for Self-Regulation Scores among Income Levels .....	73
Table 18: Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for Self-Regulation ASDS Scores.....	73
Table 19: One-Way ANOVA Results for Psychological Empowerment Scores among Income Levels.....	74
Table 20: Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for Psychological Empowerment ASDS Scores.....	74
Table 21: One-Way ANOVA Results for Self-Realization Scores among Income Levels.....	75
Table 22: Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for Self-Realization ASDS Scores.....	75
Table 23: ANOVA Table for ASDS Total Scores.....	76
Table 24: ANOVA Table for Autonomy Scores .....	77
Table 25: ANOVA Table for Self-Regulation Scores .....	78
Table 26: ANOVA Table for Psychological Empowerment Scores .....	78
Table 27: ANOVA Table for Self-Realization Scores .....	79

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Histogram of ASDS total scores for the total sample .....	64
Figure 2: Histogram of Autonomy total scores for the total sample.....	65
Figure 3: Histogram of Combined Self Regulation total scores for the total sample .....	66
Figure 4: Histogram of Psychological Empowerment total scores for the total sample.....	67
Figure 5: Histogram of Self Realization total scores for the total sample .....	68

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

Over the past 20 years, opportunities for most persons with learning disabilities (LD) to pursue postsecondary education have improved (Barr, Harrnan, & Spillane, 1995). As with other students, a meaningful high school experience is essential for students with learning disabilities who intend to pursue higher education. High school experiences vary for many reasons, which include: 1. the location of the high school, 2. the student's social economic status, 3. the race and ethnicity of the student, 4. access to certain curriculum, and 5. cumbersome bureaucratic structures and systems of the district or state. All of these factors have an impact on whether or not students graduate from high school and are subsequently admitted into college. These factors and others are particularly a challenge for students with learning disabilities. For example, researchers have pointed out that LD students have rarely been able to further their education beyond high school (Hall, Spruill, & Webster, 2002; Wagner, 1995). Hall et al. (2002) reported that only 14% of students from special education with LD enrolled in postsecondary schools, while 53% of students with no disability had enrolled in either a college or a university (Rasheed, 2005).

Researchers have identified shared experiences, among students living with learning disabilities that lead to completion of high school and access to higher education that other students may not experience (Barr et al., 1995; Brinckerhoff, 1994, 1996; Hudson, 1994). Some of these experiences include the following: 1. a student gaining an understanding of his or her learning disability in high school; 2. access to transition services; 3. access to the proper

diagnosis and placement; 4. access to the proper accommodations and understanding of those accommodations; and 5. learning how to be a self-advocate for one's learning disability.

However, many students living with learning disabilities have not availed themselves of these services. Consequently, the challenge to complete high school and gain admittance into a college or university is ever present. Students with learning disabilities who are admitted to college face many challenges to successfully stay in and complete college degrees (Brinckerhoff, 1996; Hall et al., 2002).

According to Hall et al. (2002) many students with LD fail academically because of the following: 1. lack of motivation; 2. lack of understanding of their disability; 3. lower levels of self-esteem and self-confidence; 4. greater academic and personal-emotional adjustment dysfunctions than other students face; 5. non use of resources available to assist students with their LD while in college; 6. inability to accept their LD; 7. not gaining the skills to self-advocate for accommodations needed to be successful while in college; and 8. lack of knowledge and understanding of career opportunities available for persons with learning disability (Brinckerhoff, 1996; Cosden & McNamara, 1997; Hall et al., 2002; Hartman-Hall & Haaga, 2002; Hudson, 1994; Rasheed, 2005). For example, Hartman-Hall (2002) found that college students with LD, who saw their own LD as a "changeable" disability and non-stigmatizing were more likely to seek help in the face of unfavorable reactions from professors or peers. Furthermore, Hartman-Hall (2002) reported that students who perceived their disability to be more stigmatizing were less willing to seek help for their learning disability when faced with negative responses from peers and professors (Hartman-Hall & Haaga, 2002).

Vogel and Adelman (1992) compared college students with LD and students without LD to identify factors that impacted educational attainment. The study participants were composed

of a subset of 62 students with LD. Students with LD were compared to 58 students without LD who were matched on gender and ACT composite. Some of the study analysis measured the following factors between the two groups: 1. academic preparation for college; 2. college performance; 3. graduation and academic failure rate; and 4. course load and time taken to complete degree. One of the main findings in Vogel et al. (1992) is that students with LD took approximately one year longer than their non-LD student counterparts (6 years rather than 5) to complete an undergraduate degree (Vogel & Adelman, 1992).

### Overview of Learning Disabilities

The study of Learning Disability or Learning Disabilities has origins in Europe as far back as the 1800s (Hallahan, 2002). The field and term of LD was introduced in the United States, in the 1960s and early 1970s (Hallahan, 2002). However, as early as the 1800s, the origin of what we know today as learning disabilities was found in the field of neurology (Mercer & Mercer, 1996)

Researchers have struggled for years to identify all the causes of learning disabilities. For example, Neurologist diagnosed LD in patients when minimal disorder or abnormalities in the nervous system result in learning problems (Mercer & Mercer, 1996) . Environmental conditions and learning disabilities have been linked. Some of the first studies that linked environmental hazards to learning and behavior were conducted by Needleman (1979).

Needleman's 1979 study, entitled "Deficits in Psychological and Classroom Performance of Children with Elevated Dentine Lead Levels" was one of the first to examine the impact of a chemical on human development. The purpose of studies by Needleman, Gunnoe and others was to measure the neuropsychological effects of unidentified childhood exposure to lead (Needleman et al., 1979, p. 699).

Some of the results that Needleman et al's found are as follows: Children with high lead levels were found to perform more poorly when compared to children not exposed to high lead levels of lead on the Wechsler Intelligence scale. The children with high lead exposure scored lower on the teacher behavioral rating survey than children not exposed to high lead levels (Needleman et al., 1979). For example, teachers' negative ratings of students' behavior increased along with the increased dentine lead level. These negative ratings were not limited to just the group that had the highest lead level. Needleman and others concluded that children with higher lead levels demonstrated problems with attention compared to the control group in the study (Needleman et al., 1979).

Needleman et al's (1979) study made a significant impact on uncovering the neurological effects of lead. Many researchers continue to cite the study Millston, (1997), Burns et al. (1999), Preston et al (2001). This study is significant because it represented progress in showing how environmental toxic substances such as lead and its impacts learning and behavioral development.

Perinatal causes have been linked in the past to possible problems with leaning development (Mercer & Mercer, 1996). For example, birth complications have been positively associated with later in life challenges like learning disabilities and other motor problems (Mercer & Mercer, 1996). It was reported that children with learning disabilities had more problems at birth than the United States national norm (Mercer & Mercer, 1996). The link between genetic and hereditary influences has also been identified as a possible cause to the development of leaning disabilities. For example, Mercer, (1997) highlights various research studies that prove familial recurrence of reading problems, and spelling in parents and siblings is consistently being reported in research findings.

The focus of this study is not on the causes of LD and stopping the disability from occurring since this research study examines persons already diagnosed with LD. However, this study does give the researcher the opportunity to work at the tertiary public health prevention level. The tertiary level is the third level of prevention. At this level the focus of the prevention is to halt or block the progression of a disability, condition, or disorder in order to keep it from becoming such a problem that it causes excessive care (Timmreck, 1994, p. 17).

### African Americans and Learning Disability

African Americans have historically struggled to secure adequate living conditions, education, health care, upward mobility, economic equity, and longer life expectancy (Anderson, 1988; Franklin, 1984; K. Williams, 1998). Before Congress passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1975, an estimated one million handicapped children were not receiving any formal education at all. This was particularly true for African American children who were disproportionately labeled as “educably mentally retarded” (Worth, 1999, p.1). In an earlier study that predated the 1975 legislation, Dunn (1968) indicated that this denial of education was particularly true for “socioculturally deprived” students. Children fitting that description were identified as ones who came from poverty, broken and inadequate homes, and minority racial and ethnic groups. Although it appears that the passing of the IDEA in 1975 benefited the education of African Americans, there are still many challenges regarding special education and African Americans. One example was in a 1996 study conducted at The University of Georgia Learning Disabilities Research and Training Center, that found 63% of professionals who worked with students with learning disabilities indicated that there were few adequate post-secondary options for African Americans with learning disabilities (Schmidt, Curtis, & Gregg, 1996). Other challenges for African Americans with LD are the improper

placement and overrepresentation of African American children in special education (Irvine, 1990; Kunjufu, 1984; Oakes, 1992; Ogbu, 1994).

Oakes (1992) indicates that when African American school age children are improperly placed in some special education programs, it is a form of tracking. Oakes (1992) explains that tracking is a generic term in the field of education that refers to a whole range of ability-related grouping practices in schools (Oakes, 1992). The author argues that the tracking criteria and processes used for placement often embody curricular differentiation and accommodation, which results in a division of knowledge and teaching strategies in programs or courses that stipulate the knowledge and learning experiences appropriate for different ability levels.

Very few studies on African Americans and learning disabilities have been conducted (Colarusso, Keel, & Dangel, 2001; Grant & Grant, 2002; Hudson, 1994). Some research has highlighted that African Americans are often under-diagnosed with a LD within special education. For example, Colarusso (2001) found that many low-achieving African-American students were referred for other special education programs rather than properly placed in an LD program. For example, in Georgia in 1999, the percentage of students with LD was below the national average, whereas the percentage of students in programs for mental retardation and behavioral disorders was higher than the national average (Colarusso et al., 2001).

Another example of African American students who were under-diagnosed with LD was found in a pilot study conducted in three incarcerated youth camps in selected locations in Florida. A sample of 326 incarcerated male youths was tested in the pilot study. The sample population was predominately African American males between the ages of 13 to 17. Of that cohort, 147 (46%) had undiagnosed learning disabilities. Those students were male and disproportionately African American. Although the pilot study itself was not published, later a

summary article was published based, in part, on the findings from that study (Preston, Warren, Wooten, Gragg, & Walker, 2001). More studies about learning disability and its impact on African Americans are needed.

Some research demonstrates that transition from high school to college for persons with LD can be especially difficult because of the lack of transition services at the high school level (Adelman & Vogel, 1990; Brinckerhoff, 1994, 1996). One important enabler offered in transition services is teaching self-advocacy skills. Field and Hoffman, (1998) define self-advocacy as “advocating on one’s own behalf”(Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, & Wehmeyer, 1998p. 10). “To advocate means to speak up or defend a cause or person, and self-advocacy skills include being assertive, knowing your rights, speaking up, and negotiating” (Field et al., 1998 p. 10 ). Self-advocacy skills are particularly important for students with learning disabilities who intend to transition to college. For example, students in college with LD will need identify themselves and notify college officials about their LD and the accommodations that they may need to be successful (Aune, 1991; Brinckerhoff & et al., 1992). Self-determination skills for adults with learning disabilities have also been important for life chances like employment.

Research on employment of adults with learning disabilities indicates that these adults work more often on a part-time basis and at entry level positions for minimum wage as compared to non-LD adults (Kerka, 1998; T. M. Williams, 1998). Many adults with LD lack a clear understanding of their disability, which may lead to unrealistic career choices. Furthermore, youth with LD studied by Kerka (1998) were found to believe that they had little control of career decision making. Research studies have shown that students with LD or other cognitive disabilities that are self-determined are more likely to be employed. Furthermore, these same

studies indicate that students with learning disabilities who are self-determined also have higher earnings than their peers with similar disabilities (Field & Hoffman, 1998). Wehmeyer (2002) showed that students with cognitive or learning disabilities who left school more self-determined were more likely to have obtained jobs that provide benefits like health coverage, vacation time and such. He also indicated that students who left school more self-determined were more likely to be living somewhere other than in their parent's home.

### Statement of the Problem

Students living with learning disabilities face a number of challenges in gaining access to higher education. Many factors, such as lack of self-determination skills and lack of knowledge of their, LD may impede academic success. Social acceptance and making friends are barriers in high school for students living with a learning disability (Grant & Grant, 2002). For African American students with LD, these problems are compounded by the personal and institutional racism historically that face in the United States school system (Combes & Durodoye, 2002; Kunjufu, 1985; Oakes, 1992; Ogbu, 1994). Furthermore, African Americans are over represented in some categories in special education, under represented in others, and are less likely to receive proper placement and other important services related to special education (Irvine, 1990; Oakes, 1992; Warner, Dede, Garvan, & Conway, 2002).

Access to transition services and self-determination skills have been identified in research studies as important for persons with learning disabilities to successfully complete high school and postsecondary school (Brinckerhoff, 1994; Wehmeyer, 2002; Wehmeyer, Agran, & Hughes, 1997). Research based on self-determination theory has continued to reveal that encouraging self-determination skills, especially among minority students, has resulted in more positive academic and psychological outcomes (K. O. Cokley, 2003). One major problem is that only a

limited number of studies examine the concept of self-determination among African American students. Most studies conducted have examined self-determination in non-Hispanic White students. Furthermore, these studies at the postsecondary level measuring self-determination of students have mainly been studied at majority White universities throughout the United States (K. Cokley, 2002; K. O. Cokley, 2003; Rasheed, 2005).

To address the problem, more research is needed that examines the self-determination of African Americans living with learning disabilities at the four-year college level. Previous studies have rarely examined the methods that students with LD use to overcome barriers created by bureaucratic systems and other structures in order to advance into and complete colleges and universities. Specifically, no studies were found that focus on the self-determination skills of African Americans with learning disabilities at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

### Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study was to investigate the levels of self-determination skills of a select sample of African American students with learning disabilities who attend two selected Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and who are enrolled in a LD program or disability services at their school.

### Research Questions

#### *Research Question 1*

For students with learning disabilities in a HBCU institution, what are their Arc Self-Determination Scale (ASDS) total scores, and the four ASDS sub-domain scores of Autonomy, Self Regulation, Psychological Empowerment, and Self-Realization?

*Research Question 2*

Are there significant student classification differences for ASDS total scores and for each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores?

*Research Question 3*

Are there significant relationships between GPA and ASDS total scores and between GPA and each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores?

*Research Question 4*

Across family income levels are there significant differences for ASDS total scores and for each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores? Between GPA and ASDS total scores and between GPA and each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores?

*Research Question 5*

Is there a significant amount of variance accounted for in predicting each of the four criterion variables (ASDS total score and the four ASDS sub-domain scores) from the set of four predictor variables (gender, student classification, GPA, and family income)?

### Significance of the Study

This study has far-reaching implications for public policy in the southern region of the United States and the nation related to higher education and learning disability students at HBCUs. It will also have academic and intervention significance. One of the study's academic impacts will be its contribution to the academic literature on college students with learning disabilities and their self-determination levels. A limited amount of research has been published on college students with LD using the self-determination scale (Gerber & Reiff, 1993). This study will provide researchers and academic service providers such as learning disability centers

and special education departments with greater insight into the self-determination skills of a seldom studied LD student population (K. O. Cokley, 2003; Hudson, 1994).

This study contributes to the academic research on African American students with LD and suggests possible interventions at the high school and college level. Highlighting the importance of self-advocacy skills, such as self-determination, which has been shown to be a predictor of high school and college success, will allow teachers, administrators, and other service providers at the high school and college level to develop the right transition interventions for this population.

Hudson (1994) found a significant relationship between students' knowledge of their learning disability, their acceptance of the disability, and the students' academic achievement. Hudson's results are consistent with the transition service literature, which emphasizes the importance of the student with learning disabilities acceptance of the disability. His study highlights the significance of this current study which will also focus on higher education and students with LD from HBCUs. To date, very few studies that use self-determination assessments have been used in higher education (Jameson, 2002; Rasheed, 2005). This study represents an opportunity to inform policy makers, secondary and postsecondary services providers and parents and students as to the current status of an understudied population who were successful enough to complete their high school requirement, and enter into college.

#### Delimitation of the Study

This study is limited in terms of the population sampled and the geographic region from which the sample was drawn. The study was limited to getting the self-determination skills and some basic demographic information of the sample population. The study is also limited to two public HBCU school's not allowing for comparisons between similar samples at private HBCUs.

Black students with LD at majority white schools are not considered in this study either. Because of the limitations above, this study is not representative of other states or regions located in other states that serve college students with learning disabilities.

### Definition of Terms

#### *Autonomy*

Living and acting according to laws set by a person's own preferences, interest, and/or abilities, and ability to act independently, free from excessive external influence or interference (Wehmeyer, 1996).

#### *External Locus of Control*

It is when the perception of positive and negative events are a consequence unrelated to one's own behavior and therefore is beyond their personal control (Bandura, 1986).

#### *Family Income*

Family income in this study is limited to the income of the parent or parents of the college students responding to the survey in this study (Rasheed, 2005).

#### *Internal Locus of Control*

It is when people profess a belief that they have control over circumstances that are important to them (Wehmeyer, 1996).

#### *Learning Disability or Specific Learning Disability*

Learning disabilities is a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, may occur across the life span. Problems in self-regulatory behaviors, social perception, and social interaction may exist with

learning disabilities but do not by themselves constitute a learning disability. Although disabilities may occur concomitantly with other handicapping condition or with extrinsic influences, they are not the result of those conditions or influences (Smith, 1998, p. 28).

### *Psychological Empowerment*

It is a term that refers to people's belief that they have the capacity to perform the behaviors that are needed to influence outcomes in their surrounding environment and, if they perform such behaviors that the necessary expected outcomes will result (Rasheed, 2005; Wehmeyer, 1996).

### *Self-Advocacy*

Self-advocacy defined for college students with LD is the ability for the students to recognize and speak up for the needs for their LD in a way that is effective and, does not cause them to lose respect for themselves or others (Brinckerhoff & et al., 1992).

### *Self-Determination*

This refers to "acting as the primary causal agent in one's life and making choices and decisions regarding one's quality of life free from undue external influence or interference" (Wehmeyer, 1995, p. 22): (1) the individual acted autonomously; (2) the behaviors were self-regulated; (3) the person initiated and responded to event(s) in a psychologically empowered manner; and (4) the person acted in a self-realizing manner (Wehmeyer, 1995, p. 22). Wehmeyer argues that self-determined behavior reflects all four of these characteristics.

### *Self-Efficacy*

It is an individual's perceptions of his/her ability to perform adequately in a given situation (Bandura & et al., 1996; Caraway, Tucker, Reinke, & Hall, 2003).

### *Self-Realization*

It is when a person is able to use a comprehensive, and reasonably accurate, knowledge of themselves and their strengths and limitations and, are able to act in a manner that allows that inventory of themselves (Wehmeyer, 1996).

### *Self-Regulation*

It is a complex system that enables individuals to examine their environments and their ability to respond and cope with their environments to make decisions about how to act, and evaluate the necessary actions to take to get favorable outcomes for themselves; and to revise plans of action if necessary (Wehmeyer, 1996).

### Origin of Research Topic

This research effort emanates from my life experiences as an African American male who was diagnosed with three learning disabilities (Dyscalculia, Dyslexia and Attention Deficit Disorder) at the early age of eight. Starting in the third grade and continuing through primary, secondary, and post secondary school, the researcher's frustrations and triumphs led to the development of a scholarly approach to improve the education and quality of life of persons living with a learning disability. The following narrative describes the very personal experiences of the researcher, and chronicles what undoubtedly happens to many children facing similar circumstances. It is written in the first person to highlight the intimate and challenging details of his situation.

My early educational years from first to third grade were spent in the public school system. Another part of my schooling experience from fourth to eighth grade was in the private school setting. I returned to public school to embark on my high school journey. My primary and secondary school experiences with dyslexia often left me feeling alienated from my peers.

Throughout many of those years, my reading level was approximately three years behind my regular classmates. In my case, this often led to negative conduct in class and other anti-social behavior. My fourth through eighth grade experience was in special education learning disability classrooms. However, my secondary school experience (9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>) was mainstreamed (regular classroom). It was this mainstream experience that first introduced me to other students in the regular classrooms that may have had learning disabilities, which were not yet diagnosed. I observed children who were not afforded the opportunity of the specialized medical care and educational enhancements that I received. That observation was a humbling experience. Through dedication and the understanding efforts of my parents, I was able to grow intellectually and socially while living with my learning disabilities. My early education would be the first of many experiences that would lead to this research project.

When it was time to start investigating colleges to attend, it was assumed that because of my family's tradition, I would adhere to family tradition and attend Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. My family tradition dates back to three generations of "Morehouse Men", beginning with my grandfather, Dr. Edward Buchanan Williams. He was a student at Morehouse for high school and college from 1919 to 1927, and later became a member of Morehouse's faculty. He was a colleague of Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, noted theologian and former President of Morehouse College. His three sons (including my father) and four of his grandsons all attended and graduated from Morehouse. However, because of my learning disabilities my parents investigated and found a program that would better meet my needs. Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) was one of the most revered programs for students with learning disabilities in the United States. After obtaining information about the Learning

Development and Evaluation Center (LDEC), my parents and I chose FAMU for my undergraduate studies.

FAMU exposed me to two significant experiences that led to this research topic. First, I was admitted to the LDEC, which taught me more about my learning disabilities. Through this special program, I acquired tools to address my special needs. The Director of the LDEC along with a student in the program conducted an exploratory research study in cooperation with the Tallahassee Boot Camp. Through this research it was discovered that twenty-two of the twenty-three youth at the Boot Camp were diagnosed with a learning disability.

The second major experience was an internship with the TIME OUT S.C.A.L.E.S. mentoring program, which was a partnership between Florida A&M University's Department of Criminal Justice and Sociology, the Leon County School System, and the Leon County Juvenile Court. As a case manager in the program, I oversaw the development of forty-two youth court ordered to participate in the mentoring program. My responsibilities included: assessing the school and home environments of program participants, coordinating volunteer recruitment and development, and conducting fundraising presentations and activities.

In the process of making several assessment visits to schools where the program participants were enrolled, I noticed a pattern of anti-social behavior in the classroom. The youth in the program often misbehaved in class. When asked why, they indicated that they were having problems reading out loud. They often would get themselves kicked out of class intentionally to avoid reading in front of the class. After reviewing the psychological evaluations of these youth, I found that the majority of them had been diagnosed as having a learning disability. These two experiences helped lead to the development of this research project.

In investigating the problem further, I found that there were a disproportionate number of African American males in the juvenile correctional system that were more likely to have unmet educational needs. That experience also exposed me to possible reasons why students were engaged in anti-social behavior in the classrooms, thus leading to increased juvenile delinquency.

In 1996, while participating in a public health internship at the Morehouse School of Medicine Regional Research Center for Minority Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Office of the Associate Director for Minority Health, a pilot study was initiated entitled “Learning Disabilities and Incarcerated Youth.” The study was conducted by several units at FAMU to include: the Institute of Public Health, the LDEC, and the Department of Criminal Justice and Sociology.

The pilot study was conducted in three incarcerated youth camps in selected locations in Florida. Three hundred twenty-six (326) incarcerated male youths were tested. Of that cohort, 147 (46%) had learning disabilities; 14% of those who were diagnosed with a learning disability were gifted. The first paper from that study was recently accepted for publication by the Journal for Environmental Health, a peer-reviewed journal of the National Institute of Environmental Health Science, National Institutes of Health.

The culmination of all of these life experiences has led to my passionate interest in this research project entitled “A Study of Self-Determination Skills of Students with Learning Disabilities At Selected Historically Black Colleges and Universities”. I have learned that there is a population of persons that is being underserved because of a “hidden disability”. I have developed a profound desire to further investigate this problem by examining the self-determination skills of this selected group of students in the Historically Black College and University setting. I believe this research project will strengthen the body of knowledge on

learning disabilities, and my ability to contribute to the scientific literature in the fields of education, public health. Ultimately, this research will assist in formulating public policy practices and programs that will positively impact the life chances of people living with learning disabilities.

### Summary

In this study the majority of the respondent population is African American. It is important to put in context, historically, what the term self-determination has symbolized to the African American community as it relates to education. For African Americans historically the term self-determination has applied to a collective struggle for equal rights (Anderson, 1988; Du Bois, 1993; Franklin, 1984). For African Americans collective struggle for self-determination of education was largely started on the plantations of the South (Anderson, 1988; Franklin, 1984). Blacks emerged from slavery with a strong desire to learn how to read and write (Anderson, 1988). Former slaves were the first among native southerners to call for a universal, state-supported public education (Anderson, 1988). Former slaves demonstrated a collective self-determination to create a system that would allow them to be educated despite the challenges of a postwar South. The postwar South was extremely hostile to the idea of a universal public education system; despite these challenges African Americans successfully played a major role in implementing universal public education in the South (Anderson, 1988). Many gains for persons with disabilities have been a result of activism like the examples provided previously.

Opportunities for students with learning disabilities opened up after a great deal of activism from parents of students with leaning disabilities (Carrier, 1986). Parents were the force behind many organizations supporting learning disability legislation. The main organization formed from their efforts was the Association for Children with Learning

Disabilities - an alliance of parents, researchers, educational psychologists, and special education educators (Carrier, 1986). In 1974 the organization had more than 20,000 members (Carrier, 1986). The association monitored programs for the learning disabled to make sure they were properly run.

The history of the self-determination movement as it relates to persons with disabilities can be traced to relevant movements for persons with disabilities, including the self-advocacy, disability rights, and empowerment movements. These social movements all helped lead to the current emphasis on persons living with disabilities to have a high level of self-determination (Ward, 1996). In 1988 the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) began a self-determination initiative, which emphasized developing statewide programs that would help people with disabilities have more control over their own lives (Ward, 1996). The OSERS work group defined self-determination as attitudes and abilities that help lead individuals to define goals for themselves and take the necessary steps needed to achieve those goals (Ward, 1996). This study measured the self-determination skills of students with learning disabilities at two select historically black colleges and universities located in the U.S South. The next chapter highlights some of the important literature that shaped the focus of this study

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Literature

This study investigated the self-determination skills of selected college students. The purpose of this review is to identify the challenges and successes faced by students with learning disabilities in secondary and postsecondary settings. In particular, the review of literature highlights the unique challenges faced by African American students both disabled and non-disabled.

This review focuses on the following issues: (a) barriers and enablers for people with learning disabilities; (b) post-secondary students with learning disabilities; (c) African Americans, special education and post-secondary education; (d) self-determination and learning disabilities. It concludes with a synthesis of the review of literature findings.

#### Barriers and Enablers for People with Learning Disabilities

There are many barriers for people with learning disabilities. For example, school age children living with a learning disability face many barriers (Grant & Grant, 2002). One important barrier relates to inclusion. The concept of inclusion is very controversial. Advocates on one side of the debate call for “full inclusion,” which places all students with disabilities in general education classes. Others take a more moderate approach by supporting the creation of inclusive schools that welcome students with disabilities while holding that, for some students, general education placement may not be the best educational option (Burnette, 1996, p.13). Many policies have been written in response to questions about including children with disabilities in general education classrooms.

The United States Department of Education has interpreted the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to mean that students with disabilities should have the first placement option of a regular classroom located in the neighborhood school (Burnette, 1996, p.13).

McCarthy argues that many of the issues of inclusion have remained controversial among special and regular educators, school leaders, and parent advocacy groups (McCarthy, 2000). For example, McCarthy points out that many teachers' unions are skeptical about inclusion and contend that students with learning disabilities should not be placed in regular education unless class size is reduced and teachers are trained to work with students with special needs. One big issue in the inclusion debate is whether or not to include students with learning disabilities in state test accountability programs while modifying the test tools and or how the test is administered.

State accountability assessments have enormous ramifications for students with learning disabilities. These negative ramifications include the following: 1) increasing use as the basis for awarding diplomas or for gaining access to post-secondary education opportunities; 2) students with disabilities are discouraged from participating in general curriculum studies, which can result in a lack of access to high curriculum and standards that drive education for all other students; and 3) lack of access for students with disabilities limits their chance to prove competencies in order to have full and equal access to future life opportunities (Landau, Vohs, & Romano, 1998).

Lyon (1998) indicates that the literature on social and emotional adjustment for adults with specific learning disabilities suggests that students with learning disabilities are more likely to exhibit increased levels of anxiety, withdrawal, depression, and low self-esteem compared with their non-disabled peers (Lyon, 1998, p. 68). The author reported that of 93

adults studied in a learning disability (LD) clinic sample, (36%) received counseling or psychotherapy for low self-esteem, social isolation, anxiety, depression, and frustration as adults (Lyon, 1998, p. 68).

Another major challenge that students with learning disabilities face is school bureaucracy. Legal issues, funding, administrators, and teachers each make up the complicated school bureaucracies. For example, special education is a federally mandated program, but it is drastically under funded (Worth, 1999). Worth (1999) reports, when the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was passed in 1975, the federal government indicated that it would pay up to 40 percent of the costs. However, since 1975 the federal government on average has paid only up to 10 percent of the annual cost for special education (1999). States and local school districts in many cases are not able to handle the costs despite the growing numbers of students in special education. Worth indicated that one California district reported that its special education cost grew from \$3 million to almost \$11 million in three years (Worth, 1999). Worth goes on to state that “At an estimated \$35 billion a year, special education is like a huge regressive tax-helpful to those wealthy enough to take advantage of it, and often harmful to those who are not” (Worth, 1999, p. 1). Special education bureaucratic systems have also taken their toll on some of the public school teachers across the United States.

A Washington State education association reported results of a study revealing that two-thirds of the state’s special education teachers planed to resign in the follow in five years (Gryphon & Salisbury, 2002). The teachers surveyed cited the disproportionate amount of paperwork and excessive administrative meetings as the leading reasons for their decision to leave the job (Gryphon & Salisbury, 2002). National surveys indicate that teachers with special education children in their classroom spend on average from a quarter to a third of their working

time each week on regulatory compliance issues rather than educating the students in their classrooms (Gryphon & Salisbury, 2002, p.1). Teachers are often responsible for setting up interventions and accommodations for students with disabilities. Often these same teachers lack adequate training or assistance to set up these intervention plans (Byrnes, 2002). Additionally, parents and children living with learning disabilities often have difficulties with the bureaucratic system of special education.

Many parents spend endless resources addressing obstacles to their child's most basic rights to an appropriate education. The majority of these challenges are at the expense of their personal lives, financial livelihood, and their careers (Byrnes, 2002). Litigation involving rights for special education students under the IDEA has resulted in advances for many students with disabilities. However, access to legal services are often far beyond the financial reach of many families of students with disabilities (Byrnes, 2002). Advocacy for children with disabilities is an important tool to ensure that individuals are getting the support needed in their schools for their disability. Often parents become the only advocate for their children. However, many public schools do not have the resources to teach parents and students how to advocate for services themselves.

Clearly, there have also been some major gains for persons with learning disabilities, and more success is expected (Barr et al., 1995). As a result of these enablers for students with learning disabilities, the opportunity to pursue some of the same goals of non-learning disability persons have increased. Many of the gains for persons living with learning disabilities have come by way of legislation.

As a result of lobbying by parents and the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, the Children with Specific Learning Disabilities Act of 1969 was incorporated into

the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Amendments of 1969, as part G (Special Programs for Children with Specific Learning Disabilities of Title VI (Education for the Handicapped Act Amendments) (Carrier, 1986). This law was enacted as Public Law 91-230, which marked the first legislation that included learning disabilities as a handicap condition. The term adopted at the federal level was Specific Learning Disability. Another example is a policy to support students with special needs, including learning disabilities, signed into law November 29, 1975, by President Gerald Ford. The federal legislation was called Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142, now the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Mercer & Mercer, 1996).

More progress was made with LD rights when President Clinton signed into law the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997. Some highlights from the IDEA Amendments of 1997 are that IDEA now requires that students with disabilities have access to the same high standards and general education curriculum as their non-disabled peers (Landau et al., 1998). The IDEA also requires that all students with disabilities be included in state and district assessments with accommodations, where appropriate. These examples of legislative activities illustrate the strides made to enable some persons with learning disabilities to better their life chances. Some of those life chances have come in the form of access to higher education.

#### Post Secondary Students with Learning Disabilities

College-bound learning disabled students are faced with many more challenges than their non learning disabled peers (Brinckerhoff, 1996; T. M. Williams, 1998). For example, a high school transcript analysis conducted by Vogel et al. (1992) found a significant difference between college students with learning disabilities and a matched sample (MS) of students

without learning disabilities. Vogel et al. (1992) reported that college students with learning disabilities were more likely to have taken developmental math courses in high school than college students without learning disabilities (Vogel & Adelman, 1992). The college students with learning disabilities in the study also took, on average, 6 years to complete their undergraduate degrees. The MS group in the study took, on average, 5 years to complete their undergraduate degrees (Vogel & Adelman, 1992). Students with learning disabilities in the Vogel et al. study received fewer failing grades while in college. The authors concluded that this could be due to the reduced load that many college students with LD are encouraged by advisors to take while in college (Vogel & Adelman, 1992).

Cosden et al. (1997) compared self-esteem, academic self perceptions nonacademic self perceptions, and social support between 50 college students with learning disabilities and fifty students without learning disabilities. Using a subscale reflecting perceptions of greater competence, students with learning disabilities had lower self-perceptions of their scholastic and cognitive abilities than their non disabled peers (Cosden & McNamara, 1997). The Cosden et al. (1997) study reported students with LD had lower grade point averages and lower standardized test scores overall than the college students in the sample without learning disabilities. Both groups of students indicated that campus organizations were important. Students with learning disabilities named the disability center as a key organization that provided them with support (Cosden & McNamara, 1997).

Using the academic support services is a key component for learning disability students social and academic success (Brinckerhoff & et al., 1992; Hartman-Hall & Haaga, 2002). Hartman-Hall and Haaga (2002) studied how college students with LD decided whether or not to seek assistance for their learning disabilities. Their study was comprised of 86 university

students with learning disabilities. Instruments were used to test students' perceptions of their LD. For example, the following scales were used to test the sampled population: Personal Characteristics Rating Scale (PCRS), Self-Perception Profile for College Students (SPPCS), Self-Perceptions on One's Learning Disability (SPLD). Interviews with the students and their responses to scenarios involving faculty and peer (Hartman-Hall & Haaga, 2002).

Using the SPLD scores and willingness to seek help in negative hypothetical scenarios, the researchers found the more participants felt their own LD was circumscribed, changeable, and non stigmatizing, the more willing they were to seek help in the face of unfavorable reactions from peers or professors (Hartman-Hall & Haaga, 2002). It was also found in the study that population participants were more willing to seek help from LD services after reading positive responses from professors. Learning disability students in college or university settings face a great deal of public health and mental health challenges (Hoy et al., 1997).

For example Gregg et al. (1992) examined the personality profiles of adults with learning disabilities attending a large state university and adults with learning disabilities at rehabilitation institute in the same state. The researchers used the Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2) as their instrument to compare the two groups. They found that both groups often demonstrated a poor self-concept, as well as they often had problems adjusting to difficult problem situations (N. Gregg & et al., 1992). The researcher concluded that the long-term stress of the university population of LD students needed to be studied further. In another study Hoy et al. (1997) studied the presence of depression and anxiety in three groups of adults with LD, based on self-report. The following instruments were used to conduct the study: Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI), and the IPAT Anxiety Scale questionnaire. The study included 140 college students without learning disabilities, 184 students from the same

university with LD, and 57 students from a rehabilitation setting (Hoy et al., 1997). They found that anxiety was a significant problem for LD students at the college and university setting.

Another example of differences between LD college students vs. non LD was found in the Hall et al. (2002) study. In the study researchers examined the affective factors of resiliency using three different scales. One of the scales used was the Hall Resiliency Scale (HRS). The researchers found that LD students had a significantly higher need for achievement than the non-LD college students (Hall et al., 2002). Learning disability students have many challenges during secondary and post-secondary schooling. Table one summarizes some these studies. This is particularly true case for African American students with LD.

#### African Americans, Special Education and Post-Secondary Education

Before Congress passed the IDEA in 1975, an estimated one million handicapped children were not receiving formal education at all. This was particularly true for African American children who were in disproportionate numbers being warehoused under the rubric “educably mentally retarded” (Worth, 1999, p.1). In 1968, Dunn indicated that this denial of education was particularly true for “socioculturally deprived” students. Children fitting that description were identified as ones who came from poverty, broken and inadequate homes, and minority ethnic groups (Dunn, 1968, p.5). Although it appears that the passing of the IDEA has benefited the education of African Americans, there are still a great number of challenges regarding special education and African Americans. One of the main challenges has come as a result of the historical beginnings mentioned before. An argument put forth by many researchers points out the improper placement and overrepresentation of many African American children in special education (Oakes, 1992); (Ogbu, 1994); (Irvine, 1990);; (Kunjufu, 1984). When African

Table 1

*Post Secondary Students with Learning Disabilities*

Citation	Purpose	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Findings
Cosden & McNamara 1997	Examine self-esteem, and academic perceptions	50 students with LD who used services and 50 without LD attended same 4 yr college	Student files, Self-Perception Profile for college students, subscales reflecting perceptions	Demographic and scales	Students with LD had lower self-perceptions of their scholastic and cognitive abilities than non-LD peers
Gregg, Holy & King 1992	Compare personality profiles of adults with LD attending state university and rehabilitation institute	16 students with LD at university and 26 students with LD at rehabilitation setting	Instrument administered to students	Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2)	Univ. LD population indicated feelings of fear, obsessive thoughts, lack of self confidence, self doubt and self-criticism
Hall, Spruill, & Webster 2002	Compare college LD & non-LD students in terms of the affective factors of resiliency	34 undergraduate students – 17 with LD and 17 without	Interviews with students, student records, and instruments administered	WAIS-R, The Nowicki-Duke Locus of Control Scale, Mehrabian's Need for Achievement Scale, HRS	LD students had a significantly higher need for achievement

Table 1 continued

Citation	Purpose	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Findings
Hartman-Hall & Haaga 2002	Help understand how college students with LDs decide whether or not to seek assistance	86 university students with LD	Instruments used to test students' perceptions, interviews of LD, and two experimental manipulations were tested	Interviews and use of the PCRS scale, SPPCS, and SPLD Use of hypothetical situations	Participants more willing to seek help from LD services after reading positive responses from professors, and students were more likely to get help when they received negative reactions from peers if they believe their LD is changeable
Hoy, Gregg, and others 1997	Add to literature regarding presence of depression and anxiety in two groups of LD students	3 group of adults. 184 university students with and without LDs and 57 students with LD in rehabilitation setting	Three measures were administered to all subjects; college students with LD given instruments in one-on-one setting, non-LD in group setting	STAI, BDI, and IPAT	Anxiety significant problem, particularly for LD college and Univ. setting

Table 1 continued

Citation	Purpose	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Findings
Vogel & Adelman 1992	Report on educational attainment of college students with LD compared to a sample of non-LD college students	62 college students with LD; 58 peer non-LD students or matched sample (MS)	Both groups given three screening tests that are used college-wide and college records were accessed	Reading comprehension test, Stanford Diagnostic Test, writing sample, academic preparation for college, college performance, graduation and academic failure rate, course load and time taken to complete degree	LD students took significantly more high school developmental math courses, lighter course load and took on average a year longer to graduate, poorer essay scores than MS group

American school children are improperly placed in some special education programs, it is a result of an educational practice challenged by Oakes, called “tracking”.

Oakes (1992) reports competition for school resources is often a result of tracking. This political dimension often encompasses highly charged issues of race and social class stratification. This race and social class stratification was documented in Oakes’ work. Oakes reports that “throughout the grades, race, social class, and track assignment correlate consistently with low-income students and non-Asian minorities disproportionately enrolled in low-track academic classes and advantaged students and whites more often enrolled in the high track” (Oakes, 1992, p.13). According to Oakes, complex connections between tracking and social stratification evolve in two ways. “First, schools with predominantly low-income and minority student populations tend to be “bottom heavy” (Oakes, 1992, p. 13). That means, they offer fewer academic tracks and more remedial and vocational programs than do schools serving majority non-Hispanic white, more high status student bodies (Oakes, 1992). The second link that Oakes points out between tracking and students’ race and social class can be found in many racially mixed schools through the disproportionate assignment of African-American and Latino students to low-track classes (Oakes, 1992, p. 13). Another factor impacting African Americans and their engagement in general and special education settings in public school is the declining number of African American special education teachers (Talbert-Johnson, 2001).

Many educational researchers have found that the lack of African American teachers in the schools prevents the opportunity for students to bridge the gap between home and school. Irvine (1990) suggests that African American teachers are often able to act as cultural translators for the needs of minority children. Talbert-Johnson (2001) reported that 16% of the public school population in the United States was African American, but only 8% of the public school

teachers were African American. In special education, the gap between the percentages of African American students and the percentage of African American special education teachers was even wider. African American students represented 28% of all students in special education. The percentage of African American special education teachers was 4.8% (Talbert-Johnson, 2001). For African American school- aged children with a learning disability and their parents, these historical challenges with special education and general education can have an impact on their trust of the schooling process, particularly their acceptance of a diagnosed school label (Prater, 2002). This is of concern for parents of children with a diagnosed learning disability.

Healey points out that many parents are stunned to learn their child has a learning disability (Healey, 1996). Many parents have a hard time trying to comprehend the disparity between their desires for their child and the disability that exists. The adjustment to learning about their child's learning disability is compounded by their emotional and intellectual efforts to adjust to the situation (Healey, 1996, p. 1). Healey explains that parents of a child with a disability go through six stages of adjustment. A brief description of the stages is as follows: stage one - parent may be surprised and feel dejected regarding the news; stage two - some parents may deny their child has a disability at all; stage three - the parent may feel anger and try to place blame on other persons for the diagnosis, like school officials, persons in the community, or other sources; stage four - parents become more resigned to the fact their child does in fact have some type of disability; and stage five - is the stage of acceptance, parents at this stage become more positive regarding their child; in phase six parents are able to put their lives back together regarding learning the news about the disability and take an active and objective role in helping to design or provide the proper interventions and instruction (Healey,

1996, pp. 2-3 ). For African American parents and children, coping and living with a learning disability can be even more difficult.

For example, Grant and Grant (2002) argue that, in order to understand African Americans living with a learning disability, we should revisit some of the ideas and works put forth by the scholar W.E.B. Du Bois. They said the idea that Du Bois developed regarding “double consciousness” could be applied to understand better what African Americans living with a learning disability may experience (Grant & Grant, 2002). Du Bois (1993) suggested that the “Negro living in America was like a seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second-sight in this American World” (p.2). This American World, Du Bois put forth, does not “yield him any true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the eyes of others” (Du Bois, 1993, p. 2). This double consciousness that Du Bois described years ago has some practical implications for African American parents and children with a learning disability. A pilot study that the researcher conducted with African American parents of children living with a diagnosed learning disability found that many of the parents and children struggled with the diagnosis of their child’s learning disability (Williams, 2002, unpublished). Many found it hard to accept.

The archival data used from one of the subject’s children showed some of the frustrations that her son was going through during a high school year. The subject’s son was mainstreamed in high school but did not feel comfortable telling any of his friends about his condition. The archival data showed personal drawings and reflections of some of the frustrations felt during high school by the LD student. To a certain degree, this young man hid under a veil while in school regarding his learning disability. The preliminary analysis from the in-depth interviews with parents, as well as the examination of archival data, indicated that acceptance of the diagnosis by the parents helps them to better work on gaining acceptance from the child

(Williams, 2002, unpublished). The transition literature also points out the importance of acceptance by the student to allow themselves the opportunity to pursue postsecondary education (Brinckerhoff, 1994, 1996; Brinckerhoff & et al., 1992).

Postsecondary opportunities for African Americans pursuing 4-year degrees have increased (Hefner, 2004). Many of the first locations that offered access for African American postsecondary opportunities were historically black college or universities (Anderson, 1988). Historically Black Colleges and Universities were established in response for a need for African Americans to pursue higher education in a segregated climate. There are approximately 103 HBCUs--53 private and 50 public institutions in the United States. From 1976 to 1998 African American students represented approximately 81% of the total annual enrollment at HBCUs (Sissoko & Shiau, 2005). Sissoko and Shiau (2005) found that during the same period African American attendance at HBCUs was largely influenced by tuition costs and fees, Pell grant by student, retention rate federal governmental policies and population trends (Sissoko & Shiau, 2005). Postsecondary enrollment for women in the United States has increased significantly since 1980. In the African American population, there has been a major decline of African American males attending and completing college as compared to African American women (Hefner, 2004). For example, in 2000 nearly 70 percent of black or African American college graduates were women (Hefner, 2004). This represented nearly 450,000 more African American women enrolling in college in the year of 2000 than African American men (Hefner, 2004). Some of the value beliefs indicated by black college students who attended select schools in the South were investigated by (Thornton, 2004). Three hundred and four undergraduate students, 156 women, and 108 men, enrolled in a course at a predominately black university were asked to rank 12 indices of value preferences (Thornton, 2004). When Thornton combined both female

and male scores religion and family life accounted for approximately 80% of the top rank value choices for the participants in the study. Very few studies have been conducted that, have examined the status or conditions of African American students in college with learning disabilities.

One study that was conducted to examine the status of African American college students with LD was Hudson's (1994) at one Historically Black University. The participants in the study were 45 LD students at one university. Hudson's found a significant relationship between students' knowledge of their learning disability, their acceptance of the disability and the students' academic achievement (Hudson, 1994). The study findings are in line with other researchers regarding the importance of students having knowledge of their LD and other important transition issues such as self-determination and self-efficacy. See table 2 for a summary of these studies on African Americans and Postsecondary education.

#### Self-Determination and Learning Disabilities

While there has been little research that examines students with learning disabilities and self-determination skills at the college level, there have been even less in the literature that focused on African Americans. Some of the existing literature, however, provides some insights. For example, some studies have found that high self-determination scores that indicate good self-determination skills have been one variable linked to academic achievement. Wehmeyer (1995) has reported some of the key findings regarding self-determination and student achievement. Wehmeyer is best known for his research development examining self-determination skills for students with disabilities. Wehmeyer and others have defined self-determination as the following: Self-determination refers to "acting as the primary causal agent in one's quality of life

Table 2

*African Americans, Special Education and Post-Secondary Education*

Citation	Purpose	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Findings
David Hefner 2004	Discusses decline of Black males in college	NA	Literature review	Trend data	70% of Black college graduates in 2000 were women
Hudson 1994	Effect of support services on academic achievement and knowledge and acceptance of LD and satisfaction with support services received	45 students at one HBCU sophomore to senior	Two different instruments and a review of subjects records	Support Services Survey (SSS) Participation record	Significant relationship between student knowledge of their LD, their acceptance of the LD, and academic achievement
Oakes 1992	Position paper on Tracking and its impact on research	NA	Literature review	Trend data and literature critic	Tracking fails to meet expectations, impacts school attainment, life chances; lower track students information hold back student

Table 2 continued

Citation	Purpose	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Findings
Ogbu, 1994	Examine inequality between blacks and in the opportunity structure since 1960 and why a gap persist between the two groups	NA	Literature review	Historical analysis	Inequalities are in place due to racial stratification and impacts black education 1. through educational policies and practices and societal practices deny blacks equal rewards with whites for their education
Talbert-Johnson 2001	Literature review to examine the disparity between the cultures of educators and minority students	NA	Literature review	Trend data and literature critic	Shortage of African American teachers in special ed. Lack of role models from same ethnic background for African Americans in special education

Table 2 continued

Citation	Purpose	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Findings
Thornton, 2004	Describes the manner in which a group of southern black college students structure their value preferences	Subjects 304 undergraduate students enrolled at one predominately Black university	Questionnaires given	Questionnaires tap the general value orientations of respondents	Both males and females ranked religion and family as the highest priority following graduation
Sissoko & Shiau 2005	To provide empirical analysis of determinants of Black student enrollment in HBCUs and other universities	NA	National Trend data	Formularies used to examine enrollment trends an	Black student enrollment at HBCUs is essentially determined by the average cost of tuition and fees, Pell grant per student, retention rate, gov policies and black population trend

free from undue external influence or interference” (Wehmeyer, 1995, p. 22) An individual demonstrates self-determined skills if the individual actions have the following characteristics: 1. the individual acted autonomously; 2. the behaviors were self-regulated; 3. the person initiated and responded to event(s) in a “psychologically empowered” manner; and 4 the person acted in a self-realizing manner (Wehmeyer, 1995, p. 22). Self-determination skills are important skills for LD students. For example Wehmeyer (2002) showed that students with disabilities who left school more self-determined were more likely to have obtained jobs that provide benefits like health coverage and vacations, and those same students were more likely to be living somewhere other than their parent’s home.

A national survey of teachers in the United States teachers surveyed believed self-determination skills were very important for students with disabilities (Wehmeyer, Agran, & Hughes, 2000, p. 63). For example, “teachers indicated they believed that promoting self-determination would be “very helpful” to prepare their students for success in post school life and somewhat helpful to ensure their success in school” (Wehmeyer et al., 2000, p. 63) To date very few studies have been conducted to examine self-determination skills of college students with learning disabilities. Rasheed (2005), however, studied a total of 99 undergraduate students from one majority White University with learning disabilities.

The participants in Rasheed’s study were given the Arc’s Self-Determination Scale (ASDS). Rasheed found that participants in the study had at least minimally satisfactory self-determination skills (Rasheed, 2005). He found that 30% of the participants in the study had autonomy scores that were below the mean score for the norm group and 23% were below for self-regulation and self-determination skills. Rasheed (2005) found that students with higher average GPAs in his study population also had higher overall self-determination skills scores.

Other researchers have examined self-determination and self-sufficiency skills in students. Some of the research examining the importance of students becoming self-sufficient was first conducted by Bandura.

One of the concepts that emerged with Banduras' research was self-efficacy. Self-efficacy was defined by Bandura as an individual's perceptions of his/her ability to perform adequately in a given situation (Bandura & et al., 1996; Caraway et al., 2003). According to social-cognitive theory, individuals' perceptions of self-efficacy often influence their goals and aspirations to pursue various academic and career opportunities. An individual level of self-efficacy beliefs also has an impact on how well that person may be able to handle adversity, setbacks, and delays in the pursuit of goals and the amount of effort put into accomplishing tasks. Self-efficacy measures can often reveal how well a person will be able to persevere when those challenges are presented (Bandura & et al., 1996).

Some of the research has indicated that high school students living with a learning disability tended to have lower self-efficacy than students living without a learning disability. For example, a study conducted by Hampton and Mason (2003) reported that students with learning disabilities may be disadvantaged in the availability of appropriate sources to form self-efficacy in learning. The hypothesis that the influence of LD status was mediated by sources of efficacy was proven statically significant in this study (Hampton & Mason, 2003, p.109). Table 3 summarizes research on self-determination and learning disabilities.

### Summary

This review focused on the following issues: (a) barriers and enablers for people with learning disabilities; (b) postsecondary students with learning disabilities; (c) African Americans, special education, and post-secondary education; and (d) self-determination and learning

Table 3

*Self-Determination and Learning Disabilities*

Citation	Purpose	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Findings
Bandura 1996	To examine the psychosocial influences through which efficacy beliefs affect academic achievement and parents' sense of academic efficacy and aspirations for their children	279 children ranging ages 11 to 14 years. Parents and teachers of the children participated in the study as well	Various scales were given to the children, parents, and teachers; demographic information was collected and other variables of interest	Perceived efficacy for academic achievement, perceived efficacy for self-regulated learning; third set of scales used was leisure and extracurricular activities; a scale to measure severity of depression; a parental and children academic scale was given to parents	Parents beliefs in their efficacy to help their children's intellectual growth had a positive association with their child's academic outcomes –Children who believed they could exercise some control over their own learning achieved academic success

Table 3 continued

Citation	Purpose	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Findings
Hampton & Mason 2003	To examine gender and LD status, gender, sources of efficacy, self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement	278 high school students	Scales and demographic information was taken-population was chosen from participating schools	Sources of Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (SASES) and Self-Efficacy for Learning Scale (SELS) and demographic form	Proposed model suggested that students with LD are at a disadvantage for access to self-efficacy in learning students with more sources of efficacy appeared to have higher self-efficacy beliefs and higher academic achievement than those did not
Rasheed 2005	Measure the self-determination skills of the study population	99 undergraduate students from one university with learning disabilities.	Scale and demographic information	Arc's Self-Determination Scale (ASDS) and demographic sheet	Found that students with higher average GPAs in his study population also had higher over all self-determination skills scores.

Table 3 continued

Citation	Purpose	Participants	Procedures	Measures	Findings
Wehmeyer 1995	Study examined self-determination and the use of student –directed learning strategies; conducted of teachers servicing students with various disabilities	A total of 1,219 teachers providing instruction to students with disabilities between ages of 14 and 21.	National mail survey	Used Agran, Snow and Swaner’s (199) survey, which was expanded based on the functional model of self-determination	Teachers indicated they believed that promoting self-determination would be “very helpful” to prepare their students for success in post school life and somewhat helpful to ensure their success in school

disabilities. The review of literature identified issues involving students with disabilities and postsecondary opportunities and experiences. It also included the recognition of the importance of transition services such as self-advocacy, self-efficacy and self-determination and their correlation for success for students with learning disabilities to attend and complete postsecondary education. Below are highlights from the review of literature:

1. Laws, lobbying, and bureaucratic systems in the United States school systems have impacted barriers and enablers for people with learning disabilities (Byrnes, 2002; Carrier, 1986; Gryphon & Salisbury, 2002; Landau et al., 1998; Mercer & Mercer, 1996).
2. College students with learning disabilities had lower self-perceptions of their scholastic and cognitive abilities than non-LD peers and indicated feelings of fear, obsessive thoughts, lack of self confidence, self-doubt and self-criticism (Cosden & McNamara, 1997; J. Gregg & Persichitte, 1992; Hoy et al., 1997).
3. The public school system has bureaucratic challenges regarding learning disabilities and special education that disproportionately impact African American students (Oakes, 1992; Ogbu, 1994; Talbert-Johnson, 2001). A shortage of African American males attend and graduate from college (Hefner, 2004). Little research has been conducted on African American college students with learning disabilities.
4. Self-determination and self-efficiency skills among students with learning disabilities lead to better educational outcomes than for students lacking high self-determination skill levels (Bandura & et al., 1996; Hampton & Mason, 2003;

Rasheed, 2005; Wehmeyer, Kelchner, & Educational Resources Information Center (U.S.), 1995).

The review of the literature pertinent to barriers and enablers for people with learning disabilities provides some consistent themes. For instance, barriers for students with learning disabilities are in part found as a result of the bureaucratic systems found in the United States school systems and special education programs (Byrnes, 2002; Carrier, 1986; Gryphon & Salisbury, 2002; Landau et al., 1998; Mercer & Mercer, 1996). The literature indicates that there are enablers for learning disability students that have allowed for more educational opportunities. For example, organizations led by parents help get laws passed to benefit students with learning disabilities. Many of the laws have helped open opportunity for students with learning disabilities to finish secondary school and attend and complete postsecondary school (Carrier, 1986).

The review of literature pertinent to postsecondary students with learning disabilities indicates that students with learning disabilities are faced with many more challenges than their non-disabled peers (Brinckerhoff, 1996; T. M. Williams, 1998). Problems such as lack of academic self-perceptions, and depression are examples of challenges that disproportionately impact college students with learning disabilities (Cosden & McNamara, 1997; J. Gregg & Persichitte, 1992; Hoy et al., 1997).

The review of special education and postsecondary education of African Americans highlights the challenges faced in secondary schools and the pursuit of postsecondary education. For example, some researchers found that African Americans have suffered with being miss diagnosed and placed improperly in special education classrooms (Dunn, 1968; Oakes, 1992; Ogbu, 1994). African Americans also have a lack of post-secondary opportunities particularly

African American males. The review revealed that African Americans who do attend college ranked religion and family as the highest priority following graduation from college (Thornton, 2004). A study on African American students with learning disabilities at one university showed a significant relationship between students' knowledge of their LD and academic achievement (Hudson, 1994).

The review of the literature on self-determination and leaning disability students indicated the importance of self-determination skills for students with learning disabilities. Many examples were highlighted in this review. For example it was found in this review that students with learning disabilities who had self-determination skills were more likely to be successful in school and other life outcomes (Bandura & et al., 1996; Hampton & Mason, 2003; Rasheed, 2005; Wehmeyer et al., 1995). There is a lack of studies examining self-determination skills of students with learning disabilities in college or university settings. There is even more of a lack of studies examining African American college students with learning disabilities and their self-determination skills. The next chapter covers the methods used to collect and analysis data for this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### Methods

#### *Principles of Survey Research*

This investigation used a survey research methodology. A survey is defined by the World Health Organization as an investigation in which information or data are collected in a organized matter (Last, Abramson, & International Epidemiological Association., 1995). When survey research is used to collect data, the experimental method is not used (Last et al., 1995). A survey can be administered in different ways. For example, a population survey may use face-to face interviews, self-completed questionnaires, and telephone, postal service, e-mail or other means (Last et al., 1995). Each method of survey research has its advantages and disadvantages. For example, face-to-face interviews can be a good way to gather information needed. However, this method can be very time consuming and costly for the researcher (K. Williams, 1998). Dillman (1978) indicated that survey research organizations operating from university settings faced a higher refusal rates and higher increased resistance to their face- to-face interviews. Dillman (1978) rated mail questionnaires and he pointed out some of their disadvantages and advantages. For example, it was found in the area of question construction, mail surveys have a low performance in getting open ended questions answered. When it came to administration requirements, the potential speed of implementation for mail surveys was found to be low (Salant & Dillman, 1994). Some of the advantages of mail questionnaires are found in obtaining accurate answers. In that category Dillman (1978) rated high the likelihood that social bias can also be avoided and interviewer distortion can be avoided (Dillman, 1978, pp. 74-75). For the

purpose of this study, the investigator elected to survey a sample of college students were diagnosed with a learning disability (LD). The subjects attended two selected Historically Black Colleges or Universities and were enrolled in a learning disability program at that select school during the fall of 2006 semester. The primary mode of survey research used in this study was drop-off survey. The rationale for this approach was that the target population is hard to reach and could only be surveyed in a timely and cost-efficient manner using drop-off survey method. The drop-off survey technique combines both the low labor cost of mail surveys with the personal contact of face- to-face interviews. Using this method allowed the researcher to help get respondents to complete the survey instrument on location. The instrument used to survey the participants had some open ended questions, the drop-off survey face-to-face method used to collect data in the study allowed the participants to complete the survey on site and get any questions about the survey answered by the researcher or staff at the centers.

#### Population

The participants consisted of students who had learning disabilities at two Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the United States and received services at either the Disabled Student Services Program (DSSP) at School 1 or the Learning Development and Evaluation Center (LDEC) at School 2 and who agreed to participate in the study. There were approximately 134 students from the two schools combined with LD registered to receive services from the DSSP or LDEC Fall 2006 semester. There were a total of 37 students with LD registered for services at DSSP School 1, and 28 out of the 37 students registered for services at DSSP participated in the study. Students with LD registered with DSSP were recruited in the following manner. Flyers with information about the study were posted by the researcher and program coordinator at key locations on campus. The locations were identified by the DSSP

program coordinator. Flyers were also placed inside the DSSP computer lab and main office on campus (see Appendix A). At the midpoint of data collection the ninth day a recruitment e-mail was sent by the DSSP program coordinator to all students registered with DSSP Fall 2006, requesting student participation in the study (see Appendix B). A description of what is self-determination was placed inside the DSSP office and computer lab (see Appendix C). The tutors, office staff, and administrators at the Disabled Student Services Program were fully supportive of the data collection process and helped encouraged students to participate in the study.

There were a total of 99 students with LD registered for services at the Learning Development and Evaluation Center (School 2) and 55 out of the 99 students registered for services at the LDEC participated in the study. Students with LD registered with the LDEC were recruited in the following manner. Flyers with information about the study were posted by the researcher and program director at key locations on campus. The locations were identified by the program director. Flyers were also placed inside the LDEC computer lab and main office on campus (see Appendix D). At the mid point of data collection a recruitment e-mail was sent out by the LDEC assistant director to all students registered with the LDEC Fall 2006, requesting student participation in the study (see Appendix E). A description of what is self-determination was placed inside the LDEC office and computer lab (see Appendix C). The tutors, office staff, and administrators at the Learning Development and Evaluation Center were supportive of the data collection process and helped encouraged students to participate in the study.

### Descriptive Information on the Sample

In this study data from both schools were combined. A total of eighty three (n=83) respondents participated in this study out of the total population sample of one hundred thirty six (136). The response rate for this study was sixty three percent 63%.

The gender of the respondents in the total sample (n=83) was 64% male and 36% female. Table 4 presents the frequency count by gender for the total sample.

Table 4

*Gender, N, and Percent of Total Sample*

Gender	N	Percent
Male	53	64
Female	30	36

The race and ethnicity of the total sample was majority African American (94%). The second most reported race and ethnicity in the sample was white non- Hispanic 5%. Table 5 presents the frequency counts for race and ethnicity for the total sample.

Data on student classification (i.e., Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior) the total sample of the population indicate that seniors were the largest group of respondents at 30%; the second largest classification represented in this study were freshman at 24%. Table 6 presents the frequency counts for each of the class levels for the total sample.

Table 5

*Race, N, and Percent of Total Sample*

Race	N	Percent
African American	78	94
White non-Hispanic	4	5
Hispanic or Latino	1	1

Table 6

*Class, N, and Percent of Total Sample*

Class	N	Percent
Freshman	20	24
Sophomore	16	19
Junior	19	23
Senior	24	29
Other	4	5

\*The Other category consisted of four graduate students.

In the total sample the majority of the respondents reported their parents' approximate yearly income was in the \$31,001 to \$50,000 range representing (27%) of the responses. The two second largest reported yearly income ranges were \$10,000 to \$30,000 a year and above

\$70,000 a year category; both represented (23%). Table 7 presents the frequency counts for each of the income levels for the total sample.

Table 7

*Income, N, and Percent of Total Sample*

Income	N	Percent
Less Than \$10,000/Year	7	8
\$10,001- \$30,000/Year	19	23
\$30,001 - \$50,000/Year	22	27
\$50,001 - \$70,000/Year	16	19
Above \$70,000/Year	19	23

The majority of the students in the sample had GPAs ranging from 2.01 to 2.50, which represented 42% of the sample. The second largest category in the sample was GPAs ranging from 2.51 to 3.00, which represented 34% of the sample. Table 8 presents the frequency counts for each of the GPA levels for the total sample.

#### Setting and Program Services

As previously indicated above, the participants for this study were recruited at two HBCUs located in the following cities: 1) School I., is located in Middle, Tennessee, 2) school II is located in North, Florida. These two HBCUs were chosen by the researcher for several reasons. Both schools have offered support services for students with leaning disabilities for nearly 20 years. The two schools used as research

Table 8

*GPA, N, and Percent of Total Sample*

GPA	N	Percent
1.00 – 2.00	12	15
2.01 – 2.50	35	42
2.51 – 3.00	28	34
3.01 – 3.50	6	7
3.51 – 4.00	2	2

sites are public universities in the South with similar city and university populations. The learning disability support programs at both schools are considered self-directed and decentralized programs (B. L. Peterson, 2003). A self-directed decentralized program, according to the 2003 guide of programs for students with LD or ADD, are programs that usually have no separate admissions process for LD students (B. L. Peterson, 2003). Self-directed programs require that eligibility for services be established by the disability documentation that meets the schools institutional standards. In self-directed programs services may be coordinated through an office of disability services based on the student's documentation of disability paper work; services may also be shipped around to other parts of campus (B. L. Peterson, 2003). The two programs in this study have informally been identified by students, parents, and persons in the disability services field in higher education as being good programs. The two schools were also chosen because of the relationships between the researcher and staff at both schools. This

allowed the researcher to receive support during the Institutional Review Board and data collection process at both schools.

*School I Middle, Tennessee*

The total approximation of the student body at School I, based on Fall 2005 semester was 8,900. More than 75% of the school's population is African American (Suggs, 2007). The total population in the Middle Tennessee city according to the 2000 census was 545,524 (Bureau, 2006). There were 264,095 males and 281,429 females. The largest age group was 18 years and over to 64 years old. The total in that 18 years and over age group was 424,855 (Bureau, 2006). The two largest race groups in the Middle, Tennessee city, according to the 2000 U.S. census were non-Hispanic White at 359,581 and African American at 146,235 (Bureau, 2006). The median family income in 1999 in Middle Tennessee, was \$48,448 (Bureau, 2006). The support program for students that have a learning disability at school I. was housed in Disabled Student Services Program (DSSP) on campus.

The Disabled Student Services Program is an academic support program for college students with disabilities. For the purposes of this research study only students with learning disabilities registered with Disabled Student Services office Fall 2006 semester were recruited to participate. The Disabled Student Service office is in the Department of Student Affairs at the university. The Disabled Student Services Director reports directly to the Vice President of Student Affairs. The DSSP is physically housed in a building in the heart of the university campus. The programs office is located on the first floor of the building, while the computer lab for the program is located on the basement floor. The computer lab is used for students to take exams, to receive tutoring and, other services, and to use special assistance technology. Services offered by DSSP are free to all students who are registered and have paid the regular university

tuition. There are no additional fees for any services offered by the DSSP. Participation in the program is strictly voluntary and confidential.

### *School 1 Program Services*

The DSSP provides federally mandated academic and programmatic support services to the students who qualify at the university. Students with learning disabilities were the largest disability population served by the program at school I. Some of the following accommodations for students with learning disability are offered: 1) access to DSSP computer lab with assistant technology; 2) test proctors; 3) extended time to take exams; 4) academic advisement; 5) tape recorders to record lectures; 6) tutors based on need and major; 7) study skills seminars; 8) accommodations letters for students to present to professors based on individual and needs; 9) professional staff, who advocate on behalf of the students. Students who have learning disabilities and are registered with the DSSP take regular university courses.

### *School 2 North, Florida*

The total approximation of the student body at the North Florida city school based on the fall 2005 semester was 12,179. More than 92% of the school's population is African American (Suggs, 2007). The total population in North Florida city, according to the 2000 census was 150,624 (Bureau, 2006). There were 71,137 males and 79,487 females. The largest age group was 18 years to 64 years old. The total in that 18 years and over age group was 124,431 (Bureau, 2006). The two largest race groups in the Florida city according to the 2000 U.S. census were White at 91,007 and African American at 51,569 (Bureau, 2006). The median family income in 1999 in the Florida city was \$30,571 (Bureau, 2006). The support program for students who have a learning disability at school II was housed in the Learning Development Evaluation Center (LDEC) on campus.

The Learning Development Evaluation Center is an academic support program for college students with disabilities. For the purposes of this research study only students with learning disabilities registered with Learning Development Evaluation Center Fall 2006 semester were recruited to participate in this study. The LDEC office is in the Department of Student Affairs at the university. The LDEC director reports directly to the Vice President of Student Affairs. The LDEC is physically a standalone building located near the university book store. The program office is located in the standalone building. The program has two computer labs and several break-out rooms for students to take exams, receive tutoring and other services, and use special assistant technology. Services offered by LDEC are free to all students who are registered and have paid the regular university tuition. There are no additional fees for any services offered by the LDEC. Participation in the program is strictly voluntary and confidential. The LDEC provides federally mandated academic and programmatic support services to the students that qualify at the university. Students with learning disabilities were the largest disability population served by the program at school II.

### *School 2 Program Services*

Some of the following accommodations for students with learning disability are offered at school II: 1) access to DSSP computer lab with assistant technology; 2) test proctors; 3) extended time to take exams; 4) academic advisement ;5) tape recorders to record lectures; 6) tutors based on need and major; 7) study skills seminars; 8) accommodations letters for students to present to professors based on individual needs; and 9) professional staff, who advocate on behalf of the students. Students who have learning disabilities and are registered with the DSSP take regular university courses.

## Instruments and Materials

All students were administered a demographic survey to gain basic background information of the participants. This demographic survey was developed by the researcher (see Appendix F). Participants were also given a revised copy of the Adolescent Version of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale originally created by Wehmeyer (1995). The term self-determination was defined by Field, Martin Miller, Ward, and Wehmeyer (1998) as follows: a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of one's strengths and limitations, together with a belief of oneself as capable and effective are essential to self-determination. When acting on the basis of these skills and attitudes, individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults in our society (p. 2).

The Arc's Self-Determination scale was originally developed and norm with 500 secondary school students who that had cognitive disabilities or no cognitive disabilities and attended school in urban, rural, and suburban school districts of five different states (Rasheed, 2005; Wehmeyer, 1995). To conduct research on post-secondary students for this current study, the researcher adopted changes made by Dr. Rasheed (2005) to the original scale made by Wehmeyer. Permission was given to the researcher by the Dr. Michael Wehmeyer to make changes (see Appendix G). Dr. Rasheed gave permission for the researcher to use the exact changes made Dr. Rasheed for the purposes of this current study (see Appendix H).

The Arc's Self-Determination scale was designed to be a self-report measure of self-determination scale. It was designed for use by adolescents with disabilities; it was especially geared for students with mild mental retardation and learning disabilities (Wehmeyer, 1995, p. 7). The Arc's Self-Determination Scale is a 72-item self-report instrument with total scores

ranging from 0-148 and with higher scores representing higher levels of self determination (Rasheed, 2005; Wehmeyer, 1995), (see Appendix I).

The Arc's Self-Determination Scale's four primary domains were: (1) autonomy, (2), self-regulation, (3) psychological empowerment, and (4) self-realization. Some of the scales were broken down into sub-domains. The 72 Arc's Self-Determination Scale has been used recently in two dissertation research projects with postsecondary students. All of the scales domains and sub-domains prove to have the necessary validity and reliability to study the older age population found on a college campus (Jameson, 2002; Rasheed, 2005).

#### Data Collection

Final permission from the Institutional Review Board Human Subjects Office to collect data was granted by the researcher's home institution, the University of Georgia on August 25, 2006 (see Appendix J). The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at school I granted permission for the researcher to collect data from university students who were part of the DSSP on October 18, 2006. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at school II granted permission for the researcher to collect data from university students who were part of the LDEC on November 3, 2006.

All students with LD at both schools I and II who were registered for the Fall 2006 school year and received services from the two programs were recruited to participate in the study. Flyers were placed on both campuses the weekend after IRB approval at each of the two schools around campus and in both school programs offices. A recruitment e-mail was also emailed half way through the data collection process at both schools to program participants. The researcher also made contact with key staff members at each center.

Data collection took place at school I October 23 through November 16, 2006. Data collection took place at school I, for nineteen business days Monday through Friday 8:00AM to

4:30PM. The researcher was present during the data collection process at school I, for more than 90% of the data collection days and hours. The researcher also trained staff at the DSSP on how to give the survey instrument to students in the researcher's absence. Students at School I were given the opportunity to review the following before participating in the study: informed consent form and explanation of the term, Self-Determination, to ensure their correct understanding of the study, options on how they could participate in the study, and information regarding the ten dollar (\$10.00) incentive for completing the survey.

Both schools' disability programs had offices and rooms where the survey was completed in privacy and with the assistance of the researcher or staff member with knowledge of the survey. After individual students agreed to participate, a survey was completed by the participant. Completion of the survey by the participant took approximately 30 to 40 minutes. After completion of the survey, students were given \$10.00 in cash.

Data collection took place at School II from November 13 through December 8, 2006, during the school's fall 2006 semester. Data collection took place at school II, for nineteen business days Monday through Friday 8:00AM to 4:30PM. The researcher was present during the data collection process at school II, for more than 90% of the data collection days and hours. The researcher also trained staff at the LDEC on how to give the survey instrument to students in the researcher's absence. Students at school II were given the opportunity to review the following before participating in the study: Informed consent form and explanation of the term, Self-Determination, to ensure their correct understanding of the study, options on how they could participate in the study, and information regarding the (\$10.00) incentive for completing the survey. After individual students agreed to participate, a survey was completed by the

participant. Completion of the survey by the participant took approximately 30 to 40 minutes. After completion of the survey students were given (\$10.00) cash.

### Data Analysis

Demographic data were run on the whole on all respondents. The two schools were combined for the data analysis.

#### *Research Question 1*

For students with learning disabilities in a HBCU institution, what are their Arc Self-Determination Scale (ASDS) total scores, and the four ASDS sub-domain scores of autonomy, self regulation, Psychological empowerment, and self-realization?

Descriptive statistics were used to address research question number one. The results are presented via frequency distributions in the form of table one for the total ASDS total score and ASDS and for the sub-domains of the Arc's Self-Determination Scale.

#### *Research Question 2*

Are there significant student classification differences for ASDS total scores and for each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores?

The Pearson product-moment correlation was used to address research question two to test the relationship between student classification and the ASDS total scores and the four ASDS sub-domain scores.

#### *Research Question 3*

Are there significant relationships between GPA and ASDS total scores and between GPA and each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores?

The Pearson product-moment correlation was used to address research question three to test the relationship between GPA and the ASDS total scores and the four ASDS sub-domain scores.

*Research Question 4*

Across family income levels are there significant differences for ASDS total scores and for each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores? Between family income and ASDS total scores and between family income and each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores? ANOVA was used across the levels of income on the demographic survey.

*Research Question 5*

Is there a significant amount of variance accounted for in predicting each of the four criterion variables (ASDS total score and the four ASDS sub-domain scores) from the set of four predictor variables (gender, student classification, GPA, and family income)? A regression analysis was used to examine total scores of self-determination skills and individual domain scores from each of the variables and the criterion variable.

## CHAPTER 4

### Results

In this study data from both schools were combined. A total of eighty three (n=83) respondents participated in this study out of the total population sample of one hundred thirty six (136). The response rate for this study was sixty three percent 63%. In the current study, five research questions were investigated based on responses of the sample described in chapter 3 to The Arc's Self-Determination Scale and its sub-domain tests. Each research question used in this study is be restated and the results presented immediately thereafter. These results are summarized and discussed in Chapter Five of this dissertation study.

#### *Research Question 1*

For students with learning disabilities in a HBCU institution, what are their Arc Self-Determination Scale (ASDS) total scores, and the four ASDS sub-domain scores of autonomy, self regulation, psychological empowerment, and self-realization?

Figure 1 indicates the frequency distributions of ASDS total scores for the entire group and Figures 2 through 5 show the frequency distributions of the ASDS four sub-domain scores for autonomy, self-regulation, psychological empowerment, and self-realization.

In Figure 1, the ASDS total scores for the total sample show a slight negative skew (-.640), with the mode of the scores being 102 and the median being 114.00. The mean score was 112.77 out of a possible 148 points. The lowest score was 66 (n = 1) and the highest was 139 (n = 1).

In Figure 2, the autonomy sub-domain scores for the entire group show a slight negative skew (-.611) with the mode of the scores being 61 and the median being 75.00. The mean score was 72.90 out of a possible 96 points. The lowest score was 40 (n = 1) and the highest was 93 (n = 4).

In Figure 3, the self-regulation sub-domain scores for the entire group also show a very slight negative skew (-.218) with the modes of the scores being 16 and the median being 14.00. The mean score was 13.78 out of a possible 21 points. The lowest score was 4 (n = 1) and the highest was 21 (n = 3).

In Figure 4, the psychological empowerment sub-domain scores for the entire group show a definite negative skew (-1.411) with the mode of the scores being 16 and the median being 15.00. The mean score was 14.00 out of a possible 16 points. The lowest score was 5 (n = 1) and the highest was 16 (n = 37).

In Figure 5, the self-realization sub-domain scores for the group show a definite negative skew (-.601) with the mode of the scores being 13 and the median being 12.00. The mean score was 12.08 out of a possible 15 points. The lowest score was 8 (n = 3) and the highest was 15 (n = 3).

### *Research Question 2*

Are there significant student classification differences for ASDS total scores and for each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores?

A T-test was run to analyze if there was a significant relationship between the combined student classification and the total ASDS scores. Five independent t-tests were used to address research question II; they test for significant student classification differences for ASDS total scores and for each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores. Levene's Test for the Equality of

Variances was used in the analysis of the homogeneity of variances among the four classifications groups (freshman, sophomore, junior and senior) that were used in this part of the study. There were no significance found when comparing each of the individual student classifications and the ASDS total scores and sub domains. However, Tables 9 through 11 shows each of the student classifications and total ASDS scores or Domains, Means, Standard Deviations, and t-values for the test that were close to having significance at the  $p=.05$  level in this investigation.

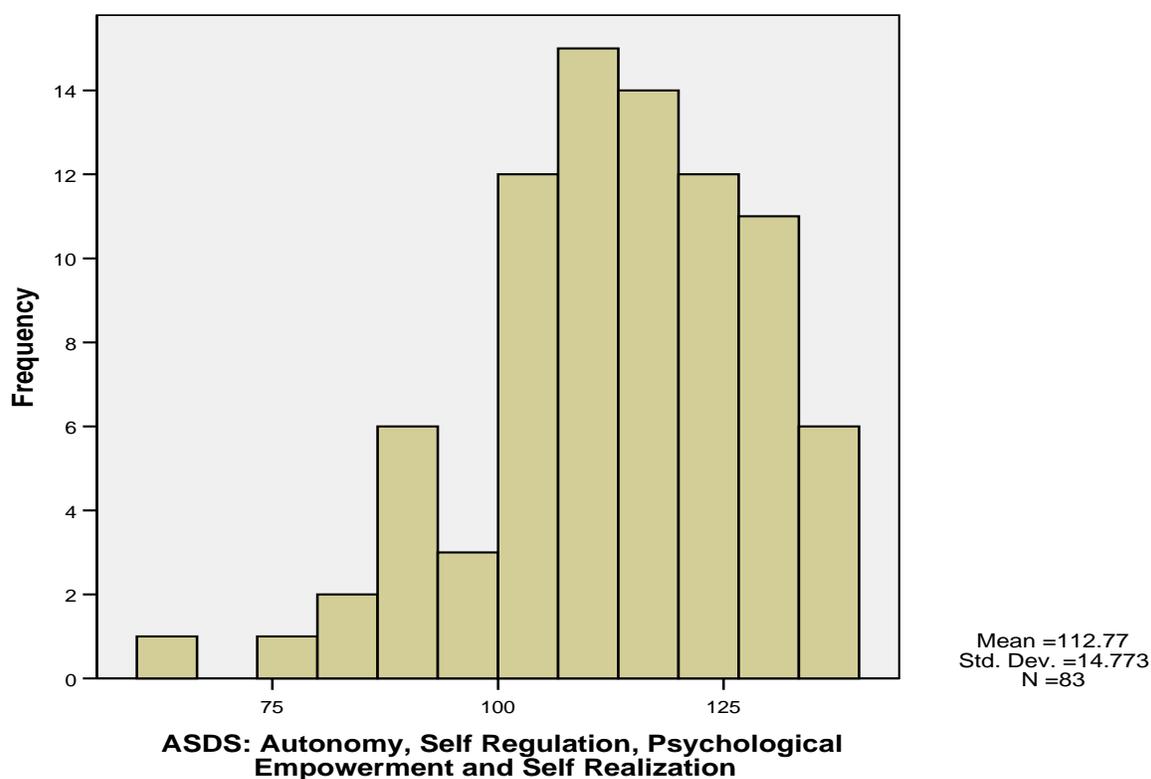


Figure 1. Histogram of ASDS total scores for the total sample

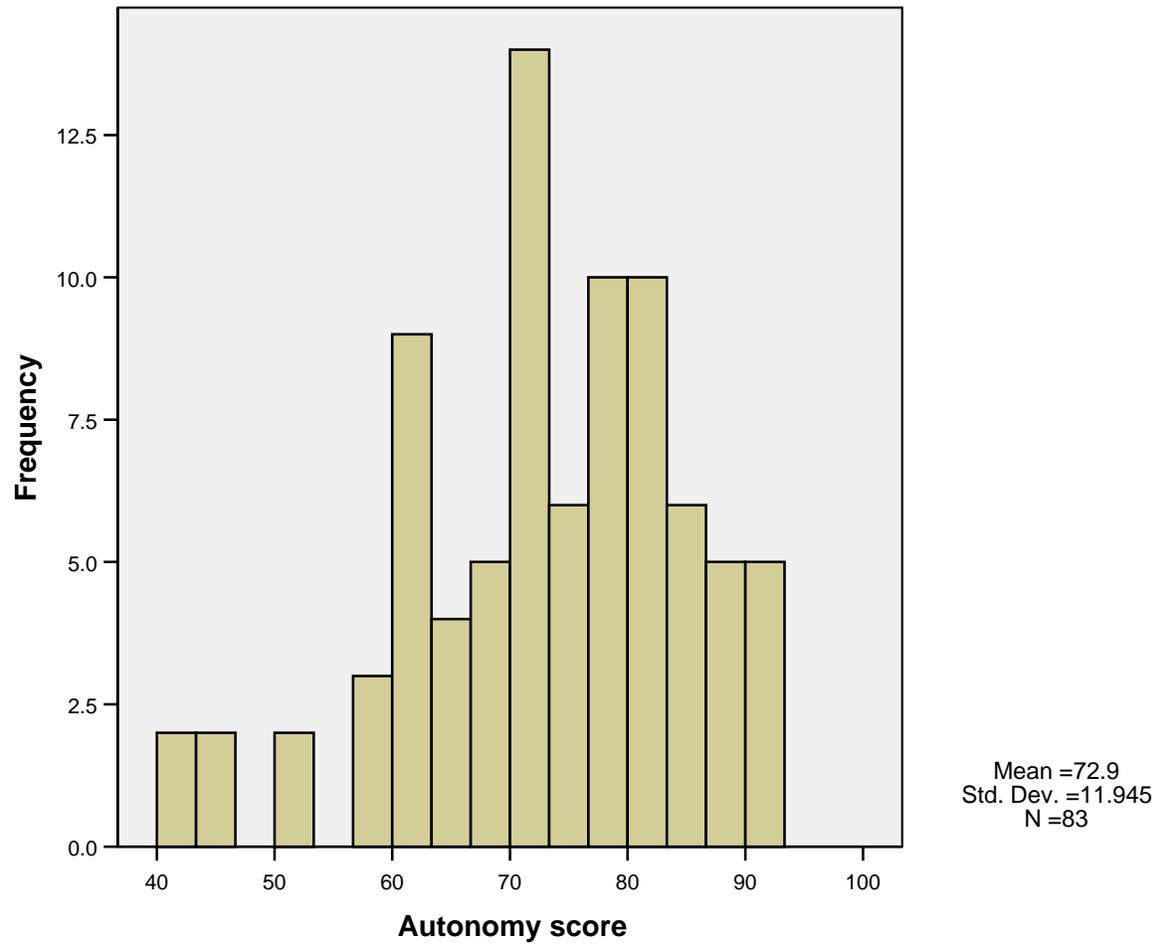


Figure 2. Histogram of Autonomy total scores for the total sample

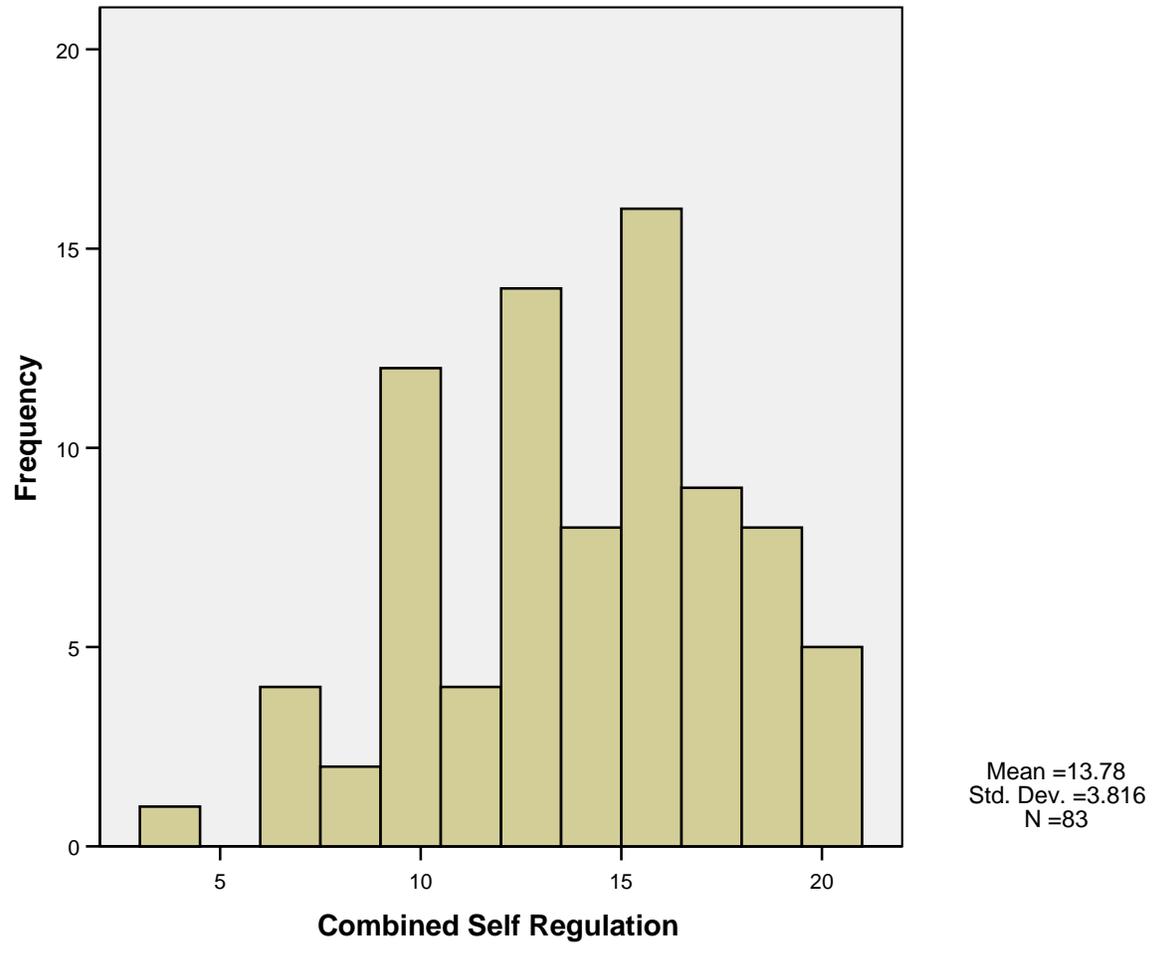
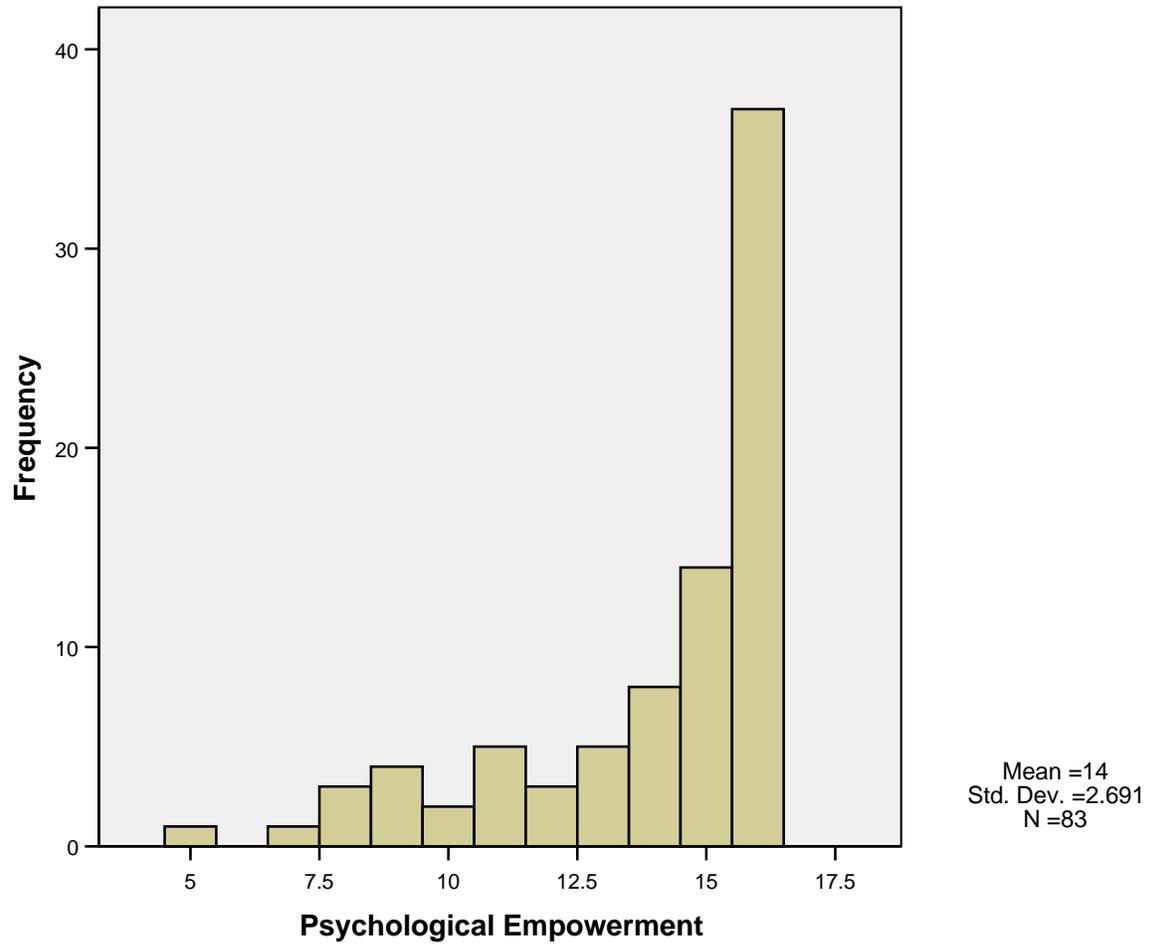


Figure 3. Histogram of Combined Self Regulation total scores for the total sample



*Figure 4.* Histogram of Psychological Empowerment total scores for the total sample

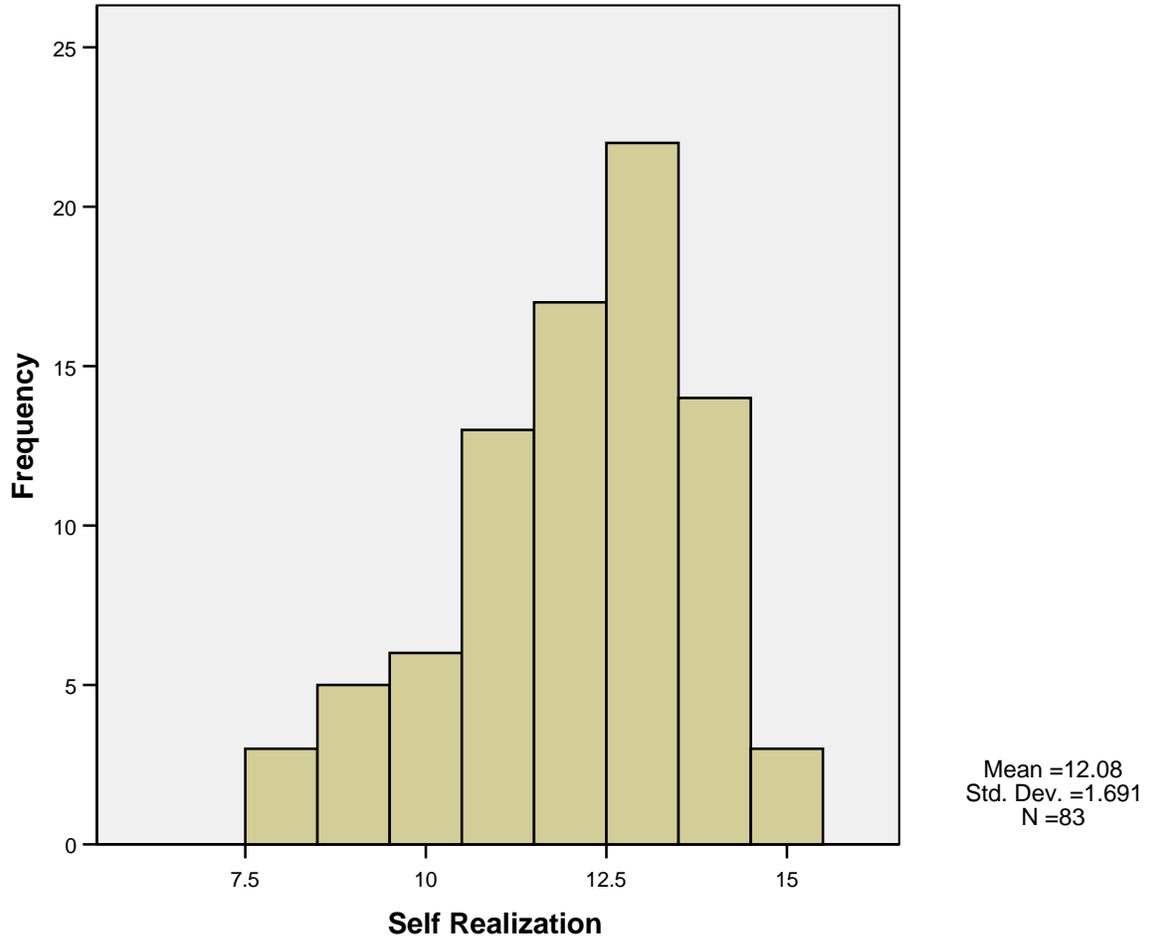


Figure 5. Histogram of Self Realization total scores for the total sample

Table 9

*Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for freshman and junior student classification Groups' ASDS Combined Self Regulation Score – freshman, junior*

Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Freshman	20	12.30	3.114	-1.958	.058
Junior	16	14.75	4.389		

Table 10

*Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for freshman and senior student classification Groups' ASDS Combined Self Regulation Scores*

Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Freshman	20	12.30	3.114	-1.901	.064
Senior	24	14.42	4.085		

Table 11

*Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for junior and senior student classification Groups' ASDS Combined Self Regulation Scores*

Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Junior	16	12.56	1.153	-1.959	.057
Senior	24	14.42	4.085		

### *Research Question 3*

Are there significant relationship between GPA and ASDS total scores and between GPA and each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores?

The Pearson product-moment correlation was used to address research question three to test the relationship between GPA and the ASDS total scores and the four ASDS sub-domain scores.

Table 12 shows the correlations between GPA and the ASDS total score and the four sub-domain scores. According to the results of the correlation analysis, GPA was significantly and positively correlated with self regulation sub-domain scores ( $r = .224, p = .041$ ).

Table 12

#### *Correlations between GPA and ASDS Total and Four Sub-Domains' Scores*

	Self-Reg.	Autonomy	Psych. Emp.	Self-Real.	Total
GPA	.224*	.155	-.003	.114	.196

*Note.* Self-Reg. = Self-Regulation domain score, Psych Emp. = Psychological Empowerment domain score, and Self-Real. = Self-Realization domain score. N = 83.

\*Significant at the .05 level (2 tailed).

### *Research Question 4*

Across family income levels are there significant differences for ASDS total scores and for each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores? Between family income and ASDS total scores and between family income and each of the four ASDS sub-domain scores? ANOVA was used across the levels of income on the demographic survey. Five ANOVA summary tables and means/standard deviations' tables for each income level are presented in Tables 13 through 22

showing the relationships between income levels (less than \$10,000 a year; \$10,001 to \$30,000 a year; \$31,001 to \$50,000 a year; \$50,001 to \$70,000 a year; and above \$70,000 a year) and ASDS total scores and the four sub-domains of The Arc's Self-Determination scale looking for significance between group differences in mean scores.

Table 13

*One-Way ANOVA Results for ASDS Total Scores among Income Levels*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	1295.074	4	323.768	1.521	.204
Within Groups	16599.577	78	212.815		
Total	17894.651	82			

Table 14

*Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for ASDS Total Scores*

Income Level	N	M	SD
Less Than \$10,000/Year	7	116.57	13.722
\$10,001- \$30,000/Year	19	105.84	18.617
\$30,001 - \$50,000/Year	22	113.05	15.426
\$50,001 - \$70,000/Year	16	115.63	12.511
Above \$70,000/Year	19	115.58	10.238

Table 15

*One-Way ANOVA Results for Autonomy Scores among Income Levels*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	724.917	4	181.229	1.288	.282
Within Groups	10974.312	78	140.696		
Total	11699.229	82			

Table 16

*Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for Autonomy ASDS Scores*

Income Level	N	M	SD
Less Than \$10,000/Year	7	77.00	8.963
\$10,001- \$30,000/Year	19	68.11	15.913
\$30,001 - \$50,000/Year	22	72.32	12.632
\$50,001 - \$70,000/Year	16	75.13	10.519
Above \$70,000/Year	19	75.00	7.165

Table 17

*One-Way ANOVA Results for Self-Regulation Scores among Income Levels*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	58.558	4	14.639	1.006	.410
Within Groups	1135.539	78	14.558		
Total	1194.096	82			

Table 18

*Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for Self-Regulation ASDS Scores*

Income Level	N	M	SD
Less Than \$10,000/Year	7	14.14	3.671
\$10,001- \$30,000/Year	19	12.26	4.532
\$30,001 - \$50,000/Year	22	14.05	3.684
\$50,001 - \$70,000/Year	16	14.44	3.306
Above \$70,000/Year	19	14.32	3.622

Table 19

*One-Way ANOVA Results for Psychological Empowerment Scores among Income Levels*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	12.387	4	3.097	.415	.797
Within Groups	581.613	78	7.457		
Total	594.000	82			

Table 20

*Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for Psychological Empowerment ASDS**Scores*

Income Level	N	M	SD
Less Than \$10,000/Year	7	14.29	2.984
\$10,001- \$30,000/Year	19	13.47	3.025
\$30,001 - \$50,000/Year	22	14.50	2.365
\$50,001 - \$70,000/Year	16	13.75	3.066
Above \$70,000/Year	19	14.05	2.415

Table 21

*One-Way ANOVA Results for Self-Realization Scores among Income Levels*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	7.684	4	1.921	.661	.621
Within Groups	226.725	78	2.907		
Total	234.410	82			

Table 22

*Income Level, Ns, Means, and Standard Deviations for Self-Realization ASDS Scores*

Income Level	N	M	SD
Less Than \$10,000/Year	7	11.14	2.734
\$10,001- \$30,000/Year	19	12.00	1.599
\$30,001 - \$50,000/Year	22	12.18	1.763
\$50,001 - \$70,000/Year	16	12.31	1.250
Above \$70,000/Year	19	12.21	1.619

As can be observed on Tables 13 – 22, no significant F-values were found for these analyses comparing the ASDS total and four sub-domain scores across income levels.

*Research Question 5*

Is there a significant amount of variance accounted for in predicting each of the four criterion variables (ASDS total score and the four ASDS sub-domain scores) from the set of four

predictor variables (student classification, Gender, family income, and GPA)? A regression analysis was used to examine total scores of self-determination skills and individual domain scores from each of the variables and the criterion variable.

Using SPSS, version 12.00, five standard multiple regression analyses were run to answer research question five. The purpose of these analyses was to investigate the relationship of the four independent variables (student classification, gender, family income and GPA) and ASDS total scores and the four sub-domain scores. More information on these analyses can be found in Appendix P. The model tested is displayed in Equation 1:

$$Y' = a + b_1\text{Student Classification} + b_2\text{Gender} + b_3\text{Family Income} + b_4\text{GPA} \quad (1)$$

The prediction of ASDS Total Scores was calculated using Equation 1 as follows:

$$\text{Total Score} = 88.554 + 1.718\text{Student classification} + 1.371\text{Gender} + 1.576\text{Family Income} + 6.376\text{GPA} \quad (2)$$

The multiple R for the equation was .274 which accounted for 7.5% of the variance in the criterion variable. The related ANOVA seen in Table 23 illustrates there was no significant predictors noted ( $p=.186$ ) for total ASDS total scores (see Appendix P, Table P1) for more details.

Table 23

*ANOVA Table for ASDS Total Scores*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	R <sup>2</sup>	p
Regression	1347.264	4	336.816	1.5888	.075	.186
Residual	16547.386	78	212.146			
Total	17894.651	82				

The prediction of Autonomy scores was calculated using Equation 1 as follows:

$$\text{Autonomy} = 58.878 + .828\text{Student classification} - 1.322\text{Gender} + 1.009\text{Family Income} + 4.025\text{GPA} \quad (3)$$

The multiple R for the equation was .208 which accounted for 4.3% of the variance in the criterion variable. From the related ANOVA seen in Table 24, there was no significance noted ( $p = .481$ ).

Table 24

*ANOVA Table for Autonomy Scores*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	R <sup>2</sup>	p
Regression	504.399	4	126.100	.879	-.043	.481
Residual	11194.830	78	143.523			
Total	11699.229	82				

The prediction of self-regulation scores was calculated using Equation 1 as follows:

$$\text{Self-Regulation} = 3.678 + .888\text{Student classification} + .992\text{Gender} + .360\text{Family Income} + 2.030\text{GPA} \quad (4)$$

The multiple R for the equation was .416 which accounted for 17.0% of the variance in the criterion variable. From the related ANOVA seen in Table 25, there was significance noted ( $p = .005$ ). Also both, student classification [ $t = 2.815$ ,  $p = .006$  (two-tailed)] and GPA [ $t = 2.176$ ,  $p = .033$  (two-tailed)] were significant predictors for the self-regulation sub-domain scores (see Appendix N, Table N3).

Table 25

*ANOVA Table for Self-Regulation Scores*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	R <sup>2</sup>	p
Regression	202.511	4	50.628	3.982	.170	.005*
Residual	991.586	78	12.713			
Total	1194.096	82				

\*p &lt; .05

The prediction of psychological empowerment scores was calculated using Equation 1 as follows:

$$\text{Psychological Empowerment} = 15.053 + .077\text{Student classification} - .996\text{Gender} + .056\text{Family Income} - .048\text{GPA} \quad (5)$$

The multiple R for the equation was .196 which accounted for 3% of the variance in the criterion variable. From the related ANOVA seen in Table 26, there was no significance noted (p = .657).

Table 26

*ANOVA Table for Psychological Empowerment Scores*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	R <sup>2</sup>	p
Regression	18.018	4	4.505	.610	.030	.657
Residual	575.982	78	7.384			
Total	594.000	82				

The prediction of self-realization scores was calculated using Equation 1 as follows:

$$\text{Self-Realization} = 10.945 - .075\text{Student classification} - .075\text{Gender} + .152\text{Family Income} + .370\text{GPA} \quad (6)$$

The multiple R for the equation was .174 which accounted for 3% of the variance in the criterion variable. From the related ANOVA seen in Table 27, there was no significance noted ( $p = .183$ ).

Table 27

*ANOVA Table for Self-Realization Scores*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	R <sup>2</sup>	p
Regression	7.089	4	1.772	.680	.030	.658
Residual	227.321	78	2.914			
Total	234.410	82				

## CHAPTER 5

### Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the levels of self-determination skills of a select sample of African American students with learning disabilities who attend two selected Historically Black Colleges or Universities and who are enrolled in a LD program or disability services at their school. The current study had a combined 83 participants who met all of the requirements to qualify in this study. This current study helps to fill a void in the study of self-determination skills of students with LD, by conducting this investigation in a postsecondary setting seldom studied. The instruments used in this study were The Arc's Self-Determination Scale (ASDS) and a short demographic information sheet. The ASDS provides a total score as well as four sub-domain scores of self-determination. The short demographic information sheet included information on the participant's gender, race, student classification, family income level, attendance of public or private high school and other key demographic information.

A negatively skewed distribution was found for the total ASDS total scores, which indicated that the majority of the participants in the study had at least a minimally satisfactory level of self-determination skills. In Wehmeyer's (1995) study, norm scores for ASDS total scores were reported for a sample of secondary school students with LD. The mean score for the students with LD in the norm group was 102 (rounded). In the current study the mean scores for ASDS total scores was 112.77. This means that 83% of the students scored at or above the mean score of the norm group in this current study. This further indicates that a large percentage of the sample in this study poses at least a minimum level of self-determination skills. It was also

found in the current study that 17% of the students fell below the norm group's mean for total ASDS scores. This indicates that they may need educational interventions to improve overall self-determination skills. Rasheed (2005) in a similar study conducted with college students with LD reported a mean score of 111.46 out of a possible 148 points for total ASDS scores. This current study found that 59% of the students scored at or above the mean score of Rasheed 2005 study done at the university level. Although Rasheed's mean score for total ASDS is slightly lower than the overall mean score in the current study it was a rather large percent of students (41.7% in this current study) scored below the mean found in Rasheed's (2005) study. This indicates a larger number of students in the current study are in need of educational interventions to improve self-determination skills.

A Figure 2 in chapter 4 illustrates the negatively skewed distribution found for the sample for the sub-domain Autonomy. The scores in the autonomy sub-domain suggest that the majority of the participants in this study with LD have at least minimum satisfactory skills in autonomy. Wehmeyer (1995) reported norms for autonomy scores for a sample of secondary school students with LD. The mean autonomy score for the members of that norm group was 65 (rounded). For this current study 76% of the participants score at or above the mean score for the secondary school norm group for the autonomy sub-domain. This result further indicates that the majority of the participants in the current study have at least minimally satisfactory autonomy self-determination skills. However, 24% of the participants in this current study also have autonomy scores that are below the mean score for the secondary school norm group (Wehmeyer, 1995). The autonomy scores that fall below the mean of the norm group may suggest the need for educational interventions that will improve the Autonomy sub-domain scores and overall self-determinations skills of these students. When this study was compared to

Rasheed's (2005) study done at the university level, it was found that 59% of the students in this current study had autonomy scores at or higher than the mean of the Rasheed (2005) study.

A negatively skewed distribution was also found for the sample for the self-regulation scores. This finding suggests that the majority of the participants in this study with LD have minimally level satisfactory skills in the self-regulation sub-domain. Wehmeyer (1995) reported norms for Self-Regulation sub-domain scores for a sample of secondary school students with LD. The mean self-regulation score (rounded) for the members of that norm group was 11. This means that 77% of the participants in the current study score at or above the mean score for the secondary school norm group further illustrating that the majority of the participants in the current study have a minimum level of satisfactory self-regulation self-determination skills. This finding also illustrates that 23% of the participants in this current study have self-regulation scores that are below the mean score for Wehmeyer's secondary school norm group. It is possible that many of these individuals could be good candidates for educational interventions that will help improve their level of self-determination skills that are reflected in the self-regulation sub-domain. Rasheed (2005) reported self-regulation scores for a sample of university students. The current study found that 45% of the students in the study self-regulations scores were below the mean score of Rasheed's mean score of 14 (rounded). This further illustrates the need for academic assistance that will help improve self-regulations skills for the students in this current study.

A negatively skewed distribution was also found for this sample for the psychological empowerment sub-domain scores. These finding suggest that the majority of the participants in this study with LD have at least a minimum level of skills in this sub-domain. Wehmeyer (1995) reported norms for psychological empowerment scores for a sample of secondary school students

with LD. The mean Psychological Empowerment score for the members of that norm group was 14 (rounded). Out of the participants in this study 71% scored above the mean score of the secondary school norm group from Wehmeyer's study. This again suggests that the students from this study at two Historically Black Colleges and Universities have at least minimally satisfactory psychological empowerment sub-domain skills. However, 29% of the participants in the current study have psychological empowerment scores that are below norm for secondary schools. The exact same results were found when examining the percentages of students that were above and below the mean of the Rasheed (2005) study conducted on a college campus. For the participants in this current study 71% of the students scored at or above the mean for psychological empowerment sub-domain of the study done by Rasheed (2005). These findings are further evidence that students in this study have a minimum level of satisfactory level of skills in this domain. The current study also has 29% of the students whose mean score were under the similar study conducted on a university campus. It is very possible that many of these individuals could be good candidates for academic services directed at increasing their level of self-determination skills reflected in the psychological empowerment sub-domain.

A negatively skewed distribution was found for the sample for the self-realization sub-domain scores, suggesting that the majority of the participants in this study with LD have at least minimum satisfactory skills in this sub-domain. Wehmeyer (1995) reported norms for self-realization scores for a sample of secondary school students with LD. The mean self-realization score for the members of that norm group was 12 (rounded). In the current study 67% of the participants scored at or above the mean score for the norm group. This is evidence that the majority of the participants in this current study have at least minimally satisfactory self-determination skills. The findings also indicate that 33% of the participants in the current study

have self-realization scores that are below the mean score for the secondary school norm group. These findings suggest that many of the individuals could be candidates for academic interventions directed at increasing their level of self-determination skills reflected in the self-realization sub-domain. The exact same results were found when examining the percentages of students that were above and below the mean of Rasheed (2005) study conducted on a college campus. For the participants in this current study 67% of the students scored at or above the mean for Self-Realization sub-domain of the study done by Rasheed (2005). These findings are further evidence that students in this study have a minimally satisfactory level of skills in this domain. The current study also has 33% of the students whose mean score were under the similar study conducted on a university campus. It is very possible that many of these individuals could be good candidates for academic interventions and services directed to help increase their level of self-determination skills reflected in the self-realization sub-domain.

For research question two which examined whether there were significant student classification differences for ASDS total scores and for each of the four ASDS sub-domain. It was no significant finding. There were no significance found when comparing each of the individual student classifications and sub-domains. However, some student classification comparisons in the sub-domains approached a significance level of  $p=.05$  in this investigation. For example juniors mean score in the self-regulation sub-domain was 15 (rounded) compared to freshman 12 (rounded). This indicates that juniors were nearly statistically significantly more likely to have higher self-determination skill scores than freshman  $t -1.95, p=.058$ . A similar finding was identified in the self-regulation sub-domain which, found seniors mean total score 14 (rounded) freshman mean total score 12 (rounded), was nearly statistically significantly higher when t-test were run for this domain  $t -1.90, p=.064$ . These findings suggest that students in

higher classifications particularly upper level classifications, scored higher than freshman in the self-regulation behavior areas. Self-regulated behaviors include the development of self-management strategies, including self-monitoring, self-instruction, self-evaluation and self-reinforcement, goal setting and problem solving (Sands & Wehmeyer, 1996). It is clear from the results that more experienced students with learning disabilities at the college level in this study had a better understanding and skill set in the self-regulation sub domain. These findings are similar to those of Hudson (1994) who concluded in a study conducted at historically black college on learning disability students that it was a statistically significant difference ( $T = -9.04$ ,  $P < .02$ ) in the students' entry level academic achievement and their academic achievement after receiving support services for one academic year. Although academic achievement is not the focus of this particular research question, it can be argued that skills in the self-regulation sub-domain increase as the students gain more experience that could help improve their overall self-determination skills. Rasheed (2005) found no significant differences (t-test) when age groups were compared for the ASDS total score or any of its sub-domains. Rasheed concluded that, perhaps, the older students in the study had more opportunities than the younger students in the study to learn self-determination skills in the work setting or in school settings.

Another explanation for the findings in student classifications and self-regulation scores in this study may be illustrated in the fact that both schools in which the students participated in this study are considered comprehensive programs for support services. Brinckerhoff indicates that comprehensive programs have some of the following advantages: diagnostic testing, individualized educational programs, personal academic advisement, and tutoring (Brinckerhoff, 1996; T. M. Williams, 1998). It can be assumed that the longer the students in this study were in school the stronger the opportunity to get help getting clearer understanding of self-regulation

skills such as goal setting which may equate to choosing a major or better understanding of career goals after school.

According to the results of the correlation analysis conducted for research question three in this study, GPA was significantly and positively correlated with the self regulation sub-domain. The higher a student scored on the ASDS sub-domain self-regulation, the higher was her or his GPA. Self-regulated behaviors include the development of self-management strategies, including self-monitoring, self- instruction, self-evaluation and self-reinforcement, goal setting and problem solving (Sands & Wehmeyer, 1996). These findings support research done by other researchers. For example Sarver (2000) conducted a study at a major university campus with 88 students with LD who were registered with the office for Students with Disabilities and reported a positive and statistically significant relationship between grade point average and their levels of self-determination (Field, Sarver, & Shaw, 2003; Sarver, 2000). In another study conducted in a university setting, Rasheed (2005) reported GPA was statically significantly and positively correlated with ASDS total scores and with the autonomy sub-domain scores. Rasheed reported that higher a student scored in the autonomy sub-domain the more likely the GPA was higher for that student (Rasheed, 2005). It can be assumed for this current study that the skill sets available in the self regulation sub-domain lead to positive education outcomes like GPA for students at the college level.

For research question four there were no statically significant differences (ANOVAs) among the income groups in the study (less than \$10,000 a year, between \$10,001-\$30,000 a year, between \$31,001-\$50,000 a year, between \$50,001-\$70,000 a year, or above \$70,000 a year) for the ASDS total score, or any of its sub-domain scores. These findings are similar to

those of Rasheed (2005), which also observed no significant differences when examining income and self-determination ASDS scores and sub-domain scores.

The final research question focused on identifying possible predictors of self-determination skills in college students with LD who attend two historical black colleges or universities. From the set of four predictor or independent variables (gender, student classification, GPA, and family income) five regression analyses were used to examine total scores of self-determination skills and individual domain scores from each of the variables and the criterion variable. In this study the results showed variables of Student classification and GPA to be significant predictors for ASDS self-regulation sub-domain scores. The regression analysis results were not surprising. For example, self-regulation proved to be significant when t-test were run to examined, both student classification and GPA, and the regression analysis also yielded these two variables as significant predictors of ASDS total scores and the self-regulation domain. These findings differ from Rasheed's (2005) findings which found gender to be a significant predictor of ASDS total scores and self-regulation scores and GPA to be a significant predictor to ASDS total scores and autonomy scores. Although gender was not utilized in the current study as an independent research question, a t-test was run comparing gender and no significance was found between gender and ASDS scores and the four sub-domain scores. The findings regarding gender not being a predictor in this current study is not a surprise due to early analysis on that independent variable.

#### Implications for Practice

Self-determination has become a gold standard for teaching students with disabilities to take control of their lives (Karvonen, Test, Wood, Browder, & Algozzine, 2004). For a couple of decades the federal government has emphasized the importance of self-determination skills for

persons with disabilities including students with learning disabilities (Brinckerhoff, 1996; Brinckerhoff & et al., 1992; Rasheed, 2005; Wehmeyer et al., 1995; Wehmeyer, Palmer, Soukup, Garner, & Lawrence, 2007). The results of this study suggest that the need for Self-Determination skills should be concentrated more on high school students who are making a transition to college. The need for lifelong self-determination skills has been documented, however; the findings from this study suggest that even more concentrated academic interventions for students coming to the end of their K-12 experience should be implemented by administrators and teachers. Both universities in this study have summer programs for freshman to enter until prior to entering college for the fall of their freshman year. Based on the results of this study administrators at the two universities may want to consider a way to offer a curriculum during the summer that would boost the self-determination skills of the freshman entering class of LD students. It is a particular need for the self-regulation sub-domain to be area of emphasis for that freshman entering class.

As an overall group the sample population in this study displayed at least a minimum level of total self-determination skills. However, a good percentage of students scored below the minimum level of ASDS total scores and the four sub-domain scores. This indicates that a golden opportunity exists on these two campuses to have professors, administrators, counselors, peers, and other professionals on campus help train the student LD population to increase self-determination skills on campus.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in terms of the population sampled and the geographic region that the sample was drawn from. The study was limited to getting the self-determination skills and some basic demographic information of the sample population. Third, the study is limited to

public HBCU schools, not allowing for comparisons between similar samples at private HBCUs. Due to the limitations above, this study is not representative of other regions located in other states that serve college students with learning disabilities; therefore, any generalizing of the results at universities other than the two HBCUs should be done with caution. Another limitation of the study was that age of participants in this study was not collected. This makes it hard for the researcher to account for nontraditional students who could have been part of the sample. The researcher was also not able to collect any variables on possible non-respondents from the sample population of this study.

Another limitation in the current study is that the students' income levels were not verified by any documentation. This, consequently, could impact the accuracy of the students' self-report of their parent(s)' income and does not take into account hardship situations such as foster home centers.

Another limitation of this, study was that a comparison of self-determination by race and ethnicity was not feasible because majority of participants were African American (94%).

#### Recommendations for Future Research

Future research concerning college students with LD and self-determination skills should focus on student classification and GPA. Student classification is particularly important in the researcher's view because other researchers who have studied self-determination in LD on the college level have left first year students out of part of the analysis (Rasheed, 2005). Researchers who have left freshman in the analysis have required a minimum number of hours completed. Some of the hour requirements have been as high as thirty hours, which on some campuses equates to being considered a sophomore (Sarver, 2000). This study suggest that more research

should be conducted that determines the self-determination skills of college freshman as a possible base line to determine an entry level for self-determination skills.

In future research it is important that more studies like this one be conducted at Historically Black College or Universities to add to the literature and help gain an understanding of what students in these particular settings may need in regards to self-determination skills. In future research one may want to compare the self-determination skills of students from a majority state school versus a Historically Black College or Universities state school to see if there any significant differences. This type of analysis may be critical in addressing policy implications and intervention issues as they relate to services provided for students with LD in these two different educational settings.

Future research on the population that participated in this study would be important to give an idea of long term self-determination skills improvement or decline. For example it would be ideal to get analysis of graduation rates and lifetime outcomes (i.e. jobs after graduation, social networks, health and well being for those who scored high on ASDS total and sub-domain scales versus the students that scored lower). A future research study might also want to examine self-determination skills at the college level using a control group versus a group of college students who receive self-determination academic training for a period of time to access the differences in ASDS scores.

Future research that focuses on college students with LD and self-determination skills might want to focus on students who get diagnosis early with LD i.e. elementary school or middle school versus those who receive a diagnoses in high school or even college. This will particularly be helpful when examining African American college students with LD. Historically African American students with disabilities have been misdiagnosed and under

diagnosed or have not received the proper interventions to help with advocacy skills needed to be successful with LD (Combes & Durodoye, 2002; Grant & Grant, 2002; Talbert-Johnson, 2001; Warner et al., 2002).

It is the researcher's hope that this research study will inform the conversation on how to better serve students pursuing college options living with learning disabilities. This research provides researchers and academic services providers, such as learning disability centers and special education departments in k-12 and higher education a view of self-determination skills of African Americans in LD support programs at two Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The researchers only ask that future researchers, services providers, community and family members continue to work to ensure that we create an environment where persons living with learning disabilities have opportunities to have positive life outcomes and live self-determined lives.

## REFERENCES

- Adelman, P. B., & Vogel, S. A. (1990). College Graduates with Learning Disabilities-- Employment Attainment and Career Patterns. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 13(3), 154-166.
- Anderson, J. D. (1988). *The education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Aune, E. (1991). A Transition Model for Postsecondary-Bound Students with Learning Disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, 6(3), 177-187.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action : a social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A., & et al. (1996). Multifaceted Impact of Self-Efficacy Beliefs on Academic Functioning. *Child Development*, 67(3), 1206-1222.
- Barr, V. M., Harman, R. C., & Spillane, S., A. (1995, January 7, 2005). *Getting Ready for College: Advising High School Students with Learning Disabilities*. Retrieved January 12, 2005, from [www.ldonline.org/ld\\_indepth/postsecondary/hrc\\_gettingready.html](http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/postsecondary/hrc_gettingready.html)
- Brinckerhoff, L. C. (1994). Developing Effective Self-Advocacy Skills in College-Bound Students with Learning Disabilities. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 29(4), 229-237.
- Brinckerhoff, L. C. (1996). Making the Transition to Higher Education: Opportunities for Student Empowerment. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 29(2), 118-136.

- Brinckerhoff, L. C., & et al. (1992). Promoting Access, Accommodations, and Independence for College Students with Learning Disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 25(7), 417-429.
- Bureau, U. S. C. (2006). *American Fact Finder, Population Finder*. Retrieved January 4, 2006, from [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFPopulation?\\_submenuId=population\\_0&\\_sse=on](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFPopulation?_submenuId=population_0&_sse=on)
- Burnette, J. (1996). Including students with disabilities in general education classrooms: from policy to practice. *Eric Review*, 4(3), 1-13.
- Byrnes, M. (2002). *Taking sides. clashing views on controversial issues in special education* (1st ed.). Guilford, Conn.: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin.
- Caraway, K., Tucker, C. M., Reinke, W. M., & Hall, C. (2003). Self-Efficacy, Goal Orientation, and Fear of Failure as Predictors of School Engagement in High School Students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 40(4), 417-427.
- Carrier, J. G. (1986). *Learning disability : social class and the construction of inequality in American education*. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Cokley, K. (2002). The Impact of College Racial Composition on African American Students' Academic Self-Concept: A Replication and Extension. *Journal of Negro Education*, 71(4), 288-296.
- Cokley, K. O. (2003). What Do We Know about the Motivation of African American Students? Challenging the "Anti-Intellectual" Myth. *Harvard Educational Review*, 73(4), 524-558.

- Colarusso, R. P., Keel, M. C., & Dangel, H. L. (2001). A Comparison of Eligibility Criteria and Their Impact on Minority Representation in LD Programs. *Learning Disabilities: Research & Practice, 16*(1), 1-7.
- Combes, B. H., & Durodoye, B. A. (2002). Transitioning African American high school students with disabilities. In F. E. Obiakor & B. A. Ford (Eds.), *Creating successful learning environments for African American learners with exceptionalities* (pp. 175-189). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press.
- Cosden, M. A., & McNamara, J. (1997). Self-Concept and Perceived Social Support among College Students with and without Learning Disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 20*(1), 2-12.
- Dillman, D. A. (1978). *Mail and telephone surveys : the total design method*. New York: Wiley.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1993). *The souls of Black folk*. New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House.
- Dunn, L. M. (1968). Special education for the mildly retarded: Is much of it justifiable? *Exceptional Children, 35*(1), 5-22.
- Field, S., & Hoffman, A. (1998). Self-Determination: An Essential Element of Successful Transitions. *Reaching Today's Youth: The Community Circle of Caring Journal, 2*(4), 37-40.
- Field, S., Martin, J., Miller, R., Ward, M., & Wehmeyer, M. (1998). *A Practical Guide for Teaching Self-Determination*. (No. ISBN: 0-86586-301-6). U.S. Virginia: Council for Exceptional Children V. A. Div of Career Development Transition.

- Field, S., Sarver, M. D., & Shaw, S. F. (2003). Self-Determination: A Key to Success in Postsecondary Education for Students with Learning Disabilities. *Remedial and Special Education, 24*(6ov-Dec), 339.
- Franklin, V. P. (1984). *Black self-determination : a cultural history of the faith of the fathers*. Westport, Conn.: L. Hill.
- Gerber, P. J., & Reiff, H. B. (1993). *Learning disabilities in adulthood : persisting problems and evolving issues*. Boston ; London: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Grant, P. A., & Grant, P. B. (2002). Working with African-American students with specific learning disabilities. In F. E. Obiakor & B. A. Ford (Eds.), *Creating successful learning environments for African American learners with exceptionalities*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press.
- Gregg, J., & Persichitte, K. C. A. U. o. N. C. G. W. I. f. D. E. (1992). *Considerations for the Optimal Design of a Two-Way Interactive Distance Education Classroom*. Access ERIC: FullText. U.S.; Colorado.
- Gregg, N., & et al. (1992). The MMPI-2 Profile of Adults with Learning Disabilities in University and Rehabilitation Settings. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 25*(6), 386-395.
- Gryphon, M., & Salisbury, D. (2002). *Escaping IDEA: Freeing Parents, Teachers, and Students through Deregulation and Choice*. Policy Analysis. (No. ED 470 823). U.S.; District of Columbia: Cato Inst Washington D. C.
- Hall, C. W., Spruill, K. L., & Webster, R. E. (2002). Motivational and Attitudinal Factors in College Students with and without Learning Disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 25*(2), 79-86.

- Hallahan, D. P., Mercer, C.D. (2002). Learning disabilities: Historical perspectives. In R. Bradley, Danielson, L.C., Hallahan, D.P. (Ed.), *Identification of learning disabilities: Research to practice*. (pp. 1-67). Mahwah, N.J: L. Erlbaum Publishers.
- Hampton, N. Z., & Mason, E. (2003). Learning Disabilities, Gender, Sources of Efficacy, Self-Efficacy Beliefs, and Academic Achievement in High School Students. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*(2), 101-112.
- Hartman-Hall, H. M., & Haaga, D. A. F. (2002). College Students' Willingness To Seek Help for Their Learning Disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 25*(4), 263-274.
- Healey, B. (1996). *Learning disabilities online: Helping parents deal with the fact that their child has a disability*. Retrieved April 23, 2004, from [http://www.ldonline.org/ld\\_indepth/teaching\\_techniques/helping\\_parents.html](http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/helping_parents.html)
- Hefner, D. (2004). Where the Boys Aren't: The Decline of Black Males in Colleges and Universities Has Sociologists and Educators Concerned about the Future of the African American Community. *Black Issues in Higher Education, 21*(9), 70.
- Hoy, C., Gregg, N., Wisenbaker, J., Manglitz, E., King, M., & Moreland, E. (1997). Depression and Anxiety in Two Groups of Adults with Learning Disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 20*(4), 280-291.
- Hudson, W. E., Sr. (1994). *The relationship of college support services to the success of students with learning disabilities attending a historically black university.*, The Florida State University, United States -- Florida.
- Irvine, J. J. (1990). *Black students and school failure : policies, practices, and prescriptions*. New York: Greenwood Press.

- Jameson, D. R. (2002). *Self-determination and success outcomes of two-year college students with disabilities: An integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Unpublished 3045329, University of New Hampshire, United States -- New Hampshire.
- Karvonen, M., Test, D. W., Wood, W. M., Browder, D., & Algozzine, B. (2004). Putting Self-Determination Into Practice. *Exceptional Children*, 71(1), 23-41.
- Kerka, S. (1998). *Adults with Learning Disabilities*. (No. EDO-CE-98-189). Columbus O. H.
- Kunjufu, J. (1984). *Countering the conspiracy to destroy black boys* (Rev. ed.). Chicago: Afro-Am Pub. Co.
- Kunjufu, J. (1985). *Countering the conspiracy to destroy Black boys* ([V.1] Rev. ed.). Chicago: African American Images.
- Landau, J. K., Vohs, J. R., & Romano, C. A. (1998). *All kids count including students with disabilities in statewide assessment programs*. Boston  
Washington, DC: Federation for Children with Special Needs  
U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement Educational  
Resources Information Center.
- Last, J. M., Abramson, J. H., & International Epidemiological Association. (1995). *A dictionary of epidemiology* (3rd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lyon, G. R. (1998). Learning disabilities. In K. L. Freiberg (Ed.), *Educating exceptional children* (10th ed., pp. 49-70). Guilford, CT: Dushkin-McGraw-Hill.
- McCarthy, M. (2000). Inclusion of children with disabilities: Seeking the appropriate balance. In K. L. Freiberg (Ed.), *Educating exceptional children* (12th ed., pp. 8-11). Guilford, CT: Dushkin-McGraw-Hill.

- Mercer, C. D., & Mercer, A. R. (1996). *Students with learning disabilities* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill.
- Needleman, H. L. C. s. H. M. C., Boston, MA), Gunnoe, C., Leviton, A., Reed, R., Peresie, H., Maher, C., et al. (1979). Deficits in psychologic and classroom performance of children with elevated dentine lead levels. *New Engl. J. Med.* ; *Vol/Issue: 300:13*, Pages: 689-695.
- Oakes, J. (1992). Can Tracking Research Inform Practice? Technical, Normative, and Political Considerations. *Educational Researcher*, *21*(4), 12-21.
- Ogbu, J. U. (1994). Racial Stratification and Education in the United States: Why Inequality Persists. *Teachers College Record*, *96*(2), 264-298.
- Peterson, B. L. (2003). *Peterson's colleges with programs for students with learning disabilities or attention deficit disorders* (Vol. v.; 28cm.). Lawrenceville, NJ.: Peterson's.
- Peterson, L. Y. (2004). *College students with disabilities: Building self-determination and self-efficacy*. Unpublished 3138526, The University of Oklahoma, United States -- Oklahoma.
- Prater, L. P. (2002). African-American families: Equal partners in general and special education. In F. E. Obiakor & B. A. Ford (Eds.), *Creating successful learning environments for African American learners with exceptionalities*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press.
- Preston, B. L., Warren, R. C., Wooten, S. M., Gragg, R. D., 3rd, & Walker, B. (2001). Environmental health and antisocial behavior: implications for public policy. *J Environ Health*, *63*(9), 9-19; quiz 33-14.
- Rasheed, S. (2005). *Self-Determination in Postsecondary Students with Learning Disabilities and their Correlates*. Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, United States -- Illinois.
- Salant, P., & Dillman, D. A. (1994). *How to conduct your own survey*. New York: Wiley.

- Sands, D. J., & Wehmeyer, M. L. (Eds.). (1996). *Self-determination across the life span : independence and choice for people with disabilities*. Baltimore: P.H. Brookes Pub.
- Sarver, M. D. (2000). *A study of the relationship between personal and environmental factors bearing on self-determination and the academic success of university students with learning disabilities*. Unpublished 9984478, University of Florida, United States -- Florida.
- Schmidt, S. F., Curtis, R. S., & Gregg, N. (1996). Introduction: Multiple factors impacting the assessment and instruction of African-American adolescents and adults with learning disabilities. In N. Gregg, R. S. Curtis, S. F. Schmidt, University of Georgia. Learning Disabilities Research and Training Center. & Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation. Learning Disabilities Research and Training Center. (Eds.), *African American adolescents and adults with learning disabilities : an overview of assessment issues*. Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia.
- Sissoko, M., & Shiau, L.-R. (2005). Minority Enrollment Demand for Higher Education at Historically Black Colleges and Universities from 1976 to 1998: An Empirical Analysis. *Journal of Higher Education*, 76(2), 181.
- Smith, C. R. (1998). *Learning disabilities : the interaction of learner, task, and setting* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Suggs, E. (2007, September 27). A parade of events marches in. *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, p. JE4.
- Talbert-Johnson, C. (2001). The quest for equity: Maintaining African American teachers in special education. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 70(4), 286-297.

- Thornton, C. H. (2004). Value Orientations: A Study of Black College Students. *College Student Journal*, 38(1), 103.
- Timmreck, T. C. (1994). *An introduction to epidemiology*. Boston: Jones and Bartlett.
- Vogel, S. A., & Adelman, P. B. (1992). The Success of College Students with Learning Disabilities: Factors Related to Educational Attainment. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 25(7), 430-441.
- Wagner, M. M. (1995). Outcomes for youths with serious emotional disturbance in secondary school and early adulthood. *The Future of Children: Critical Issues for Children and Youths*, 5(2), 90-112.
- Ward, M. J. (1996). Coming of Age in the Age of Self-Determination: A Historical and Personal Perspective. In D. J. Sands & M. L. Wehmeyer (Eds.), *Self-determination across the life span: independence and choice for people with disabilities* (pp. xxi, 353). Baltimore: P.H. Brookes Pub.
- Warner, T. D., Dede, D. E., Garvan, C. W., & Conway, T. W. (2002). One Size Still Does Not Fit All in specific learning disability assessment across ethnic groups. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 35(6), 500-508.
- Wehmeyer, M. L. (1995). The Arc's self-determination scale procedural guidelines [microform]. Arlington, Tex. and Washington, DC: Arc of the U.S. ; U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement Educational Resources Information Center.
- Wehmeyer, M. L. (1996). Self-determination as an educational outcome: why is it important to children, youth, and adults with disabilities? In D. J. Sands & M. L. Wehmeyer (Eds.), *Self-determination across the life span : independence and choice for people with disabilities* (pp. xxi, 353). Baltimore: P.H. Brookes Pub.

- Wehmeyer, M. L. (2002). *Self-determination and the education of students with disabilities*, from <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS44738>
- Wehmeyer, M. L., Agran, M., & Hughes, C. (1997). *Teaching self-determination to students with disabilities : basic skills for successful transition*. Baltimore: P.H. Brookes Pub. Co.
- Wehmeyer, M. L., Agran, M., & Hughes, C. (2000). A National Survey of Teachers' Promotion of Self-Determination and Student-Directed Learning. *Journal of Special Education*, 34(2), 58-68.
- Wehmeyer, M. L., Kelchner, K., & Educational Resources Information Center (U.S.). (1995). *Whose future is it anyway? a student-directed transition planning process [microform]*. Arlington, TX  
Washington, DC: ARC National Headquarters ;  
U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement Educational Resources Information Center.
- Wehmeyer, M. L., Palmer, S. B., Soukup, J. H., Garner, N. W., & Lawrence, M. (2007). Self-Determination and Student Transition Planning Knowledge and Skills: Predicting Involvement. *Exceptionality*, 15(1), 31-44.
- Williams, K. (1998). *An Evaluation of The National Dental Association and Colgate Palmolive Scholarship Program*. Unpublished Thesis, Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Williams, T. M. (1998). *Life after High School: Transitional Issues for Learning Disabled Students*. Chicago, Illinois: Chicago State University.
- Worth, R. (1999). The Scandal of Special Ed. *Washington Monthly*, 31(6), 34-38.

APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

## Recruitment Flyer School 1

**EARN \$10.00 CASH**

If you are a student with a LEARNING DISABILITY and are currently registered in TSU's Disabled Student Services Program or receive services, **you are eligible to earn \$10 cash by participating in a research study that will only take 30 to 40 minutes of your time.** The purpose of this study is to investigate the levels of self-determination skills of students with learning disabilities who attend two selected Historically Black Universities, and who are enrolled in a disability services program at their school.

To be eligible for participation in the study you must:

- Have a Learning Disability
- Be registered in school this semester and enrolled or receive support from Your Disabled Student Services Center at your school.
- Completely fill out and return the demographics questionnaire, and The Arc's Self-Determination survey

**The questionnaire and survey will be available for you to complete in your Disabled Student Services Center room 117 in the Floyd-Payne Campus Center and the Disabilities Lab room 003 in Kean Hall. This will begin Monday, October 23, 2006 through Friday, November 10, 2006 during office hours of 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Someone from the DSS staff will be available to hand out both, the questionnaire and survey and answer any questions or provide assistance (writing or reading) if requested.**

Remember, it takes about 30 to 40 minutes to complete the survey.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Kevin B. Williams or Steven McCrary at (615) 963-7872 or (706) 255-8592

Thank you in advance for participating in this study.

## APPENDIX B

## Recruitment E-mail School 1

If you are a student with a LEARNING DISABILITY and are currently registered in TSU's Disabled Student Services Program or receive services, **you are eligible to earn \$10 cash by participating in a research study that will only take 30 to 40 minutes of your time.** The purpose of this study is to investigate the levels of self-determination skills of students with learning disabilities who attend two selected Historically Black Universities, and who are enrolled in a disability services program at their school.

To be eligible for participation in the study you must:

- Have a Learning Disability
- Be registered in school this semester and enrolled or receive support from Your Disabled Student Services Center at your school.
- Completely fill out and return the demographics questionnaire, and The Arc's Self-Determination survey

**The questionnaire and survey will be available for you to complete in your Disabled Student Services Center room 117 in the Floyd-Payne Campus Center and the Disabilities Lab room 003 in Kean Hall. This will begin Monday, October 23, 2006 through Friday, November 10, 2006 during office hours of 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Someone from the DSS staff will be available to hand out both, the questionnaire and survey and answer any questions or provide assistance (writing or reading) if requested.**

Remember, it takes about 30 to 40 minutes to complete the survey.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Kevin B. Williams or Steven McCrary at (615) 963-7872 or (706) 255-8592

## APPENDIX C

## What exactly is Self-Determination?

Refers to “acting as the primary causal agent in one’s life and making choices and decisions regarding one’s quality of life free from undue external influence or interference” (Wehmeyer, 1995, p. 22). (1) the individual acted autonomously; (2) the behaviors were self-regulated; (3) the person initiated and responded to event(s) in a psychologically empowered manner; and (4) the person acted in a self-realizing manner (Wehmeyer, 1995, p. 22). For example: You are having a particularly rough time with a certain course. How assertive are you in seeking assistance from the professor or others so that you will learn more and earn a higher grade on the next exam? Or, how self-determined are you in reaching your goal?

Level of Self-Determination is determined by the extent to which an individual:

1. Acts on basis of her or his independent beliefs
2. Sets goals and performs tasks to reach them
3. Believes that she or he can influence her or his own outcomes
4. Knows of her or his own strengths and weakness and how to benefit from that knowledge

This survey will address each of these areas.

## APPENDIX D

## Recruitment Flyer School 2



## EARN \$10.00 CASH

If you are a student with a LEARNING DISABILITY and are currently registered in FAMU's Learning Development and Evaluation Center (LDEC) or receive services, **you are eligible to earn \$10 cash by participating in a research study that will only take 30 to 40 minutes of your time.** The purpose of this study is to investigate the levels of self-determination skills of students with learning disabilities who attend two selected Historically Black Universities, and who are enrolled in a disability services program at their school.

To be eligible for participation in the study you must:

- Have a Learning Disability
- Be registered in school this semester and enrolled or receive support from Your Disabled Student Services Center at your school.
- Completely fill out and return the demographics questionnaire, and The Arc's Self-Determination survey

**The questionnaire and survey will be available for you to complete in the Learning Development and Evaluation Center 667 Ardelia Court Tallahassee, Fl 32307 This will begin Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup> through Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006 during office hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Someone from the LDEC staff will be available to hand out both, the questionnaire and survey and answer any questions or provide assistance (writing or reading) if requested.**

Remember, it takes about 30 to 40 minutes to complete the survey.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Kevin B. Williams (706) 255-8592 or Dr. Nathaniel Holmes at (850) 599-3180

Thank you in advance for participating in this study.

Note: Mr. Kevin B. Williams graduated from Florida A&M University in 1995 and was enrolled in the LDEC while a student at FAMU.

## APPENDIX E

## Recruitment E-mail School 2

Students,

## **Earn \$10.00 CASH FILLOUT SURVEY**

We wanted to make you aware that we have 1995 FAMU alumnus of the LDEC, Mr. Kevin B. Williams who is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Georgia visiting the Learning and Development Evaluation Center. Mr. Williams is conducting a dissertation study entitled “A Study of Self-Determination of Students with Learning Disabilities at Select Historically Black Colleges and Universities”. Please read the information below and act accordingly. The last day to participate in the study is **Friday December 8, 2006 5:00 pm, if you fit the description below you will be eligible to earn \$10.00 cash by participating in the research study that will only take 30 to 40 minutes of your time.**

### **Details Below:**

**The questionnaire and survey will be available for you to complete in the Learning Development Evaluation Center 667 Ardelia Court Tallahassee, FL 32307 From Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup> through Friday, December 8, 2006 during office hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.**

**Someone from the LDEC staff will be available to hand out the survey and answer any questions or provide assistance (writing or reading) if requested.**

Remember, it takes about 30 to 40 minutes to complete the survey.

**The purpose of this study is to investigate the levels of self-determination skills of students with learning disabilities who attend two selected Historically Black Universities, and who are enrolled in a disability services program at their school.**

To be eligible for participation in the study you must:

- Have a Learning Disability
- Registered in school this semester and enrolled or receive support from Your Learning Development Evaluation Center at your school.
- Completely fill out and return the demographics questionnaire, and The Arc’s Self-Determination survey

**For the students that have already participated in the study thank you for your time!**

~Mrs. Donna Shell, Nathaniel Holmes and Kevin B. Williams

Come by LDEC FAMU earn \$10.00 cash fill out survey last day December 8<sup>th</sup>

## APPENDIX F

## Demographic Information Sheet

ID # \_\_\_\_\_

1. Student Classification: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Sex: M \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is your Race/Ethnicity: (choose all that apply)
  - White
  - Black or African American \_\_\_\_\_
  - American Indian or Alaska Native \_\_\_\_\_
  - Asian \_\_\_\_\_
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander \_\_\_\_\_
  - Hispanic or Latino \_\_\_\_\_
  - not Hispanic or Latino \_\_\_\_\_
  - Some Other Race or Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_ Specify \_\_\_\_\_
5. City where you went to high school: \_\_\_\_\_
6. State where you went to high school: \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is/was your Parents' approximate yearly income?
  - Less than \$10,000 a year
  - \$10,001 to \$30, a year
  - \$ 31,001 to \$50,000 a year
  - \$50,001 to \$70,000 a year
  - above \$70,000 a year
8. Check what type of high school did you attended and circle how many years you attended that type of high school?
 

Public _____	Circle total years attended	1	2	3	4
Private _____	Circle total years attended	1	2	3	4
9. Population of high school: below 200 \_\_\_\_\_ 200-500 \_\_\_\_\_  
500-800 \_\_\_\_\_ 800-1,000 \_\_\_\_\_ 1,000 & above \_\_\_\_\_
10. If you have more than one disability, please list them in the order of their importance:
  - (a) \_\_\_\_\_
  - (b) \_\_\_\_\_
  - (c) \_\_\_\_\_
11. My current cumulative grade point average (GPA) is \_\_\_\_\_.

## APPENDIX G

Permission to Use Arc's Self-Determination Scale Instrument Designed  
by Dr. Michael Wehmeyer

Message Contents

Page 1 of 2

Delete Prev Next Reply/All Forward/Inline Open Inbox 319 of 380 [Go to](#) [Move](#) [Copy](#) In

**Date:** Fri 9 Jun 13:10:08 EDT 2006**From:** "Wehmeyer, Michael L" <wehmeyer@ku.edu> [Add To Address Book](#) | [This is Spam](#)**Subject:** RE: Requesting Permission to use The Arc's Self-Determination Scale**To:** "Kevin B. Williams" <kevinbw@uga.edu>**Cc:** "Dr. Derrick Alridge" <dalridge@uga.edu>, "Cecil Fore III" <cfore@uga.edu>, "Kevin B. Williams" <kevinbw@arches.uga.edu>

Kevin, you are certainly free to use The Arc's Self-Determination Scale as you've described. I would note that the original version was not normed with college students. I believe, however, that you have obtained a revised version developed by Dr. Saleem Rashaad that was normed, or at least used, with college students, so I presume that will address that issue.

Good luck with your research. I'd be very interested in learning how it comes out!

Mike

---

From: Kevin B. Williams [mailto:kevinbw@uga.edu]  
Sent: Fri 6/9/2006 12:07 PM  
To: Wehmeyer, Michael L  
Cc: Dr. Derrick Alridge; Cecil Fore III; Kevin B. Williams  
Subject: Requesting Permission to use The Arc's Self-Determination Scale

Dr. Michael L. Wehmeyer,

My name is Kevin B. Williams and I am a Ph.D candidate at the University of Georgia where Dr. Cecil Fore III and Dr. Derrick Alridge serve as my co-chairs for my dissertation research project entitled "A Study of Self-Determination of Students with Learning Disabilities at Select Historically Black Colleges and Universities". I am writing to request permission to use The Arc's Self-Determination Scale you originally developed. I reviewed "The Arc's Self-Determination Scale: Procedural Guidelines" and I will use the scale for research purposes, to study college students.

I will give you full credit for your instrument in all publications that the instrument is used or data derives from. Please respond to this e-mail with your response regarding using your instrument. Thank you in advance for your consideration on this matter. My contact information is below in case you have further questions.

Kevin B. Williams  
1248 Winburn Drive  
East Point, GA  
Cell # 706-255-8592

<https://punts4.cc.uga.edu/wm/mail/read.html?sessionid=5bf167c97a0592064f163f2feb306...> 7/14/2006

## Appendix H

## Permission to Use ARC's Self-Determination Scale Instrument Modified by Dr. Saleem Rasheed

INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
NORTHWEST

June 2, 2006

Kevin B. Williams  
1248 Winburn Drive  
East Point, GA 30344

SCHOOL OF  
EDUCATION



Dear Kevin:

This letter will serve as consent for you to use the survey instrument from my doctoral research. As you know, the instrument that I used was a modified version of the original work done by Dr. Michael Wehmeyer entitled, The Arc's Self-Determination Scale. I am giving you permission to use the instrument that I modified for my college age population, ask that it be used only for research purposes and not distributed in any other way, and that your research identify the original scale as the original source.

If I can provide additional support for your work, please feel free to contact me via phone at (219) 980 - 6519 or by e-mail at [srasheed@iun.edu](mailto:srasheed@iun.edu). Good luck in your research!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Saleem A. Rasheed'.

Saleem A. Rasheed, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, Special Education  
Indiana University Northwest  
School of Education  
Hawthorne Hall 353  
Gary, IN 46408  
PHONE: (219) 980 - 6519  
FAX: (219) 981 - 4208

Hawthorn Hall 354  
3400 Broadway  
Gary, Indiana  
46408-1197

219-980-6510  
Fax: 219-981-4208

## APPENDIX I

Arc's Self-Determination Scale Designed by Wehmeyer,  
Modified Version by Dr. Saleem Rasheed

**DIRECTIONS:** For each question, please indicate your response by circling the appropriate number below each question or statement - Select a 1, 2, 3, or 4. **THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS.**

**Possible Answers:**

**1 = I DO NOT EVEN IF I HAVE THE CHANCE**

**2 = I DO SOMETIMES WHEN I HAVE THE CHANCE**

**3 = I DO MOST OF THE TIME I HAVE THE CHANCE**

**4 = I DO EVERY TIME I HAVE THE CHANCE**

1. I make my own meals or snacks.

**1      2      3      4**

2. I care for my own clothes.

**1      2      3      4**

3. I do chores in my home.

**1      2      3      4**

4. I keep my own personal items together.

**1      2      3      4**

5. I do simple first-aid or medical care for myself.

**1      2      3      4**

6. I keep good personal care and grooming.

**1      2      3      4**

7. I make friends with others.

**1      2      3      4**

8. I use the post office.

**1      2      3      4**

9. I keep my appointments and meetings.

**1      2      3      4**

10. I deal with sales people at stores and restaurants.

**1      2      3      4**

11. I do free time activities based on my interests.

**1      2      3      4**

12. I plan weekend activities that I like to do.

**1      2      3      4**

13. I am involved in school-related activities.

**1      2      3      4**

14. My friends and I choose activities that we want to do.

**1      2      3      4**

15. I write letters, notes, or talk on the phone to friends and family.

**1      2      3      4**

16. I listen to music that I like.

**1      2      3      4**

17. I volunteer in things I am interested in.

**1      2      3      4**

18. I go to restaurants that I like.

**1      2      3      4**

19. I go to movies, concerts, and dances.

**1      2      3      4**

20. I go shopping or spend time at shopping centers or malls.

1      2      3      4

21. I take part in group activities.

1      2      3      4

**Possible Answers:**

**1 = I DO NOT EVEN IF I HAVE THE CHANCE**

**2 = I DO SOMETIMES WHEN I HAVE THE CHANCE**

**3 = I DO MOST OF THE TIME I HAVE THE CHANCE**

**4 = I DO EVERY TIME I HAVE THE CHANCE**

22. I do school and free time activities based on my career interests.

1      2      3      4

23. I work on school work that will improve my career chances.

1      2      3      4

24. I make long-range career plans.

1      2      3      4

25. I work or have worked to earn money.

1      2      3      4

26. I am in or have been in career job classes or training.

1      2      3      4

27. I have looked into job interests by visiting work sites or talking to people in that job.

1      2      3      4

28. I choose my clothes and the personal items I use every day.

1      2      3      4

29. I choose my own hairstyle.

1      2      3      4

30. I choose gifts to give to family and friends.

1      2      3      4

31. I decorate my own room.

1      2      3      4

32. I choose how to spend my personal money.

1      2      3      4

**Please answer the 9 written questions below now.**

**When you have finished answering them, begin again with the instruction that come before #42.**

33. **Beginning:** You are sitting in a planning meeting with your parents and your academic advisor. You want to major in History but your family wants you to major in something more practical like Accounting. You can only major in one.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**End:** The story ends with you majoring in History.

34. **Beginning:** You hear a friend talking about a new job opening at a local book store. You love books and want a job. You decide you would like to work at the book store.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**End:** The story ends with you working at the bookstore.

35. **Beginning:** Your friends are acting like they are mad at you. You are upset about this.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**End:** The story ends with you and your friends getting along just fine.

36. **Beginning:** You go to your English class one morning and discover your English book is not in your backpack. You are upset because you need that book to do your homework.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**End:** The story ends with you using your English book for homework.

37. **Beginning:** You are in a club at school. The club advisor announces that the club members will need to elect new officers at the next meeting. You want to be president of the club.

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**End:** The story ends with you being elected as the club president.

38. **Beginning:** You are at a new university and you don't know anyone. You want to have friends

**Middle:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**End:** The story ends with you having many friends at the new university.

39. Where do you want to live after you graduate?

[ ] I have not planned for that yet.

[ ] I want to live \_\_\_\_\_.

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_

40. Where do you want to work after you graduate?

I have not planned for that yet.

I want to work \_\_\_\_\_.

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_

41. What type of transportation do you plan to use after graduation?

I have not planned for that yet.

I plan to use \_\_\_\_\_.

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** For the next section, you will respond by either circling a 1 or a 2 next to the statement according to your response. The first answer is recorded as a “1” while the second is recorded as a “2”.

**Possible Answers:**

**First Answer = “1”**

**Second Answer = “2”**

42. I usually do what others want – **1**

I tell others if they are doing something I don’t want to do – **2**

43. I tell others when I have new or different ideas or opinions – **1**

I usually agree with other people’s opinions or ideas – **2**

44. I usually agree with people when they tell me I can’t do something – **1**

- I tell people when I think I can do something that they tell me I can't – 2
45. I tell people when they have hurt my feelings – 1  
I am afraid to tell people when they have hurt my feelings – 2
46. I can make my own decisions – 1  
Other people make decisions for me – 2
47. Trying hard at school doesn't do me much good – 1  
Trying hard at school will help me get a good job – 2
48. I can get what I want by working hard – 1  
I need good luck to get what I want – 2
49. It is no use to keep trying because that won't change things – 1  
I keep trying even after I get something wrong – 2
50. I have the ability to do the job I want – 1  
I cannot do what it takes to do the job I want – 2
51. I don't know how to make friends – 1  
I know how to make friends – 2
52. I am able to work with others – 1  
I cannot work well with others – 2
53. I do not make good choices – 1  
I can make good choices – 2
54. If I have the ability, I will be able to get the job I want – 1  
I probably will not get the job I want even if I have the ability – 2
55. I will have a hard time making new friends – 1  
I will be able to make new friends in new situations – 2
56. I will be able to work with others if I need to – 1  
I will not be able to work with others if I need to – 2

**Possible Answers:**

**First Answer = "1"**

**Second Answer = "2"**

57. My choices will not be honored – 1  
I will be able to make choices that are important to me – 2

**DIRECTIONS:** For this last section, tell whether you think each of these statements describes how you feel about yourself or not. **THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS.** You will respond by circling either a 1 or a 2 on the below each statement

according to your response. The answer of “Agree” is recorded as a “1” while the answer of “Don’t Agree” is recorded as a “2”.

**Possible Answers:**

**Agree = “1” below statement**

**or**

**Don’t Agree = “2” below statement**

58. I do NOT feel ashamed of any of my emotions.

**1      or      2**

59. I feel free to be angry at people I care for.

**1      or      2**

60. I can show my feelings even when people might see me.

**1      or      2**

61. I can like people even if I don’t agree with them.

**1      or      2**

62. I am afraid of doing things wrong.

**1      or      2**

63. It is better to be yourself than to be popular.

**1      or      2**

64. I am loved because I give love.

**1      or      2**

**Possible Answers:**

**Agree = “1” below statement**

**or**

**Don’t Agree = “2” below statement**

65. I know what I do best.

**1      or      2**

66. I don't accept my own limitations.

**1      or      2**

67. I feel I cannot do many things.

**1      or      2**

68. I like myself.

**1      or      2**

69. I am not an important person.

**1      or      2**

70. I know how to make up for my limitations.

**1      or      2**

71. Other people like me.

**1      or      2**

72. I am confident in my own abilities.

**1      or      2**

**The End. Thank You!!!**

## APPENDIX J

## Institutional Review Board Approval University of Georgia



Office of The Vice President for Research  
DHHS Assurance ID No. : FWA00003901

Institutional Review Board  
Human Subjects Office  
612 Boyd GSRC  
Athens, Georgia 30602-7411  
(706) 542-3199  
Fax: (706) 542-5638  
www.ovpr.uga.edu/hso

## APPROVAL FORM

Date Proposal Received: 2006-07-19

Project Number: 2007-10027-0

Name	Title	Dept/Phone	Address	Email
Mr. Kevin B. Williams	PI	Workforce Education, Leadership and Social Foundations 221 River's Crossing	1248 Winburn Drive East Point, GA 30344  706-255-8592	kevinbw@uga.edu
Dr. Cecil Fore III	CO	Special Education 548 Aderhold Hall +7153 (706) 613-5646		cfore@uga.edu

Title of Study: A Study of Self-Determination of Students with Learning Disabilities at Select Historically Black Colleges and Universities

45 CFR 46 Category: Administrative 2  
Parameters:  
None;

Change(s) Required for Approval:  
Revised Consent Document(s);

Approved : 2006-08-25 Begin date : 2006-08-25 Expiration date : 2011-08-24

*NOTE: Any research conducted before the approval date or after the end data collection date shown above is not covered by IRB approval, and cannot be retroactively approved.*

Number Assigned by Sponsored Programs:

Funding Agency:

Form 310 Provided: No

Your human subjects study has been approved.

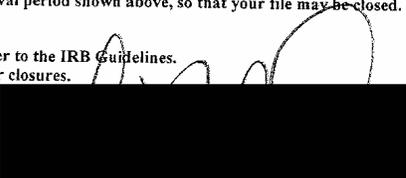
Please be aware that it is your responsibility to inform the IRB:

- .. of any adverse events or unanticipated risks to the subjects or others within 24 to 72 hours;
- .. of any significant changes or additions to your study and obtain approval of them before they are put into effect;
- .. that you need to extend the approval period beyond the expiration date shown above;
- .. that you have completed your data collection as approved, within the approval period shown above, so that your file may be closed.

For additional information regarding your responsibilities as an investigator refer to the IRB Guidelines.

Use the attached Researcher Request Form for requesting renewals, changes, or closures.

Keep this original approval form for your records.

  
Chairperson or Designee,  
Institutional Review Board

## APPENDIX K

## Institutional Review Board Approval Tennessee State University School 1



Research and Sponsored Programs  
 Tennessee State University  
 3500 John A. Merritt Blvd.  
 Nashville, Tennessee 37209-1581

Office of the Vice President

To: Kevin Williams  
 kevinbw@bellsouth.net  
 Dr. Cecil Fore  
 cfore@uga.edu

Dept.: Educational Administration

From: Dr. Peter Millet, Chair, Institutional Review Board

Re: Protocol #HS2006-1385

Date: Wednesday, October 18, 2006

The document listed below has been carefully reviewed and found to be in compliance with OPRR document title 45, Code of Federal Regulations part 46, the protection of human subjects, as amended by Federal policy, effective August 19, 1991. This project is **approved** as it presents minimal or no research risks to the pool of impending human subjects. Please make note, that any deviations in the administration of the protocol, accidental or otherwise should be reported to the IRB as soon as possible. The FWA for Tennessee State University is #FWA00007692, which is effective from October 21, 2004, through October 21, 2007.

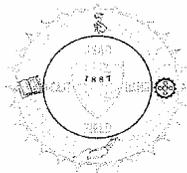
**A study of self-determination of students with learning disabilities at select historically Black colleges and universities.**

This approval is valid for one year from the date indicated above. Continuation of research beyond that date requires re-approval by the Institutional Review Board.

Please contact me at 963-5446 or pmillet@tnstate.edu for additional information.

## APPENDIX L

## Institutional Reviewed Board Approval Florida A&amp;M University School 2



*Excellence with Caring*

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

**Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University**  
Tallahassee, Florida 32307-3100

---

Telephone: (850) 412-5246  
Fax: (850) 412-5012

**APPROVAL MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Dr. Richard Gragg III  
Environmental Sciences Institute

**FROM:** C. Perry Brown, DrPH   
Chair, Institutional Review Board (IRB)

**DATE:** November 3, 2006

**RE:** "A Study of Self-Determination of Students with Learning Disabilities at Select Historically Black Colleges and Universities" (006-65)

The Florida A&M University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved the above name project and no other revisions are necessary.

The IRB has not evaluated your project for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If the project has not been completed by **November 3, 2007** you must request a renewed approval for continuation of this project.

You are advised that any changes in the protocol in this project must be resubmitted to the committee for approval. Also, the principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unexpected problems causing risks to research subjects or others.

The institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is **FWA00005391**.

## APPENDIX M

## Descriptive Results for Gender

Table M1

*Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for Gender Groups'**ASDS Total Scores*

Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Males	53	113.08	15.34	.248	.805
Females	30	112.23	13.93		

Table M2

*Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for Gender Groups'**ASDS Autonomy Scores*

Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Males	53	73.28	12.68	.383	.703
Females	30	72.23	10.68		

Table M3

*Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for Gender Groups'*

*ASDS Self-Regulation Scores*

---

Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Males	53	13.34	4.00	- 1.416	.161
Females	30	14.57	3.39		

---

Table M4

*Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for Gender Groups'*

*ASDS Psychological Empowerment Scores*

---

Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Males	53	14.34	2.50	1.541	.127
Females	30	13.40	2.94		

---

Table M5

*Ns, Means, Standard Deviations, t-scores, and p-values, for Gender Groups'*

*ASDS Self-Realization Scores*

---

Group	N	M	SD	t	p
Males	53	12.11	1.43		.206 .838
Females	30	12.03	2.09		

---

## APPENDIX N

## Summary of Regression Results

Table N1

*Summary of Standard Multiple Regression Results for ASDS Total Scores*

Model	$\beta$	t	p
Stud.Class	.147	1.333	.186
Gender	1.288	-.409	.683
Income	-.061	1.233	.221
GPA	.071	1.673	.098

Table N2

*Summary of Standard Multiple Regression Results for ASDS Autonomy Scores*

Model	$\beta$	t	p
Stud.Class	.087	.782	.437
Gender	-.053	-.480	.633
Income	.108	.960	.340
GPA	.144	1.284	.203

Table N3

*Summary of Standard Multiple Regression Results for ASDS Self-Regulation**Scores*

Model	$\beta$	t	p
Stud.Class	.293	2.815	.006*
Gender	.126	1.210	.230
Income	.121	1.152	.253
GPA	.227	2.176	.033*

\*p &lt; .05

Table N4

*Summary of Standard Multiple Regression Results for ASDS Psychological**Empowerment Scores*

Model	$\beta$	t	p
Stud.Class	.036	.321	.749
Gender	-.174	-1.547	.126
Income	.026	.233	.816
GPA	-.008	-.068	.946

Table N5

*Summary of Standard Multiple Regression Results for ASDS Self-Realization**Scores*

---

Model	$\beta$	t	p
Stud.Class	-.056	-.500	.619
Gender	-.021	-.190	.850
Group	.115	1.012	.315
GPA	.094	.829	.410

---

## APPENDIX O

## Components of The Arc's Self-Determination Scale

<u>Domain 1: Autonomy</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>
<i>Sub-Domain: Independence</i>	
Personal Care and Family Oriented Functions	18
Interactions with the Environment	12
<i>Sub-Domain: Choice or Acting on Basis of Preferences, Beliefs, Values, and Abilities</i>	
Choice: Recreation and Leisure	18
Choice: Community Involvement	15
Choice: Post School Direction	18
Choice: Personal Expression	15
<i>Total Possible Points for Autonomy Domain</i>	96
<u>Domain 2: Self-Regulation</u>	
Sub-Domain: Interpersonal Cognitive Problem Solving	12
Sub-Domain: Goal-Setting and Task Performance	9
<i>Total Possible Points for Self-Regulation Domain</i>	21
<u>Domain 3: Psychological Empowerment</u>	16
<u>Domain 4: Self-Realization</u>	15
Global (Total) Self-Determination Score	148