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The Influence of Household/Parental Structure on
Student Performance on Standardized Tests

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Abstract

The Influence of Household/Parental Structure on
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The purpose of this study is to analyze the reliability of household structure as a means of predicting student performance on standardized tests. How well a student performs on standardized tests is a key component of federal assessments and is ultimately used to determine the quality and success of schools. Raising these scores is imperative for schools achieve mandated adequate yearly progress scores. Quantitative research methods were used in this study to show correlations between household structure and student performance. Participants in the study included 33,136 students in Seattle Public Schools. Statistical descriptive tests reveal the parental structure of the home in which a child is raised, be it a two parent home or a single parent household, is as great a predictor of his or her performance on standardized tests as other more generally accepted predictors such as race/ethnicity, gender and/or income. The author recommends further research be conducted into the role of parental structure on student performance, specifically into how parental choice influences academic achievement. It is also recommended that school districts develop programs and interventions that target children from non-traditional households as a means of improving student performance.

Key words: single parent households, standardized tests, student performance

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Ultimately, all thanks are owed to God from whom all good things flow. I am tremendously blessed.

DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to my daughter Eryn, the greatest inspiration in my life. As the fifth generation of our family to be raised in a single-parent household, it is my prayer that research like this will help change the way schools view the link between household structure and academic success in your lifetime. Thank you for your patience, encouragement and hugs – they helped make the hard times easier. Eryn, I will always love you. You have given my life purpose and meaning.

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GLOSSARY

Biological parent: a person sharing a direct genetic link, either male or female, to a child.

Blended family: a household made up of one biological parent and a step-parent or co-habiting partner (not sharing a direct genetic link to the child).

Child: individuals, male or female, under the age of 18.

Co-habiting: a parent living with, but not married too, another adult.

DOE: Department of Education.

Dual parent household: consist of

1) a child's biological parents, both mother and father, regardless of marital status.

2) a child's biological parent, either mother or father, and a co-habiting partner (not biologically related to the child), a step-parent, or an adoptive parent (this could include a same sex couple in which one of the parents shares a direct genetic link to the child).

3) two adoptive parents (this could include a same sex couple in which both parents adopted the child).

EALRs: Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

EEOS: Equality of Educational Opportunity Study, commissioned by Congress in 1966.

ERA: Education Reform Act of 1993. The most commonly used title of the Student Learning and Improvement Act approved by the Washington Legislature.

FRL status: Whether a family qualifies based on income for free/reduced lunch.

Household structure: the parental makeup of the home in which a child is being raised.

HSPE: High School Proficiency Exams.

Intact family: a family that has not experienced divorce.

MSP: Measurement of Student Progress.

NCES: National Center for Education Statistics.

NCLB: No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

OSPI: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Other households: consist of

- 1) relatives other than a child's biological parents.
- 2) a non-relative that has not adopted the child
- 3) children in foster care.
- 4) children who are emancipated and are self-supporting.

SAT: Scholastic Aptitude Test.

SPS: Seattle Public Schools.

RCW: Revised Code of Washington. An RCW, or law, is a piece of legislation that has been passed by the Washington State Legislature and has been signed by the Governor.

Single parent: an unmarried, biological parent, either male or female.

WASL: Washington Assessment of Student Learning, the initial test used to assess student learning in Washington State.

WSDOH: Washington State Department of Health.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION, SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM, RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Introduction

One of the primary goals of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was to improve student performance and close the achievement gaps that existed between “minority and nonminority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers” (NCLB, 2002). The goals mirror those contained in Washington State’s Student Learning and Reform Act, better known as the Education Reform Act (ERA), of 1993 (Washington Legislature, 1993). Among the mandates of both the state and federal laws was annual testing to determine student progress. Given the use of these tests to measure the quality and effectiveness of individual schools and districts it is critical to consider all possible factors that might contribute to a student’s success or lack of success on these tests (Horn, 2003). Since the implementation of these tests, programs and policies have been enacted in nearly every school district in the country to address the role of race/ethnicity, disability and income on student performance. At the same time little attention has been given to what Staples and Johnson (1993) describe as the country’s largest minority group, that of single parent households. The results of this study will contribute to research on the influence household or parental structure, whether a child is being raised in a single parent or two parent home, on student performance on standardized tests.

Washington State was one of the first to institute mandatory testing in order to gauge the effectiveness of its schools, but not until after it was found guilty of not providing children living in the state with a basic education (Cipollone, 1998). In 1975, the state legislature commissioned a study of public education funding and reform. The author concluded the way Washington paid for schools in the state was “the major contributing factor in creating unequal educational opportunities among students across the state” (Miller, 1975). Two years later, Thurston County Superior Court Judge Robert Doran found, in what was referred to as Doran Decision I, the state had violated its own constitution in failing to “provide ample funding for education through a general and uniform system of schools” (*Seattle School District No. 1 v. State of Washington*, 1977 at 486). That same year the Washington Legislature passed the Basic Education Act (Laws of 1977, 1st Ex. Sess., ch. 359) that included a goal for the state school system, “to provide students with the opportunity to achieve those skills which are generally recognized as requisite to learning” (§ 2). The law also included provisions requiring the implementation of instructional programs to achieve those goals and a funding formula to implement the program (§ 1).

In 1983 a second lawsuit was filed against the state, this one challenging the Basic Education Act. A group of school districts asserted, and the court agreed, the state was not meeting its obligation to fully fund the programs included in the state constitution (*Seattle School District v. State*, 1983, Clerk Papers at 274, 351). In the years following that ruling, according to the court, “it was argued (the school system) needed to focus more on whether students were gaining the knowledge and skills necessary for success in the real world” (*McCleary v. Washington*, 2010). Amid a teachers strike in the spring of

1991, then Governor Booth Gardner created the Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding (GCERF) to study the state's kindergarten-12 education system and to make recommendations on how to transition the existing education system to one that was performance-based (Lunghofer, 2009). The GCERF's recommendations led to the Education Reform Act of 1993 (ESHB 1209) which called for an education system that would, "provide students with the opportunity to become responsible citizens, to contribute to their own economic well-being and to that of their families and communities, and to enjoy productive and satisfying lives" (Laws of 1993, ch. 336, § 101). To achieve that end, the state defined Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) for all grade levels, and set deadlines for implementing an assessment system to test students' mastery of those skills (§ 202(3)(b)).

In order to assess students' mastery of the EALRs, the state developed a series of tests to evaluate student knowledge and progress called the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). Tests were created for reading, writing, mathematics and listening and were first administered to fourth graders in the 1996-1997 school year. The tests were later expanded to include other student groups, with different subjects being tested at different grade levels. Students were tested in reading and mathematics in grades 3-8 and in grade 10, writing tests were conducted in grades 4, 7 and 10, and students in grades 5, 8 and 10 were tested in science. The results of those tests were used to determine if students met in each subject (Steecher, Chun, Barron and Ross, 2000). A series of protests over the WASL followed (Baht, 2003; Parents, students protest WASL, 2004; Jenkins, 2007) resulting in the election of a new state superintendent who promised

to replace the WASL with two new tests, the Measurement of Student Progress (MSP) and the High School Proficiency Exam (Shaw, 2010)

From the moment a child comes out of the womb, his or her academic path and how they will perform on such tests begins to take shape. The incidence of children being raised in singleparent households is increasing. Prior to 1960, only one in ten children in the United States lived in a single parent household. By 2009, more than one in four did so (Tucker and Mitchell-Kernan, 1995; Smeeding, Moynihan and Rainwater, 2004; Dunifon, 2009; Kreider and Ellis, 2011, Kids Count Data Book, 2011), a rate higher than any other industrialized nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Figure-1 displays the breakdown of the living arrangements of children in the United States.

Table 1: Living arrangements for children.

Living arrangements for children	Percent			
	2009	2004	2001	1996
Percent of children living with:				
Two Parents	68.6	69.7	70.5	70.9
Biological mother and father	60.0	60.8	62.2	62.5
Biological parent and step-parent	7.1	7.2	6.7	6.6
Biological parent and adoptive parent	.3	.7	.7	.8
Adoptive mother and father	1.2	.9	.8	1.0
Other ¹	--	.1	.1	--
Mother only	23.6	23.2	22.5	22.9
Father only	3.7	3.2	3.0	2.6
Grandparents only	2.5	2.2	1.9	1.8
Other relatives	.9	.9	1.2	1.0
Nonrelatives only	.7	.8	.7	.9

-- Represents or rounds to zero

¹Includes children living with one adoptive parent and one stepparent or with two stepparents

Source: U S Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 1996, 2001, 2004, and 2008 Panels, Wave 2 Topical Module For information on sampling and nonsampling error, see <www.census.gov/sipp/source.html>

Children come to live in single parent households in a variety of ways, through divorce, the death of a parent, or they are born to a mother who is not married or does not live with the child's father. Bramlet and Mosher (2001) found that nonmarital births are most

prominent among Black, Hispanic and Native American families, while divorce accounts for most single parent households among Whites. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, nearly 40-percent of children born in 2009 were born to unmarried mothers, nearly double the percentage of twenty years earlier (Hepworth Berger, 1987; Martin, Hamilton, Ventura, Osterman, Kirmeyer, Mathews, and Wilson, 2011). For those born into married households, nearly half will experience divorce (Hepworth Berger, 1987). It is anticipated that 60-percent of all children will spend at least some portion of their lives in a single parent household (Krein and Beller, 1988, Crosbie-Burnett and Pulvino, 1990, Andersson, 2002). And, while the percentage of children under the age of 18 being raised by a single parent in the U.S. varies based on the ethnicity/race of the child (Kreider and Ellis, 2011), non-White families have the highest rates of single parent households with two-thirds of Black children, 52% of Native Americans and 41% of Hispanic/Latino children living with only one parent. By comparison, Asian families have the lowest percentage (16%) of single parent households; one in four White children is raised by a single parent. (Staples and Johnson, 1993; Haveman, 1994; Sigle-Rushton and McLanahan, 2004, Kids Count Data Book, 2011). Hune and Takeuchi (2008) argue that figures for Asian families are misleading in that the government lumps various Asian ethnic groups into a single racial identifier. Their study of populations in Washington State found that Chinese Americans had the lowest incidence of single parent households (16%) while other Southeast Asian groups, i.e., Cambodian, Laotian, Hmong and Mien populations had a much higher rate (46%).

The increase in single parent households in the U.S. has been described as one of the most studied social changes of the twentieth century (Usdansky, 2009; Heuveline,

Timberlake, and Furstenberg, 2003). Nearly fifty years ago family structure was identified as one of the most important factors in determining how well a child performs in the classroom (Coleman, Campbell, McPartland, Mood, Weinfeld and York, 1966a). The Coleman Report found that a child's household structure had a greater impact on their ability to learn than even the most academically rigorous and/or the wealthiest school. Much of the research done since the Coleman Report has focused on child well-being, i.e., health, economy, and educational attainment following the divorce of the child's parents (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980; McLanahan, 1985; Graham, Beller and Hernandez, 1992; Amato, 1993; Hamilton, 1993; Haveman, 1994; Abd El-Fattah, 2006). One such study found that scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) fell in direct proportion to the increase in the divorce rate over a seventeen year period from 1963-1980 (Wirtz, 1977).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the reliability of household structure as a means of predicting student performance on standardized tests. How well a student performs on standardized tests is a key component of federal assessments and is ultimately used to determine the quality and success of schools. Raising these scores is imperative for schools achieve mandated adequate yearly progress scores. Currently primarily rely on race/ethnicity, gender, income, and English language ability to predict outcomes (Fleming and Garcia, 1998; Codero-Guzman, 2001; Hartman, 2001; Abedi, 2002; Ami and Microtraining and Associates, 2005; Olszewski-Kubilius and Lee, 2011). In analyzing the reliability of household structure as a predictor of student performance,

the author hopes to, 1) contribute to the understanding of an additional factor to be considered when determining how best to help students achieve academically, 2) add to the body of literature on the relationship between household structure and student achievement, and, 3) to better understand some of the challenges faced by children raised in single parent households in achieving academically.

Problem statement:

Children grow up in a variety of family settings. Some are born into single parent households; some are born into two parent homes. Household structure in the United States is an ever-changing circumstance with two parent households being created and recreated through marriage, divorce and remarriage. 60-percent of all children will find themselves in a single parent home at some point in their lives because of these changes (Krein and Beller, 1988, Crosbie-Burnett and Pulvino, 1990, Andersson, 2002). In 2009, more than 27-percent of all children living in the United States lived in a single parent home , a number that had been steadily increasing over the past fifty years (Tucker and Mitchell-Kernan, 1995; Smeeding, Moynihan and Rainwater, 2004; Dunifon, 2009; Kreider and Ellis, 2011, Kids Count Data Book, 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Single parent households are now being called, the largest minority group in the country (Staples and Johnson, 1993) Researchers frequently use race/ethnicity, income and English language ability in predicting student performance in the classroom (Fleming and Garcia, 1998; Codero-Guzman, 2001; Hartman, 2001; Abedi, 2002). Given the number of children raised in single parent homes, the question this researcher asks is what is the effect of household structure in student performance on standardized tests?

Research questions:

- 1) Is there a relationship between household/parental structure and student performance on standardized math tests?
- 2) Does household/parental structure compare to other variables in its prediction of student performance on standardized math tests? If so, how?
- 3) Does household/parental structure impact student performance among all racial/ethnic groups?

Significance of the problem

The number of high school dropouts in the United States has reached epidemic proportions (Bridgeland, Dilulio & Burke Morrison, 2006; Balfranz, Bridgeland, Fox and Moore, 2011) with an estimated 1.2-million students expected to leave school before the end of the 2011/2012 school year (Miller, 2011). The situation is so bad experts say it poses a threat to national security (National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE), 1983; Wise, 2012). Nationally, the dropout rate is estimated at just nine percent, a figure that masks double digit dropout rates among Native American and Hispanic Students (Department of Education, 2011).

For those students that stay in school, a gap persists in the academic achievement of student subgroups, between minority and non-minority students and between low-income children and children of means (Barton, 2003; Nord, Roey, Perkins, Lyons, Lemanski, Tamir, Brown, Schuknecht, and Herrold, 2009). Much of the research on the achievement gap has focused on differences between racial and economic groups

(Orfield, Kahlenberg, Gordon, Genessee, Slocumb and Payne, 2000; Wise, 2010) and between genders (Milne, 1989) while virtually ignoring one of the largest subgroups, children of single parent families. It is the one group of students that spans all races, ethnicities, incomes and disabilities, yet few programs have been developed to help support these students. Parnham (2007) found, “the practice of thinking in terms of broad categories (e.g. Black vs. White, Latino vs. White) results in poor policy and teaching choices because it does not respect within and between group differences” (p 9). By lumping children of color into disaggregated categories tends to do more harm than good and can lead to negative assumptions and stereotypes on the part of educators and policy makers (Ramirez & Carpenter, 2004).

Students who live with a single parent – even if it is only for a portion of their childhood – are two times more likely to drop out of high school than students who grow up with both of their biological parents at home, even when allowing for the effects of socio-economic status (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994; Darity and Meyers, 1995; Coles, 2006). Even with that knowledge, dropout statistics are not kept for students based on their family composition in Washington State. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) claims that the marital status of parents changes too frequently to track accurately (Nathan Olson, personal communication, March 6, 2008). In fact, the state’s Comprehensive Education Data And Resource System (CEDARS), a longitudinal data system maintained by OSPI to collect and store student data does not include any information regarding household structure, except in those situations when the student is in foster care. At the same time, the data base does keep track of the child’s age, immigration status, ethnicity/race, whether the child speaks English, qualifies for special

education services and whether the child is homeless (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2012a). Nationally, few resources exist that break down dropout statistics by incidence of single parent households. Many claim that children of single parents dropout at a disproportionately higher rate than children of two parent households (Barton, 2005; Evans, 2004). A review of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth indicates that the dropout rate of children in single parent homes is 29-percent compared with just 13-percent for children living in two-parent families (McLanahan and Sandefur, 1994).

There have been a number of reasons cited for this phenomena. The children of single parents suffer more economically when compared to children in two-parent homes (Haveman, 1994; Sampson, 1995; Hunsley, 1997; Holyfield, 2002), mainly because they have only one wage earner in the family (West Coast Poverty Center, 2010). While the average income of a married couple is, \$69,716, single mothers average just \$31,818 per year (Omori, 2010, p 31). A lower socioeconomic status is the “most important factor in children’s lower achievement in single parent homes, accounting for about half of the disadvantage” (McLanahan and Sandefur, 1994, p. 3). That disadvantage often results in children being forced to attend schools in less affluent neighborhoods where schools have fewer resources, higher student-teacher ratios and the least technology (Kozol, 1991; Holyfield, 2002). In schools in high poverty areas up to two-thirds of their students likely live in non-traditional households (Noguera, 1996 in Noguera, 2008).

If a child is born into a low-income family, that child is more likely to be prone to illness (Christie-Seely and Talbot, 1985) and to: “begin its life with inadequate infant care, to be not ready to learn when they get to school, to play in unsafe neighborhoods, to receive a lower-quality education..., to be less healthy, to be prone to disease and to die earlier”

(King County Equity & Social Justice Initiative, 2008, p 2). Poverty has been linked to delays in mental and behavioral development and overall health, making it harder to learn (Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 1994; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2007).

The most common out-of-school factors tied to income are:

1) low birth-weight and non-genetic prenatal influences on children; 2) inadequate medical, dental and vision care, often a result of inadequate or no medical insurance; 3) food insecurity; 4) environmental pollutants; 5) family relations and family stress; and 6) neighborhood statistics (Berliner, 2009, p 1).

Low birth-weight has been tied to attention deficit and other neurological disorders that lead to lower scores on standardized tests in mathematics, reading, and spelling (Davis, Burns, Snyder & Robinson, 2007; Grunau, Whitfield & Davis, 2002). This begins a cycle that can be devastating to a child's academic career. If a child is sick, he or she is likely to stay home and miss valuable class time. When a student misses a class, he or she is more likely to begin to fall behind in their coursework. And, if they fall behind, they are less inclined to go to school (Basch, 2010). This, Hirschi (1969) suggests, demonstrates the causal pathway that intertwines out-of school and in-school factors that contribute to the achievement gap. "Children who are behind academically and who are unable to perform at a level commensurate with grade level expectations often engage in disruptive behavior" (as cited in Noguera, 2008, p 113). Students who are disruptive in the classroom often face disciplinary action that can exclude them from school and undermine the likelihood that they will graduate (Thompson, Hanson, and McLanahan 1994; Hoffmann, 2006; Jeynes, 2011). A study of records from Seattle Public Schools

found that students who don't live with both of their parents are 2.3 times more likely to be suspended or expelled than those who live in intact homes (Denn, 2002).

Overwhelming research also indicates a child's cultural capital – parents, family, and teacher role models – can play a role in any success or failure, they may see (Nieto, 2000; Carter, 2003; Jeynes, 2003; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009), but single parents often find they have less time to help their children with their school work (Haskins and Adams, 1983; Zill and Nord, 1994, Hoffmann, 2006; Walker, Crawford and Taylor, 2008; Jeynes, 2011). Studies by Hossler and Stage (1992) have also shown that parental involvement and encouragement is especially important in their children's predisposition phase, helping shape their children's core belief system with regards to educational opportunities (as cited in Ceja, 2006). But, single and low-income parents often find themselves less available to be involved in their child's education. Statistics show single parents, on average, spend less time reading or talking to their children which can have a negative effect on their children's linguistic abilities resulting in those children being less prepared to begin kindergarten (Lee & Burkham, 2002; Conant, 1961; United States Government Accountability Office [USGAO], 2002, p 6). Additional research has found children in single parent households are also placed more frequently in special education classes (Holyfield, 2002).

There is a growing body of research that suggests standardized tests have been linked to an increase in the dropout rate (Madaus & Clarke, 2001, Thomas, 2005; McNeil, Coppola, Radigan, Vasquez Heilig, 2008). Students who fail to pass these tests are more likely to leave school before graduation (Orfield and Kornhaber, 2001; Borg, Plumlee, and Stranahan, 2007). This study is significant in that it will provide information on

relationships between household structure and student performance on standardized tests. This information will provide policymakers with another tool to develop programs aimed at increasing retention and graduation rates for this unrecognized population of students.

Definition of Terms

Child: For the purpose of this study children are defined as individuals under the age of 18 (Kreider and Ellis, 2011). While it is acknowledged that households and families come in many forms, this study defines household structure as, (1) single, or lone, parent households. According to Learn (2006), a single parent is someone, male or female, who has “physical custody and responsibility for support a child(ren) and has never been married or in a common law relationship, is separated or divorced from a spouse/common-law partner, or is widowed is considered a single parent” (p.1). (2) Dual or two parent households, which are made up of one of the following: (a) both biological parents, (b) a biological parent and a step-parent, (c) two adoptive parents or, (d) a same sex couple. (3) Seattle Public Schools identifies “other” households as those consisting of children living with a relative other than a biological parent, a non-relative (not adopted), in foster care or children who are living by themselves (Steven Wright, personal communication, April 4, 2012). Race/ethnicity identifiers were determined by Seattle Public Schools as Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African American, Native American, Hispanic/Latino, White and multi-racial. These terms are, as indicated by Coleman, et.al., (1966), “not used in the anthropological sense, but reflect social categories by which people in the United States identify themselves and are identified by others” (p iii).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the influence of household structure on student performance on standardized tests and subsequently on student achievement. Sources were taken from books, journals, articles, government studies, school district and state data bases, websites and personal interviews.

Student achievement in America's schools has long been an issue, especially in the context of student diversity. J. Russell Morris (1954) pointed to disparities in student achievement among racial and socioeconomic groups as a problem of national concern. He claimed students of color were hampered by "limited and inferior educational opportunities" (p 190). His analysis of existing literature at the time found that, "it is easier for a low-ability boy from a wealthy home to go to college than it is for a highly talented boy from a low-income family" (p 190). His studies were based primarily on the earlier works of Leander Boykins (1949), who found that inequitable education funding played the greatest role in disparities in student achievement. Twenty years after the Morris study, James Coleman, et.al., (1966a) used the same title in a report to Congress on the *Equality of Educational Opportunity* in the United States. While the report was commissioned to study the availability of educational opportunities based on race, religion and national origin, Coleman and his colleagues found that a student's own social/family background played one of the most important roles in their level of achievement. Coleman's study (N=639,650) used a social survey consisting of test scores

and questionnaires from a sample of schools throughout the U.S. His questions concerning family background included such questions as:

1. Who acts as his mother?
 - A. His real mother, who is living at home
 - B. His real mother, who is not living at home
 - C. His stepmother
 - D. His foster mother,
 - E. His grandmother
 - F. Another relative (aunt, etc.)
 - G. Another adult
 - H. No one. (Coleman, et.al., 1966b, p. 591)

At the time of Coleman's study a majority of students in the United States attended schools that were primarily segregated along racial and income lines, with 65% of African American first graders attending schools that were between 90-and 100-percent Black. Defacto segregation continues in U.S. schools based on racial/ethnic and socioeconomic status (Street, 2005; Wise, 2011). A study by the University of Washington's Center for Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) (Campbell, Gross, Sepe, and Yatsko, 2010) found that only 10-percent of Black/African American students in Seattle Public Schools attend high-performing schools, those in which students score in the highest quartile on standardized tests.

Another government-commissioned study, *A Nation at Risk*, (NCEE, 1983) put educational attainment at its very core:

“All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgement (sic) needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself” (p 9).

Citing statistics showing academic achievement at its lowest levels in 26 years, and illiteracy rates as high as 40-percent among students of color, *A Nation at Risk* involved eighteen different studies that focused areas such as: student achievement, comparisons of patterns in courses students took, a state-by-state comparison of diploma requirements and comparisons of mandatory tests administered by states. Among the study’s findings: “‘minimum competency’ examinations... fall short of what is needed, as the ‘minimum’ tends to become the ‘maximum,’ thus lowering the educational standards for all” (p 22).

The state of Washington commissioned a series of studies on the achievement gap focusing on different racial ethnic groups. The report on the achievement gap faced by African American students (OSPI, 2008) identified several causes for the disparity between the scores of Black students and those of White students:

- Inequitable distribution of skilled, experienced teachers
- Insufficient and inequitable school funding
- Inadequate, obsolete, and unbalanced distribution of facilities, technology and, instructional materials

- Inequitable access to demanding, rigorous pre-college coursework
- Institutional racism
- Lack of cultural competence among teachers, school staff, administrators, curriculum and assessment developers and the school system itself.

The report also identified a series of secondary causes which indirectly link the effects of household structure with the achievement gap:

- Intergenerational poverty
- Families/communities not able (and often not welcomed by the education system) to support or advocate for children
- A lack of supplemental services such as mentoring and tutoring to young people whose backgrounds subject them to the inequities and risk factors listed above (p 10).

The state commissioned report on Native American achievement (Clearinghouse on Native Teaching and Learning, 2008) focused a great deal of attention on parental involvement, family participation and Native identity as links to a student's performance. It was one of the only state-sponsored reports that identified household structure's relationship to academic achievement, seeing the school system's failure to understand "the different constellations of families in Native communities" (p 43). The report told the story of one single mother who felt teachers and administrators at her child's school acted out of a negative stereotype of single parents and used that bias to try to push her child into special education. Similar reports were also commissioned for Hispanic/Latino (Contreras and Stritikus, 2008), Pacific Islander (Takeuchi and Hune, 2008), and Asian American students (Hune and Takeuchi, 2008). In their study of Pacific Islander students,

Takeuchi and Hune (2008) examined data obtained from Seattle Public Schools (N=238). They found that Samoan students in the district were more likely to live in single parent or no-parent households, a statistic that could be linked to a higher dropout rate among this student population.

Sara McLanahan (1983a; b; 1985) has produced a large body of work on the effects of household structure on student achievement. One of her early works focuses on a longitudinal study of participants (N=5000) in the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) which followed families from 1968 through 1972. The unit of analysis in her research was the family group. McLanahan identified four hypothesis to support her family composition theory from that work that provide the first basis of knowledge for this study, including: “absent father,” “economic deprivation,” “family stress” and “no effect” hypotheses. The absent father hypothesis is based in the fact that most single parent households are headed by women (McLanahan, 1983a; Hill, 2009). It suggests that the loss of a male role model is the primary determinant of student performance and behavior. The economic deprivation hypothesis is based in the knowledge that most single female headed households live in poverty (National Center for Law and Economic Justice, 2011). The family stress hypothesis, first identified by Hill (1958) and later studied by Christie-Seely and Talbot (1985), focuses on the impact of divorce on families and suggests that it is this stress that results in lower student performance. The no effect hypothesis contends household structure has no effect on student outcomes, rather any decline in student achievement can be attributed to other factors including but not limited to: parental educational attainment, social capital, and neighborhood makeup. Her tests of these hypotheses indicated they impacted students differently based on their

race/ethnicity. She concluded economic deprivation and the stress associated with divorce accounts for nearly all of the parent absence effect among Whites. In contrast, McLanahan found that for Blacks the absence of a father in the home causes a statistically significant increase in juvenile delinquency, psychological adjustment and lack of socioeconomic mobility, all factors tied to poor student performance.

Using an extended database from the PSID (1968-1978, N=5000), McLanahan (1985) later furthered her tests of family composition theory by testing the effect of household structure and economic status on educational outcomes. In this study she limited her sample to those in which children live with either two parents or a single female headed household. Participants consisted of 48 children who lived with never married mothers, 242 children whose fathers had died (mother widowed), 290 children from divorced homes, and 342 children living with separated mothers. She found that the absence of a parent has a negative and significant effect. She also found different effects based on the race/ethnicity of the parent and the type of single parent household, i.e., divorce, separation, death or unmarried mother.

Michael DeBell (2008) focused his research on the absent father theory. Using bivariate comparisons of the 2003 Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey of the National Household Education Surveys Program (N = 12,426), DeBell found the absence of a father in single female headed households correlates with lower academic achievement and reduced parental involvement in a child's education. His is one of the few studies to focus on the absence of fathers in single parent households. Most research compares single parent families with other household structures.

Using a critical discourse analysis of depictions of single parent households, Margaret Usdansky (2009) studied representative examples in popular magazines (N=474) and science journals (N=202) published between 1990 and 1998. Her data set was identified through the search of magazines indexed in Readers Guides under subject headings of “divorce,” “single fathers,” “single mothers,” “single-parent families,” and related terms. She identified relevant articles stored by JSTOR using key word searches for terms consisting of “single-parent families,” “nonmarital childbearing,” and terms related to marital dissolution. From a random sample of those articles she analyzed six outcomes: 1) “Critical Depictions” in which single parent families were characterized as unacceptable, wrong or bad. 2) “Normative Debate” which consisted of articles aimed at improving the well-being of single parent households. 3) “Critical Depictions among the subset of depictions including Normative Debate” combined the first two outcomes but links those articles aimed at improving the well-being of single parent households but are also critical of them. 4) “Morality.” These articles contained the word moral or morality in a discussion of the formation of single parent households. 5) Those articles codified as “Blame” included those which find an individual factor responsible for the resulting single parent home such as divorce or promiscuity. 6) The final outcome is “Harm.” These articles focused on the ill-effects of single parent households, including student outcomes, economics and behavior. Usdansky found that the number of articles critical of single parent households that were the result of divorce declined in the time period studied; articles that were critical of nonmarital households were consistent throughout. Her research would seem to provide evidence of social labeling theory which suggests that, once a child is labeled by his or her peers then traditional stereotypes and attitudes

“become a guided imagery for the reacting society and eventually for the [labeled child themselves] ” (Wilkins and Velicer, 1980).

Social labeling is an essential concept in most theories of learning, forming the third basis of knowledge for this study. Lemon (1997) focused her study on the issue of stereotype and bias in support of the intact or dual parent family and against children raised in single parent homes. She specifically investigated how teachers' and classmates' judgments of a child are influenced by the knowledge that his or her parents are divorced. The subjects in her study were four 4th grade classes in the Seattle area. Lemon provided the students with a description of two hypothetical children, the only difference between the two being their household structure; one was raised in a single parent home, the other was raised in a two parent home. The students in each class were then given a 13-question survey asking questions about their perceptions of the children described. Half were asked about their perception of how well the student from the single parent home might perform in their class. Would they be able to do the work assigned, would they get along with their classmates, etc. The other half of the students were given the same survey, but were asked about their perceptions of the student from the intact or dual parent home. Lemon found in her study that a greater number of students felt the child from the single parent home would perform more poorly on class assignments and would likely not fit in as well with their classmates as the hypothetical child from the two parent home.

Summary

In reviewing the related literature, causal links were found to infer that students would perform more poorly in school if they were from single parent homes, but no direct correlation was found between the two variables. Much of the existing literature focuses on economic deprivation theory and social labeling theory in attempting to identify causes for lower student performance among children from single parent households. This research created the framework for the current study. The hypothesis guiding this study is that there is a statistically significant correlation between household structure and student performance on standardized tests.

Chapter III

RESEARCH METHODS, FINDINGS & LIMITATIONS

Research design

This type of study is characterized as descriptive research. According to Best and Kahn (2006), “It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident or trends that are developing” (p. 118). A study was conducted with students enrolled at 97 schools within Seattle Public Schools and investigated, documented, described, and analyzed factors related to student performance on the math portion of the Measurement of Student Progress test mandated by the state. Students are required by state law to take tests on reading, math, science and writing in order to graduate (OSPI, 2012b). The math test was specifically chosen for this study because of its predictive nature for academic retention (Hamre and Pianta, 2001, Pang, 2010). Whether a student passed or failed this test became the dependent variable used in this examination. Independent variables included gender, household structure, and race/ethnicity.

Selection of Subjects/Participants

The participants in this research study were students from the Seattle School District in grades 3 thru 11 (N=33,136). 48.5% of the participants were female (16,090), 51.5% of the participants were male (17,046). The participants were a diverse population with 20.6% Asian/Pacific Islander, 20.4% were Black/African American, 12.7% were Hispanic, 4.5% identified as multi-racial, 1.5% were Native American and 40.3% were White. 61.9% of the students lived in dual parent/intact households, 34% lived in single

parent households, 5.1% live in other households. 42% of the total student population qualifies for free reduced lunch. Of those students living in dual parent/intact households, 31% qualify for free reduced lunch. 60% of students in single parent homes qualify for free reduced lunch, 51% of other households qualify. To ensure confidentiality, certain identifying variables were modified such as the combined racial/ethnic identifier of Asian/Pacific Islander, and the term “other households” to include foster families, children being raised by non-relatives or relatives other than a biological or adoptive parent and/or children who have been emancipated and are self-supporting.

This population was selected for several reasons, primarily because Seattle Public Schools is one of the few school districts in Washington State that collects household data on its students. The district is located in a county which has the highest rate of nonmarital births in the state (Washington State Department of Health [WSDOH], 2011b) and the highest rate of divorce (WSDOH, 2011a), in a state identified as having one of the highest divorce rates in the country (Fiegerman, 2010; Elliott and Simmons, 2011). Students from grades 3 thru 10 were chosen because these grade classifications are required to take Washington’s Measurement of Student Progress and High School Proficiency Exams (HSPE), the standardized tests mandated under No Child Left Behind and state law (ESHB 1209, 1993).

Data for this study was collected from the Seattle School District’s student database. Permission was granted by the district to examine the database for possible relationships between household structure and student performance and to compare and contrast household structure with other student subgroups, i.e., race/ethnicity, gender, and income (as determined by the student’s free/reduced lunch status). In codifying the data, students

that did not take the tests were eliminated from the codified data base. The district indicated there may be several reasons students might not take the tests, i.e., they were admitted to the district after the tests were administered, they were absent the day the tests were given and never made it up, and/or they chose not to take the test (Steve Wright, personal interview, April 4th, 2012).

Data analysis

Upon receipt of electronic data, data were exported into SPSS 20.0 (2012) for analysis. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, number, and percent) were used to analyze the data to answer the research questions.

The control variable was identified as follows: 1=did not pass the test, 2= passed the test.

Independent variables were identified as:

Gender: 1= female, 2 = male.

Race/Ethnicity: 1= Native American, 2=Hispanic/Latino,
3= White, 4=Black, 5=Asian/Pacific Islander,
6= multi-racial/ethnic.

Parental/Household Structure: 1=single mother, 2=single father, 3=other,
4= dual/two parent.

Grade Level: 1 = grades 3-5, 2 = grades 6-8, 3 = grades 9-11.

Research Question Results

Research Question 1

Is there a relationship between household/parental structure and student performance on standardized math tests?

In focusing on the math portion of the MSP, the data set was limited to those students in grades 3-8 who took the test (N=20,702). Students in the third subset, grades 9-11, are not required to take this portion of the exam. This subset is different than the larger dataset in that it is made up of slightly fewer males 49.3% (10,205) than females 50.7% (10497). Ethnically, 19.5% (4047) of the participants self-identified as being Asian/Pacific Islander, 18.5% (3820) reported they were Black, 12.8% (2643) identify themselves as Hispanic/Latino, 5.6% (1157) self-identify as multi-racial, 1.3% (265) report themselves as Native American (though the identification is not broken down by tribal affiliation), and 42.3% (8770) are White.

Table 2 shows that, when broken down by household status, participants in this study closely mirrored national statistics (Haveman, 1994; Kids Count Data Book, 2011), a majority of White (75%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (69%) students lived in dual parent/intact homes. Just over half of all multi-racial (58%) and Hispanic/Latino (55%) students live in dual parent households. Nearly half of all Black (55%) and Native American (48%) students live in single parent homes.

Table 2: Household structure based on race/ethnicity

HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE	ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	BLACK	HISPANIC /LATINO	MULTI-RACIAL	NATIVE AMERICAN	WHITE
Dual Parent	69%	36%	55%	58%	37%	75%
Father	4%	6%	5%	4%	7%	4%
Mother	24%	49%	34%	35%	41%	18%
Single	28%	55%	39%	39%	48%	22%
Other	3%	9%	6%	3%	15%	3%

Table 3 shows the breakdown of households based on their qualification for free/reduced lunch. As is the case nationally, a greater percentage of students in the Seattle School District who are being raised in single parent households qualify for free/reduced lunch than their counterparts in dual parent households.

Table 3: Household Structure based on FRL status

HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE	QUALIFY	DON'T QUALIFY
Dual Parent	31.3%	68.8%
Father	52.1%	47.9%
Mother	61.1%	35.8%
Single	59.9%	37.5%
Other	51.1%	48.9%

Further analysis using a chi-square test of independence showed that household structure had a significant relationship with whether or not children met math standard.

Specifically, dual parent households had children who met state standard most (74%), with single parent mothers' children meeting standard at 48%, single parent fathers' children meeting standard at 52%, and children from other household structures meeting standard the least, at 30% ($\chi^2(3) = 1655.50, p < .001$). Figure 1 displays these percentages.

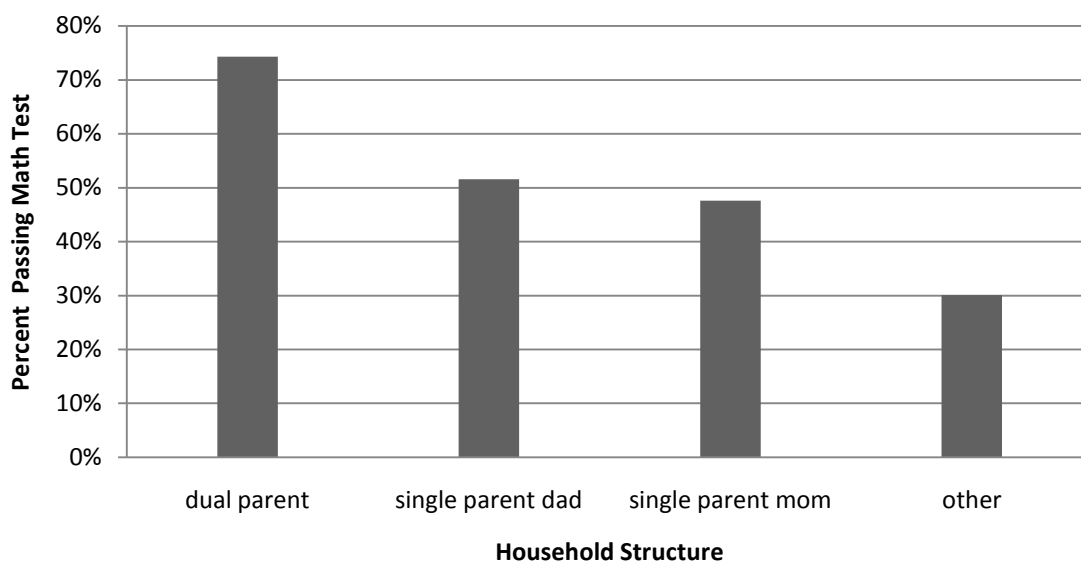


Figure 1. Percentage of Students meeting math standard based on household structure

Additionally, a chi-square test of whether dual parent households have children who meet standard more than either type of single-parent household was conducted, and shown to be significant as well, ($\chi^2(1) = 1316.99, p < .001$), with the combined single-parent household showing a 48% passing rate whereas the dual parent household had a 74% passing rate.

Research Question 2

Does household/parental structure compare to other variables in its prediction of student performance on standardized math tests? If so, how?

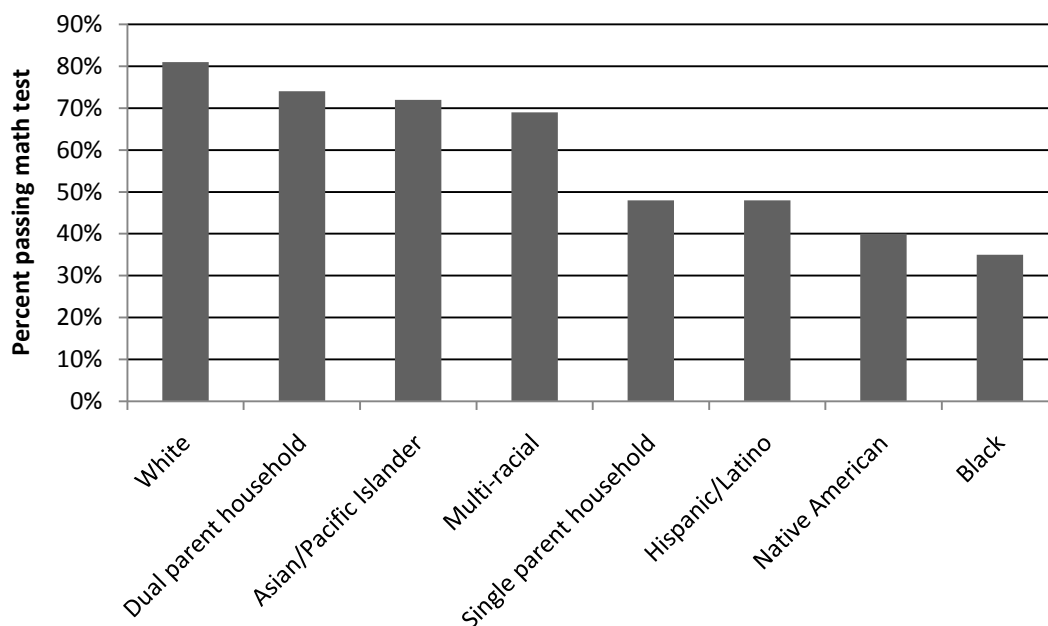


Figure 2. Percentage of students meeting math standard based on race/ethnicity and household structure

The figures from research question number one were combined in figure 2 to address research question number two. These figures show the percentage of students meeting the math standard as determined in a chi-square test of how students perform on the math test based on their race/ethnicity. These were shown to be significant as well, ($\chi^2(5) = 3028.16, p < .001$). Combined single-parent households met math standards at the same rate, 48%, as Hispanic/Latinos, a group for whom a number of interventions are in place.

An additional chi-square test of the role of income on student performance on the math test showed that whether a student qualifies for free/reduced lunch is also significant ($\chi^2(1) = 2881.88, p < .001$). Only 45% of low income students pass the math portion of the MSP. A chi-square test of gender effects is also statistically significant. The results showed females outperformed their male classmates by a two-to-one margin, 64% for girls, 32% for boys. ($\chi^2(1) = 10.97, p = .001$).

An analysis of those who failed to pass the test showed a greater percentage of children of single parent households scored worst on the test as compared to children in dual parent households, as seen in figure 3.

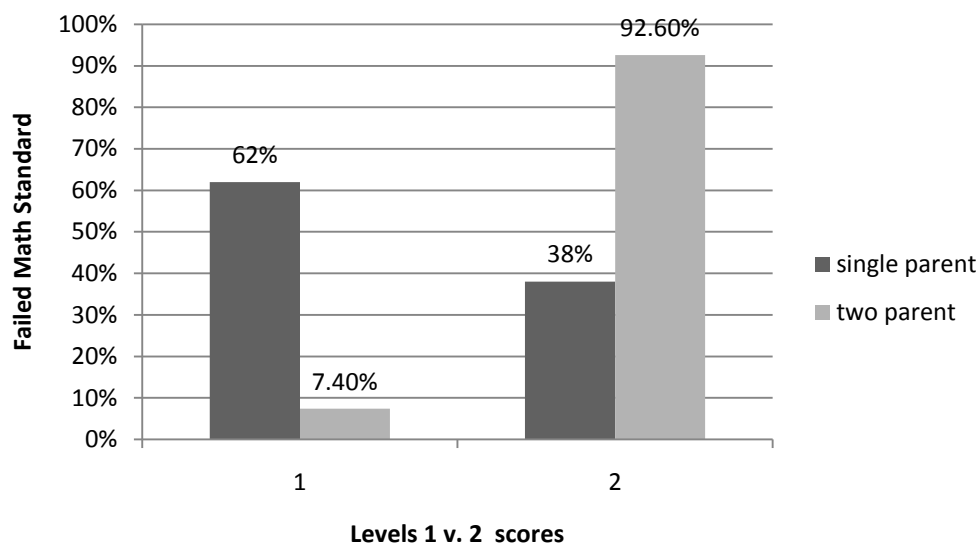


Figure 3. Comparison of students who failed the math portion of the MSP single parent v. two parent households.

Research Question 3

Does household/parental structure impact student performance among all racial/ethnic groups?

The final analysis conducted on the data set was to examine the relationship between household/parental structure and race/ethnicity. For this test, results were limited to only single parent households. As seen in figure 4, fewer than half of most racial/ethnic minority students raised by single parents passed the math portion of the MSP. Only Asian/Pacific Islander and multi-racial students had a majority of their populations pass the test. A chi-square test of the data ($\chi^2(5) = 548.20, p = .001$) showed a statistically significant relationship between single parent households and student performance based on race/ethnicity. Finally, when controlling for household structure, males raised in single parent households out-performed females (50.2% to 46.0%).

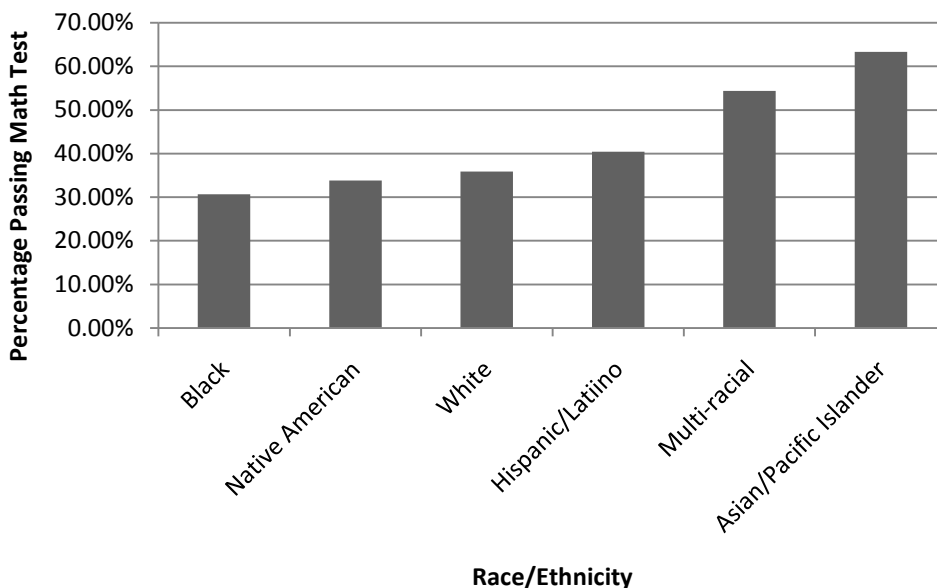


Figure 4: Performance on math tests by children of single parent homes based on race/ethnicity.

LIMITATIONS

A study of this size naturally has several limitations. The sample is unusually large when compared to many other studies, causing even the smallest difference between groups is to be statistically significant even if it is not practically significant. There may also be some non-independents in the data set, meaning that the statistical results might be influenced by students sharing similar environments, such as schools and classrooms. Further research can account for this issue. These analyses did not account for shared relationships between variables such as FRL and household structure since each variable was examined separately. Future work can examine how these variables behave in concert with each other (for example, what is the unique relationship between household structure and children's outcomes, after accounting for FRL).

Another limitation of this study is that it does not discriminate between the different types of single parent (e.g., never married, divorced, widowed, separated), or two parent households (blended family, same sex, adoptive). According to the U.S. Census nearly 11-percent of all children living in a two parent households live with a step-parent (Kreider and Ellis, 2011). Additionally, the statistics do not speak to the mobility of the child. It would also be desirable to have reliable measures of parental conflict and whether the child has access to the non-custodial parent. Finally, no causal claims can be made about the direction of the relationship between variables as is the nature of any survey data. However, these data still provide important information to inform policy.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The problem statement was: Children grow up in a variety of family settings. Some are born into single parent households; some are born into two parent homes. Household structure in the United States is an ever-changing circumstance with two parent households being created and recreated through marriage, divorce and remarriage. 60-percent of all children will find themselves in a single parent home at some point in their lives because of these changes (Krein and Beller, 1988, Crosbie-Burnett and Pulvino, 1990, Andersson, 2002). In 2009, more than 27-percent of all children living in the United States lived in a single parent home, a number that had been steadily increasing over the past fifty years (Tucker and Mitchell-Kernan, 1995; Smeeding, Moynihan and Rainwater, 2004; Dunifon, 2009; Kreider and Ellis, 2011, Kids Count Data Book, 2011; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Single parent households are now being called, the largest minority group in the country (Staples and Johnson, 1993) Researchers frequently use race/ethnicity, income and English language ability in predicting student performance in the classroom (Fleming and Garcia, 1998; Codero-Guzman, 2001; Hartman, 2001; Abedi, 2002). Given the number of children raised in single parent homes, the question this researcher asks is what is the effect of household structure in student performance on standardized tests?

Through a descriptive statistical analysis of student records from Seattle Public Schools, this study identified a significant relationship between a student's parental structure and whether that student passes a standardized test. Chi-square analyses of those correlations

make it clear, household structure is as predictive as any other independent variable currently recognized by policymakers.

While this study did not test a specific theoretical perspective, the results do tend to support the findings of theorists like Sara McLanahan who believe that family composition plays a significant role in how well a student performs academically. McLanahan argues that two-parent households provide the best family structure for children (McLanahan, 1983a, 1983b, 1985; McLanahan and Sandefur, 1994). This study found that children in two-parent households, regardless of ethnicity or income, passed the math portion of the MSP at a greater rate than children in single parent households.

In light of this research, it is this researcher's recommendation that:

- 1) Further study is needed into the variations of single parent families and how those variations influence student outcomes. Zill (1978) found that children of widows outperformed children of divorced or separated mothers, but little research has been done on what is being called the New American Family: the rising incident of women who are choosing to have children while remaining single (Hoffmann and Johnson, 1998; Holyfield, 2002; Afton, 2006; Hertz, 2006). Further research could determine if more educated women with higher incomes who choose to raise their children alone will provide their children with additional resources e.g., books, travel, resources, and enriching extracurricular activities that have been shown to result in higher student achievement (Hill and Stafford, 1980; Laureau, 1989).
- 2) School systems should take a multi-pronged, more holistic approach to education (Hooks, 1994). Just as no fingerprint is the same as another, no child is the same as another. Each child comes to the classroom with unique backgrounds, abilities, talents,

strengths and weaknesses that cannot be labeled in a way that can be addressed by a cookie cutter approach to education. In attempting to do so, as Carter suggests, some students will “resist the cultural default – that which is regarded as ‘normal’ or ‘regular’ – namely, white, middle-class standards” (Carter, 2003, p. 137). This can be achieved by including parental marital status, or household structure, in curriculum in the same way race/ethnicity and gender have been under multiculturalism (Banks and Banks, 1995, Asher, 2007).

3) School systems should develop recognize that single parents may require special accommodations in order to actively participate in their child’s education (Bray and Anderson, 1984; Lindle, 1990; Gorski, 2008). As Hepworth Berger (1987) recommends, those accommodations may take the form of special times for parent teacher conferences, babysitting services for other children of the household during those conferences, and something seemingly as simple as recognizing the child’s name may be different than that of the parent. Additionally, special accommodations may be necessary to maintain the involvement of the noncustodial parent, if there is one present in the child’s life (Depner and Bray, 1990, Delgado-Gaitan, 1994).

Summary

Americans frequently cite education as one of the most important issues facing the United States, often ranking education over immigration, taxes, foreign policy and defense (Polakow, Butler, Deprez, and Kahn, 2004; CBS/NY Times, 2012). Their feelings are echoed by President Barrack Obama who, throughout his administration, has cited education as a key component of economic recovery (Obama, 2009; 2010; 2011;

2012). Obama is not the first president to identify education as a central issue to their administration. Every president since George Washington has stressed the importance of education (Washington, 1790). Lyndon Johnson went so far as to say there is no issue that mattered more to the future of the country (Johnson, 1964). At the same time, single parent households have been transformed, as Amato (2000) found, from “a private misfortune into a social issue – an issue that has become the focus of a good deal of media attention, public debate, and social policy” (p149). But, despite decades of research identifying family dynamics as one of the most important contributors to student success (Coleman, et.al., 1966a;NCEE, 1983; Moynihan, 1986, Jeynes, 2002), little has been done to incorporate household structure into intervention programs (Depner and Bray, 1990; Hunsley, 1997). Teachers realize children bring what they are experiencing at home into the classroom (Hepworth Berger, 1987) but even the current administration admits, single parent families have not been factored into education policies (Collins, 2011).). It would seem obvious the system is in desperate need of repair and in a state of crisis and the achievement gap will never be reduced unless out-of- school factors, like household structure are addressed (Sleeter, 2001; Berliner, 2009).

One could argue each administration was simply conforming to Allison’s Organizational Perspective (1971). When viewed through this lens, presidents who openly support education, yet fail to enact legitimate policies, like those that take into account household structure, that might alter academic outcomes, are simply acting according to a “standard pattern of behavior” (p 67) while at the same time avoiding the perceived threat that might be produced if they had ignored the issue. By its own admission, the U.S. Department of Education failed to implement the recommendations contained in A

Nation at Risk (NCEE, 1983; U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Princeton University professor and civil rights activist Cornel West says the fact that household structure involves the family, finding interventions that do not also impose Eurocentric ideals on people of color could be difficult (Cornel West, personal interview, April 25, 2012).

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Appendix A: Data Sharing Agreement

Superintendent's Office
"Every student achieving, everyone accountable."



"CONTRACTS"
 This form is to be used for contracts, MOU's, and grants above \$75,000. Contracts below \$75,000 may be signed by the Purchasing or Accounting Manager. An original of the document to be approved must be attached to this form. If the contract requires Board approval, a copy of the approved Board Action Report must be included.

TO: Superintendent (for approvals over \$100,000)
 Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance (for approvals up to \$100,000)

FROM: MARK TEOH **DATE:** 2/15/2012 **PHONE:** 2-0120
 Initiator

SUBJECT: Request for Approval for: Data Sharing agreement for Cynthia Wike

The subject and attached material have been reviewed with the appropriate staff members as indicated by the signatures below. All policies and legal requirements have been followed. If the material meets your approval, please sign and return to my office. The page(s) requiring your signature have been tagged.

Attachment(s) Data Sharing Agreement for Cynthia Wise (Researcher)

Related policy or RCW(s) _____

Initiator/Staff member Mark TEOH 2-0120 2/15/2012
 Signature Phone Date

ROUTE APPROVAL:

(1) Manager/Principal Date _____ (2) Director Date _____

(3) Facilities Finance Date _____ (4) Procurement Date _____
 (Capital only)

(5) Legal 2/15/12 Date _____ (6) GC/Asst. Supt. Op. or TL Date _____
 (as appropriate)

(7) Accounting 2/15/12 Date _____
 (for encumbrance)

APPROVAL (PRELIMINARY APPROVAL FOR CONTRACTS OVER \$250,000):

\$75,000 to \$100,000 _____ Asst. Supt. for Bus. and Finance or Exec. Dir. Finance Date _____

\$100,000 to \$250,000 _____ Assistant Supt. for Business and Finance Date _____

_____ _____ Superintendent Date _____

FINAL APPROVAL FOR CONTRACTS OVER \$250,000 (Initiator is responsible for providing a copy of the approved Board Action Report to Accounting.)

Board Action approval date: _____

Signers should return this form and attachments to Accounting. Accounting is responsible for routing.

DATA ACCESS AND USE AGREEMENT FOR NON-PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE STUDENT INFORMATION



This DATA ACCESS AND USE AGREEMENT (the "Agreement") by and between SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS (the "District"), and Cynthia Wise (the "Requester"), is entered into effective as of February 13, 2012 (the "Effective Date").

RECITALS

1. The District is a public school district organized under the laws of the State of Washington that provides educational instruction to students in grades K-12 in the City of Seattle, Washington;
2. **REQUESTER** is conducting research to ascertain the academic and other school performance improvements experienced by Seattle Public School students;
3. Both parties agree that this project will potentially lead to a greater understanding of the impacts that CBOs can contribute to academic and other school performance metrics.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises contained herein, the parties hereby agree as follows:

AGREEMENT

1. **Objective; Intent of the Parties.** To conduct analysis through the use of **non-personally identifiable student information**, educational records, and data (hereinafter "student records") in order to assess the impacts (if any) on student academic performance and other measures of school performance due to the students involvement in programs provided by **REQUESTER**.
2. **Responsibilities of the District.** During the term of this Agreement, the District shall:
 - a. Prepare data files as defined in *Appendix A - Data File Description*.
 - b. Deliver data files to requester by the dates noted in Appendix A.
3. **Responsibilities of the Requestor.** The Requester, representing all members of the research team, shall:
 - a. Provide the list of students participating in the project to SPS; provide updates to this list as necessary
 - b. Be responsible for the student records obtained;
 - c. Use student records appropriately and only for authorized purposes;
 - d. Destroy student records that have been provided from the District pursuant to time limitations defined in the Agreement and, if requested, provide certification to SPS that such records have been destroyed;
 - e. Prior to publication/release, if requested, and subject to the following, provide any documents generated as a result of using student records received from SPS for review and verification that the intended purpose has been adhered to;
 - f. Submit final summary report to the District.
 - g. Understand that deliberate or accidental misuse of student records may result in one or more of the following: loss of access, disciplinary action, dismissal or prosecution under the scope of any applicable federal and state laws;

The Requester shall not:

- a. Share student records with any individuals or third parties not included in the Agreement;
- b. Make or allow any unauthorized use of information provided/generated;
- c. Publish reports with a cell size of less than 10. (Reports must mask these cells so that results are not revealed.)

4. **Review by the District.** The District reserves the right to review before release any information using this student data if it is to be released publicly.
5. **Legal Obligations**
While this Agreement does not involve exchange of personally identifiable student information, both parties acknowledge separate obligations in accordance with the requirements of Public Law 93-380--Privacy Rights of Parents and Students, commonly known as the "Buckley Amendment", the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99.

AGREEMENT TERMINATION

The District may terminate this Agreement at any time, for its own convenience, for any reason, with written notice to the Requester. The Requester may terminate this Agreement for any reason, with 30 days written notice to the District. Otherwise, the Agreement will end July 31, 2012.

CONFIDENTIALITY

A. USE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

1. **REQUESTER** understands that it will have access to **non-personally identifiable student information**, records, and data from SPS (hereinafter "student records"). **REQUESTER** agrees that student records are strictly confidential and shall not be disclosed to a third party at any time (except as provided for in this Agreement), or used or retained by **REQUESTER** after the services under this Agreement have ended or the Agreement is terminated. **REQUESTER** further agrees that no student records will be shared with any other person or entity outside of **REQUESTER** or its agents, unless it is done with permission of SPS. Student records are protected under federal law (20 U.S.C. 1232g - FERPA).
2. **REQUESTER** agrees to return or destroy any student records obtained through SPS at the end of the Agreement or upon request of SPS.
3. **REQUESTER** agrees that disclosure of student records, without permission of SPS, is just cause for SPS to immediately terminate the Agreement.
4. SPS acknowledges that **REQUESTER** will be reporting findings to the City of Seattle. The reporting will be intended to:
 - Support **REQUESTER** understanding of the impact of their programs on student academic achievement, as measured by key school district indicators
 - Provide data to support SPS in understanding the impact of **REQUESTER** work with students
 - Develop a data-driven perspective of necessary components for engaging in ongoing dialogue among key partners regarding the impact of CBOs on academic achievement

ASSIGNMENT

Neither party shall assign its rights or responsibilities under this Agreement without the written authorization of all the other parties.

VITA

Cynthia Wise was born in Wenatchee, Washington. She has lived many places in her life, primarily in New Mexico and Washington State. She has spent much of her life working in broadcast journalism and currently calls the Seattle area her home. At New Mexico State University she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Government. In 2012 she earned a Master of Education degree in Education Policy from the University of Washington.