

**THE EFFECTS OF THE SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM ON THE
PERSISTENCE AND PROGRESSION RATES OF ACADEMICALLY
UNDERPREPARED AFRICAN AMERICAN FIRST YEAR COLLEGE
STUDENTS**

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Education in the Graduate School
of Texas Southern University

By

Angela A. Anderson, B.A., M.A.

Texas Southern University

2017

Approved By

Dr. Holim Song

Chairperson, Dissertation Committee

Dr. Gregory H. Maddox

Dean, The Graduate School

ProQuest Number: 10684140

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10684140

Published by ProQuest LLC (2018). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

Approved By

Dr. Holim Song

11/28/2017

Chairperson, Dissertation Committee

Date

Dr. Ingrid Haynes-Mays

11/28/2017

Committee Member

Date

Dr. Jacqueline Smith

11/28/2017

Committee Member

Date

Dr. Eui Bun Lee

11/28/2017

Committee Member

Date

Dr. Ronnie Davis

11/17/2017

Committee Member

Date

Copyright© Angela A. Anderson

2017

All rights reserved

THE EFFECTS OF THE SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM ON THE
PERSISTENCE AND PROGRESSION RATES OF ACADEMICALLY
UNDERPREPARED AFRICAN AMERICAN FIRST YEAR COLLEGE
STUDENTS

By

Angela A. Anderson, Ed.D.

Texas Southern University, 2017

Associate Professor Dr. Holim Song, Dissertation Chair

Persistence and progression rates for underprepared, African American, first year students entering four-year colleges is a major concern. With the consistent low persistence, progression and graduation rates of underprepared African American students in both Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and predominantly White serving institutions (PWIs), there lies a dire need to examine programs that will lead to a solution to this problem. The purpose of this dissertation study was to investigate the effectiveness of the implementation of a 2014 Summer School Program aimed at closing the achievement gap between conditionally (academically underprepared) admitted students and unconditionally (academically prepared) admitted students in an HBCU located in southeast Texas. More specifically, this study uses ex post facto research to determine the difference in the performance of underprepared students who were conditionally admitted summer

school participants to the performance of unconditionally admitted students who were entering the university as first- time freshmen.

The present study utilizes a multivariate, correlational design in order to examine the differences among independent and dependent variables through the use of Chi Square and Independent and Dependent *T*-Tests. These specific models were used to determine the effectiveness of the 2014 Summer School Program at one of the state's largest HBCUs. Coded institutional demographic data for the 2014 cohort was obtained. Participants for the present study were randomly selected from institutional data consisting of those conditionally accepted college students who participated in the summer school program and unconditionally accepted college students entering the university for the first time. The sample group consisted of 310 first time, incoming college freshmen. Each of the comparative study groups (treatment and control) consisted of 155 first time, first semester freshmen. The control group consisted of those incoming, traditional, African American, first time, first semester freshmen students who met all college admissions standards and were unconditionally- admitted into the university; whereas, the treatment group consisted of those students conditionally admitted into the university and attended the Summer School Program.

The results of this study indicate that there were differences between dichotomized data consisting of progression, persistence, cumulative hours completed, and gender of conditionally admitted students who enrolled in the 2014 Summer School Program and traditional, unconditionally admitted students who did not enroll in the summer school program for Fall 2014. In addition, persistence and

progression rates among conditionally admitted students who enrolled in the summer school program and unconditionally admitted students who did not enroll in the summer school program for Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 were not significant.

PREVIEW

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vi
VITA.....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ix
DEDICATION	x
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Background of the Study	3
Significance of the Study	4
Purpose of the Study	5
Research Questions.....	6
Statement of The Hypotheses	7
Assumptions.....	8
Limitations of the Study.....	8
Theoretical Framework	10
Definition of Terms.....	10
Organization of the Study	13
2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	14
Introduction.....	14

	Page
Theoretical Framework	16
Transitioning from High School to College.....	18
Initial Contact.....	23
Persistence and Progression Rates of Participants.....	24
Persistence and Progression Rates of Participants by Gender	29
Summer School Programming.....	33
3. METHODOLOGY	51
Introduction.....	51
Type of Research Design.....	51
Population and Research Setting.....	53
Sampling	55
Instrumentation	56
Data Collection Procedures.....	56
Independent and Dependent Variables	57
Statement of the Null Hypothesis.....	58
Statistical Analysis	59
Evaluation of Assumptions	59

4.	ANALYSIS OF THE DATA.....	62
	Demographic Profile of Participation in the Study.....	64
	Statistical Analysis	66
5.	SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATION, AND IMPLICATIONS.....	79
	Summary of Findings.....	80
	Discussion.....	81
	Conclusions.....	90
	Recommendations for Further Study.....	91
	Implications.....	92
	REFERENCES	93

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Frequency Distribution of Participants by Gender	64
2. Frequency Distribution of Participants by Age	64
3. Frequency Distribution of Participants by Residency.....	65
4. Chi Square Regarding the Difference in the Persistence Rates of First Year African American College Students Who Did Not Attend the Summer School Program During the 2014-2015 Academic School Year	67
5. Chi Square Regarding the Difference in the Persistence Rates of First Year African American College Students Who Did Not Attend the Summer School Program During the 2015-2016 Academic School Year	68
6. Chi Square Results Regarding the Differences in the Persistence Rate of First Year African American College Students who Attended the Summer School Program During the 2014 – 2015 Academic School Year.....	69
7. Chi Square Results Regarding the Differences in the Persistence Rate of First Year African American College Students who Attended the Summer School Program During the 2015 – 2016 Academic School Year.....	70
8. Chi Square Results Regarding the Differences in the Differences in the Persistence Rate of First Year African American Male and Female College Students who the Summer School Program During the 2014 – 2015 Academic School Year.....	71
9. Chi Square Results Regarding the Differences in the Differences in the Progression Rate of First Year African American Male and Female College Students who the Summer School Program During the 2015 – 2016 Academic School Year.....	72
10. T-Test Results Regarding the Cumulative Hours Change Rates of First Year African Students Who Attended and Did Not Attend the Summer School Program.....	74

11. T-Test Results Regarding the Cumulative Hours Change Rates of First Year African Students Who Attended and Did Not Attend the Summer School Program.....	75
12. T-Test Results Regarding the Cumulative Hours Attempted and the Cumulative Hours Completed Change Scores of First Year African American Male and Female College Students Who Attended the Summer School Program During the 2014 – 2016 Academic School Year.....	76
13. Summary of Findings.....	77

PREVIEW

VITA

July 23, 1964.....	Born – Houston, Texas
1990	B. A., Sam Houston State University Huntsville, Texas
2004.....	M.A., Texas Southern University Houston, Texas
2000-06	Retention Coordinator Texas Southern University Houston, Texas
2000-06	Peer Tutor Coordinator Texas Southern University Houston, Texas
2007-08	Area Coordinator GCCSA Houston, Texas
2008-13	Senior Writer Texas Southern University Houston, Texas
2013-Present	Professor of Speech Communication HCCS – Katy Campus Katy, Texas
Major Field.....	Curriculum and Instruction

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to give all praise to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, without Him none of this would be possible. I would like to express my sincere gratitude and profound appreciation to Dr. Holim Song, my advisor, for his patience, motivation, and immense knowledge, and, most importantly, for his continuous support in the pursuit and completion of my doctoral study and related research. His guidance helped me with my research and writing, and I could not have imagined having a better advisor and mentor to complete my doctoral dissertation.

I would like to thank my dissertation committee: Dr. Ronnie Davis for his deep understanding and love of statistics that has now spilled over to me; Dr. Eui Bun Lee for guiding me not only with this endeavor but also my thesis studies; and last but not least, Drs. Ingrid Haynes-Mays and Jacqueline Smith for their patience, diligence and encouragement throughout this process.

My sincere appreciation also goes to Dr. Sannie Reagan for his confidence in me and for pushing me to stay focused and to finish the course; to Dr. Cherry Gooden, for believing in me and reminding me daily that there is nothing that I cannot do, and finally to Dr. Lillian Poats, who provided me support, understanding, and discipline needed to finish this race.

To my friends, thank you so very much for not giving up on me. Thank you for standing by me when times seemed dark, and the road too long.

DEDICATION

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to my parents, Abner and Augerine Anderson Jr. for standing by me, teaching me, motivating me and actually willing me to succeed. I thank them for all of their sacrifices and for listening to me even when they were ready to go to sleep. They believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. Also, I'd like to thank my brother Abner 'Andy' Anderson, III, who has stood by me through thick and thin, and has quietly pushed me forward. He is my hero and inspiration that keeps me going on a daily basis. Finally, I would like to say a heavenly thank you to Eulonda Bailey and Sharon Nellums-Goosby, two of the three original members of the Sam Houston State Three, thank you for walking with me piece-the-way. Rest, you have earned your wings and your heavenly reward. To the GUAC Crew, thank you for walking this walk with me.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For the average student, transitioning from high school to a college environment is full of excitement, but can be latent with apprehension. A large part of this anxiety is leaving from a time- accounted setting (high school or similar) to a self-guided learning environment (college or university). Such a drastic change and transition in students' livelihood can seem as an insurmountable obstacle, particularly when faced with other challenges. Historically, African American and other marginalized population of students arriving as first-time freshmen college or university campuses have been deemed academically underprepared for the rigors of higher education.

Many experiences are shared among first-time freshmen, such as confusion over the enrollment process, concerns about finances, and the need to balance their lives in and away from college. However, there can be striking differences in the transition process for White, African American, and Hispanic students. These commonalities and differences have implications when designing and developing strategies to facilitate students' transition to college, implementing intervention techniques to improve retention, and creating professional growth opportunities to help faculty and staff understand more fully the challenges students face (Weissman, Bulakowski, & Jumisko, 1998).

A review of the literature on the subject of student transition to college reveals that the majority of the existing research conducted on students at four-year colleges and universities shows that student persistence and progression is a concern for these

institutions. Tinto's (1975) model of student persistence has been tested primarily with students at four-year colleges and universities and emphasizes the importance of academic and social integration within the academic community. The author argues that students who were more involved and connected to their classes, fellow students, and campus were more likely to persist. Similarly, students who perceived that they did not fit in were more apt to leave the institution. Tinto describes students who experienced feelings of incongruence as "individuals who see themselves as being substantially at odds with the system" and referred to isolated students as those who were not involved in any part of the college (Tinto, 1993). Tinto's study adds to the dilemma faced by many students who are socially and academically unprepared for the college environment. However, Tinto's study does not disaggregate data by ethnicity, gender, or setting.

Statement of the Problem

Persistence and progression rates for underprepared African American, first-year college students are a significant concern. These students find themselves struggling in the higher education environment and lack the academic foundation for successful matriculation. Moreover, these students struggle with meeting the requisites for completing coursework resulting in eventually a self-select out of the college environment. Low-income students and students with disabilities encounter similar challenges (Gladieux & Swail, 1998). The importance of a college degree in the United States is becoming increasingly important, particularly for disenfranchised or marginalized students. Students without the prerequisites for college success drop out and enter the work population. Fewer skills leads to less income. Research

indicates that there is an emerging difference in the overall earning potential of those with high school diplomas and those with bachelor's degrees (Mortenson, 2005; Perna, 2003).

Historically, Americans have a high regard for higher education and for many ethnicities and races in the United States, the ability to obtain an education or post-secondary education was illegal. Despite historic efforts towards *leveling the playing field* land grants were awarded to establish historically black colleges. Although the present-day integration of blacks and whites, as well as other races, in predominately white institutions is lawful, the poor retention and graduation rates for African-American students, particularly males, persist in higher education. Cross and Slater (2001) stated that the decrease in the number of African- American male university graduates in the past ten years holds negative implications not only for the African-American community but also for the American society as a whole. Brittian, Sy, and Stokes (2009) believe that the lack of minorities graduating from higher education institutions reflects negatively on universities who want to increase diversity and retention rates.

Background of the Study

There is a growing need for support services for students with academic difficulties in post-secondary education. Students with educational problems are at-risk for several reasons, including poor academic performance and failure to complete college. College support services are mandated for people with documented disabilities but are also available to students who struggle academically. Ideally, these educational support centers solicit the participation of students at-risk for

performance problems in college at the earliest point of entry. Ferguson (2000) defined the at-risk student as someone who is learning disabled and underprepared or someone who lacks skills in meeting the academic demands of post-secondary education. The need for support services noted has been a large number of students who enter college and are at-risk for satisfactory academic performance.

College students that have been identified as being at-risk for academic failure also have skill deficits in some vital process areas critical to college success (Eberling, 1998; Houck et al., 1989). The most prevalent of these include time management, note-taking, goal setting and motivation, information processing, and necessary study skills (Bragg, 1992; Hattie, Biggs, & Purdie, 1996). One meta-analysis supported findings that at-risk students arrive at post-secondary institutions with low academic skills (e.g., study habits and study skills approaches) and a lack of knowledge concerning the amount of preparation needed for the scholarly work required (Mull, Sitlington, & Alper, 2001). The lack of academic training is another strong contributor to students failing to complete degree requirements (Eberling, 1998).

Significance of the Study

Evidence of prior research has been conducted on the persistence and matriculation of college students. Shaw, Brinckerhoff, Kistler, & McGuire (1991) found that the college environment is demanding and requires a significant amount of self-motivation and personal responsibility, and these attributes are often lacking in at-risk students. Shaw et al. (1991) theorized that the lack of self-motivation and personal responsibility might be a result of previous frustration resulting from

repeated academic failure. While self-motivation and individual responsibility may not be present in students with disabilities, these skills are challenging to train. However, improving such skills may have an indirect, positive influence on motivational factors as well.

Schumaker, Deshler, Alley, Warner, & Denton (1982) recommended that learning strategies instruction should be used to teach the methods of learning content specific material efficiently. Over the past few years, there has been an increase in the number of programs and services provided to at-risk students in post-secondary institutions (Dalke & Schmitt, 1987). Studies having positive outcomes are associated with instruction of learning strategies to college students (Schutz & Lanehart, 1994). Cheung and Kwok (1998) found a positive correlation between students' GPA and study or learning strategies employed. McKeachie (1990) concluded that using learning strategies and tools among college students was related to positive grade attainment.

The aforementioned studies provide evidence of the various contexts of popular research studies on attrition and persistence of college students. Therefore, this research seeks to add a different perspective to the field of higher education by investigating the effects of participating in the summer school program, initial student contact, and the impact of the program on successful student outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was fourfold: first, this study examined the differences in the persistence rate and progression rate change score (number of hours attempted and number of hours completed) of first-year college students who

attended the Summer School Program and those students who did not attend the Summer School Program during the 2014 – 2015 and 2015 – 2016 academic school years. Secondly, this study assessed the persistence rate of first-year college students who attended the Summer School Program during the 2014-2016 and 2015 – 2016 academic school years. Thirdly, this study investigated the differences in the progression rate scores of African American first-year college students who attended the Summer School Program during the 2014 – 2015 and 2015 – 2016 academic school years. Finally, this student ascertained the differences in the persistence rate and progression rate change scores of male and female African American first-year college students. Answers to the following questions were sought:

Research Questions

- R₁: Is there a significant difference in the persistence rate scores of African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program and those who did not attend the program?
- R₂: Is there a significant difference in the persistence rate scores of African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program?
- R₃: Is there a significant difference in the persistence rate scores of African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program?
- R₄: Is there a significant difference in the progression rates scores of change for African American first year students who attended the Summer School Program and those who did not attend the program?

R₅: Is there a significant difference in the progression rate scores of African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program?

R₆: Is there a significant difference in the progression rate scores of male and female African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program?

Statement of the Hypotheses

These were six null hypotheses that were formulated and tested for this study. Three for the academic school year 2014 – 2015, and three for the academic school year 2015 – 2016.

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in the persistence rates of African American first year college student who attended the Summer School Program and those students who did not attend the Program.

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant difference in the persistence rates of African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program.

H₀₃: There is not statistically significant difference between the progression rate scores of male and female African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program.

H₀₄: There is not statistically significant difference between the mean cumulative hour change scores of African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program and those students who did not attend the Program.

H0₅: There is not statistically significant difference between the mean hours attempted and the means hours completed scores of African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program.

H0₆: There is no statistically significant difference between the mean cumulative hour change scores of male and female African American first year college students who attended the Summer School Program.

Assumptions

This study assumed that the data collected used was reliable and valid, and would measure the students' academic persistence and progress as a result of the completion of the summer school program. These additional assumptions should be noted:

1. The sample population was reflective of the population to be researched.
2. The sample population participated fully in the program.
3. The study sought to find out if there is a relationship between those students who participated in the summer school program and those students traditionally admitted students by admission status and by gender.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited in the scope of its population and university selection. For the purpose of this study, the students available were minority, academically underprepared, first time freshmen who were conditionally admitted into this Historically Black College and University's (HBCU) summer school program. The population or cohort requirements were based on their Texas Success Initiative (TSI)

scores, high school grade point average (GPA) and summer school program placement test. The summer school program was developed as an admissions tool to provide a transitional apparatus for those students who did not meet university standards for traditional admittance, but applied to the university and were conditionally admitted. The following additional limitations were also noted below:

1. This study was limited in the scope of its population and university selection.
2. The students available were minority, academically underprepared, first time freshmen, conditionally admitted into this institution's summer school program.
3. The population or cohort requirements were based on their Texas Success Initiative (TSI) scores, high school grade point average (GPA) and the summer school program placement test (THEA).
4. The program was a residential program and limited to those who could afford to live on campus. It was limited also to those who could afford to pay the nominal fee for the program.
5. Also, the program was limited to first semester freshmen considered academically underprepared, who applied to the university and were conditionally admitted.
6. There was an ethical bias in that one group being studied received treatment and the other group studied did not receive treatment.
7. Students may have not been enrolled in the spring, but came back and re-enrolled in the fall.