



138
539
THS

This is to certify that the
thesis entitled

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN
AMERICAN ADOLESCENT FEMALES WHO RESIDE IN AN
URBAN COMMUNITY

presented by

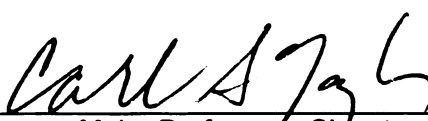
Pamela R. Smith-Miniffee

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Master of
Science

degree in

Family and Child Ecology


Major Professor's Signature


Date

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
	MAR 11 2008 03 11 08	

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENT
FEMALES WHO RESIDE IN AN URBAN COMMUNITY

By

Pamela R. Smith-Miniffee

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Family and Child Ecology

2004

ABSTRACT

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENT FEMALES WHO RESIDE IN AN URBAN COMMUNITY

By

Pamela R. Smith-Miniffee

This exploratory study concerning African American adolescent females and positive youth development will examine positive functioning for African American adolescent females within an urban setting, internal and external developmental assets, and the trajectories used to acquire positive attributes.

The interview protocol used in the OTO (Overcoming the Odds) project, a longitudinal study that assesses positive youth development of African American males involved in gangs or community-based organizations (CBOs), will be used to assess two groups of African American female participants. One group will consist of girls who have positive influences, such as support of parents and/or schools and participation in faith-based or community organizations. The other group will consist of girls who have been involved in the Third City (underground and underworld activity).

I dedicate this thesis
to my daughters Courtney Miniffee and Zakiya Miniffee.
With all my love, I thank you for your understanding,
support, patience, and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I thank God, for without Him this would not have been possible. To Dr. Taylor, chair of my committee, thank you for challenging me every step of the way. Your insight and intuitiveness are remarkably keen regarding the arena of life and the world of academe. I aspire to create the positive balance between youth culture, family, community, academe and policy that you arduously labor to accomplish. Thank you to my committee members, Dr. Villarruel for your valuable input and guidance; to Dr. Silvey for your encouragement and advice; to my mother Helen Smith for the countless hours you listened to my thoughts; to my father Raymond Smith for believing in me; to my brothers, Darryl Smith who stayed up with me late nights on the telephone when I struggled to write and Raymond Smith II for keeping me focused during the rough times; to my surrogate family, the Stephens' who were always willing to lend a hand no matter what; to my family, friends, Family and Child Ecology and Institute for Children, Youth, and Families faculty and staff that are to numerous to name.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Purpose of the Research.....	7
Research Questions.....	8
Significance of the Problem.....	9
Definition of Terms.....	10
Theoretical Framework.....	12
Phenomenological Variant of Ecological	
Systems Theory (PVEST)	13
Developmental Contextualism	14
Forty Developmental Assets	15
Strengths and Limitations of the Models	16

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW.....	17
Historical Perspective of African American Female	
Development.....	19
The Reality of Inner-City Girls' Lives.....	23
Increased Violence Among Urban Girls-Trend or Epidemic?	29
Neighborhood and Community Involvement.....	31

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY.....	33
Objectives of the Research.....	33
Research Questions.....	34
Overview of the Research Design.....	35
Data Collection Procedures.....	35
Demographic Characteristics of the Research	
Participants.....	38
Recruitment of Participants.....	38
Confidentiality.....	38

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION.....	41
-----------------	----

APPENDICES.....	43
Appendix A Phenomenological Variant of Ecological	
Systems Theory (PVEST)	45
Appendix B Forty Developmental Assets Model.....	47
Appendix C The Interview Protocol.....	49

REFERENCES.....	65
-----------------	----

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This exploratory study is aimed at understanding African American adolescent female positive youth development in an environment of urban poverty and violence. African American youth in impoverished neighborhoods are exposed to high levels of risk for delinquency, crime, violence, early unprotected sex, teen pregnancy and parenting, school failure, underachievement, dropping out of school, drug and alcohol use, and abuse (Dryfoos, 1998; Harper & Robinson, 1999; Lerner, 1995; Li, Feigelman, & Stanton, 2000), all of which contribute to their foundation of development. Being African American and female from a low-income environment inherently presents three issues that they are struggling against in this society.

There is a dearth of information available about positive African American adolescent development. Researchers have focused specifically on illness and deficit rather than strength and virtue when studying adolescents (Rich, 2003). The literature about adolescent African American females addresses issues concerning teenage pregnancy (Crosby et al., 2002; Dixon, Schoonmaker,

& Philliber, 2000; Greening, Stoppelbein, & Jackson, 2001; Martyn & Hutchinson, 2001), identity formation (Spencer, Dupree, & Hartmann, 1997, 1991; Stevens, 1997), violence and delinquency (Brown & Gourdine, 2001; Harper & Robinson, 1999; Miniffee, 2001; Scahill, 2000; Spencer, Dupree, Cunningham, Harpalani, & Muñoz-Miller, 2003; Taylor, Lerner, von Eye, Bobek, Balsano, Dowling, & Anderson, 2004) academic problems (Dunbar, 2001), drug abuse (Guthrie & Low, 2000; Harper & Robinson, 1999), and eating disorders (Abrams & Stormer, 2002; Barry & Grilo, 2002; Johnson, Rohan, & Kirk, 2002). Moreover, research in the area of African American youth emphasizes negative developmental experiences and outcomes (i.e., early child-bearing, joining gangs, poor academic achievement, and drug usage). Yet, contrary to the findings of such studies, there are African American youth in low-income environments who have risen above adverse situations.

Taylor, Lerner, von Eye, Balsano, Dowling, Anderson, Bobek, and Bjelobrk (2002) posited that inner-city male gang youth, despite the negative contextual factors in their community, show signs of positive functioning similar to youth who participate in community based organizations (CBOs). In their longitudinal assessment of urban African American males who are involved in gangs or CBOs (Taylor et

al., 2002a, 2002b), they found that youth from economically deprived neighborhoods possess positive assets and stable characteristics of positive functioning. Specifically, they noted that gang youth demonstrated positive attribute scores as well as CBO youth for two periods of testing, which indicates the capability of those involved in gangs for "overcoming the odds" in their environment. This study seeks to examine whether the same patterns of support networks for females exist.

Historically, African American women have been socially devalued. Since their inception in the United States as slaves, they have been prostituted and abused; yet, even with inhumane obstacles and challenges they remain strong. Despite the negative images and stereotypes, they continue to be leaders when faced with hard times and tough decisions, not only in their families and communities, but nationally. Thus, African American women have made significant achievements in the world of education, athletics, politics, art, media and other influential areas of life (Carter, 2003). Nonetheless, within the African American female experience, the overall development of children, specifically adolescent girls, has lacked attention from the academy.

Statement of the Problem

African American females have not been included in the evolution of positive youth development research. Oftentimes, researchers have focused on symptomatic outcomes (e.g., teen pregnancy). The issues confronting urban girls from distressed neighborhoods are sparsely documented in current literature. As noted by Sullivan (1993), they are trying to survive in homes and communities where they face domestic violence, emotional abuse, incest, rape, abandonment by parents addicted to alcohol and drugs, the unhealthy competition between young mothers and daughters for the love and attention of men, and the emotional stress of daily violence. An environment with minimal resources and opportunity influences the every day challenge of healthy social development. Within these eroding neighborhoods there is the lack of high-quality education, adequate health care, and community support. So many girls in the inner-city are not receiving the fundamental skills it takes to live full and productive lives. This study, then, seeks to fill the void in the scientific literature--to document the strengths that exist among African American females who have previously been ignored.

The African American community, parallel to mainstream society, has a long history of oppressed women. The African American female struggle against sexist, misogynistic, and patriarchal ways of thinking and behaving is deeply rooted in American culture. Cone (1991) speaks to this issue by pointing out the role of women in the political arena during Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X's leadership. Although African American women were dedicated educators, organizers of political groups, and business pioneers, they played a secondary role and did behind-the-scenes work of male dominated civil rights organizations. Women like Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, Ruby Blackburn, and Septima Poinsette Clark were civil and voting rights activists. They were to be seen, but not heard. Overshadowed by prolific male leaders and ignored by their generation, they fought to spur change and uplift the race (Carter, 2003; Ransby, 2003).

In contrast, the young inner-city women of the Hip-Hop generation endure waves of oppression and episodes of success. Success is defined as someone making it out of the hood. A baller (i.e., a male who makes a lot of money) represents liberation and freedom for the oppressed African American male, and Hip-Hop media figures like Mary J. Blige and Little Kim are role models for adolescent females. This

generation of African American adolescent females is not readily accepting the back seat to their male counterparts. Instead, a lot of young women have adopted a new philosophy where they have begun to take on the traditional male role, such as being more openly aggressive and vocal about their plight to better their situation (Taylor, 1993). The defining of African American female youth is a multifaceted subject. Unlike their predecessors, this population of young urban females of today are appearing to adopt the mentality of "By any means necessary" (i.e., quote from Malcolm X that has been given a different connotation by African American male youth), and are using their strengths to pursue other avenues (e.g., running their own crews and dancing) to sustain them economically. This is a reflection of the socioeconomic and cultural environment that surrounds them.

Yet, despite the odds against them, some of these youth exhibit signs of resiliency and positive functioning that may enable them to make it out of the neighborhood. The study conducted by Taylor and colleagues (2002a; 2002b) posits that the potential for positive youth development for African American males who are involved in gangs or CBOs is evident. Can the strengths and trajectories that influence positive development for females be determined by

replicating the OTO project for African American adolescent females?

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study is to identify developmental assets in conjunction with trajectories that foster positive youth development among adolescent African American females who are members of community based organizations (CBOs) in comparison to those who engage in delinquent behavior.

In total, twenty African American adolescent females will be recruited to participate in this exploratory study. All of the young women will range from 14-18 years of age at the time of recruitment. Ten will be participants in a CBO and the other half will be involved in undesirable societal behavior.

The current research will examine nine domains (family /parenting, gender, racial/ethnic identity, neighborhood/ safety, school education, peer relations, role models, drug use, sexual activity, and religious activities/religiosity) to explore the possibility of positive attributes and the support systems sustained by urban African American adolescent females in order to answer the research questions described below.

Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following questions by replicating the OTO project for African American females:

- Which internal and external developmental assets do African American adolescent females possess?
- What trajectories lead to positive youth development for African American adolescent females?
- What is the relationship between developmental assets assessed for African American adolescent females and their youth development?
- What is the relationship between the community environment and youth development for adolescent African American females?
- Do African American adolescent females with delinquent behavior have the same developmental assets as African American adolescent females with non-delinquent behavior?

Five demographic items--age, people with whom the participant lives, parents' place of birth, participant's place of birth, and parents' educational level plus characteristics of positive functioning--are variables to be examined through data collection.

Significance of the Problem

It is critical that the diversity of African American adolescent female development be examined. The pathway of ontogeny for African American women is definitely not a monolithic event. The reality of confronting racism, sexism and classism are daily challenges faced during the struggle of socialization. However, it is the African American woman's perseverance and determination to strive and survive in an urban setting that warrants the focus of researching the ecological adaptation of her adolescent female self.

This exploratory study seeks to understand the multidimensional and complex life process of such development. Moreover, positive youth development has not been researched for African American females. What has happened to the good girl versus bad girl image? Today's society sends conflicting and confusing messages. In addition, African American youth must confront negative images that are constantly portrayed of them in the media.

Exploring the developmental experiences of African American females will provide insight into the challenges of growing up in a society that does not value the life experiences of inner city girls. African American adolescent females have different societal experiences than

mainstream adolescent females and these should be documented. Given the limited amount of scholarly literature available, this research will draw upon popular cinema that reflects real life in urban communities as another element for support. And in doing so, this research will add another dimension, thus filling a gap in available literature addressing the development of adolescent African American females.

The findings from this qualitative study will benefit policy makers, community advocates, and developmental professionals in creating programs that will provide adolescent African American females with a prosperous environment to obtain gainful skills that will enhance their life chances for a healthy future as an adult.

Definition of Terms

Following are some of the major terms that are used in this study, along with specific definitions and sources for their usage in this context.

Term	Definition	Source
Adaptive modes	Creative adaptations to life-course discontinuities required of minority families to survive and thrive amid unacknowledged societal inconsistencies.	Spencer, 1990, p.267

Baller	1) Professional sports player 2) Lavish spender 3) Drug dealer	Westbrook, 2002, p.7
Developmental asset	A relatively new conceptualization of positive human development, synthesizing contextual and individual factors that, when present, serve to protect from, or inhibit health-compromising behavior and enhance the opportunity for positive developmental outcomes.	Benson, 2002, p.125
Hood rat	Person often seen aimlessly hanging around a neighborhood.	Westbrook, 2002, p.71
Positive youth development	a) The natural process of development in children and adolescents; b) a category of programs and organizations that provide activities to promote youth development; and c) a unifying philosophy characterized by a positive, asset-building orientation that builds on strengths rather than categorizing youth according to their deficits.	Small & Memmo, 2004, p.7
Resiliency	The positive behavior patterns exhibited by both individuals and the family when they are able to recover in the face of adversity.	Small & Memmo, 2004, p.5
Third City & Underground - Underworld (UG-UW) Theory	The community is of the world, which includes Africa and Asia, that are aligned with neither a communist nor a non-communist block of undeveloped and poor citizens who breath, move, and live in the underworld or underground or both. They have found no stability or reliability in	Taylor, in press

	mainstream society. They are disconnected from the majority citizenship and have found themselves non-citizens or anti-citizens in traditional communities. These individuals are involved in activity that may break the law or go against community values.	
Thriving	Adaptive regulation that involves mutually beneficial and sustaining exchange between individuals and contexts (such as the family, peer group, or community). This process includes both universal structural components and culturally specific functional components.	Lerner, Brentano, Dowling, & Anderson, 2002, p.5

Theoretical Framework

This qualitative study is driven by the concept of positive youth development. The initial thought is that, by understanding positive youth development and the characteristics of resiliency, researchers gain knowledge of the components necessary for youth to attain a healthy lifestyle. Developmental systems theory has been chosen to analyze the positive and/or negative experiences that can influence the person-context environment of adolescent African American females.

Three developmental system models are selected to

frame the experiences of these youth.

Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST)

Margaret Beale Spencer's Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST) provides a valuable approach to understanding the complexity of minority youth identity development. The development processes and adaptive coping methods are examined within the framework of this model in response to specific stressors and risk characteristics that predict positive or negative life outcomes (Cunningham & Spencer, 2000). The model has five major components (see Appendix A). Swanson, Spencer, Dell'Angelo, Harpalani, and Spencer (2002) describe PVEST in *Identity Processes and the Positive Youth Development of African Americans: An Explanatory Framework* as building a bridge between identity and contest. The first component, *risk contributors*, refers to factors (i.e., contexts and characteristics) that pose a challenge during the course of development. The second component, *stress engagement*, consists of immediate experiences of stress that challenges an individual's well-being. *Coping methods*, the third component, are the means that an individual uses to manage stress and dissonance. *Emergent identities* define how

individuals perceive themselves in various contexts of development (family, school, and neighborhood). Finally, *life-stage outcome* includes either productive or adverse developmental characteristics.

Developmental Contextualism

Developmental contextualism (Lerner, 2002), stresses that there is interconnectedness with the individual [adolescent] and the context. This view of human development recognizes that the individual and multiple levels of organization influence each other over a life-span. Furthermore, this theory emphasizes the concept of "plasticity," that development during adolescence is malleable and open-ended.

As young people progress through adolescence, developmental contextualism stresses that they are active forces in their own development and that they act on their own ecology as it in turn reciprocates on them. The notion is that the young person's multiple levels of human development through personal characteristics (e.g., biological, psychological, cultural, historical, and societal) and contextual characteristics (e.g., school, community, peer group, and family) are "fused" and that neither level has exclusive influence over the other. The

influence is mutual and flexible and the variables from the different levels reciprocate with each other across the individual's life-span (Lerner, n.d.).

Forty Developmental Assets

Through extensive research at Search Institute, Benson and colleagues have identified forty developmental assets (see Appendix B) appropriate for adolescents (6th to 12th grades), that help young people grow up healthy, caring and responsible (Benson, 2003). The 40-asset framework covers eight categories: support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. The positive responses from the interview protocol can be related to the 40-developmental asset model.

The questions in the interview protocol consist of nine categories: parents and family, peer relations, school and education, drug use, sexual activity, religious activity and religiosity, racial or ethnic identity, role model and confidant, and neighborhood and safety. These are examined for positive attributes and functioning. The positive responses will be placed in the appropriate category of the 40 developmental assets model.

Strengths and Limitations of the Models

Developmental contextualism offers a multidisciplinary approach, where development of the individual is observed in longevity. This multilevel-integrative, person-context concept is conducive to studying minority youth. It is used in conjunction with PVEST, which has a cultural foundation that places emphasis on understanding an individual's perception and the process in adapting to stressful environments and situations. Although the "Forty Developmental Assets" model can be applied to adolescents and will be used as part of this study, it does have some limitations, because it does not take into account the different aspects and needs of an inner-city population (For example, a negative influence may become what is characterized as a positive influence) when a gang member becomes a supportive adult in an adolescent's life.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There is a void in the research among African American literature. Very little information specifically targets African American females and even more specifically African American adolescent females. For the past twenty years researchers have criticized the lack of high-quality research that addresses the psychological and health development of adolescent girls (Leadbeater & Way, 1996). In addressing African American adolescent female issues, Rozie-Battle (2002a) states:

The research on the psychosocial development of African American girls is limited. Information that is available focuses on teen pregnancy and health issues such as nutrition and physical activity. African American girls are facing challenges, including poverty, crime, poor self-esteem, and peer pressure. Despite some of the negative characteristics attributed to African American girls, many are achieving some success. Policy makers and service providers need to recognize the resiliency and unique needs of African American girls and develop services that ensure their needs are being fully met.

Moreover, positive youth development literature exclusively for African American females does not exist. They have not been included. Some social scientists (Roxie-Battle, 2000c; Taylor et al., 2002a, 2002b) have researched the concept of positive youth development focusing on adolescent African American males or African American youth in general. My exploration of the literature leads me to the same information conveyed by Taylor and his colleagues (Taylor et al., 2002a, 2002b; Lerner & von Eye) in the OTO project. From their quest they documented scholarship advocating that all young people possess individual and ecological assets that may contribute to positive development.

Furthermore, other literature available focused on areas such as African American youth and the role of family, substance use, and concepts and theories of human development. Thus, exploring the concept of positive youth development leads to a limited literature review for inner-city African American females. Therefore, a historical perspective of African American female development, African American films, and Hip Hop culture was incorporated when no studies could be found.

Historical Perspective of African American Female Development

The contemporary views of youth today do not embrace the same middle-class values as did the past couple of generations. According to Taylor (1990), many of the youngsters in his study have rejected middle-class values and created a value system of their own. It is important to recognize the endeavors of African American women from the past and present as role models for African American adolescent females and as advocates for change. An overview of women succeeding from the 1600's to the present is presented as part of this historical perspective.

1600s: Slavery began in the United States. Women (slaves) were considered property and had no rights. In some southern states they were not allowed to learn to read or write. Underground schools were established by African American women to teach reading and writing (Hine & Thompson, 1998).

1700s: There were African American women who were literary pioneers. During these antebellum years they wrote poems reflective of this time period.

Lucy Terry Prince in 1746 wrote the poem "Bars Fight" and is referred to as the first African American poet (Bolden, 2004). On September 1, 1773 **Phyllis Wheatley**

became the first African American to publish a book entitled: *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (The Library of Congress, n.d.).

1800s: More than 85 percent of the African American population during the Reconstruction era could not read or write (Carter, 2003). During this period in time, African American women used their organizational and leadership skills to educate fellow African Americans and to construct the Black Women's Club movement (Carter, 2003).

The National Association of Colored Women was founded in 1896. **Mary Church Terrell, Harriet Tubman, Ida B. Wells-Barnet, and Frances E. W. Harper** were some of the founding members (Carter, 2003). They were social activist and educators that fought for the equality of African American women and civil rights for all.

1900s: The recognition of the African American woman's remarkable accomplishments is no longer omitted from history in the United States. Educators, lawyers, actresses, politicians, and poets, for example, are professions that were held by African American women.

Darlene Clark Hine is a historian and author of many books written about the history of African Americans and African American women (Hine, 1990, 1994, 1997, 1998).

Willa Player was an educator and civil rights activist who

became the first African American woman in the country to serve as President of a four-year [Bennett College] fully accredited liberal arts college (Willa Player encouraged and taught many!, 2004) **Marian Wright Edelman** was the first African American woman to pass the Mississippi bar. She is most noted for the work she does for the little citizens in our nation. In 1973 she started the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C. (Bolden, 2004).

Oprah Winfrey is a talk show host, Academy Award-nominated actress, and producer whose syndicated television show, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, is the most popular talk show ever (Appiah & Gates, 1999). **Maxine Waters** in 1990, became a United States Congresswoman from California and is the former head of the Congressional Black Caucus (Carter, 2003).

Maya Angelou is an author, professor, actress, director, and poet who wrote and delivered a poem at the 1993 Inaugural ceremony of President-elect Bill Clinton (Carter, 2003).

2000s: On January 22, 2001 **Condoleezza Rice** became the first African American woman to hold the position of National Security Advisor to the President of the United States (Rice, 2004). In Detroit, we find African American female development reflected in a variety of professional

roles. **Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick** is serving her third term representing Michigan's 13th Congressional District. Bringing the NASA Engineering and Aeronautics program to Michigan for students is only one of her many accomplishments. Also, she was appointed by her peers to the House Appropriations Committee and is the first chairwomen of the Congressional Black Caucus' Political Action Committee (Kilpatrick, 2004). In 2004, **Ella Bully Cummings** was appointed as the first female Police Chief (Schaefer, 2003) and January 2004, **Kym Worthy** became the first African American and first woman (interim) Prosecutor for Wayne County (Hackney, 2004).

Meeting challenges and overcoming the obstacles that have caused African American women to suffer in this nation is an extraordinary achievement. Hine and Thompson (2002,) stated:

From the beginning, they [African American females] have done more than find ways to feed a family with little or nothing in the house. They have found ways to educate children, resist the oppressions of slavery, support their churches, build hospitals, register voters, and get elected to the United States Senate. Theirs is more than a story of oppression and struggle. It is a story of hope (p. 5).

And it is with hope that the identification of the strengths of African American females, and their associated supports, can assist policy makers and youth development

specialists to enhance the life chances of young women by developing practices and programs that build upon these developmental characteristics as opposed to their "deficiencies."

The Reality of Inner-City Girls' Lives

Urban communities are experiencing an influx of African American adolescent females into the juvenile justice system. Wayne County, which includes the City of Detroit and is the state's most urban county, is wrestling with growing numbers of female youth in juvenile detention and placement (Skillman Center for Children, 2002). Juvenile crime rates have dropped 23% since 1995, yet the arrest rate for girls is increasing at a rapid pace (Childrens Defense Fund, 2001). In the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) sample, approximately two-thirds of the girls in the juvenile justice system are minorities, primarily African American and Hispanic (Acoca, 1999).

Economically disadvantaged adolescents have shown positive development in poverty-stricken neighborhoods (Spencer et al., 1997). Many negative stereotypes (e.g., gang members, teenage mothers, drug dealers and hood rats) are depicted of youth growing up in economically poor

environments. Oftentimes, these images are portrayed in all facets of media, a picture painted by mainstream society that is hard to escape, reinforcing criminal and violent behavior as characteristics of all African American young people (Roxie-Battle, 2000c).

In urban communities, a number of African Americans live within the confines of discrimination, violence, poverty, drugs, and sexual abuse in their communities. The aforementioned circumstances pose grave challenges for adolescent females in the process of reaching adulthood.

The film *Sparkle* (Rosenman, 1976) is an informative example of African American adolescent female development in a distressed environment. This film depicts the life of three sisters who were reared in a single parent household. Their mother was employed as a maid for a White family in the suburbs. She tried to instill positive values and encourage her daughters to be respectable young women.

The sisters had the opportunity to eventually move out of the impoverished neighborhood they grew up in by using their talent as singers. The older daughter succumbed to the ills of the street, however. She eventually died from drug addiction and the physical abuse inflicted by her drug-dealing boyfriend.

The hope the group once had, of becoming famous and rich in order to lift them out of their dire straits, died with the sister. However, the middle sister was resilient and able to overcome the adversity of her neighborhood by eventually using her strength and assets to sing on her own.

According to Rozie-Battle (2002), this new generation is really not much different than former "rebellious" generations and it is important for the community to embrace African American youth in their efforts. Similarly, today's inner-city African American adolescent females have challenging complex variables to work through.

Other film writers have shown the strength of Black women succeeding through harsh conditions of poverty while rearing their children in adverse conditions such as, physical and mental abuse as depicted in the films *What's Love Got To Do With It* (Lanier, 1993), and *The Color Purple* (Walker, 1985). Both of these films captured the spirit of a woman, illustrating the "adaptive modes" or resiliency characteristics that helped them to maintain, until removing themselves from abusive situations.

Findings based on the National Survey of Black Americans suggest that family and friends play a significant role in the adjustment to stressful situations

incurred by African American families (Neighbors, 1997). However, families do not exist in isolation and are impacted by the community and neighborhood, therefore influencing youth with both positive and negative experiences (Olive, 2003).

The genesis of the African American child's socialization and cultural awareness takes root in the home, as well as it does for other cultures. In American society since the time of slavery, family has been one of the strongest and most important traditions in the African American community (Franklin, 1997). Families in the inner-city often differ from the traditional nuclear family. For girls who live in impoverished neighborhoods, a family may consist of single mother-headed household, single mother-headed household with rotating boyfriends taking the role of father, grandparent(s), and aunts and uncles (related or factious kin). It seldom means two parents raising children in this difficult environment; the challenge of providing for basic needs is a struggle.

Yet, our society says through media, news, and print that possessing certain material items makes one important (Olive, 2003). However, the cost of these items is often not within the economic structure of a low-income family. These young girls want to own the car, wear the clothes and

jewelry, and have the boyfriend that they see in videos or hear in today's songs. They want to get "paid." With limited opportunities two of the most prevalent choices are found in legal or illegal avenues--illegal (e.g., prostitution, robbery, drug sales), and legal, in the fast growing rap industry (e.g., dancing in videos). One way they hope to get out of poverty is to become what they see. Young women scantily dressed, dancing provocatively, with "ballers," young men that represent getting paid, is a choice closer at hand than to strive for an education in schools that are often poorly equipped at preparing young African American girls to thrive as assets in this society. A poor education and lack of social skills, resources and opportunity created by the underpinnings of racism, classism and sexism is detrimental to the foundation of the African American community.

According to Taylor (1993), a vast majority of African American females head the households of Detroit and live below the poverty line. Data for 2000 indicates that this is true for 39.5% of these single-parent female households (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Similarly, Taylor, Tucker, Chatters, and Jayakody (1997) have found that one of several factors influencing the high level of poverty among African American children is higher rates of female-headed

households among African Americans. Additionally, they contend that childhood poverty is strongly linked to a child's living arrangements and that living in poverty places children at risk for serious health problems, low educational achievement, and minimal labor market participation.

A little more than one-third of the African American children in Michigan live in poverty. This typically means that not many resources exist in the community. Furthermore, upward mobility is a slight opportunity; these children are exposed to life-threatening situations and ongoing environmental stressors due to such conditions (Dupree, Spencer, & Bell, 1997; Olive, 2003).

Until lately, researchers studying adolescence appeared to be less interested in the social environment of young people than in their psychosocial development. In light of the deteriorating conditions in many low-income communities, the research concern has shifted from trying to alter individual behaviors to changing the settings that either promote or discourage healthy youth development (Dryfoos, 1996). This focus on positive youth development among poor youth of color leads to an interest in identifying the "adaptive modes," or the individual and ecological assets, that may promote positive developmental

change even among individuals involved in many of the high risk behaviors linked to poverty (Taylor et al., 2002b).

According to Dryfoos (1996), a consensus has been reached among researchers and practitioners that poverty and racism are major determinants of the declining status of children and that these issues must be dealt with if young people are to have equal access to success in American society. However, politicians and policy makers have not reached this consensus.

Increased Violence Among Urban Girls - Trend or Epidemic?

As previously noted, girls are increasingly becoming more violent. The insurgence of violence and delinquency by girls has become a national phenomenon. In addition, the crime rate for girls has increased (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999). Times have changed and some teen-age girls no longer strive to be yesterday's definition of a lady; they are embracing the persona of a thug. Taylor (1993) noted in his research that young women in Detroit were not only members of gangs, but some had their own crews. When girls in the study were asked if they were afraid of the violence in the streets, the following summation represents the attitude of several respondents: violence is an everyday occurrence and a female can't be soft, she has to be hard or fellas in the

hood will run her over. Others contend that they don't condone violence and that fighting and shooting in their neighborhood happened all the time.

In their research, Campbell (1984), Deschenes and Esbensen (1999) and Chesney-Lind (1999) also recognized the existence of female gangs and their tendency to be violent. Moreover, Deschenes and Esbensen (1999) contend that gang girls are more violent than non-gang boys.

Several girls and women were featured as a recent example of violence amongst girls in the Detroit News, when a twelve year-old girl was brutally beat at a birthday party. She was kissed on the cheek by the birthday girl's boyfriend as a dare from the other kids at the party. The birthday girl's mother not only instructed her daughter to assault the victim; she was also a participant in the fight (Hall, 2004). Over ten years ago, Taylor (1993) found that inner-city girls in his study were absorbed in violence. Specifically, girls were carrying weapons (e.g., guns) and getting into violent fights.

The chaos and disharmony experienced in urban America has lead to the hopelessness young women sense in their environment. The outward display of violence by girls is a manifestation of society's unwillingness to embrace them.

Neighborhood and Community Involvement

Young persons will not be able to build essential skills and competencies or feel safe, cared for, valued, useful, and spiritually grounded unless their families and communities provide them with the supports and opportunities they need along the way. According to Olive (2003), African American youth have culturally unique needs that should be embraced when considering the development of community programs and practices. Thus, youth development is also a process in which family and community must actively participate.

If youth are given the opportunity to have a say in the programs, within the family and organizations in their community, by supportive and encouraging adults (e.g., family members, school faculty, and community professionals), it is believed that this positive experience contributes to their successful development (Villarruel, Perkins, Borden, & Keith, 2003).

According to Villarruel and colleagues (2003), "Positive development is not something adults do to young people, but rather something that young people do for themselves with a lot of help from parents and others" (p. 397). It is very important that the voice, interpretations, and perceptions of young people be heard. If not, then only

the adult perspective has been integrated in determining the best developmental approach for children [youth] to ascertain a healthy and productive lifestyle (Chan, Carlson, Trickett, & Earls, 2003; Dunbar, 2001; Villarruel et al., 2003).

African American adolescent females from families of lower socioeconomic status (SES) live in communities that are culturally and economically isolated. Issues such as gangs, unemployment, poor education and drug and alcohol addiction have substantial impact on the way adults in impoverished settings relate to youth. For example, almost half of the adults in Detroit are functionally illiterate (Riley, 2001). They cannot help their children with homework, fill out job applications or read street signs. How do we begin to develop neighborhoods that are underdeveloped?

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Objectives of the Research

The overall objective of this research is to replicate the OTO project for African American adolescent females in or to examine theory concerning positive youth development and to identify internal and external attributes of inner-city female adolescents. Specifically, this study will focus on understanding the relationship between the positive developmental trajectories and individual and contextual assets between two groups of African American adolescent females.

Consistent with the objectives of the longitudinal study of African American male adolescents by Taylor et al (2002a, 2002b), this female project seeks to achieve the same goals:

- Test theoretical ideas about the nature of positive youth development within the person-context developmental system.
- Bring data to bear on the notion that all young people possess attributes that may be associated with positive development and that such development is furthered by development within a community setting

possessing key assets for healthy growth.

- Create an empirical base for discussion of the programs and policies that should be designed to enhance positive development among gang youth.

Research Questions

- Which internal and external developmental assets do African American adolescent females possess?
- What trajectories lead to positive youth development for African American adolescent females?
- What is the relationship between developmental assets assessed for African American adolescent females and their youth development?
- What is the relationship between the community environment and youth development for adolescent African American females?
- Do African American adolescent females with delinquent behavior have the same developmental assets as African American adolescent females with non-delinquent behavior?

Overview of the Research Design

In order to gain a better understanding of urban youth development for African American females, an exploratory study using developmental systems theory is suggested. Specifically, duplicating the OTO project, which documents attributes of positive functioning and internal and external developmental assets of African American male youth, will be the guide for studying the female population. The purpose of this study is to identify the developmental assets and trajectories of positive functioning of inner-city adolescent African American females. The first step is to adapt and implement the interview protocol for females. Phase II of this study is when the actual data will be collected. Interviews will be conducted in a location chosen by the participant.

Data Collection Procedures

The Taylor method has been chosen for conducting interviews. The key to Dr. Taylor's methodology is that it has always been adapted to his population. First, there must be sensitivity to the urban community. Secondly, one must note that the African American community is not monolithic. It is very diverse.

This same methodology is used to conduct the interviews in the OTO project. Taylor's methods profoundly rely on being part of and serving the community. In addition, the trust accrued as a consequence of Taylor's investment in the community assures participants that promises of anonymity of response will be kept, and that there will be an openness about the study's purposes, ready access to the investigators, and the presentation of interview items compatible with the literacy and language style of the participants (Taylor, 1990).

Additionally, only interviewers with experience will conduct the interviews. This is new ground and the interview methods described by Taylor (Taylor 1990, p. 38 - 41; Taylor et al 1998, p. 7-8), must be used because:

- Many of the participants, regardless of the nature of their delinquent behavior or affiliation with a community group, will under no conditions respond in writing to a questionnaire.
- Participants often display a high degree of illiteracy and the mere mention of filling out any type of questionnaire jeopardizes the research. Thus, although written interview protocols need to be available--to demonstrate to the youth precisely what will be involved in the research--all questions are read to

them. In addition, all items have a closed-ended format. However, participants are free to add in any information they wish when responding to a question. The permissibility of open-ended responses is necessary to assure participants that the researchers are open to their views, and not just to a prearranged set of answers. The dual format is methodologically useful as well: It provides both readily quantifiable (albeit categorical) data from the closed-ended responses as well as qualitative, and potentially richer, data from the open-ended responses, when they occur.

- Gang members, in particular, become very uncooperative with any mention of names or personal reference that might jeopardize them as informants or leave them vulnerable to law enforcement authorities.

Accordingly, the goal of the interview format is to maximize their willingness to respond to the interview questions and not to require that such responses occur in a standard setting.

Demographic Characteristics of the Research Participants

In total, twenty African American adolescent females will be recruited from Detroit, MI to participate in this exploratory study. All of the young women will range from 14-18 years of age at the time of recruitment. Ten will be participants in a CBO and the other half will be involved in undesirable societal behavior.

Recruitment of Participants

Volunteer participants are recruited from a bi-focal approach. This means that two distinct groups of adolescent African American females will be focused on. One group will consist of girls who have positive influences such as: support of parents and/or schools and participation in faith based organizations or community based organizations. The other will consist of girls who are at times involved in the UG-UW theory.

Confidentiality

Inclusive in eliciting the cooperation of the participants are the following five guarantees (Taylor, 1990):

- Guarantee to the participants that no names will be recorded or used. This includes nicknames, which

often identify individuals, particularly those in gangs, better than do their birth names.

- Guarantee that this study is only for research to understand urban youth behavior and development. As researchers, we have no other motives for asking questions of the youth. However, we stress that if the participants are worried about our intent, they should refrain from giving any information they consider critical or possibly damaging since the results of the study will be disseminated.
- Participants are given a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week, phone number to use in the event that they have any questions.
- Guarantee to all participants that no hidden tape recorders will be used. The investigators will inform participants that interviews will be taped. However, if the participants object, the investigators will not use the tape recorder. Past experience with this procedure (Taylor, 1990, 1993) suggests that about 50% of participants object to the use of the recorder.
- Guarantee that all conversations and interviews are confidential. The investigators promise that under no

circumstances will they name sources to other gangs
or to fellow gang members.

The sincerity of the investigators is the key to these
guarantees. Taylor has found success by using well-trained
community members to conduct the interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

There is a gap in the literature for research addressing African American adolescent female development. The research has been limited particularly for young women from low-income environments. As previously mentioned in the Statement of the Problem, this population of girls may encounter domestic violence, emotional abuse, incest, rape, abandonment by parents addicted to alcohol and drugs, the unhealthy competition between young mothers and daughters for the love and attention of men, and the emotional stress of daily violence.

As I have looked at the picture of inner-city African American female development, positive youth development is not included for this population. I have been exposed to different media that reflect a better description or more in depth understanding of these young women's lives through cinema, television and hip hop videos and music. For example, I offer some of the lyrics from Bonnie and Clyde by Jay-Z, "She rides wit me - the new Bobby and Whitney only time we don't speak is durin' 'Sex and the City' She get Carrie feva, but soon as the show's ova she's right back to being my souljah, cuz mami's a rida, and I'm a

rolla, put us together, how they gon' stop both us?"

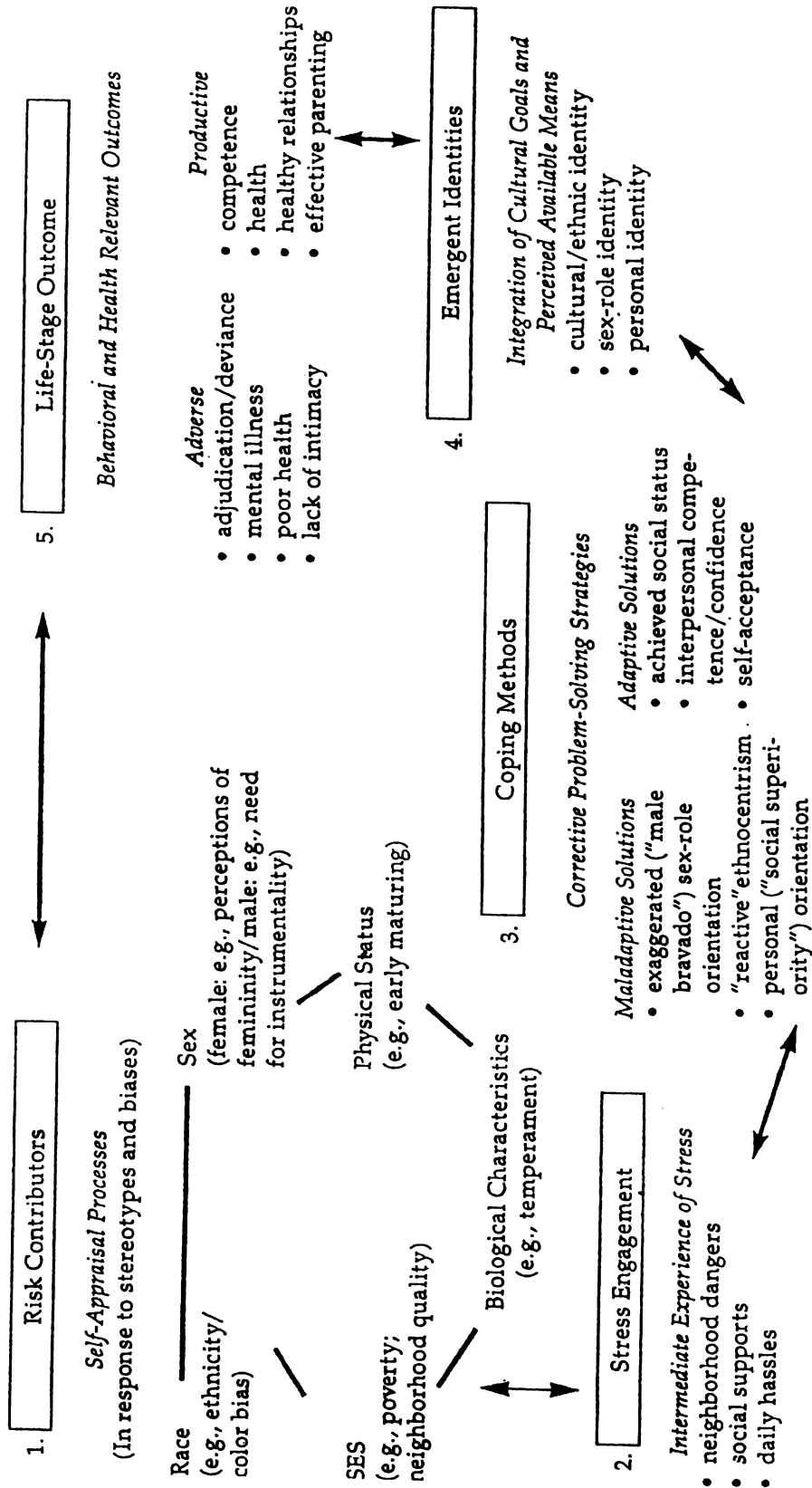
Recently, a young African American woman from Detroit stood trial for a robbery where she and an accomplice (male) robbed several places. She was convicted and her partner shot and killed himself during the chase where she was apprehended. The behaviors that some young people [women] exhibit result from the socioeconomic and community environment in which they grow up.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

A Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST)

APPENDIX A



A Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST)

Dupree, D., Spencer, Margaret Beal and Bell, Sonia. (1997). African American Children. In G. a. Y. Johnson-Powell, Joe (Ed.), *Transcultural Child Development* (pp. 237-268) New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

APPENDIX B

FORTY DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

APPENDIX B

40 Developmental Assets

Search Institute has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

Category	Asset Name and Definition
External Assets	Support 1. Family Support-Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive Family Communication-Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other Adult Relationships-Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring Neighborhood-Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring School Climate-School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent Involvement in Schooling-Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.
	Empowerment 7. Community Values Youth-Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as Resources-Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to Others-Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety-Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.
	Boundaries & Expectations 11. Family Boundaries-Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries-School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood Boundaries-Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. 14. Adult Role Models-Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive Peer Influence-Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High Expectations-Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.
	Constructive Use of Time 17. Creative Activities-Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth Programs-Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious Community-Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at Home-Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.
Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning 21. Achievement Motivation-Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement-Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework-Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to School-Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure-Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
	Positive Values 26. Caring-Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and Social Justice-Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity-Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty-Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. Responsibility-Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint-Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
	Social Competencies 32. Planning and Decision Making-Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence-Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence-Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance Skills-Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution-Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
	Positive Identity 37. Personal Power-Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." 38. Self-Esteem-Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of Purpose-Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. Positive View of Personal Future-Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

APPENDIX C

THE INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

APPENDIX C
The Interview Protocol

ID Number: _____

Age: _____

1. Whom do you live with?

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| A. Parent(s) | D. Brother, Sister |
| B. Aunt, Uncle | E. Friend |
| C. Cousins | F. Other |

2. Do your friends get high?

- A. Yes
- B. No

3. Do you go to church?

- A. Yes
- B. No

4. Do you belong to a youth group at church?

- A. Yes
- B. No

5. Do you have a friend that you can talk to about your problems?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Sometimes

6. How do you settle disputes between your friends (crew, posse, set)?

- A. Talk it out

B. Fight w/ fists

C. Guns

D. Knives

E. Other

7. On school assignments you work best with:

A. Yourself

B. Other students

C. Your friends

D. Anyone available

E. No one

8. Do your parents have rules for home?

A. Yes

B. No

9. Are those rules:

A. Strict

B. Easy

C. Moderate

D. None

10. How would you rate your relationship with your parents?

A. Excellent

B. Fair

C. Poor

11. Will your parents support you regardless of what you do in life?

- A. Support
 - B. Will not support
 - C. Never support
12. How does your family settle disagreements?
- A. Physical (Violence)
 - B. Verbal (Violence)
 - C. Verbal (Peaceful)
 - D. Don't talk
 - E. Do nothing
15. What does your family do together (play sports, eat meals together, etc.)?
- A. Everything together
 - B. Lots of things together
 - C. Some things together
 - A. Never together
16. Does your family care about your education?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
17. How far did your parents go in school?
- A. Elementary school
 - B. Middle school
 - C. High school
 - D. Other school (trade)
 - E. No school

18. Are your parents critical of you?

A. Yes

B. No

19. Do they (parents) tell you they are proud of you?

A. Yes

B. No

20. Do your parents smoke?

A. Yes

B. No

21. Do your parents drink alcohol?

A. Yes

a. Heavy (more than 4 per day)

b. Moderate (2 drinks a day)

c. Light (occasional, say once a week)

B. No

22. Do your parents use legal drugs? (like aspirin, blood pressure medication)

A. Yes

B. No

23. Do they (parents) use illegal drugs? (heroin, cocaine, weed)

A. Yes

Drug type:

a. Cocaine

b. Heroin

c. Crack cocaine

d. Marijuana

C. No

24. Do your parents go to parent/teacher conferences?

A. Yes

B. No

25. What name do you call yourself racially?

A. Black

B. African

C. African-American

D. Other

26. Does it matter what race a person is that you hang with?

A. Yes

B. No

27. What do you think of people who use drugs?

A. Good things (character)

B. Bad things

C. Don't think

D. Don't care

28. What do you consider a drug?

A. Marijuana

B. Heroin

C. Cocaine

D. Crack cocaine

E. Other

29. Where did you first see illegal drugs?

A. In my home

B. On my street

C. In my neighborhood

D. With my friends

E. My relatives outside my home

30. Does your school have diversified teachers? (Black, Latino, Asian, Native American, other race groups)

A. Diverse

B. Some diverse

C. All the same race

D. Don't know

31. Is your school safe?

A. Yes

B. No

32. Do you do your homework from school?

A. Yes

B. Sometimes

C. No

D. Never

33. Why do you go to school?

- A. To get a better job
- B. Because my parents demand that I go
- C. To socialize and hangout with my friends
- D. To be able to go to college

34. Do you have sexual relations?

- A. Yes
- B. No

35. Do you use protection when having sexual relations?

- A. Yes
- B. No

36. What age did most of your friends begin having sex?

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| 13_____ | 17_____ |
| 14_____ | 18_____ |
| 15_____ | 19_____ |
| 16_____ | 20_____ |

37. Whom do you look up to as a role model? (A person you admire and would like to be like)

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| A. Parents | C. Teacher | E. Pastor | G. Rapper |
| B. Family | D. Lawyer | F. Gangster | |

38. Is there someone you can go to for advice?

- A. Yes
- B. No

39. Does it matter if they are male or female?

A. Yes

B. No

40. What is your neighborhood like?

A. Safe

B. Somewhat safe

C. Dangerous

D. Real dangerous

E. Don't know

41. Have your family/friends experienced danger and violence?

A. Yes

B. No

C. On an occasion

42. How important is good health to your future?

A. Extremely important

B. Quite important

C. Not sure

D. Somewhat important

E. Not important

44. Do you have a neighbor you can talk to about your future plans?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Sometimes

45. Do you have friends you can talk to about your future plans?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Sometimes

46. How likely would you be to pursue something that your friends wouldn't?

- A. Very likely
- B. Likely
- C. Not sure
- D. Somewhat likely
- E. Not likely

47. How sure are you of your future plans?

- A. Very sure
- B. Somewhat sure
- C. Not sure at all

48. Do you think you experience racism?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Not sure

49. How do you deal with racism?

- A. Hurt the person physically
- B. Verbally reprimand the person
- C. Talk to him or her about what he or she said
- D. Talk to someone else about what happened
- E. Not do anything at all

50. What grades do you earn in school? (Do not ask this question if they have already indicated that they do NOT attend school.)

- A. Mostly A's**
- B. About half A's and half B's**
- C. Mostly B's**
- D. About half B's and half C's**
- E. Mostly C's**
- F. About half C's and half D's**
- G. Mostly D's**
- H. Mostly below D's**

51. During the last 12 months, how many times have you been a leader in a group, crew, gang or set?

- A. Never**
- B. Once**
- C. Twice**
- D. 3-4 times**
- E. 5 or more times**

52. During an average week, how many hours do you spend helping other people without getting paid (such as helping out at a hospital, daycare center, food shelf, youth program, community service agency, special secret place or doing other things) to make your city a better place for people to live?

- A. 0**
- B. 1**

- C. 2
- D. 3-5
- E. 6-10
- F. 11 or more

53. Is helping in a distressed place a good thing or could it not be cool?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Depends on the situation
- D. I don't know

54. How much do you agree or disagree with the following?

I take good care of my body (such as eating foods that are good for me, exercising regularly, and eating three good meals a day).

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Not sure
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly disagree

55. How much do you agree or disagree with the following?

I save my money for something special rather than spending it all right away.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Not sure
- D. Disagree

E. Strongly disagree

56. How important is the following to you in your life?

Getting to know people who are of a different race than I am.

A. Extremely important

B. Quite important

C. Not sure

D. Somewhat important

E. Not important

57. How much do you agree or disagree with the following?

I give up when things in my life get hard for me.

A. Strongly agree

B. Agree

C. Not sure

D. Disagree

E. Strongly disagree

58. Some young people have parents, teachers, neighbors, or other adults who give them advice, and who love and support them. Do you feel as if you know adults that you can talk to for help and advice?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Not sure

59. In some communities, adults listen to what young people have to say and make them feel important. How much do you agree or disagree with this statement?

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Not sure
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly disagree

60. Some young people live in communities where adults place limitations on their behaviors but also expect young people to behave in positive and socially-responsible ways. How much do you feel that these boundaries and expectations are a part of your life?

- A. A lot
- B. Average
- C. Some
- D. Not at all

61. Some young people spend their time after school or on weekends taking lessons in music, art, drama, or spending time with folks in crews, cliques, sets or gangs. Others volunteer, do community service, or go to activities involving religion. Some young people spend their free time with nothing special to do. What do you spend your free time doing?

- A. Taking lessons in music, art, drama, or dance
- B. Participating in volunteer work or community service projects
- C. Participating in religious programs, groups, or services
- D. Singing, rapping, producing beats, dancing, planning parties, fashion shows with street flavor.

E. I usually have nothing special to do.

62. At school, do you try as hard as you can to do your best work? (Do not ask this question if they have already indicated that they do NOT attend school).

A. Yes

B. No

C. Sometimes

63. Do you consider yourself the type of person that enjoys helping people and trying to make the world a better place to live in?

A. Yes, all of the time

B. Sometimes

C. No, not at all

D. Not sure

64. Do you consider yourself the type of person that enjoys hurting other people?

A. Yes, all of the time

B. Sometimes

C. No, not at all

D. Not sure

65. Do you consider yourself the type of person who is very aware of other people's feelings and who respects the values and beliefs of other people even if they are different from your own?

A. Yes, all of the time

B. Sometimes

C. No, not at all

D. Not Sure

66. On the whole, do you like yourself and the way your life is going right now?

A. Yes

B. Sometimes

C. Maybe

D. No

E. Not sure

67. How important is religion in your life?

A. Not important

B. Somewhat important

C. Important

D. Very important

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- Abrams, L. S., & Stormer, C. C. (2002). Sociocultural variations in the body image perceptions of urban adolescent females. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 31, 443-450.
- Acoca, L. (1999). Investing in Girls: A 21st Century Strategy. *Juvenile Justice*, VI, 3-13.
- Appiah, K. A., & Gates, H. L. (1999). *Africana: the encyclopedia of the African and African American experience*. New York: Basic Civitas Books.
- Barry, D. T., & Grilo, C. M. (2002). Eating and body image disturbances in adolescent psychiatric inpatients: Gender and ethnicity patterns. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 32, 335-343.
- Benson, P. L. (2002). Adolescent development in social and community context: A program of research. *New Directions for Youth Development* (95), 123-148.
- Benson, P. L. (2003). Developmental assets and asset-building community: Conceptual and empirical foundation. In R. M. Lerner & P. L. Benson, (Eds.), *Developmental assets and asset-building communities: Implications for research, policy, and practice* (pp. 19-43). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Bolden, T. (2004). *The book of African-American women: 150 crusaders, creators, and uplifters*. Avon: Adams Media.
- Brown, A. W., & Gourdine, R. (2001). Black adolescent females: An examination of the impact of violence on their lives and perceptions of environmental supports. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 4, 275-298.
- Campbell, A. (1984). *The girls in the gang*. New York: Basil Blackwell.
- Carter, C. J. (2003). *Africana Woman: her story through time*. Washington: National Geographic Society.

- Chan, B., Carlson, M., Trickett, B., & Earls, F. (2003). Youth participation: A critical element of research on child well-being. In R. M. Lerner & P. L. Benson (Eds.), *Developmental assets and asset-building communities*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.
- Chesney-Lind, M. (1999). Girls, gangs and violence. In M. Chesney-Lind & J. M. Hagedorn (Eds.), *Female gangs in America*. Chicago: Lake View Press.
- Children's Defense Fund. (2001). Retrieved August 8, 2002, 2001, from <http://www.childrensdefense.org/release010417.htm>
- Cone, J. H. (1991). *Martin and Malcolm and America: A Dream or a nightmare*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.
- Crosby, R., DiClemente, R. J., Wingood, G. M., Sionean, C., Harrington, K., Davies, S. L., et al. (2002). Pregnant African-American teens are less likely than their nonpregnant peers to use condoms. *Preventive Medicine: An International Journal Devoted to Practice & Theory*, 34, 524-528.
- Cunningham, M., & Spencer, M. B. (2000). Conceptual and methodological issues in studying minority adolescents. In R. Montemayor, G. R. Adams, & T. P. Gullotta, (Eds.), *Adolescent diversity in ethnic, economic, and cultural contexts* (pp. 235-257). Thousands Oaks: Sage.
- Deschenes, E. P. (1999). Violence among girls: Does gang membership make a difference? In M. Chesney-Lind & J. M. Hagedorn (Eds.), *Female gangs in America*. Chicago: Lake View Press.
- Dixon, A. C., Schoonmaker, C. T., & Philliber, W. W. (2000). A journey toward womanhood: Effects of an Afrocentric approach to pregnancy prevention among African-American adolescent females. *Adolescence*, 35, 425-429.
- Dryfoos, J. G. (1996). Adolescents at risk: Shaping programs to fit the need. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 65, 5-18.

- Dryfoos, J. G. (1998). *Safe passages: Making it through adolescence in a risky society*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dunbar, C. (2001). *Alternative schooling for African American youth: Does anyone know we're here?* (Vol. 1). New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Dupree, D., Spencer, M. B., & Bell, S. (1997). African American children. In G. Johnson-Powell & J. Yamamoto (Eds.), *Transcultural child development* (pp. 237-268). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Franklin, J. H. (1997). African American families. In H. P. McAdoo (Ed.), *Black Families* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Greening, L., Stoppelbein, L., & Jackson, M. (2001). Health education programs to prevent teen pregnancy. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 28*, 257-258.
- Guthrie, B. J., & Low, L. K. (2000). A substance use prevention framework: Considering the social context for African American girls. *Public Health Nursing, 17*, 363-373.
- Hackney, S. (2004, January 6). Worthy is new prosecutor. *Detroit Free Press*.
- Hall, W. (2004, 4/27). Violence among girls catches some off guard. *Detroit News*, p. 3A.
- Harper, G. W., & Robinson, W. L. (1999). Pathways to risk among inner-city African-American adolescent females: The influence of gang membership. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 27*, 383-404.
- Hine, D. C., (ed.) (1990). *Black women in United States history*. Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing.
- Hine, D. C., Barkley, E., & Brown, R. T.-P. (1994). *Black women in America : an historical encyclopedia*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hine, D. C. (1997). *Hine sight : Black women and the re-construction of American history*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Hine, D. C., & Thompson, K. (1998). *A shining thread of hope: the history of Black women in America*. New York: Broadway Books.
- Johnson, W. G., Rohan, K. J., & Kirk, A. A. (2002). Prevalence and correlates of binge eating in White and African American adolescents. *Eating Behaviors*, 3, 179-189.
- Juzang, I. J. (Writer) (2004). This is my reality: The price of sex--an inside look at black urban youth sexuality and the role of media. In E. MEE (Motivational, Entertainment) Productions, Inc. (Producer). USA: MEE (Motivational, Educational, Entertainment) Productions, Inc.
- Kilpatrick, C. (2004). *Biography of Congress Carolyn Kilpatrick, Representing the People of Michigan's 13th District*, from <http://www.house.gov/kilpatrick/bio.shtml>
- Lanier, K. (Writer), & B. Gibson (Director) (1993). What's love got to do with it? [DVD]. In T. Pictures (Producer): Touchstone Home Video.
- Leadbeater, B. J. R., & Way, N. (1996). *Urban girls: resisting stereotypes, creating identities*. New York: New York University Press.
- Lerner, R. M. (1995). *Our youth and our community: What next? Presentation*. Retrieved September 15, 2003, from <http://www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/4h/overhed2.htm>
- Lerner, R. M. (2002). *Adolescence: development, diversity, context, and application*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education.
- Lerner, R. M. (n.d.). *A Developmental Contextual View of Human Development*. Retrieved 6/20/2003.
- Lerner, R. M., Brentano, C., Dowling, E. M., & Anderson, P. M. (2002). Positive youth development: Thriving as the basis of personhood and civil society. *New Directions for Youth Development* (95), 11-34.
- Li, X., Feigelman, S., & Stanton, B. (2000). Perceived parental monitoring and health risk behaviors among

- urban low-income African-American children and adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 27, 43-48.
- Martyn, K. K., & Hutchinson, S. A. (2001). Low-income African American adolescents who avoid pregnancy: Tough girls who rewrite negative scripts. *Qualitative Health Research*, 11, 238-256.
- McKinney, R. (2002). Ecological factors and their relationship to maternal reports of behavioral problems in African American adolescents. *Child Study Journal*, 32, 53-72.
- Minifree, P., & Walker, N. (2001). *Some promising approaches for reducing youth violence* (Michigan Family Impact Seminars Briefing Report No. 2001-1). East Lansing: Institute for Children, Youth, & Families.
- Neighbors, H. W. (1997). Husband, wives, family, and friends. In J. R. Taylor, J. S. Jackson & L. M. Chatters (Eds.), *Family life in Black America* (pp. 277-292). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Olive, E. (2003). The African American child and positive youth development: A journey from support to sufficiency. In F. A. Villarruel, D. F. Perkins, L. M. Borden & J. G. Keith (Eds.), *Community youth development: Programs, policies, and practices* (pp. 27-46). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Ransby, B. (2003). *Ella Baker & the Black Freedom Movement: a radical democratic vision*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Rice, C. (2004). *Biography of Dr. Condoleezza Rice, National Security Officer*, from www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/ricebio.html
- Rich, G. J. (2003). The positive psychology of youth and adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 32, 1-3.
- Riley, R. (2001, July 29). *Rochelle Riley: How illiteracy devastates city*. Retrieved April 15, 2004, from http://www.freep.com/news/metro/riley29_20010729.htm

- Rosenman, H. (Writer), & S. O'Steen (Director) (1976). Sparkle [Video]. In R. S. Organization & W. Bros. (Producer). Burbank: Warner Bros.
- Roxie-Battle, J. L. (2000c). Youth development: A positive strategy for African American youth. *Journal of Health & Social Policy*, 15, 13-23.
- Roxie-Battle, J. L. (2002a). African American girls and the challenges ahead. *Journal of Health & Social Policy*, 15, 59-67.
- Scahill, M. C. (2000). *Female Delinquency Cases, 1997*. Retrieved August 28, 2002, from <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org>
- Schaefer, J. (2003). *A Long Road To The Top: A female police chief is a first in Detroit, but the glass ceiling didn't shatter overnight*. Retrieved November 13, 2003, from <http://www.freep.com/cgi-bin/forms/printerfriendly.pl>
- Skillman Center for Children, C. O. U., Labor and Metropolitan Affairs, Wayne State University; Institute for Social Research University of Michigan, and members of the Wayne County Female Services Advisory Committee. (2002). *The Signs Are There: Girls and Juvenile Justice in Wayne County*. Detroit: Skillman Center for Children.
- Small, S., & Memmo, M. (2004). Contemporary models of youth development and problem prevention: Toward an integration of terms, concepts, and models. *Family Relations*, 53, 3-11.
- Snyder, H. N., & Sickmund, M. (1999). *Juvenile offenders and victims: 1999 national report*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Spencer, M. B. (1990). Development of minority children: An introduction. *Child Development*(61), 267-269.
- Spencer, M. B., Dupree, D., Cunningham, M., Harpalani, V., & Muñoz-Miller, M. (2003). Vulnerability to violence: a contextually-sensitive, developmental perspective on African American adolescents. (Youth Perspectives

- Through History, Culture, And Community). *Journal of Social Issues*, 59, 33.
- Spencer, M. B., Dupree, D., & Hartmann, T. (1997). A Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST): A self-organization perspective in context. *Development & Psychopathology*, 4, 817-833.
- Spencer, M. B., Swanson, D. P., & Cunnigham, M. (1991). Ethnicity, ethnic identity, and competence formation: Adolescent transition and cultural transformation. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 60, 3666-3387.
- Stevens, J. W. (1997). African American female adolescent identity development: A three-dimensional perspective. *Child Welfare League of America*, 76, 145-172.
- Sullivan, L. Y. (1993). Preface. *Girls, gangs, women, and drugs*. C. S. Taylor. East Lansing, Michigan State University Press
- Swanson, D. P., Spencer, M. B., Dell'Angelo, T., Harpalani, V., & Spencer, T. R. (2002). Identity processes and the positive youth development of African Americans: An explanatory framework. *New Directions for Youth Development* (95), 73-99.
- Taylor, C. S. (1990). *Dangerous society*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
- Taylor, C. S. (1993). *Girls, gangs, women, and drugs*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
- Taylor, C. S. (in press). *Diary of a G: Indigo Youngblood--Life of a young gangster*: Available from the Institute for Children, Youth, and Families, 27 Kellogg Center, East Lansing, MI.
- Taylor, C. S., Lerner, R. M., von Eye, A., Balsano, A. B., Dowling, E. M., Anderson, P. M., et al. (2002a). Stability of attributes of positive functioning and of developmental assets among African American adolescent male gang and community-based organization members. *New Directions for Youth Development* (95), 35-55.
- Taylor, C. S., Lerner, R. M., von Eye, A., Balsano, A. B., Dowling, E. M., Anderson, P. M., et al. (2002b).

Individual and ecological assets and positive developmental trajectories among gang and community-based organization youth. *New Directions for Youth Development* (95), 57-72.

Taylor, C. S., Lerner, R. M., von Eye, A., Bobek, D., Balsano, A., Dowling, E., & Anderson, P. M. (2004). Positive individual and social behavior among gang and non-gang African American male adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research*.

Taylor, R. J., Tucker, M. B., Chatters, L. M., & Jayakody, R. (1997). Recent demographic trends in African American family structure. In R. J. Taylor, J. S. Jackson & L. M. Chatters (Eds.), *Family life in Black America*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

The Library of Congress (n.d.). *Phyllis Wheatley, the first African American to be published*. Retrieved January 30, 2004, from http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/jb/revolut/poetslav_1

Villarruel, F. A., Perkins, D. F., Borden, L. M., & Keith, J. G. (2003). Community youth development: Youth voice and activism. In F. A. Villarruel, D. F. Perkins, L. M. Borden & J. G. Keith (Eds.), *Community youth development: Programs, policies, and practices*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Walker, A. (Writer), & S. Spielberg (Director) (1985). *The Color Purple* [DVD]. In S. Spielberg, K. Kennedy, F. Marshall, Q. Jones, (Producer). Burbank: Warner Bros.

Westbrook, A. (2002). *Hip Hoptionary*. New York: Random House.

Willa Player encouraged and taught many! (2004). Retrieved 3/22/2004 from http://www.aaregistry.com/african_american_history/2314/Willa_Player_encouraged_and_taught_many

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



3 1293 02732 4833