

# INSIGHT

**THE CLASS OF 2010 SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH  
JOURNAL OF BROOKLYN TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL**





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RESEARCH JOURNAL OF BROOKLYN  
TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

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**INSIGHT** publishes original research conducted by the students enrolled in the Social Science Research major of Brooklyn Technical High School. The Social Science Research major offers a rigorous course of study which introduces students to the disciplines of sociology, psychology, and anthropology in addition to the the research class. The year-long course in social science research methods allows the students to develop and pursue their own research designs.

The 2009 edition of the **INSIGHT** include abstracts from most of the students from the Social Science Research major. The year-long project introduced the students to various research methods and statistics under the guidance of the social science teacher, Ms. Amy Lucisano. Three full length papers are included to serve as a sample of the work each student did.

**INSIGHT** follows a modified form of the American Psychological Association (APA) citation format.

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*For more information about the research methods class in the Social Science Research major, as well as requests for full length papers of the abstracts included, send inquires via e-mail to Ms. Amy Lucisano at [alucisano@bths.edu](mailto:alucisano@bths.edu).*

# CONTENTS

<b>Tiffany Tsang</b> <i>The Varying Difficulty Levels in New York State Math Regents Examinations during 1986-2008</i> .....	1
<b>Susan Mei</b> <i>The Influence of Personality Type on High School Students' Academic Achievement..</i>	9
<b>Tasha Alexis</b> <i>Racial Socialization and its Effect on One's Application to a Historically Black College or University</i> .....	19
<b>Anna Tseng</b> <i>The Effect of Participation in Extracurricular Activities on Academic Performance among High School Students</i> .....	28
<b>Brian Burns</b> <i>The Relationship between one's Number of Facebook Friends and the Information Provided on one's Profile</i> .....	28
<b>Emily Feng</b> <i>Racist Television?: The Ethnic Portrayals of Criminals on Television Crime Dramas and the Actual Criminal Demographics in American Society in 2007</i> .....	29
<b>Jing Zhang</b> <i>Accuracy of Local New York City Newspaper Reports over the Two Decades</i> .....	29
<b>Feng Chen</b> <i>The Relationship between the Degree of Suggestive Self Destructive Behavior (SDB) in Japanese Films and the Average Suicide Rates in Japan</i> .....	30
<b>Jennifer Yip</b> <i>The Level of Gender Stereotype in Commercials Shown during Weekdays versus Commercials Shown during Weekends</i> .....	30
<b>Kyosha Pierre Francois</b> <i>Self-acceptance between Male and Female Members of the Homosexual Community</i> .....	31
<b>Mike Dinatale</b> <i>Level of Optimism Portrayed in Sitcoms over Time</i> .....	31
<b>Raymond Mark</b> <i>Evidence of Hypomaniac Symptoms in Correlation with Academic Progress</i> .....	31
<b>Vicky Lin</b> .....	32



<b>Denis Vinogradov</b> <i>The Russians are not Coming!: A Content Analysis of Film</i> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>Alana Mohamed</b> <i>The Portrayal of Sexual Minorities in North American Television</i> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>Fanny Zeng</b> <i>The Effect of Parenting Styles on the Level of Consumerism among Teenagers</i> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>April Zhong</b> <i>The Effect of Television on Asian American Teenagers' Level of Materialism</i> .....	<b>34</b>
<b>Mandy Lin</b> <i>Maternal and Parent Choices based on a Woman's Independence during her Adolescence</i> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>Julie Tan</b> <i>The Long Term Effects of Toys on the Attention Span during Adolescence</i> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>Shrabani Naha</b> <i>Monogamy and Benevolent Sexism</i> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>William Cheung</b> <i>Popular Music's Effect on Drug Arrests in America</i> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>Carrie Tang</b> <i>The Effect of Time Period on Comedy Sitcom's Emphasis on Physical Appearance</i>	<b>36</b>
<b>Andy Ye</b> <i>Media Exposure and Copyright Infringement</i> .....	<b>36</b>
<b>Yiru Li</b> <i>The Relationship between Immigration Status and the Belief in the American Dream among High School Students</i> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>Asmaa Butt</b> <i>Religiosity and Level of Education</i> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>Qian Chen</b> <i>The Effect of Companion Animals on Adolescent Social Activity</i> .....	<b>38</b>
<b>Christina Gee</b> <i>The Affect of Neighborhood Diversity on the Attitudes of Far East Asian Americans toward Blacks</i> .....	<b>38</b>
<b>Gary Jiang</b> .....	<b>38</b>
<b>Steven Gordon</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>Stella Huang</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>Puja Paul</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>Amanda Gendy</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>Tahmina Parvin</b> <i>The Exploration of the Factors Affecting Fertility Decisions among Muslim Women</i> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>Leon Shustin</b> .....	<b>40</b>
<b>Eva Minkin</b> <i>The Dark Side of Disney: A Content Analysis of the Portrayals of Gender with a Reference to Violence in Disney Films</i> .....	<b>41</b>
<b>Audrey Noniashvili</b> .....	<b>41</b>

# The Varying Difficulty Levels in New York State Math Regents Examinations during 1986-2008

**Tiffany Tsang**

The difficulty level of NYS math Regents over a twenty-three year period was examined using an eleven-item tally sheet. A significant relationship was found; the mean difficulty level for Math I Regents was statistically higher than that for the Math A Regents. In addition, the difficulty level for the exams has decreased over the years. Results also indicate that there has been a decrease in the percentage of points needed to earn a passing grade of 65.

## INTRODUCTION

Since the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, standardized tests for primary and secondary education have been labeled as “high-stakes.” High-stakes testing is the practice of attaching important consequences to standardized test scores. Nichols and Berliner (2008) argue that high-stakes testing has been implemented in order to influence teachers to be more effective and for students to be more motivated to do well in order to yield greater academic achievement. In an effort to achieve higher results, states have implemented a number of education reforms. However, critics of standardized tests argue that they are damaging to the education of students (Nichols & Berliner, 2008); if a student fails to pass standardized exams, the student may not graduate.

Furthermore, Geiser and Studley (2002), Geiser and Santelicies (2007), and Brown and Conley (2007) showed that standardized tests are not the best indicators to predict student success in college. That is, college success does not correlate to one’s standardized test scores. Yet many college admissions offices base their

acceptance decisions on standardized tests; today, most colleges require an SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) or an ACT (American College Testing Program) score. Secondary schools also prize these standardized tests. Michigan abandoned its high school exam and replaced it with the ACT and uses the results for No Child Left Behind requirements to determine the winners of state scholarships (State of Michigan, 2007). Florida, Indiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, and Washington State allow for SAT scores to substitute for state high school exit exams (Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2007). In addition, the City University of New York guarantees admission to students who obtain a designated level of performance on the New York Regents examination while in high school (City University of New York, 2006). On the other hand, some schools waive the necessity of standardized test scores for certain applicants (Gibson, Leavitt, Lombard, & Morris, 2007). Since standardized tests are important to higher education, it is important to examine these tests more closely.

A previous study done by Ray (2008) evaluated whether the South Carolina

standardized test, the High School Assessment Program (HSAP), measured achievement. The results showed that there was a weak correlation between grade point average and High School Assessment Program score and that the Math section was strongly correlated with SAT Math whereas the ELA section was weakly correlated. Due to the varying correlations between the state's standardized test (HSAP) and the widely accepted standardized test used throughout the nation (the SAT), it is important to examine the tests themselves.

In this study, the researcher assessed how the algebra Regents have progressed over the last two decades by comparing the Math I (1986-1998) with the Math A (1999-2008). Statistics show that more students have passed the Math A Regents as the years progress (Domancio, 2002), but it is unclear whether this is because education has improved or because the exams' level of rigor has declined. Specifically, the researcher hoped to determine whether the exam itself has been "watered-down" to allow more students to pass by analyzing each Regent's difficulty level and its respective conversion chart. The examination's conversion chart will show if the percentage or correct number of answers correlates with the scaled score; it will show if the percentage or correct number of answers needed to earn a passing grade has regressed over the years. The researcher hopes to show that the examinations have regressed in difficulty level over the years and that a smaller percentage of correct answers are needed to pass the examinations as the years progress. Since much significance has been placed on standardized exams, it is important to assess whether or not the exams have been compromised by extraneous political factors.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Subjects***

The sample consisted of twenty Math Regents exams chosen using purposive sampling. Each of the twenty years (1989-2008) under study was represented by one exam. To rule out any other factors, such as examinations re-administered to students who failed the first time, only the June examination for that year was sampled since students typically take the June examination for the first time after completing their algebra course. As such, ten Math A Regents examinations from June were selected for the years 1999-2008 and ten Mathematics I Regents examinations from June were selected for the years 1989-1998. However, since examinations from 1991-1993 could not be retrieved, the researcher extended the time frame from 1986-1998, with the years 1991-1993 unrepresented in this study. The sample only focused on the multiple choice questions in Part I. Simple random sampling was used to select 15 multiple choice questions from each exam to analyze in order the difficulty level. Also, the examinations' corresponding Conversion Charts were studied to ascertain the raw score needed to pass the Regents.

### ***Materials***

An 11-item tally sheet, designed by the researcher, was used to determine the difficulty level of math Regents examinations. The data collection instrument identified nine different types of math problems and associated them with varying difficulty levels. Each question was analyzed to see if any of the indicators were used. The indicators comprised of 3 different elements.

The first indicator was if a problem necessitated the use of a certain type of computation: if addition or subtraction of integers was involved, it received 0 points, if multiplication or division of integers and fractions was involved, it received 1 point, if addition or subtraction of fractions was involved, it received 2 points, and if exponents or radicals of numbers was involved, it received 3 points.

The second indicator was whether the knowledge of external theorems to solve the problem was required: if it was, the problem received 3 points, if not, the problem received 0 points.

The third indicator was the problem's topic: if standard algebra (solving for a variable) was involved, it received 1 point, if graphing was involved, it received 2 points, if logic was involved, it received 3 points, and if probability was involved, it received 3 points.

A question can was only administered one tally for each sub-indicator; for example, if a problem mandated the use of addition or subtraction twice, only one tally would be given to that category since multiple instances of adding does not correlate with a higher level of difficulty. Each sub-indicator received a number of points according to its assigned difficulty level which ranged from 0 points (easy) to 3 points (hard).

Example: A rectangular lot that is 60 feet by 80 feet, has a straight diagonal pathway. What is the length, in feet, of the diagonal pathway? (1)  $\sqrt{20}$ , (2) 140, (3) 20, or (4) 100 (June 16, 1994, Math I, question #34).

1. The student needs to know the Pythagorean Theorem (in a right triangle, the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the two legs) [knowledge of

external theorems – 3 points].

2. The Pythagorean Theorem involves the use of exponents [use of exponents or radicals – 3 points] and addition [addition or subtraction of integers – 0 points].

This problem would have received 6 points [3+3+0].

Another variable used to determine the examination's difficulty level is the percentage of the number of raw points necessary to earn a passing grade of 65 out of the number or raw points possible. This information was retrieved from each examination's respective conversion chart for converting raw scores to scaled scores. This variable was included because critics have alluded to the fact that for the more recent exams, students only needed to get only one-third of the questions correct to earn a pass (Gootman, 2004).

### ***Procedure Explained***

Data analysis was performed by the researcher to compare the level of difficulty for each math Regents examination. Data was recorded from the aforementioned sources and entered into a spreadsheet for statistical analysis.

## **RESULTS**

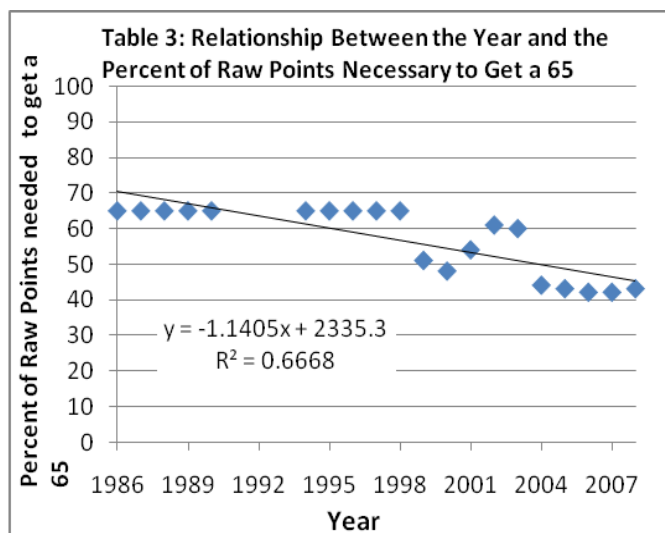
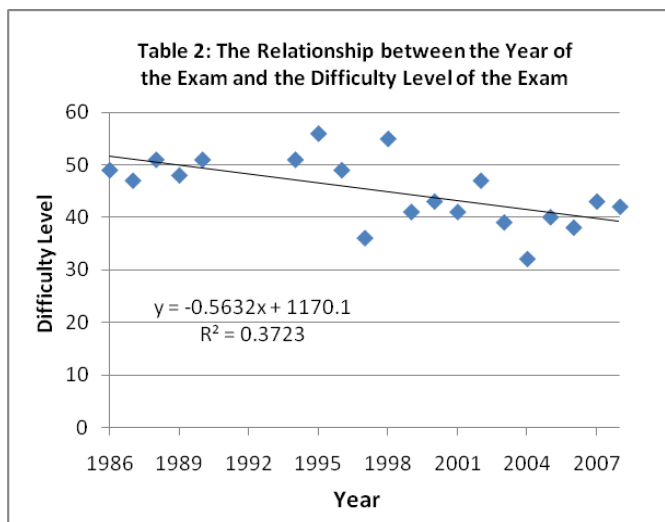
The math difficulty level of math standardized exams for New York State was examined in this study. The main hypothesis that the math difficulty level has regressed over the years was supported. A t-test assuming equal variance was used to assess whether the mean difficulty level of the Math I was statistically different from the mean difficulty level of the Math A as displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1: The Type of Test in Relation to the Difficulty Level of Math NYS Regents Examinations**

	<i>Math I</i> (1986-1998)	<i>Math A</i> (1999-2008)
Mean	49.3	40.6
Variance	30.01111111	15.37777778
Observations	10	10
Pooled Variance	22.69444444	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	18	
t Stat	4.083612052	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000349	
t Critical one-tail	1.734064	

The hypothesis was supported ( $p < .00035$ ) as the absolute value of the test statistic ( $t = 4.08$ ) exceeded the one-tail critical value (1.73) at the 0.05 significance level. The results of the tests are shown in Table 1. As the table shows, it is evident that the average difficulty level for 1986-1998 (49.3) is higher than the average difficulty level for 1999-2008 (40.6), indicating a regression in difficulty levels over the years.

Pearson’s correlation was used to test the correlation between the year of the exam and its respective difficulty levels. The hypothesis was supported as the test statistic ( $r = -.61$ ), exceed the critical value (0.38). The test revealed a statistically significant negative correlation between the two variables which illustrated that as the years progressed, the difficulty level for the exams decreased as displayed by Table 2.

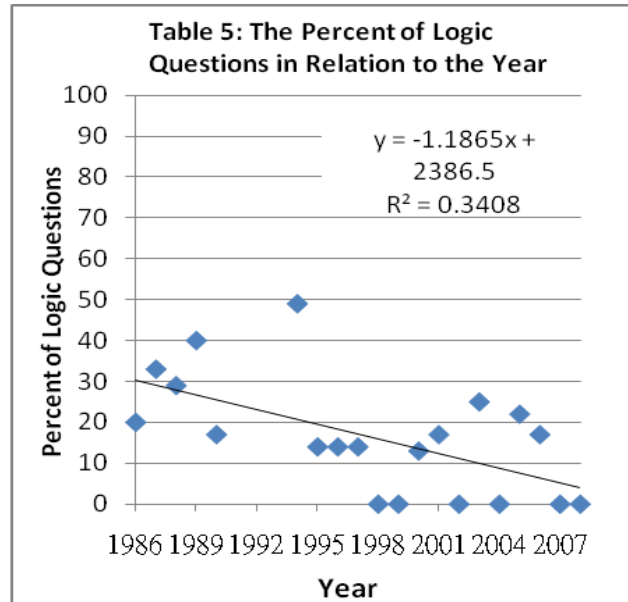
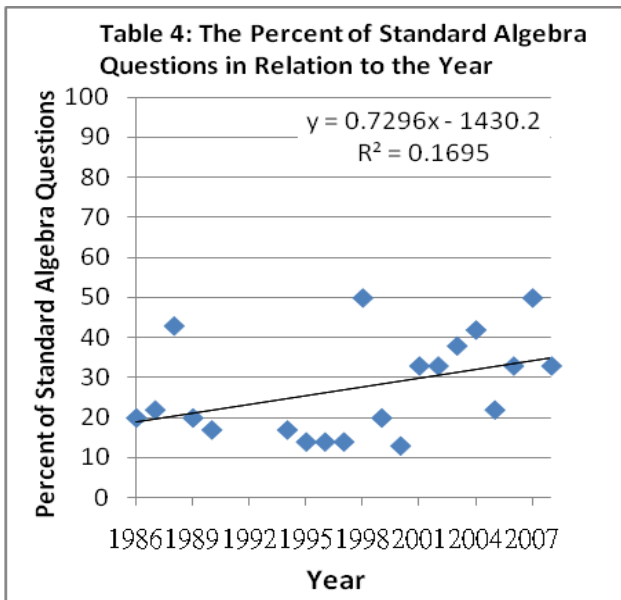


Pearson’s correlation was also used to test the correlation between the year of the exam and its respective conversion scores. (In other words, the percent of correct answers needed to earn a passing grade of 65.) The relationship was significant because the test statistic ( $r = -.82$ ) exceeded the critical value (0.38), as indicated in Table 3.

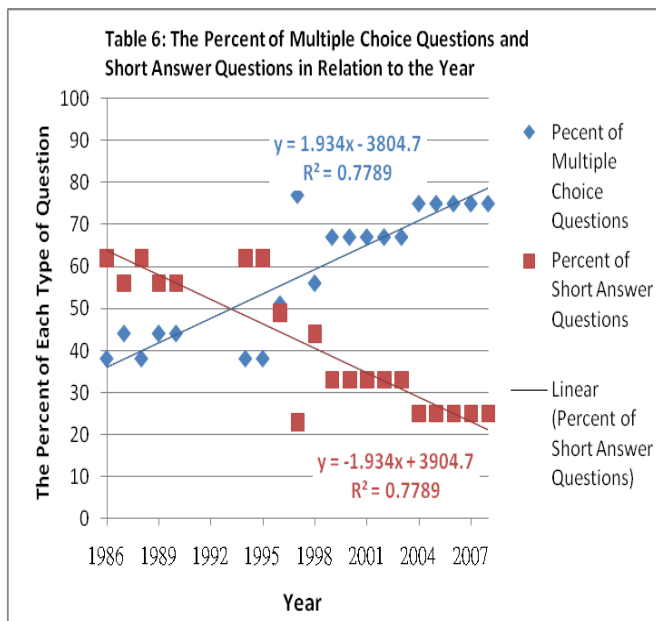
Because of the correlation found in Table 2, the researcher conducted a series of further stat tests to determine more nuanced information. The percentage of each type of problem (standard algebra [solving for a variable], logic questions, probability questions, or graphing questions] was also assessed using Pearson’s correlation. There

was a statistically significant correlation for the percent of algebra questions and the percent of logic questions over the years. There was no statistically significant correlation between both the year of the exam and the number of algebra questions on the exam as well as the year of the exam to the number of logic questions.

As shown in Table 4, there was a statistically significant positive correlation between the percent of standard algebra questions and the year of the exam as the test statistic ( $r = 0.41$ ) exceed the critical value (0.38). As shown in Table 5, there was a statistically significant negative correlation between the percent of logic questions and the year of the exam, as the test statistic ( $r = 0.58$ ) exceeded the critical value (0.38). These tests were conducted to perhaps explain why regression in difficulty level has occurred.



The percent of each type of question (multiple choice questions versus short answer questions) was also considered. There was a statistically significant positive correlation between the percent of multiple choice questions and the year of the examination as the test statistic ( $r = 0.86$ ) exceeded the critical value (0.38), indicating that as the years progress, there has been a greater percentage of multiple choice questions, as illustrated in Table 6. Similarly, there was a statistically significant negative correlation between the percent of short answer questions and the year of the examination as the test statistic ( $r = 0.86$ ) exceeded the critical value (0.38). This test was also conducted to explain a potential regression in difficulty level has occurred.



## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to examine the possible regression of New York State Math Regents examinations over a twenty-three year period. All results indicate that the hypothesis is supported at the 0.05 significance level. Not only was the average difficulty level for the Math I Regents higher than the average difficulty level for the Math A Regents, but results show that there has been a steady regression in difficulty level over the twenty-year sample.

Perhaps the regression is due to the different structures of the Math I and the Math A. This study examined Part I of each exam. However, while Part I of the Math I exam had a combination of multiple choice questions and short answer questions, Part I of the Math A exam consisted of only multiple choice questions. The researcher analyzed only the multiple choice questions of each examination in order to minimize the number of variables that may have affected the results. A future study should analyze all of the questions for each exam

The results of this study showed that the most recent Math A exams only required the student to answer 40% of the questions to earn a passing grade (Table 3). The New York State Education Department (NYSED) defends its scaled score of sixty-five indicates achievement of the State Learning Standards, as determined by a committee of New York State teachers (New York State Education Department, 2005). NYSED also argue that the Regents take into consideration the difficulty level of each question, allowing scaled scores to be much higher than the percent of correct questions. This is unclear why NYSED did not simply weight more of its questions rather than curve the scores.

The increase in the number of multiple choice questions over the years may indicate that the examination's difficulty level has regressed. A student may guess the correct answer for multiple choice questions but not for short answer questions. However, short answer questions give partial credit and so may not be outright "easier" than multiple choice questions. Therefore, further research should determine whether or not multiple choice questions are generally "easier" than short answer questions.

The same applies for the "type of problem" in algebra Regents. Since the percentage of standard algebra questions has increased and the percentage of logic questions has decreased this suggests that standard algebra questions are "easier" than logic questions. This issue should be researched further in future studies.

Another possible explanation of the current results may lie in the national and state educational policies implemented over the past decade. Since President George W. Bush's No

Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), states have been required to develop standardized tests for students in particular grade levels if they are to receive federal funding. However, there is no national standard; states create their own standards and assessments for students. States must also show that subgroups of students, such as minorities, students from low-income families, and the disabled, are making adequate progress on tests (No Child Left Behind Act, 2002). If states do not improve year to year, they face punitive measures. Criticism of the NCLB Act has argued that states' incentive to improve may lead them to lower their standards, "watering down" state assessments (South Carolina Department of Education, 2003). Federal researchers have even found that 15 states have lowered their standards for fourth-grade and/or eighth-grade standardized tests for the math and/or reading. States include Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming (Dillon, 2009).

New York State has claimed that students are performing better on state math tests. However, students are performing poorly on federal tests. Under state exams, 80% of students are proficient; under federal exams, only 34% are considered proficient (Medina, 2009). If these criticisms hold credence, the implications are dire. Not only could these assessments be an inaccurate tool to measure progress in our state educational systems, but the issues that may be preventing educational progress would be left unaddressed.

The implications of this study are severe; the level of difficulty of math examinations has regressed; future inquiries should be investigated

to determine if the level of difficulty of math education has regressed. If math education has regressed, some high school graduates may not be prepared for college mathematics. Some high school graduates may not be prepared to enter the workforce. In a society where advancements in all academic fields are important, education must advance as well. Education reform must be implemented if it is found that education has regressed. Educational reforms that have been attempted and prospects of future attempts of reform are illustrated by Leinwand and Ginsburg (2007), Mac Iver and Mac Iver (2009), and Wieczorek (2008).

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## The Influence of Personality Type on High School Students' Academic Achievement

Susan Mei

The relationship between personality type and academic achievement in high school students was examined. An accidental sample of 82 participants in the Center for Family Life program in Brooklyn was surveyed. The main hypothesis was rejected. Results suggest that personality types of high school students may not play a strong role in influencing their grades, but further studies can be done in order to yield more accurate results of the influence of personality types in academics.

### INTRODUCTION

The effort to improve students' education in the U.S. has always been tedious and complicated, especially when so many external factors are involved in influencing academic achievement. In a 1992 study, Gerald D. Tharp tested personality type's effect on college students in a physiology course, and found that students with specific characteristics had a higher tendency to perform better than others with different characteristics. Personality type has frequently been a factor taken into consideration when influencing academic achievement, and has mostly been studied among college students in specific college courses (Herbster, 1996; Hill, 1996; Shi et al., 2007; Tharp, 1992; Wu et al., 2007). However, the influence of personality types on academic aptitude has rarely been studied among high school students, where their academic achievements are affected by a variety of subjects. Under the pressures of taking a number of classes, high school students can find themselves doing better in some subjects, while falling behind in others due to the different methods in which they view and take in

information. The difference in students' interpretation of information leads back to the theory that personality type may play a role in pushing students to succeed in some subjects, while leading them to perform poorly in others (Shi et al., 2007; Tharp, 1992).

Past research indicates that a significant relationship exists between students' personality types and academic achievement (Bauer, 2003; Emerson, 2007; Herbster, 1996; Hill, 1996; Tharp, 1992). Additionally, past studies suggest that specific personality temperaments are closely related to achievement in specific fields of study. There are four different categories that a person can fit under for their personality type: Extroversion or Introversion, Sensing or Intuition, Thinking or Feeling, and Judging or Perceiving. For example, Tharp's (1992) study found that undergraduate students enrolled in a human physiology class who preferred the sensing and introversion trait excelled in the course. This may be due to the idea that the sensing trait is characterized with the preference to take in immediate and practical facts, and the introversion trait. In contrast, the students characterized with the opposite trait of

extroversion received lower grades and dropped out of the course in larger numbers. Wu et al.'s (2007) study concluded that students exhibiting the introversion trait exceeded in the medical course as opposed to students who exhibited the extroversion trait. Bishop-Clark et al. (1994) also pointed out that students in computer programming courses displayed contrasting personality traits when it came to course achievement. Computer programming students who exhibited sensing characteristics had higher test scores than students with the opposing trait of intuition. These studies suggest that certain courses and subject matters favor students with specific personality traits.

The idea that personality type influences our abilities and behaviors in various fields of study has been supported. A study done by McPherson et al. (2007) showed that the personality type of students is related to the career paths they choose to pursue. In the study, most of the students were characterized with traits that benefited the career path they chose, such as being extroverted for business majors who had good communication skills. Therefore, students are more likely to choose a major that best reflects their abilities. Personality type was also found to be correlated with quality of effort, and performance in academic, social and personal activities (Bauer, 2003; Irani et al., 2003). It has been noted that the determined personality type of students not only affects their academic achievement, but it affects their learning style as well (Emerson et al., 2007; Isaksen et al., 2003; contra Reynolds, 1999). Learning style and personality type seem to come hand in hand, as the character traits of students

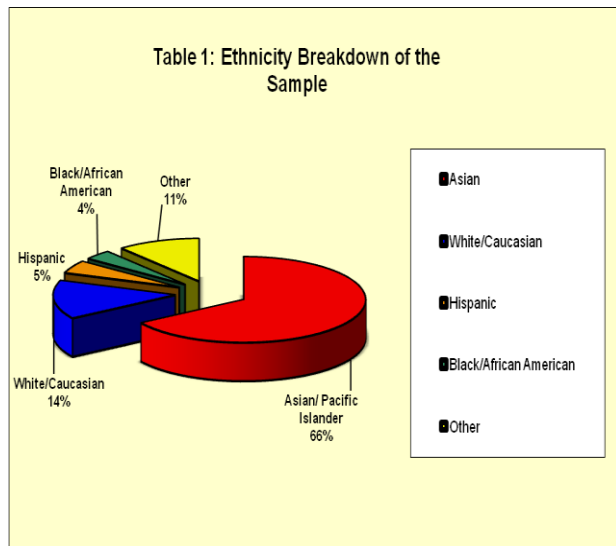
are a factor in how they interpret information (McClanaghan, 2000).

The purpose of this study is to determine how personality types of high school students affect their academic aptitude. Academic aptitude is defined by the students' performance and preference of their school courses. The high school students' achievements are based on their grade point averages in each of four fundamental courses, such as Mathematics, Science, History, and English. The overall grade point averages of the students are taken into account as well. To determine a student's personality type, the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) will be used. The MBTI is an instrument designed to measure how people perceive the world and make decisions. This widely used questionnaire has helped employers select the best potential workers, as well as assist instructors in identifying efficient methods to teach students (Buckless, 1991; McClanaghan, 2000; McPherson, 2007). A multitude of studies have observed the influence personality type has on academic achievement in specific courses in college students (Herbster, 1996; Hill, 1996; Novin, 2003; Opt, 2003; Reynolds, 1999; Shi et al., 2007; Tharp, 1992; Wu et al., 2007), but few have observed the effect personality type has on individual subject courses for a younger set of students. This study seeks to identify the relationship that each personality trait has with the main subject classes in the high school curriculum. In addition to personality type, variables such as age, gender, ethnicity, and family income are examined as potential factors that influence academic achievement.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample

A sample of 82 participants, chosen through the accidental sampling method, completed survey research. The sample was obtained from a population of high school students who were members of the Center for Family Life organization in Brooklyn, New York. A non-random, accidental sampling method was used in order to allow subjects to obtain the most participants as



possible without imposing on the program's activities. The sample obtained from the program consists of 33 males and 49 females (40% male, 60% female). The ethnic breakdown of the sample includes 54 Asian/Pacific Islander ( 66 %) people, 12 White/Caucasian (14 %) people, 4 Hispanic (5 %) people, 3 Black/ African American (4 %) people, and 9 people (11 %) categorized under the "Other" section. Table 1 displays the ethnic breakdown of the sample.

### Materials

A survey instrument was administered to the subjects in the study. Demographic questions were asked to indicate age, gender, ethnicity, and annual household income. Subjects' gender was self reported by marking off male or female. Ethnicity was self recorded by subjects by marking off the appropriate box. Response categories included Asian/Pacific Islander, White/Caucasian, Hispanic, Black/African American, Native American/American Indian, and Other. Income responses were given in the ranges of: \$0 – \$15,000, \$15,001 – \$30,000, \$30,001 – \$45,000, \$60,001 – \$75,000, \$75,001 – \$90,000, \$90,001+, and an option of "I do not know" for subjects who are unsure of their annual household income.

Academic achievement was measured with questions asking about subjects' grade point averages in certain courses in school. Participants were directed to respond to open-ended questions about their grade point averages, and then directed to select and rank their favorite subjects.

Personality type was measured using a modified version of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator constructed by Myers, B. I. (1962). The modified version of the scale contains 20 items used to categorize participants under the psychological type functions of Extroversion or Introversion, Sensing or Intuition, Thinking or Feeling, and Judging or Perceiving. The items ask for subjects to select between two actions to determine their personality functions.

### Procedure

Survey research was conducted during the afternoon after school, when potential

subjects would attend the Center for Family Life program. The surveys were self-administered by the researcher to the subjects, and were completed while the researcher was in the room. Subjects were allowed to ask the researcher any questions pertaining to the survey. Surveys were mainly collected twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays when the program provided activities for junior and senior high school students.

## RESULTS

**Table 2: Overall GPA in Relation to Subject's Exhibition of the Extroversion or Introversion Personality Type**

	<i>Extroversion</i>	<i>Introversion</i>
Mean	1.682927	1.463415
Variance	0.521951	0.254878
Observations	41	41
Pooled Variance	0.388415	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	80	
t Stat	1.594732	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.057358	
t Critical one-tail	1.664125	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.114715	
t Critical two-tail	1.990063	

The main hypothesis that students' personality types influenced their academic achievement was examined. The t-test: two sample assuming equal variance was utilized to test the significance between students' academic achievement by overall average with their

exhibited personality types. All hypotheses were rejected. As shown in Table 2, there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables ( $p=0.11$ ) because the value of the test statistic (1.59) does not exceed the critical value (1.99) at the 0.05 significance level. The hypotheses stating that there is a relationship between overall grade point average with the personality types of sensing/intuition, thinking/feeling, and judging/perceiving were also rejected with similar t-test results.

The t-test: two sample assuming equal variance was utilized to test the significance between students' academic achievement by each subject area with their exhibited personality types. All hypotheses, with the exception of the hypothesis that students' grades in history class are influenced by personality type of extroversion/introversion, were rejected.

The relationship between a student's performance in mathematics and their personality types of extroversion/introversion, sensing/intuition, thinking/feeling, and judging/perceiving was tested using four t-tests assuming equal variance. Each of these t-tests focused on one personality type category; such that extroversion/introversion was tested with performance in mathematics in one t-test, sensing/intuition was tested with performance in mathematics in another t-test, and so on. There were no significant relationships found between subjects' overall grade point averages in Mathematics class with their personality types. As displayed in Table 3, the hypothesis that a sensing/intuition personality type influences grades in math is rejected because the test statistic

(1.95) does not exceed the critical value (1.99) at the 0.05 significance level.

**Table 3: GPA in Mathematics in Relation to Subject's Exhibition of the Sensing or Intuition Personality Type**

	<i>Sensing</i>	<i>Intuition</i>
Mean	1.903225806	1.56862745
Variance	0.623655914	0.53019608
Observations	31	51
Pooled Variance	0.565243517	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	80	
t Stat	1.954182033	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.027086992	
t Critical one-tail	1.664124579	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.054173983	
t Critical two-tail	1.990063387	

**Table 4: GPA in English in Relation to Subject's Exhibition of the Thinking or Feeling Personality Type**

	<i>Thinking</i>	<i>Feeling</i>
Mean	1.378378378	1.488888889
Variance	0.297297297	0.346464646
Observations	37	45
Pooled Variance	0.324339339	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	80	
t Stat	-0.874387548	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.192262332	
t Critical one-tail	1.664124579	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.384524665	
t Critical two-tail	1.990063387	

The relationship between the subjects' grades in English class and their personality types were tested with t-tests. Again, the hypotheses were rejected because the test statistics found in each t-test did not exceed the critical values at the 0.05 significance level. An example is seen in Table 4, where the hypothesis that a student's grade point average in English class is related to the thinking/feeling personality type is rejected. Between the two variables ( $p = 0.38$ ), the test statistic (0.87) does not exceed the critical value (1.99).

**Table 5: GPA in Science in Relation to Subject's Exhibition of the Judging/Perceiving Personality Type**

	<i>Judging</i>	<i>Perceiving</i>
Mean	1.564102564	1.534884
Variance	0.462887989	0.540421
Observations	39	43
Pooled Variance	0.503592725	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	80	
t Stat	0.186201381	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.426379094	
t Critical one-tail	1.664124579	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.852758187	
t Critical two-tail	1.990063387	

The hypotheses that overall grade point average is influenced by personality type in science class were tested. All four hypotheses were rejected, because the test statistics in each test did not exceed the critical values. In Table 5, the hypothesis that grade point average is related

to the judging/perceiving personality type is tested ( $p=0.85$ ). This hypothesis is rejected because the test statistic (0.19) does not exceed the critical value (1.99).

The hypotheses that overall grade point average is influenced by personality type in history class were tested. All but one hypothesis was rejected. The three hypotheses that were rejected stated the relationship between grade point average in history class with the thinking/feeling personality type, judging/perceiving personality type, and sensing intuition personality type. The test statistics did not exceed the critical values in those three t-tests. However, the t-tests that tested the relationship between the grade point average in history class with the extroversion/introversion personality type turned out positive.

As seen in Table 6, the test statistic (2.46) exceeds the critical value (1.99). In addition the p-value (0.016) does not exceed the 0.05 significance level.

The secondary variables for influencing academic achievement include age, ethnicity, family’s annual household income, and gender. All four of these non-directional hypotheses were rejected, and no significant relationship was found. To test the relationship, between the overall grade point average and ethnicity of the subjects, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was utilized. As seen in Table 7, there was no statistically significant relationship because the test statistic ( $F=2.09$ ) does not exceed the critical value (2.49), and the p-value (0.09) exceeds the significance level of 0.05.

**Table 6: GPA in History in Relation to Subject’s Exhibition of the Extroversion/Introversion Personality Type**

	<i>Extroversion</i>	<i>Introversion</i>
Mean	1.341463415	1.731707
Variance	0.751219512	0.280488
Observations	41	41
Pooled Variance	0.515853659	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	80	
t Stat	2.460083221	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.008022696	
t Critical one-tail	1.664124579	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.016045392	
t Critical two-tail	1.990063387	

**Table 7: Overall GPA in Relation to Subject's Ethnicity**

SUMMARY

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Asian/Pac	54	90	1.666667	0.415094
White	12	16	1.333333	0.242424
Hispanic	4	4	1	0
Black/AfAm	3	6	2	1
Other	7	10	1.428571	0.285714

ANOVA

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	3.169048	4	0.792262	2.093645	0.090002	2.493696
Within Groups	28.38095	75	0.378413			
Total	31.55	79				

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between personality types and academic achievement. The main hypothesis that personality type influences the academic achievement of students is not supported. Academic achievement, in terms of the overall average on a student's report card, is not statistically significant in relation to personality type, because an overall average can be influenced by other factors. The overall average on a report card is not only based on the student's personality type alone. If a student was in an advanced class, a grade can be weighted, therefore increasing the overall average. Students' grades can be inflated by the number of advanced

placements courses they are enrolled in. In addition, the academic environment in which a student is learning can alter performance in class. Whether a student is more outgoing or introverted, sensible or more intuitive, the influence of teachers or peers can also alter grades.

The hypotheses that stated the relationship between four subject areas in relation to four categories of personality types were all rejected with the exception of one. The only hypothesis with a positive relationship stated that a student's overall grade point average in history class was related to their preference for the extroversion or introversion personality type. Perhaps a statistically significant relationship was found between these two variables because a history class involves learning about past events. In the

t-test for this hypothesis, students who exhibited the extroverted personality type received a higher grade in the class in contrast to students who exhibited the introverted personality type. Students in the Extroversion category received an average of a 1.34 in the class, whereas students in the Introversion category received an average of a 1.73. (The closer the average is to 1, the higher the average is.) Students who display the Extroversion trait may do better in History class because that personality type is characterized by the preference to relate to the external world of people and events over internal ideas and thoughts (Switch, 1998). This ability is helpful in succeeding in a history class where historical figures and events are studied and analyzed.

The rejected hypotheses that stated the relationship between grade point averages in Mathematics, Science, English, and History with personality types may have come out negative because of the unfocused area of study. In high school, students are required to take a large number of courses; the fundamental ones are based around Mathematics, Science, English, and History. Because students are studying such a variety of required subjects, their performance in each class can be influenced by the workload. A student can focus on an assignment for one class, while neglecting another. Perhaps past studies have found a positive relationship between academic achievement and personality type, because most of these studies are based on students in college-level courses (Herbster, 1996; Hill, 1996; Shi et al., 2007; Tharp, 1992; Wu et al., 2007). In these studies, the courses that are being taken are based on a specific field. In

addition, these courses are chosen by the students themselves, which makes it easier to pinpoint the characteristics that allow them to succeed or do poorly in the course.

Age, ethnicity, annual family income, and gender are shown to be unrelated to academic achievement. Because high school students are within the same age range, there are no significant differences seen in academic achievement. The majority of the sample fell under the Asian/Pacific Islander category, which may have altered the relationship between ethnicity and academic achievement. Annual family income was not shown to have a strong influence on academic achievement in this sample. Lastly, there was no relationship found between gender and academic achievement.

If further research is done, the sample should be taken from a more ethnically diverse location. Students from Center for Family Life generally fell under the Asian/Pacific Islander category, which may have influenced the results. In addition, potential subjects were not obtained due to schedule and deadline issues. Overall, high school students' personality types may not have a great influence on their academic achievement, because their areas of study are widespread and unfocused, as opposed to college students who have specific areas of study.

Findings from this study show that personality type may play a role in students' academic achievements, but does not strongly influence a student's grades. Furthermore, studies done on college students would be more beneficial due more specific fields of study. In high schools, personality types do not strongly

influence grades. Also, findings from this study tell us that it is possible to maximize learning for everyone when we use personality types to better understand the inner workings of the mind and human behaviors. It is recommended that future researchers study the personality types of college students in every available course to pinpoint characteristics that help them achieve academically.

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## **Racial Socialization and its Effect on One's Application to a Historically Black College or University**

**Tasha Alexis**

The factors that affect the application to a Historically Black College or University were examined. A sample of 72 black high school students completed a questionnaire that included the Youth Cultural and Racial Experiences of Socialization Scale. The primary hypothesis was supported, indicating that a statistically significant relationship exists between the level of racial socialization and the application to a HBCU. Findings also indicate that application to a HBCU is related to the racial composition of one's friendship network and within one's neighborhood.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Leaving high school and going to college is one of the greatest transitions a student may experience, as it presents a new chapter in one's life. Thus, the decision that one makes holds great importance. While the college process is usually stressful for all high school seniors, African Americans have dealt with particularly high levels of stress when it comes to the college application process. Numerous studies have been conducted on the factors that contribute to African Americans' decisions surrounding the application process, and have focused specifically on socioeconomic status and academic achievement.

Horvat (1997) suggests that the roots of this disadvantage are still visibly present today, especially in economic inequalities between blacks and whites and the educational opportunities that each group has. In Horvat's study (1997), which focused primarily on black female high school seniors, he reports that although females all spoke with pride about their race, they acknowledged how race created

boundaries within their lives, stating they felt that society usually looks down on them and expects less.

Racial stereotypes are apparent among many groups of American society. But African Americans are the most visibly stereotyped racial group in the U.S. (Harding, 2007). Harpalani (2007) states that stereotypes associated with Black Americans are often characterized as intellectual inferiority and athletic prowess.

However, once getting past the issue of racial stereotypes and racial barriers, many African American students do apply to college. In fact, in the past decade the percentage of blacks applying to college has increased dramatically (Satterfield, 2008). One reason for this increase is due to the popularity of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). HBCUs are academic institutions of higher learning in the United States that were established before 1964 and had the intention of serving the black community (Satterfield, 2008). HBCUs play a huge role in graduating African Americans. Although they initially were unsuccessful, (according to Satterfield [2008], by 1968 there was a 34% decrease in Blacks' college

enrollment), currently 18% of all African American students attend a HBCU (Cross, 1991). In the past two decades, the number of students attending a HBCU has increased by 26% (Terenzini, Yaeger, Bohr, Pascarella, and Amaury, 1997), and according to the information presented by Garibaldi (1991) historically black colleges and universities have been the source of 40% of all bachelor's degrees and 30% of all master's degrees earned by African Americans.

According to Terenzini et. al. (1997), Historically Black Colleges promote greater satisfaction among black students than Predominately White Institutions (PWIs). They also appear to provide greater social support and faculty support, and there is a greater comfort level due to fewer reports of racist incidents and sentiments (Terenzini et. al., 1997). Terenzini et al. (1997) suggests that black students at black colleges have been found to be more integrated into campus life, perceive their college as providing more institutional support and have more favorable relationships. The study suggests that HBCUs give black students a sense of optimism that PWIs do not provide, citing that compared to black PWI students, black HBCU students tend to enroll for more hours and classes, live on campus, have higher expectations of completing a baccalaureate degree, be satisfied with their college experience, be more involved in campus clubs/organizations and report positive residence hall experiences (Terenzini et al., 1997). The HBCU experience is said to offer a more nurturing and mentoring environment, as well as more cultural activities.

With all of the positive associations to historically black colleges, there is no doubt that a large percentage of African Americans students

would be attracted to them. However, the specific reasons why black students, specifically high school seniors, are interested in applying there, has not been extensively researched. The most obvious factor would be because of one's socioeconomic status. Most HBCUs cost significantly less in tuition, or offer decent financial aid packages, and therefore become more affordable for students and their families (Kim, 2004). Another factor that has been linked to applying to historically black colleges is location. Students who grow up in neighborhoods that are close in proximity to HBCUs are more likely to attend a HBCU (Mykerezi and Milis, 2008). One application factor that was not previously found to be significant is the racial composition of a student's high school. In Lewis's (2006) study, the percentage of minority students in a black student's high school classes does not significantly predict his/her application to a black college.

However, the racial composition of one's high school is only one of many elements that play into a student's socialization. Racial socialization refers to the process by which parents shape their child's attitudes and perception of race and how one's race fits into the various social contexts that they may come in contact with (Bennett, 2006). According to Frabutt, Walker, and MakKinnon-Lewis (2002), racial socialization more specifically focuses on the messages and practices that provide information concerning the nature of race status as it relates to personal and group identity, intergroup and individual relationships, and position in the social hierarchy. Racial socialization is practiced by all racial and ethnic groups, however, it is most commonly practiced

among black families and among mothers (Frabutt et al., 2002). Based on Frabutt et al. (2002), mothers tend to emphasize self-esteem, positive feelings about ethnicity, self respect, lack of fair and honest treatment from White Americans, and education. Frabutt et al. (2002) reviewed an additional study conducted in 1985 by Bowman and David. In this study, the researchers demonstrated that youth who were socialized to be aware of racism and racial barriers performed better in school and had a greater sense of personal identity. Nora and Cabrera (1996) found that parental encouragement positively affected academic experience in Black college students. Generally, racial socialization and ethnic identity are thought to serve as protective factors in the lives of African Americans, especially among youths (Bennett, 2006).

The present study aimed to highlight the application process of black high school juniors and seniors. More specifically, it sought to find a link between the level of racial socialization of a black high school junior or senior and his/her decision to apply to a historically black college or university. In this study, the measure of one's level of racial socialization was based on specific common messages that a black youth may have heard of or may have been told within their lifetime. These messages may include the idea of white superiority, a Christian upbringing, and black slave struggles. In order to determine one's level of racial socialization, focus is put on the influences that may have exposed the student to each message, whether they are a parent, a grandparent, a teacher, a friend or the media, in order to show what the student has learned and

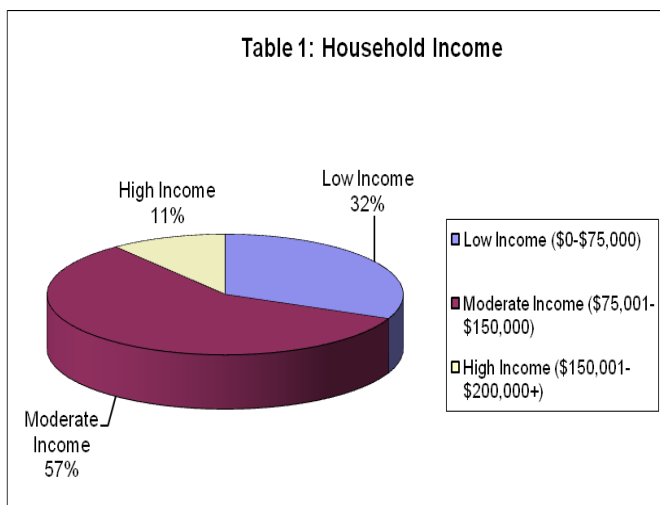
who he/she has learned from in terms of his/her race. Focus is also put on how much the student agrees with each racial socialization message, to show how it has influenced and how it has been incorporated into his/her life presently. Secondary factors/hypotheses that were tested were household income, the racial composition of one's neighborhood, the racial composition of one's high school and the racial composition of one's friends. This study may help further the understanding of the influence that the degree of racial socialization exhibits on black students' choices and the role that race still plays in educational decisions within the American black community.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Subjects*

A sample of 72 black high school juniors (11<sup>th</sup> grade) and seniors (12<sup>th</sup> grade) was used for this study. Three Brooklyn Public Library branches and one branch of the New York YMCA were selected through accidental sampling. These institutions were chosen because of their representation of different socioeconomic groups and their large number of teenage African American members. The students were randomly selected from each branch in order to ensure the greatest likelihood of obtaining a representative sample.

Forty five percent of the sample consisted of females and 54% was male. The two grade levels were represented fairly evenly, with 49% of the students being juniors and 51% seniors, and the ages of students ranged from 15-18 years old. The sample composition in terms of household income is shown in Table 1.



### **Materials**

A sixty item questionnaire, including a modified version of the Youth Cultural and Racial Experiences of Socialization scale (Stevenson, 2008) was used to collect the data. This measure is a comprehensive revision and unification of previous measures of racial socialization by Stevenson (1994, 2002) that includes conceptual advances in the racial socialization field. Some new components included racial socialization in areas of internalized racism, classism, gendered racial socialization, multiculturalism, and religious coping.

A series of questions were constructed to measure the dependent variable, the application to a HBCU. It was determined by asking the participant if they had ever previously heard about HBCUs, whether they were planning to apply, and to how many. The students were asked to pick the response that best fit their circumstance, whether the responses were “yes” and “no”, or a number range.

To determine the subject’s level of racial socialization, the Youth Cultural and Racial Experiences of Socialization scale was adapted and the subjects were asked to respond to thirty statements on a Likert Scale. For the thirty

statements, the subjects were asked to what extent they agreed with each statement (on a four point scale), and who they had previously heard the statement from, if they had heard it at all. Examples of these statements are “One should be proud to be Black,” “It is important to remember the experience of Black slavery,” and “You have to work twice as hard as whites in order to get ahead in this world.”

The questionnaire also included the measures of secondary variables as well. Household income, and the racial percentages of the participant’s attended high school, friendship network and neighborhood were all self reported.

### **Procedure**

In the library branches, an employee of each branch distributed the surveys to the students. Each student filled out the survey at his or her own leisure and returned it to the employee upon completion. Within a one week period the surveys were delivered back to the researcher. At the YMCA branch the surveys were distributed to the subjects by the researcher and were returned upon completion. All potential subjects were informed that participation in the study was strictly voluntary, and all respondents gave their free and informed consent to participate in the study.

### **RESULTS**

Several variables were examined to determine which are associated with the application to a Historically Black College or University. The variables tested represent a variety of aspects that can influence a black student’s application. The level of one’s racial

socialization, household income, and the percentage of blacks in one’s neighborhood, high school, and friendship network were all considered.

A t-test assuming equal variances was used to examine the primary hypothesis that racial socialization is related to the application to a historically black college. Subjects were grouped into three categories, divided according to their level of racial socialization: Low (45-105), Moderate (106-165) and High (166 and above). The hypothesis was supported ( $p < .05$ ) because the value of the test statistic ( $t = -2.13996$ ) exceeded the critical two tail value (1.99608), indicating that there is a statistically significant relationship. As illustrated by Table 2, students who had higher levels of racial socialization were less likely to apply to a HBCU.

**Table 2: Application to a HBCU and Level of Racial Socialization**

	<i>Applied to an HBCU</i>	<i>Didn't apply to a HBCU</i>
Mean	127.1	143.8276
Variance	964.0923	1115.148
Observations	40	29
Pooled Variance	1027.22	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	67	
t Stat	-2.13996	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.018001	
t Critical one-tail	1.667916	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.036003	
t Critical two-tail	1.996008	

**Table 3: Application to a HBCU and Percentage of Blacks in One’s Neighborhood**

	<i>Applied to HBCU</i>	<i>Didn't apply to HBCU</i>
Mean	50.47619	65.33333
Variance	1009.524	529.1954
Observations	42	30
Pooled Variance	810.5306	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	70	
t Stat	-2.18308	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.016193	
t Critical one-tail	1.666914	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.032385	
t Critical two-tail	1.994437	

It was also hypothesized that the percentage of blacks in one’s neighborhood has an effect on one’s application to a historically black college. A t-test was used to test this hypothesis. The test statistic ( $t = -2.18308$ ) exceeds the critical value (1.994437) at the .05 significance level. According to the results, people who do not apply to HBCUs have a larger percentage of blacks living in their neighborhood. The results of this test are displayed in Table 3.

The third hypothesis states that the percentage of blacks in one’s friendship network is related to his/her application to a historically black college. The two-tail values were used since it is a non-directional hypothesis. The results of a t-test assuming equal variances indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship since the test statistic ( $t = 2.599$ ) exceeds the critical value (1.995) at the .05 significance level. The results propose that the more black friends one has in his/her

friendship network, is the more likely he/she applies to a HBCU. The results are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Application to a HBCU and Percentage of Blacks in Friendship Network**

	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Didn't Apply</i>
Mean	74.75	59.16667
Variance	502.5	769.1092
Observations	40	30
Pooled Variance	616.201	
Hypothesized Mean		
Difference	0	
df	68	
t Stat	2.599206	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.005725	
t Critical one-tail	1.667572	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.01145	
t Critical two-tail	1.995469	

**Table 5: Household Income and Application to a HBCU**

	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Did not apply</i>
Mean	5.466667	5.555556
Variance	2.878161	3.333333
Observations	30	27
Pooled Variance	3.093333	
Hypothesized		
Mean Difference	0	
df	55	
t Stat	-0.19052	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.424802	
t Critical one-tail	1.673034	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.849604	
t Critical two-tail	2.004045	

**Table 6: Percentage of Blacks in One's High School and Application to a HBCU**

	<i>Applied</i>	<i>Did not apply</i>
Mean	57.61905	49
Variance	589.3148	602.4138
Observations	42	30
Pooled Variance	594.7415	
Hypothesized Mean		
Difference	0	
df	70	
t Stat	1.478476	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.071883	
t Critical one-tail	1.666914	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.143766	
t Critical two-tail	1.994437	

A t-test was used to test the hypothesis that household income is related to application to a HBCU, as well as the hypothesis that the percentage of blacks in one's high school is related to the application to a HBCU. In both hypotheses, there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables. The results from these tests are displayed in Tables 5 and 6.

**DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that affect a black student's application to a Historically Black College or University. The primary hypothesis was that racial socialization affects one's application to a HBCU. More specifically, the higher one's level of racial socialization, the more likely the person is to apply. Although a statistically significant relationship was found between the two variables, contrary to what was hypothesized, the results suggest that the

higher one's level of racial socialization, the *less* likely a person is to apply to a HBCU. These results are consistent with Pope's (2000) study on racial identity and student developmental tasks. Pope found that students who had a secure Black sense of self (i.e., higher level of racial socialization) were better able to establish a purpose in college, and develop mature relationships and academic freedom, than students with less of a sense of Black identity. In Predominantly White Institutions or ethnically diverse college environments, students may not have access to the kinds of academic and social settings that support the Black culture (Terenzini et. al., 1997). Thus, it appears that having a stronger sense of racial identity, developed by racial socialization, in which one feels connected with other cultural groups may make it easier to adjust to college in a predominantly White or racially mixed setting, most likely by allowing for feeling a sense of belonging to the university. Anglin (2007) suggests that students who have a miseducated and negative Black sense of self and a lower level of racial socialization may experience more difficulty adjusting to a predominately white college. They specifically may experience more difficulty feeling academically and socially satisfied. Believing in the negative messages and associations about one's racial group may make it difficult to feel qualified and confident around predominantly White or ethnically diverse groups of students. In addition, students who reject White people and culture may feel overwhelmed with their college experience in a predominantly White or mixed-race/ multicultural environment (Anglin, 2007). For this reason, Black students may then turn to historically Black colleges.

Perhaps another explanation for why black students who possess higher levels of racial socialization are less inclined to apply to HBCUs is that since they already have a strong sense of cultural identity, they want to prove to others the strength of the Black culture as a whole. Because the stereotypical images of academic excellence usually include Whites and Asians, and not Blacks, a Black student may feel that they have something to prove at a PWI and may feel the desire to represent his/her race in positive ways.

The relationship between the percentage of blacks within one's neighborhood and the application to a HBCU was also examined. The results, as shown in Table 3, suggest that people who do not apply to HBCUs have a greater percentage of blacks within their neighborhood. Although this is contrary to the researcher's hypothesis, these results are very much applicable. For example, one explanation could be that perhaps a black student is unhappy or unsatisfied living in a predominately black community and would be skeptical of applying to an institution that is still mostly composed of blacks or an institution that requires them to live in a residence hall with only black students. Another explanation may be that he/she would like to experience living in a more racially diverse area, in order to learn about different cultures and find new interests that may be outside of the black culture. This experience is more likely to be found at a predominately white institution, as opposed to a predominately black college.

Another statistically significant relationship found was between one's percentage of blacks in his/her friendship network and the application to a HBCU. The results of the t-test, shown in Table 4, indicate that black students who have a greater

percentage of black friends, are more likely to be interested in a HBCU. An explanation for these results is that people tend to stick close to what they are familiar or comfortable with culture wise. This usually means tending to stay close to people of their own race, because they have a lot in common. This need to stay with familiarity, in the case of blacks, may influence them to apply to a HBCU.

The lack of relationship between household income and the application to a HBCU can be because of the availability of financial aid, both merit and non merit based. Therefore, whether someone comes from a wealthy home, or comes from a less fortunate home, he/she has the chance to pay for his/her college education using government aid. Also, especially for African American students, there are many (paid) internships and scholarships that are offered, thus easing the financial strain. No relationship was found between the percentage of black students in one's high school and the interest in a HBCU as well. One can favor going to a school with more blacks because of familiarity and higher comfort level, or one can have the desire to meet new people from other races and cultures.

The transition from high school to college is very challenging for most students and may be particularly difficult for Black students. Luckily, Historically Black Colleges and Universities have proved to be helpful for black students in providing a socially and academically favorable environment. This study has identified several factors that may result in a black student applying to a HBCU. However, it has also distinguished factors why a student *would not* apply to a HBCU. Racial socialization is a process that affects the lives, actions and thoughts of many people,

especially African Americans. This study has not only investigated the connection between racial socialization and the application to colleges, but in essence, demonstrates the role that race still plays in educational decisions within the American black community. Perhaps a further study can examine the effects of racial socialization on the realization of a black student's maximum potential.

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## **The Effect of Participation in Extracurricular Activities on Academic Performance among High School Students**

**Anna Tseng**

This study examines the relationship between participation in extracurricular activities and academic performance. It seeks to further the existing body of knowledge on factors that affect academic performance and to examine whether a relationship exists between participation in extracurricular activities and academic performance and if so, what type of relationship exists (negative or positive). A sample of 100 high school students was selected using random sampling and asked to complete a survey. The primary hypothesis that participation in extracurricular activities is related to academic performance was not supported. This study was found to be inconsistent with previous research (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Camp, 1990), which found a relationship between participation in extracurricular activities and scholastic achievement. Results also indicated that there is no correlation between academic performance and level of self-esteem, level of self-perceived parental support. In addition, it was found that there exists no relationship between one's academic performance and one's history of outside tutoring or prep courses. However, the secondary hypothesis that academic performance is related to the amount of time spent studying was supported.

## **The Relationship between one's Number of Facebook Friends and the Information Provided on one's Profile**

**Brian Burns**

This study compared the number of facebook friends one has to other information provided one's profile to determine which method would be better for studying social networking sights: signaling theory or ethnomethodology (globalization). Every fifth profile in the New York Network on facebook was chosen, beginning with a randomly chosen public profile. Signaling theory states that humans instinctively look for and respond to signals. For example, if one wanted to prove that he/she knows someone, one would send the person a friend request on facebook. The recipient would then respond to the request accordingly. Ethnomethodology examines the social network as a melding of all the world's different cultures over social network. Although this is a realistic approach to tackling the question, it does not consider social interactions on an individual level. None of the hypotheses were supported; the number of friends one is not related to one's demographics. The sample had a near 50-50 gender balance, with the majority being 17 years of age. The t- stat is 1.992997097 (two-tailed). The age breakdown established 17 years old as the dominant age of the sample. The hypothesis that one's ethnicity is related to the number of facebook friends one has is also unsupported. The p-value is over .05 and the test statistic (.50) is below the critical value (2.34). It was found that a relationship exists between one's favorite TV show genre and the number of friends one has. The p-value was .07 and the test stat rose to 1.9 and the critical value was 2.2. Signaling theory is not applicable to social networking because befriending is the key component of signaling theory. Because one's ethnicity was found to be unrelated to the number of facebook friends one has, ethnomethodology may not fit this application, either.

## **Racist Television? : The Ethnic Portrayals of Criminals on Television Crime Dramas and the Actual Criminal Demographics in American Society in 2007**

**Emily Feng**

Ethnic stereotyping is inevitable in almost all aspects of everyday life. In fact, society is riddled with biased beliefs. Black people love KFC and Kool-Aid. Chinese people are good at math. Brown people eat curry. White people can't dance. Hispanic people rob stores. Even on matters such as driving, studies have shown that African Americans have a higher rate of being pulled over than White Americans do, with the former having a 12.52% pull-over rate and the latter a 7.03% pull-over rate (Nixon, 2005). This type of stereotyping is especially evident in crime dramas on television. In this study, the relationship between the ethnic portrayals of criminals on the most popular television crime dramas, *CSI: New York* and *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, and the actual criminal demographics of America in 2007 was explored. A quota sampling of 45 episodes from both dramas was analyzed using content analysis. The main hypothesis that the arrests of criminals for certain crimes on TV would be consistent with the actual arrests made in 2007 was rejected.

## **Accuracy of Local New York City Newspaper Reports over the Two Decades**

**Jing Zhang**

The accuracy of local New York City Newspaper Reports over two decades was examined. Eighty newspapers from years 1988 to 2007 were randomly sampled with half from *New York Daily News* and half from *New York Post*. Headlines of each newspaper were noted and recorded if it was related to violent crimes – murder and non-negligent manslaughter; forcible rape; robbery; and aggravated assault. Another factor that was noted was the genders of the chief editors of the papers. It was hypothesized that the accuracy of the violent crime reports declined over two decades. Due to the emergence of yellow journalism, newspaper articles may have transformed from factual reports to sensational and exaggerated articles. Competition with free newspapers and the internet forced newspapers to focus more on high profile crimes to attract sales. Main findings include accuracy did not decrease from 1988 to 2007; in fact, there was a moderate positive correlation between reported violent crimes and violent crimes recorded in statistics. Results showed that murder was more inaccurately reported than any most of the other violent crimes for *New York Post*. In addition, the data also suggested that *Daily News* was more accurate than *New York Post*.

## **The Relationship between the Degree of Suggestive Self Destructive Behavior (SDB) in Japanese Films and the Average Suicide Rates in Japan**

**Feng Chen**

The relationship between average suicide rates in Japan per 100,000 people and the level of suggestive self destructive behavior in Japanese films was examined. Fourteen of the most popular Japanese films between 1971 and 2005 were randomly selected and content analysis was used to record instances of SDB/ encouragement of SDB. There was a significant positive correlation between the level of suggestive SDB in Japanese films and the average suicide rates in Japan. The unemployment rates in Japan were also found to have a correlation with the average suicide rates in Japan. D. R. Anderson, Deborah, Huston, Schmitt, & Wright (2001) argued that imitation is very common among those who view films and television shows. Freudian psychoanalytic theory, on the other hand, offers a different explanation, "Todestrieb," which states that "people have an innate death drive that impels them to pursue their own downfall and death." In other words, humans are self-destructive by nature.

## **The Level of Gender Stereotype in Commercials Shown during Weekdays versus Commercials Shown during Weekends**

**Jennifer Yip**

The objective of this study was to analyze gender stereotypes in television advertisements. Content analysis was used to analyze 100 commercials broadcast over six local television channels. Commercials were watched every day between May 11<sup>th</sup> and June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009 between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 pm. Commercials were selected using random sampling. Commercials containing only promotional announcements, public service announcements, and/or advertisements clearly originating at the local station were disregarded. All program material, public service announcements, billboards, and promotional announcements were also eliminated. A series of variables common to similar investigations were coded to allow comparisons to be made. Data shows that there is no correlation between the day of week a show is aired and the amount of stereotype instances present in commercials.

## **Self-acceptance between Male and Female Members of the Homosexual Community**

**Kyosha Pierre Francois**

This study examined the level of self-acceptance among male and female homosexuals. The hypothesis of this study was that female homosexuals have a higher level of self-acceptance than male homosexuals do. Variables include the region the participant grew up in and whether he/she attended a private school or a public school. 100 surveys were given out to New York University and Hunter College students who identified themselves as homosexuals. The sample technique used was quota sampling. The results show that the level of acceptance of a homosexual's family affects the homosexual's level of self-acceptance. The other seven hypotheses were not supported.

## **Level of Optimism Portrayed in Sitcoms over Time**

**Mike Dinatale**

The level of optimism portrayed in television sitcoms over time was examined. A random sample of 40 episodes from sitcoms that were aired between the years 1970 and 1999 were analyzed through content analysis. Levels of optimism was defined as any instance in which positive phrases made by characters during specific situations such as “everything will be okay”, “look on the bright side”, or “every cloud has a silver lining,” characters expressing feelings of happiness or joy, and whether or not the problem of the episode was resolved. Each instance of optimism was given one point, and the episodes with higher scores portrayed a higher degree of optimism. The main hypothesis that the level of optimism in sitcoms has declined during this time period was rejected. Additional independent variables evaluated in this study were ethnic diversity of characters in a show, a show’s target audience, political party in office when a sitcom was aired, and the state of the economy during which a sitcom was aired. None of these variables proved to have a relationship with the dependent variable, and were therefore rejected.

## **Evidence of Hypomanic Symptoms in Correlation with Academic Progress**

**Raymond Mark**

This study examines the prevalence of symptoms of hypomania among a student population. Hypomania is an episode or a mood state characterized by elation, irritability, mild euphoria, elevated energy levels and a decreased need for sleep. This condition is a feature of Bipolar II Disorder, which is characterized by persistent cycling between depressive and hypomanic episodes. This study examined a sample of 47 college students that are between the ages 18-22 using a combination of the Mood Disorder Questionnaire and the Altman Self-Rating Mania Scale. The students were given short surveys that incorporated these two scales, in addition to items that measured demographics. The prevalence of symptoms of hypomania was correlated to their academic achievement of the time, based on their then current grade point average.

The primary hypothesis that the prevalence of hypomanic symptoms affected the level of academic achievement, measured according to G.P.A., was not supported. Students that displayed prevalent symptoms of hypomania did not tend to have a higher nor lower G.P.A. However, there were many implications of the prevalence of hypomania among a student population. This study indicated that 19.15% of students were tested positive on both the MDQ and the ASRM.

This study made many important implications. One of which is that a more accurate scale is needed to measure the prevalence of symptoms of hypomania, as there were contradicting correlations in the measure of the same variable between the MDQ and the ASRM. This study also suggested that the prevalence of hypomania is substantially higher than the prevalence rate based on the rigid stipulations of the DSM-IV-TR, which stands at 2%.

## Vicky Lin

Often underestimated, optimism plays a large role in influencing our outlook in life as well as our behavior. Past studies focused primarily on optimism and its influences on longevity, and less on what factors might influence optimism. This study examines what might be a possible factor that influences optimism. The relationship between one's level of self interest (defined as excessive regard for one's personal advantage) and level of optimism (defined as a positive outlook in the world) with reference to the middle aged adults. A thirty-eight-item questionnaire, targeting the middle aged (40-65), was distributed to two purposively selected fitness centers from Long Island.

Results strongly suggested that as one's level of self interest increases, one's level of optimism decreases. The main hypothesis – that people who are more optimistic will have a lower level of self interest – was tested using the Pearson's Correlation. The correlation coefficient ( $r = -0.66364$ ) exceeded the critical value (0.232) at the .05 significance level, supporting the hypothesis. This negative correlation shows as one's level of self interest decreases, one's level of optimism increases. Because the correlation coefficient ( $r = -0.66364$ ), is closer to -1 than 0, it can be concluded that the relationship between the two variables is rather strong.

Variables that may affect the subjects' optimistic level such as gender, ethnicity, social economic status and one's physical and mental well being were considered and tested using Pearson's Correlation, T-Test, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

## **The Russians are not Coming!: A Content Analysis of Film**

### **Denis Vinogradov**

The portrayal of Russians in American Film during the later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Film is often a reflection of popular culture and it reflects elements of the political and/or economic climate of a particular era. Hollywood is considered to be the center and capitol of today's film industry. The study uses a total sample of 21 movies. Three from each decade were selected starting from the 1940s and ending in the 2000s. The movies were selected from a population of movies that have Russian characters and a central theme focusing on communism and its aspects. The movies were found using the internet and the Google search engine. The researcher used stratified random sampling. The hypothesis was that the portrayal of Russians has become more positive since the end of the Cold War. The results were tested and it was shown that they were not statistically supported. The study poses an interesting question even though it was not supported. Do Hollywood films use current political situations in order to attract audiences and profit from them? "One of the historic obligations of the news media is to entertain. This obligation is directly related to current situations which in turn are used to increase markets and expand revenues."

## **The Portrayal of Sexual Minorities in North American Television**

**Alana Mohamed**

The relationship between the portrayal of homosexuals and portrayal of bisexuals in North American television throughout the past ten years was observed. A sample of 20 North American television shows were chosen from a list compiled by David A. Wyatt of University of Manitoba, with ten homosexual characters and ten bisexual characters studied. Of the homosexual characters, 80% of the sample was male and 20% was female, while of the bisexual characters, 100% was female and there were no male bisexuals prominent enough in television to be studied. Of the sample, 55% of characters were Caucasian, 25% were Latino/a, 15% were black, and 5% were Asian. A code sheet was filled out for each character, which analyzed the character's level of responsibility, level of desirability in a relationship, and level of good citizenship. The higher a character's coded value, the higher the level of the chosen character's positive portrayal on the show was. There was no relationship discovered between the sexuality, gender, age, or ethnicity of the character and the character's portrayal. However, sexuality was found to have a positive correlation with level of household responsibility. The sexuality of a character may not have had as strong a relationship with the portrayal of a character due to the liberal media bias found by Groseclose and Milyo in their 2005 study of American media bias. Homosexual and bisexual characters may have been portrayed similarly because they fall under the "non-heterosexual" umbrella found by Haddock et al. in their 1993 study of attitudes towards homosexuals. This suggests that the producers of today's television still look to heterosexuals as their target audience and any neutralization of the portrayal of sexual minorities is for the benefit of reaching a larger target audience. A study such as this one could help the scientific community understand how certain stereotypes about sexual minorities are formed and supported, leading to a better understanding about the minority behind the stereotype.

## **The Effect of Parenting Styles on the Level of Consumerism among Teenagers**

**Fanny Zeng**

The relationship between parenting style and the level of consumerism among teenagers was examined. Surveys were distributed to 75 students that were enrolled in Kumon tutoring centers. Students from ages 12-18 were chosen through accidental non-random sampling to participate in the survey. The sample consisted of 54 females (72%) and 21 males (28%). For this study the dependent variable, consumerism, was measured by using Richins and Dawson's Consumerism Scale (1992). The independent variable was measured with the Baumrind's Parental Authority Questionnaire (1991), which was used to determine whether the students have been raised under a permissive, authoritative, or authoritarian parenting style. Secondary independent variables consisted of the participants' demographic information and leisure time activity. The main hypothesis that parenting style is related to level of consumerism was tested using a single factor Analysis Variance (ANOVA). The results showed that the hypothesis was not supported. Teenagers in this generation are given more freedom and independence, so without parents to monitor their child's shopping habits, parenting styles does not have much influence on consumerism. The secondary independent variables that were tested were rejected as well. For the future, it would be interesting to look at how peer and school influence have on adolescents' level of consumerism. Further studies can look at the difference in media's influence on the level of consumerism on children and adults.

## **The Effect of Television on Asian American teenagers' Level of Materialism**

**April Zhong**

The relationship between the level of materialism of Asian American teenagers and the amount of television they were exposed to per week was examined in this study. Exposure to television was broken down into the various genres of television. The relationships between the level of materialism of Asian American teenagers and other variables such as age, gender, annual financial income, religion or belief system, parents' country of origin, and immigration status were also observed. The level of materialism was evaluated by a five point Likert scale created by Richin and Darwin. The secondary variables were self reported by the participants. Surveys measuring these variables were distributed to several SAT tutoring sites as well as teen time sessions in two libraries. These sites were chosen because of their density of Asian American teenagers. The results indicated that there was no significant relationship between the level of materialism of Asian Americans and the amount of television exposure. Furthermore, all other secondary hypotheses were rejected with the exception of the hypothesis relating the relationship between immigration status and the level of materialism of Asian American teenagers. The relationship between the immigration status and the level of materialism of Asian American teenagers was the only one that was statistically supported.

## **Maternal and Parental Choices based on a Woman's Independence during her Adolescence**

**Mandy Lin**

Using multiple methods, this study investigated the hypotheses that the level of independence during a woman's adolescence, a woman's socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and age affect her maternal choices in the future. Questionnaires were given to a sample of one hundred middle age women at the Staten Island Mall. These one hundred women were chosen through non-random, accidental sampling to provide the most diverse sample at the nearest convenient location. Three subjects were excluded from this analysis because they failed to complete the information in the questionnaire. Parenting style and parental bonding were used to represent the measurement of maternal and parental choices. Parenting style was measured with the Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1991). The Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI; Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979) was used to assess the type of parenting style each participant received as a child. The level of independence of a woman during her adolescent years was measured using an independence scale constructed by the researcher. By analyzing the results, the evidence provided a relationship between age and maternal choices. The data supported the notion that the older a woman is, the more children she has. This relationship signified that the older a woman is, the more time she has had to conceive a child or the more time she has had to find a partner to conceive a child with. However, the level of independence during a woman's adolescence does not affect her level of parental authority. Negative correlations were found among the level of independence during adolescence, socioeconomic status, and maternal choices.

## **The Long Term Effects of Toys on the Attention Span During Adolescence**

**Julie Tan**

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that affect the attention span of teenagers when they were younger. The primary hypothesis is that the toys and activities children engage in will affect their attention span as teenagers. A scale of ten statements was issued to one hundred teenagers in an academy, with ages ranging from seven to eighteen years old. The students were first separated by purposive sampling, and then chosen by simple random sampling. The survey was self-administered. The results showed that the primary hypothesis was not supported. Attention span was also compared to other independent variables, such as age, parents' marital status, average amount of sleep, and average amount of television exposure. In addition to the primary hypothesis, the three sub-hypotheses were also not supported. However, previous research has shown links between attention span and the types of toys and activities engaged in. Some possible flaws in this study were the unrepresentative sample and the set of questions used to measure attention span. Although the hypotheses were not supported, additional findings from the results have shown that there is a closer relationship between attention span and the types of toys played with than the relationship between attention span and the type of activities engaged in.

## **Monogamy & Benevolent Sexism**

**Shrabani Naha**

Benevolent sexism has been measured amongst society in numerous studies. Dardenne, Dumont, and Bollier (2007) suggest that benevolent sexism is a subtle form of sexism that affects women's level of esteem. This paper explores another factor that may also be affected by benevolent sexism, which has yet to be tested. The present study looks at whether a person's level of benevolent sexism relates to their ability to maintain a monogamous relationship. Such a relationship is when an individual is strictly devoted to only one partner. Individuals that have higher levels of benevolent sexism are more likely to support a belief system in which women are treated with courtesy and consideration, but are restricted in the roles they may play within intimate relationships (Viki, Abrams, & Hutchinson 2003). Using accidental sampling, fifty-three college students who attend Baruch College were given a survey to complete. Inspired by the Glick and Fiske ASI scale, (Silvan-Ferrero & Bustillos 2007), a new scale was constructed to measure the independent variable, a person's level of benevolent sexism. Demographic variables such as gender, ethnicity, and marital status of parents while growing up were also tested with the dependent variable. The second hypothesis stated whether gender related to a person's ability to maintain a monogamous relationship. The third hypothesis was that the marital status of one's parents while growing up relates to one's ability to maintain a monogamous relationship. Lastly, the fourth hypothesis stated that one's ethnicity relates to their ability to maintain a monogamous relationship. The hypotheses were not supported by the results of the study. In all of the hypotheses, the test statistics did not meet up to the standards of supported hypotheses. However, with a larger and broader sample, the study could be improved and repeated.

## **Popular Music's Effect on Drug Arrests in America**

**William Cheung**

This study focuses on factors related to the effect of popular culture on society. The study incorporates 80 songs from the 1970's to modern day in hopes of finding a correlation between the presence of drugs in popular music's lyrical text and drug arrests in the United States through the analysis of direct drug references, indirect drug references, and whether drug references were made in the title of songs. No relationships were found between the presence of drug references in popular song lyrics and drug arrests. A large number of varying genres of music that are listened to by the populace are proposed as an explanatory alternative to these findings. Factors contributing to drug use in America have been explored extensively, focusing on such topics as peer pressure, parental influences, and even the role the internet plays in influencing people to experiment with drugs. Results from McIntosh, Macdonald, and Makeganeg (2006) indicate that factors ranging from peer pressure to curiosity may greatly influence the choice of using illegal substances. In addition, that study suggested that young people have found newer broader reasons to experiment with illegal substances such as curiosity or to quote a subject, "just have a good time". This study hopes to add upon the wealth of information gathered by other researchers.

## **The Effect of Time Period on Comedy Sitcoms' Emphasis on Physical Appearance**

**Carrie Tang**

Factors related to television comedy sitcoms' emphasis on physical appearance were examined through content analysis. A purposive sample of 60 sitcoms was selected within the time frame from 1950 to 2009. This time span was chosen in order to show the transition of the value of physical appearance over time from the introduction of comedy sitcoms. The top ten sitcoms from each decade were chosen to reflect what values the viewers of that time period valued. The results of this study showed that the primary hypothesis was not supported ( $t = 0.559$ , critical value = 1.672), indicating no relationship between time period and television's accentuation on physical appearance. The secondary hypotheses, which were the effect of the gender of the producers, directors, and writers who worked on the sitcoms, respectively, on the emphasis of beauty were also found to have no correlation.

## **Media Exposure and Copyright Infringement**

**Andy Ye**

The study explores the causes of the overwhelming trend of pirating music and movies on the internet, which is considered to be copyright infringement. The primary hypothesis was that media exposure is related to one's attitudes towards the issue of pirating. The researcher surveyed 106 students from colleges through a 19-item questionnaire that includes five hypotheses. The primary hypothesis was rejected but the secondary hypotheses were mostly supported.

## **The Relationship between Immigration Status and the Belief in the American Dream among High School Students**

**Yiru Li**

The relationship between the belief in the American Dream and immigration status, with respect to ethnicity, was examined. The American Dream is the idea that that everyone has equal opportunities to attain success if one is determined and willing to work hard. Further, the amount of opportunities one feels is available to him or her was also specified. A 23-item questionnaire was completed by 128 students (74 females and 54 males) who were purposively selected from four different social studies classes from 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, in Brooklyn Technical High School of New York City. Classes were selected to best fit the group the researcher needed to study consisting of diverse ethnic groups ranging in immigration statuses. Surveys were administered to students and completed by them during school hours with their consent. A self-constructed, 11-item Likert scale was designed by the researcher to measure the students' belief in the American Dream. For other variables, participants selected from provided ranges or checked boxed. The results found that immigration status and ethnicity had no significant relation to the belief in the American Dream. However, students' future academic goal was found to have statistically significant relationship with the belief in the American Dream. Other secondary variables that were examined, including age, academic achievement, family's socioeconomic status, gender, and subjects' perception of their parents' support, were not significantly correlated to the belief in the American Dream. Finally, the study opens up future research regarding education and success, parent and student relationships, and what they can do to motivate future generations.

## **Religiosity and Level of Education**

**Asmaa Butt**

Although religiosity is thought to be linked to IQ, few have explored its relationship with level of education. The researcher of this study conducted a survey of 98 adults accidentally sampled at a Brooklyn Public Library, which was purposively sampled for the diverse population found there. The researcher analyzed associations between religiosity and level of education. Religiosity was defined as faith in and awareness of the subject's followed religion, or belief system, including atheistic belief systems, and was measured in a three- point scale, which included self-reported faith in the belief system, adherence to beliefs, and willingness to learn about the belief system. Level of education was self-reported. Secondary variables included age, gender, marital status, ethnicity, belief system, mother's level of education, father's level of education, and immigration status, and were self-reported as well. Level of education had no statistically significant relationship with religiosity. The researcher found self-reported faith in the belief system to be associated to level of education, and overall religiosity to correlate with level of education among theists, though the results of neither were directional. The researcher also found a link between sex and religiosity, with females being more faithful to their religions than males. There was a statistically significant relationship between ethnicity and religiosity as well as between immigration status and religiosity. In addition, the results indicated a clear correlation between the subject's religious beliefs and religiosity. Jews tested, who were all secular, had an average level of religiosity of 42.5%, Christians had an average of 63.6%, Muslims 71.4%, Buddhists 59.1%, Atheists 64.5%, Agnostics 62.2%, people of other beliefs 68.3%.

## **The Effects of Companion Animals on Adolescent Social Activity**

**Qian Chen**

The correlation between the social activity of adolescents and the presence of pets in their household (pet ownership) was explored. Participants within the ages of 13-22 were selected via accidental sampling from SAYA (South Asian Youth Action), Project Gateway (a division of The Chinese Community Planning Program), and various forums and [livejournal.com](http://livejournal.com) communities on the internet. Out of the 133 participants, 92 of them were pet-owners. Seventeen additional hypotheses were tested with variables related to the primary hypothesis, eight which were supported. The primary hypothesis was supported and it was found that non-pet owners had lower levels of social activity. Other noteworthy statistically significant findings included a correlation between social activity & self esteem, pet attachment & gender, and self esteem and sex.

## **The Affect of Neighborhood Diversity on the Attitudes of Far East Asian Americans towards Blacks**

**Christina Gee**

A girl grew up under the care of her two parents: her father from Hong Kong and her mother from mainland China. Her father moved at age fourteen and spent much of his childhood in New York City. The mother was raised in China. The girl noticed the difference in attitudes between her parents. Her father was generally tolerant towards her different friends, whereas her mother was a little less acceptive. There was one group in particular that her parents attitudes differentiated the most - Blacks. This study researches the influence of the environment on attitudes. Could the ethnic centrality of neighborhood affect how people perceive each other? A 21-item survey was distributed to seventy students, aged 14-18, from Brooklyn Technical H.S., chosen for its diverse population. The results showed that gender, grade, ethnicity did not affect prejudice. There was a positive correlation between ethnic centrality and prejudice. The larger Asian population of the neighborhood and the greater the level of prejudice towards Blacks. The environment plays an important role in development of personality and prejudices.

**Gary Jiang**

Many teenagers idolize celebrities in the spotlight. Often on public television, devout fans are seen dressed in dedication to their favored celebrities. This certainty, however, is not remnant in relationship to print advertisements. This study was conducted to determine the effect of celebrity presence in print advertisements on the consumerism of teenagers. One hundred business class students ranging from ages 14-22 took part in the study. Participants completed a 20-item survey electronically. The electronic survey results suggested no influence on consumerism of teenagers through the presence of celebrities in print advertisements.

## **Does Anyone Recall Commuting? Effects of Commuting on Short Term Recall**

**Steven Gordon**

The study focuses on the relationship between mode of commute and short-term recall. Commuting is performed on a daily basis, and can often have subconscious effects that commuters themselves are not aware of. Modes of commute differ in what each mode requires. For example, driving requires the commuter to keep their eyes on the road, while a commuter taking a bus is able to focus on reading rather than the road. Seventy-two office workers were given a questionnaire, measuring short-term recall ability, based on an image and a text paragraph that they were given prior to the questionnaire during a study period of one minute for each. These questions were developed by the researcher, and requested participants to recall specific details from both study materials. Results suggest no significant relationship exists between the short-term recall and mode of commute.

**Stella Huang**

This study examined whether the stereotypical portrayals of physically disabled people decreased throughout the years. A content analysis study was conducted consisting of a sample of nine television shows, three episodes each. A list of stereotypes from the webpage of the University of Victoria Students' Society constituency organization of disabled students was compiled. The researcher constructed a tally sheet in which to mark down the number of times each stereotype was presented. Each episode had its own total score. The results showed that the degree to which the physically disabled person is stereotypically portrayed did not decrease with time. However, there was a slight positive correlation between the two variables.

**Puja Paul**

This study focuses on the relationship between the level of consumerism of clothing amongst college students and the presence of a group. One hundred students attending Long Island University were given surveys through a non-random accidental sample. The survey consisted of various questions that determined level of consumerism of every subject, as well as their shopping habits. No relationship was found between the two variables being tested. According to the results, subjects who went shopping alone displayed higher levels of consumerism than subjects who went shopping in the presence of a group.

## **The Exploration of the Factors Affecting Fertility Decisions among Muslim Women**

**Tahmina Parvin**

What are the factors that affect female fertility decisions among the Bangladeshi female Muslim community in New York City? This study involves 100 Muslim women in New York City. The researcher used a non-random purposive sample. Women chosen to participate were Muslim, married, and between the ages of 25 and 45. The 100 Muslim women that go to Modleesh (religious meetings) have volunteered to help by filling out a survey regarding the study. The dependent variable for the study was: the number of children the participant has. The independent variables that were measured were: degree of religiosity, marital satisfaction, mosque attendance, income, age of marriage, life satisfaction, highest degree earned, awareness of contraceptive measures, and desirability to have children. A significant relationship was found between current age and awareness of contraceptive measure to fertility rate. Many of the factors were rejected. The ones that were rejected were degree of religiosity, marital satisfaction, and life satisfaction, use of contraceptives, mosque attendance, and desirability to have children, income, and level of education. The purpose of this study was to compare fertility rates to such factors such as degree of religiosity, level of life and marital satisfaction, age at marriage, current age, awareness and use of contraceptives, highest degree earned, and mosque attendance. Unfortunately only two of the hypotheses were supported. Results show that no statistically significant relationship exists between fertility rate and almost all of the independent variables. Before giving out the surveys, the researcher assumed that many of the variables would be supported because of the previous literature read on the topic. But to her excitement Bangladeshi women are not like all the other Muslim and non-Muslim women in the world. The factors and/or variables stated above don't affect how many children they have and will have and maybe that's a good thing. The two supported hypotheses were: the number of children a woman had was related to her current age and the more contraceptives a woman was aware of before having children, the more children she would have. The first one may indicate that if the woman is in her late thirties and early forties she has at least one or two more children than a woman in her late twenties and early thirties. The latter was a bit shocking because it was unexpected. The researcher figured that the fewer contraceptives a woman was aware of the more children she would have, not the opposite. What the researcher thinks indicates the outcome is the women just wanted to have more children. In her opinion she thinks the women just wanted more children and it had nothing to do with awareness contraceptives. But the results are just what the statistical test proves to be correct.

**Leon Shustin**

Surveys were distributed to 92 students between the ages of 13 and 18, exploring the relationship between the use of communication technologies to level of comfort with face-not-face communication among teens. The modes of communication technologies tested were cell phone use, use of instant messaging, use of networking sites, and the use of other online social networking services. Subjects tested attended a private school in Brooklyn and a CollegeNow Course in Baruch College. The results of the study showed that there was no relationship between the use of communication technologies and the level of comfort with face-to-face communication among teens.

## **The Dark Side of Disney: A Content Analysis of the Portrayals of Gender with a Reference to Violence in Disney Films**

### **Eva Minkin**

This content analysis study was conducted to research portrayals of gender with reference to violence in 20 animated Disney films. The films were selected using simple random sampling to ensure all Disney movies and equal chance of being part of the sample. All the films were watched and instances of physical and verbal violence were tallied for the main characters in each movie. Also, each character's socioeconomic status was determined. Overall violence for each character was also calculated. Four hypotheses were tested. One of the successful hypotheses found that male Disney characters have a higher overall violence than female Disney characters. Hypotheses tested that were unsuccessful were: a lower level of socioeconomic status will cause a higher level of overall violence and a higher level of socioeconomic status will cause a lower level of verbal violence. One explanation for why they may not have been supported was the small (and not well represented) sample size.

### **Audrey Noniashvili**

Self-esteem plays an important role in daily life. Whether it is the ability to speak up in class or the ability to pursue most phenomenal of dreams, self-esteem effects the decision. Similarly, this study was conducted to determine how strongly self-esteem effected ambiguity of answers. The researcher used a survey that consisted of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and a self-made scale that utilized the Rorschach Inkblot Test to determine level of ambiguity in subject's answers. Approximately 100 Brooklyn Technical High School students participated in the study. The primary hypothesis was disproved, but there was a correlation found between the two primary variables.

### **Amanda Gendy**

This study explored social factors that affect the academic performance of high school students. A survey was distributed to high school students asking about their academic performance and that involved family and background. Educational achievement was found to be greatly affected by the number of permanent residents living with the student, ethnicity, parental expectations, and parental marital status. As part of the study, household income was not identified as a determinant of educational achievement. Overall presence of the biological parents was considered highly important to the results of this study.