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Parents' Perceptions of Academic Progress Information Access and Dual Enrollment Student Success

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Walden University

College of Education

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2015

Abstract

Parents' Perceptions of Academic Progress Information Access and Dual Enrollment

Student Success

by

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

To comply with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations, parents of high school students taking college classes as part of a dual enrollment program have to employ alternative monitoring practices to remain informed about their students' academic progress. This quantitative research study explored how parents' perceptions of access to student academic progress information correlated with their students' academic performance based on cumulative grade point average (GPA) in college classes. Credit-based transition programs (CBTP) and parent monitoring theory provided the framework. All 867 parents of students under age 18 enrolled in the dual enrollment program at an urban community college in a western state during the winter quarter 2015 were asked to respond a 10 question survey instrument, modified from Stattin and Kerr (2000) and six demographic indicators. The results of 59 returned questionnaires were linked to GPAs of students using descriptive and correlational statistics. A small response (6.8%) limited the ability to correlate parental perceptions and dual enrollment success in college courses. No significance was demonstrated; however, when cumulative GPAs and parent responses on the survey instrument were correlated using split-cases with demographic indicators, six significant correlations appeared. These indicated that parents do appear to play some significant role in supporting their dual enrollment student's success in college courses. As a result, colleges may want to find mechanisms for parents of dual enrollment students to stay engaged without compromising the FERPA regulations.

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Student Success

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother who stood behind me and believed in me when others in the family questioned my intentions and my sincerity in achieving this endeavor. May she rest in peace. I would also like to dedicate it to my ex-wife, who always reminded me that I was up to the task and capable of achieving my dream of becoming a Ph.D. Finally, to my two dogs and my one cat, who put up with many hours of being ignored, but always greeted me with unconditional love when I finally finished my work and came home to them.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Education in the United States has seen a recent movement toward capitalizing on credit-based transition programs (CBTP) at the secondary education level (Brophy & Johnson, 2007; Rodriguez, Hughes, & Belfield, 2012; Edmunds, Bernstein, Glennie, Willse, Arshavsky, Unlu, et al., 2010). This movement began as a way for secondary schools to meet the need for increased academic challenges (Karp, Calcagno, Hughes, Jeong, & Bailey, 2007). As a result, more high school students are now in the college environment than there previously were. Many variations of CBTP exist, but for the purpose of this study, the focus is on dual enrollment.

Parents who are accustomed to monitoring the progress of their high school students face a change in their ability to monitor their dual enrollment students' progress (Karp, Hughes, & O'Gara, 2008). The regulations of the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibit colleges and universities from releasing personal information about students enrolled in their institution, except to the students themselves (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). The question arose as to whether parents' perceptions of this change in academic information access would correlate with their dual enrollment students' academic success.

Little research was found related to how the parents' role as an academic support agent has changed the nature of the parents' relationships with dual enrollment students and schools as a consequence of the move from high school to college courses. Little was known about how parents perceived these changes related to monitoring their students' overall academic progress. Academic progress checks in college occur with

less frequency than often experienced in high school (Born, 2006). Along with the inaccessibility of academic progress information access, parents face new challenges in their efforts to promote and monitor the academic progress of their student. If a relationship existed between academic information access for parents and the academic success of their students, this would suggest that mechanisms for assisting parents might be helpful in assuring the success of dual enrollment students in college.

As more students enter the college system earlier and younger than ever before, an increased number of high school students attempt to maneuver the transitions from the high school structure to a college structure (Karp et al. 2007; Woosley & Miller, 2009). Along with these transitions come all the experiences and distractions that a college campus environment usually offers. Since the dual enrollment population is younger than their traditional college peers, decision making capabilities may be less well developed (Oliver, Ricard, Witt, Alvarado, & Hill, 2010). This less well developed ability for decision making relates directly to their ability to handle the new academic challenges and expectations. Before dual enrollment, parents were able to participate in their students' academic progress by actively monitoring and engaging with this progress.

This research investigated whether there was a correlation between parental perceptions of access to academic progress information and their students' success in college-level courses. The theoretical frameworks for this research included credit-based transition programs (CBTP) theory (Cubberley, 2009; Karp & Hughes, 2008a; Karp & Hughes, 2007; Sullivan-Ham, 2010) and parent-monitoring theory (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Presently, much of the research into CBTP tends to

focus on student academic readiness (Berger et al., 2010; Born, 2006; Hooker & Brand, 2010; Karp et al., 2008; Marken et al., 2013; Medvide & Blustein, 2010; Mohker & McLendon, 2009; Newton & Vogt, 2008; Oliver et al., 2010; Wolk, 2005). However, this focus failed to consider other aspects involved in the transition from a high school environment to a college level environment. For example, previous research did not examine the emotional and social maturity of dual enrollment students. Some researchers, like Karp, Hughes, and O’Gara (2010), Ongaga (2010) and Tinto (1997) attempted to address the social and emotional issues associated with first year college students attempting to find a personal sense of belonging on campus.

The results of this research were expected to illuminate whether parent monitoring appears to assist as student transition to a dual enrollment college environment. In addition the results of the research could aid secondary institutions in realizing that academic readiness for students includes keeping parents engaged in supporting their dual enrollment students. It was hoped that the outcome of this research might offer insight into the importance of parent/student communication in dual enrollment settings. By using the results of this research, secondary and their cooperating post-secondary partners that offer dual enrollment programs would find benefit in developing better mechanisms for supporting and encouraging the parents of dual students to continue to monitor their student’s academic progress.

This chapter covers the background research, statement of the problem, discussion of the importance of this study, and its relevance to current trends in education. Following the importance of the research is a discussion of the purpose for this study, the

working research question, hypothesis, and theoretical framework. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the nature of the research, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations and significance. A summary of the chapter then leads to the literature review in Chapter 2.

Background

States' support of CBTPs aimed at offering high school students the opportunity to acquire college credits while still enrolled and attending high school, have seen a steady increase over the last few years (Karp & Hughes, 2008a; Karp et al., 2007). CBTP opportunities exist in almost all fifty states (Marken, et al., 2013). Commonly, these programs were known by various titles: dual enrollment, early college, early college transition program (Karp & Hughes, 2008a), running start (Brophy & Johnson, 2007), and concurrent enrollment (Golann & Hughes, 2008; Mokher & McLendon, 2009) to name just a few examples. As proposed by Karp and Hughes (2008a), all credit-based, early high school-to-college programs can be referred to as dual enrollment programs and are discussed as such in this dissertation.

In the more rigorous and extensive dual enrollment programs, many high school students began their junior or senior years taking all their classes on a college campus, as opposed to taking them on the traditional high school campus (Karp et al., 2007). This transition from a traditional high school setting to a college setting involves a number of significant adjustments for both the students and their parents. From the parents' perspective, this transition from the high school setting meant a significant shift in the availability of academic information access and their ability to monitor their student's

activities as closely as before (Oliver, et al., 2010). In the traditional high school setting, parents had almost immediate access to information regarding their student's academic or behavioral progress. If a problem or question arose, access to administrators, teachers, or counselors was readily available, and problems could be addressed immediately.

However, once a high school student begins taking courses fulltime on the college campus, parents' access to academic progress information changes. FERPA prohibits colleges and universities from releasing personal information about students enrolled in their institution, except to the students themselves (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Parents could access personal information, but only with written permission from their dual enrollment student. Each application required an official student information release request generated by the student. This restriction inhibited the parents' ability to access the same academic progress information during the semester and maintain the same level of monitoring and student support that they would have if their student was enrolled in high school. The reduction in official academic progress information access required parents and students to rely on the quality of their already established communications systems. Depending upon the quality of this relationship, the ability of parents to solicit academic progress information from their dual enrollment student became more limited (De Goede, et al., 2009; Doo & Schneider, 2005; Dornbusch, et al., 1990; Finkenauer, et al., 2004; Frijns, et al., 2010; Geuzaine, et al., 2000; Keijsers, et al., 2010; Keijsers, et al., 2009; Smetana, et al., 2006). Consequently, the quality of the information parents received depended upon the quality of the communication relationship between a parent and the student prior to entering the dual enrollment program.

One of the consequences of high school students beginning fulltime college classes early is that students began to explore their own self-autonomy earlier than many of their high school peers (De Goede et al., 2009; Smetana et al., 2006). Because of the unstructured nature of the college environment, the dual enrollment students were exposed to many more opportunities, enticements, distractions, and challenges than they may have previously experienced (Duffy, et al., 2009; Hooker & Brand, 2010; Oliver et al., 2010). As a result, dual enrollment students might resort to strategies of information nondisclosure or secrecy when confronted by their parents' attempts to solicit information about their progress and activities at college (Dornbusch et al., 1990). As feelings of self-autonomy increase, efforts by parents to monitor or solicit specific information might be deemed by students as suddenly intrusive or a direct attempt at privacy invasion, and might have been met with resistance and nondisclosure (Hamza & Willoughby, 2011).

The question this research attempted to answer was: Is there a correlation between parents' perception of academic progress information access and their students' overall academic success in the college-level courses? The target population was the parents of high school students enrolled in the dual enrollment program at a community college system in a western state. In order to protect confidentiality and assure anonymity, the community college is referred to by the pseudonym, Southwest Community College (SWCC).

Research on variables affecting high school students' success in college courses had focused primarily on problems related to funding, counseling, preparation and

organization, and culturally related elements (Burns, 2010; Howley, Howley, Howley, & Duncan, 2013; Medvide & Blustein, 2010; Sigal, Thurston, & Tienda, 2010; Okagaki, Helling, & Bingman, 2009; Karp & Hughes, 2008; Karp et al., 2010; Karp, O’Gara & Hughes, 2008; Karp et al., 2007; O’Connor & Justice, 2008). Little research looked into the dynamic between perceived parental ability to monitor their high school dual enrollment student’s academic progress and whether that related to the success of their students in college-level classes.

Much of the dual enrollment research investigated student success as related to overall academic readiness (Berger et al., 2010; Born, 2006; Hooker & Brand, 2010; Karp et al., 2008; Marken et al., 2013; Medvide & Blustein, 2010; Mohker & McLendon, 2009; Newton & Vogt, 2008; Oliver et al., 2010; Wolk, 2005). Other researchers investigated the program from the perspective of ethnic and cultural differences (Born, 2006; Berger et al., 2009; Duffy et al., 2009; Hooker & Brand, 2010; Karp et al. 2008; O’Connor & Justice, 2008; Rodriquez et al., 2012), and socio-economic status (Born, 2006; Berger et al., 2009; Duffy et al., 2009; Hooker & Brand, 2010; Marken et al., 2013; Medvide & Blustein, 2010; Williams & Southers, 2010). While other researchers investigated gender differences (Karp et al. 2007; Karp et al. 2008; Medvide & Blustein, 2010; O’Connor & Justice, 2008; Ongaga, 2010; Sullivan-Ham, 2010), as well as the ability for students to self-advocate and utilize college support structures (Duffy et al., 2009; Hooker & Brand, 2010; Karp et al., 2008; Medvide & Blustein, 2010; Oliver et al., 2010; Roberts, 2007). The literature review that follows in Chapter 2 demonstrates a gap in the research associated with the parents’ perception of how their change in monitoring

and academic information access relates to their dual enrollment students' academic success in college courses.

It was important to understand how parents perceive the differences in their ability to monitor their dual enrollment students' academic progress and their ability to support their students. Did the change in perceived parent monitoring ability based on academic information access correlate with the degree of success dual enrollment students achieve in their college-level courses?

Problem Statement

Parents experience a change in their ability to access academic progress information about their high school dual enrollment student when the student begins taking college courses (Jacobson, & Crockett, 2000; LeBahn, 1995; Romanik, 2010). This change in access might ultimately affect the ability of parents to monitor their dual enrollment students' academic progress in their college courses and catch academic problems in a timely manner when they arise (Dornbusch et al., 1990). When academic problems arise in a dual enrollment program, the student's future access to college might be affected, defeating the purpose of the dual enrollment experience. The researchers who have investigated parental perceptions about student academic success looked at how parents' inability to solicit information from their student prohibited parents from engaging in activities that could assist students in their academic achievement outside the actual school environment (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; LeBahn, 1995; Romanik, 2010). These studies were more concerned with activities outside of school that detracted from

their students' academic progress. Additionally, none of the studies focused on dual enrollment students and the change in the parents' access to timely information.

The primary emphasis for most of the extant research was on how undesirable extramural deviant activities (i.e. early drug use, early sexual activity, tobacco use, etc.) affect a students' desire to disclose information or not. The research that did focus on student disclosure and academics tended to focus on the effectiveness of the parents' ability to monitor student extracurricular activities, not academic ones. This reduced efficacy was determined to be a result of students' increased reluctance to disclose information about their activities in and out of school.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the correlation between parents' perception of their ability to acquire academic progress information and their high school students' academic success in college-level courses.

The independent variable for this study was the parental perceptions' of their ability to access academic progress information about their student participating in the dual enrollment program at a local community college system.

The dependent variable was identified as student success. This dependent variable measures academic success by utilizing the student's cumulative college GPA for classes taken at the college level while participating in the dual enrollment program. The study also used the college course grades in three core subject areas: English, math, and science. These classes were chosen as they represent the subject areas in which most academic performance evaluations are generally based.

The quantitative research design focused on the relationship between parents having access to student progress information and student achievement. Correlation was the appropriate analytic method for examining the relationship between two variables.

Research Question and Hypothesis

Research Question: What was the relationship between parents' perception of academic progress information access and the success of their dual enrollment student in college-level courses?

Null Hypothesis (H_0). There was no relationship between the parents' perception of their access to academic progress information and success of dual enrollment students.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There was a relationship between parents' perception of their access to academic progress information and success of their dual enrollment students in their college courses.

The research population was defined as the total parent population of dual enrollment students under the age of eighteen registered in a local community college system. The community college had one main campus, and three satellite campuses located in various cities around the state. The research used data from all four community college campuses.

Each family of a student under eighteen years of age registered in the SWCC system dual enrollment program during the winter quarter of 2015 was sent a 10-question survey instrument modified with permission from Stattin and Kerr (2000), additional demographic questions, and a letter of consent (see Appendix A).

The measurement tool consisted of ten demographic and background items, and ten Likert-type survey questions specifically related to academic aspects modified from a questionnaire (Appendix A) modified from Stattin and Kerr's (2000) full instrument previously used by Kerr et al. (2010), Stattin and Kerr (2000), and Tilton-Weaver and Marshall (2008). The instrument for this study was divided into five categorical constructs based on the similarity of the information that each question was attempting to solicit. The constructs included the following categories: bad reaction to communications, disclosure of daily activities, off-task behavior, knowledge of daily activities, and solicitation of academic information. The demographic questions were included to identify general sociological trends relevant to the SWCC dual enrollment population. The purpose of collecting demographic background information was to assist in eliminating or identifying potentially confounding variables that might contribute to or detract from a student's success in college courses. While the primary focus of this study was to explore the connection between parental access to student academic progress information and success in college courses, it was important to explore the possibility that other factors may play a significant role as well.

The instrument itself was a Likert-scaled questionnaire focused on the perceptions of the quality and nature of adolescent information disclosure held by both parents. Because this research was focused on parental perceptions, only the questions taken from the original Stattin-Kerr (2000) survey that pertained to parent-directed questions specifically looking at academic information were used in the measurement tool.

Questions that pertained to extracurricular activities not directly associated with school and academic information disclosure were not included.

An attempt was made at measuring success using the students' cumulative GPAs. The cumulative GPAs were taken from archived data held by SWCC for students who have already participated in college-level courses in the dual enrollment program. GPAs were correlated with parent responses to the survey instrument and the demographic information using Pearson's r to determine significance.

The demographic information that was solicited from parents included, the relationship of the person completing the survey instrument to the dual enrollment student, the number of semesters the student has been enrolled in the dual enrollment program, and the grade level of the student in question. Also requested was information about the estimated annual household income for each family, whether their student was the first person in the family to attend college, and the highest education level attained by either parent in the household.

Additional demographic indicators were important enough to be included in the correlation analysis: highest level of education achieved by one or both parents, and whether or not their dual enrollment student is the first member of their family to attend college.

Research had found that differences in SES (Berger et al., 2010; Hooker et al., 2010; Karp & Hughes, 2008; Medvide & Bluestein, 2010), culture, and ethnicity (Berger et al., 2009; Born, 2006; Medvide & Bluestein, 2010; Rodriguez et al., 2012) could hinder dual enrollment student's potential success in college. Traditionally

underrepresented populations (i.e. low income and minority students) often came to college lacking the social capital needed to succeed in maneuvering the college environment (Berger et al., 2010; LeBahn, 1995). Necessary skills for students include self-advocacy or knowing how to seek and ask for assistance when problems arise (Oliver et al., 2010). In some cases, the need to work outside of college in order to afford an education negatively affected students' success.

Some researchers found that gender often played a role in determining academic success in college. Women typically demonstrated greater levels of success in college. Some of the success for females might be attributed to differences in maturation found to exist between male and females students of the same age (Dornbusch et al., 1990; Leal 2008; Sullivan-Ham, 2010).

Finally, like SES and ethnicity, the level of parental education, and being the first person in the family to attend college are factors that might have an impact on academic success for dual enrollment students in college courses. Students whose parents had not achieved higher levels of education, or students who were the first in their family to attend college, might lack the social or cultural capital to provide the requisite support mechanisms to help them succeed in their college courses (Berger et al., 2009; Dornbusch et al., 1990; Hooker et al., 2010; Oliver et al., 2010).

Theoretical Framework for the Study

The theoretical framework for this research included two theoretical approaches. The first, CBTP philosophy, referred to secondary education programs that offer simultaneous college and high school courses to eligible students. These programs

allowed students to enroll in college courses and earn credits toward an associate's degree (A.A.) and applied those same credit hours towards high school graduation requirement (Karp et al., 2008a; Karp et al., 2007). Over the last decade, politicians and educational policy writers mandated greater academic opportunities for high school students who are not being challenged by the existing high school curriculum (Ortiz, 2008). As a result, states began to devise cooperating agreements between postsecondary and secondary schools to allow eligible high school students to take college courses while still in high school for both high school and college credits (Oliver et al., 2010). The hope was that experiencing college level courses would encourage students to remain in high school long enough to graduate. It was also hoped that the experience would reinforce college retention encouraging students to continue in their postsecondary education after their graduation from high school. There was also a trend towards better preparing high school students to leave high school more "world-ready" (Hooker & Brand, 2010). Education policy writers hoped that earlier exposure to college would both increase the overall rigor of secondary education, as well as improve the readiness of high school students for the world after high school (An, 2015; Oliver et al., 2010).

The second theoretical framework involved the practice of parent monitoring of their students' activities and progress, both in and out of school. Parent monitoring theory referred to the parents' effort to access information and acquire knowledge about their students' academic progress, activities, behavior, associations, movements, and whereabouts (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; Karp et al., 2008). Parent monitoring practices in their positive form involved a desire on the part of the parents for support and

awareness. In its negative form, parent monitoring could devolve into a parental desire to control the activities and the lives of their student (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000).

Both theoretical approaches applied to the parents and the students enrolled in dual enrollment programs. Parents desirous of better academic outcomes for their student encouraged them into dual enrollment hoping that they would remain academically challenged and motivated, as well as a way to give their student the beginnings of a college education, often at no cost to themselves (Bailey & Karp, 2003; Ongaga, 2010). Despite the fact that the incidence of parental monitoring begins dropping off after the student reached the ninth grade, many parents still continued to monitor academic progress all the way through their students' graduation from high school (Karp et al., 2007). For these parents, the change in their ability to access their high school students' academic progress information potentially hindered their ability to offer the support necessary for their student to remain successful in their college courses.

Nature of the Study

This was a correlation study with two variables using a convenience sample of high schools with dual enrollment programs in the southwest. The study focused on parents' perceptions of access to academic progress information about their students who were enrolled in a dual-degree program at SWCC. It associated these perceptions with student grades as a measure of academic achievement. An anticipated sample of 266 out of 855 potential candidates would be needed to address the power calculation at 95% confidence (Raosoft, 2004). By sampling only those parents whose dual enrollment students were under eighteen years of age, only parental permission was needed to access

archived cumulative GPA and grade information. In this way, difficulties associated with the FERPA regulations could be avoided, which would occur if students over eighteen years of age were used in the sample.

Definitions

The following terms are operationally defined for use in the study:

Academic Success: Academic success was operationally defined for this study by dual enrollment students' cumulative GPA's.

Dual Enrollment: For the purpose of this study's population, dual enrollment referred to high school students taking college courses fulltime or part-time on the local college or university campuses.

Parent Perception of Academic Information Access: For the purpose of this research, parental perception of academic information access was defined as parents' perceptions regarding their ability to obtain academic progress information from the college or university their dual enrollment student attends. The perceptions were measured by answers given on a modified Likert-style questionnaire originally devised by Stattin & Kerr (2000) for their research on parent monitoring (See Appendix A). The results of the Likert-scaled questionnaire formed the basis for determining parental perceptions of their access to academic information access.

Assumptions

Although some parents do monitor and maintain a level of vigilance over the activities of their high school students, especially pertaining to academic progress and performance, it was not true for all parents. It was assumed that the degree of monitoring

differs from family to family as does the quality and mode of the parental technique for monitoring. It was well documented in the literature that parent monitoring begins decreasing once a student reaches middle school, and decreases more significantly around the ninth grade (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; LeBahn, 1995). This research, however, makes the assumption that the parents of dual enrollment students were likely to practice student monitoring longer into the student's academic career, because of the greater attention to their students' academic success and achievement. It was assumed that the community college system had a systematic and accurate record keeping system for student grades and appropriately used a non-identifying coding scheme provided to the researcher.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the study was delimited by three distinct elements. The first, the parental perceptions' of their academic information access, was measured only by the questionnaire distributed to the parents of those students presently enrolled in the dual enrolment program at the local community college. Second, the scope was delimited to only those parents of students who have previously participated in the dual enrollment program and have successfully completed at least one semester of college-level work. Third, the study was delimited by the use of only those grades and cumulative GPA's acquired while the student was a participant of the dual enrollment program.

Limitations

The population size was potentially a limitation, especially since the survey was voluntary and many parents chose to opt out, or did not complete the questionnaire.

However, given the nature of the sampling population, and the widespread geographic distribution of the sampling population, this was the most efficacious method for collecting parent data. However the chosen method was a limiting factor in this research.

A potential limitation might be in the method used to measure success. Since only cumulative GPAs were being considered for measurement, elements that were less tangible that might remain a better reflection of success were not considered, such as portfolios, student involvement in extracurricular activities, academic-based or otherwise, and internships. These items, while potentially indicative of success and developmental maturity, were not be measured or weighed.

One final limitation related to the logistics surrounding the permissions needed to access the research data. Since the research focus was proceeding through the community college, FERPA regulations apply. By operating through the community college, this necessitated that permissions to access grades and cumulative GPA information was obtained from both the parents of the dual enrollment students and the dual enrollment students themselves if students older than eighteen years of age were sampled. This dual permission sequence could have created some logistical difficulties in attempting to acquire the necessary permissions from both parties.

Significance

Colleges and universities should acknowledge the significance of the role that parents' play in the success of their dual enrollment student, and that parents are a major stakeholder in students' academic success. By realizing this connection, educational institutions should find avenues for keeping the parents in the loop and therefore improve

the overall quality of CBTP system. Keeping parents informed could potentially keep dual enrollment students on task and help them remain successful in their college-level courses.

It was anticipated that the results of this study would suggest additional areas for secondary schools sponsoring dual enrollment programs to recognize and address in their parent orientation programs for in-coming dual enrollment students and their parents. The results might also assist in opening areas of discussion between secondary schools and their cooperating postsecondary institutions, such as cooperative agreements on communications and early warning systems to alert parents of impending problems.

CBTPs might be encouraged to work with parents to improve the quality of their informal communication networks with their students. It was also envisioned that this research offered opportunities for parents to improve their ability to support their dual enrollment students by identifying areas where parents' struggle in their efforts in assisting their students' academic success. Once identified, academic institutions could use the information to develop better outreach and support mechanisms for parents of dual enrollment students. If schools and parents recognized the danger signs that indicate when dual enrollment students begin to struggle in their college experience, success rates could be improved.

Summary

Dual enrollment programs created opportunities for high school students to accrue college credits while still enrolled in high school. These types of programs became

increasing popular in most states throughout the U.S. They were part of an evolving trend that was guided by a theoretical framework known as CBTPs.

Parental access to pertinent academic information relative to their students' progress changed once their dual enrollment student begins taking courses at a college or university. FERPA regulations prohibited colleges from releasing student information to anyone except to a person for whom the records directly pertain (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Therefore, parents no longer had as easy access to the information as they once experienced.

The principle theoretical framework for this study was parent-monitoring theory or the parents' ability to monitor their students' academic progress throughout their high school career. Applied in this study, the experience of parents of a dual enrollment student changes from one where information is easily obtained from teachers and administrators to one where information is more restrictive. Therefore, the dynamics involved in parent monitoring changes and parents need to adapt and develop new strategies for finding the information to support their dual enrollment students.

Information access became dependent upon the quality of the communication that exists between the parents and student.

What follows in Chapter 2 is a restatement of the problem that this study attempts to address and a concise summary of the current literature relevant to the problem. The summary is followed by a brief discussion of literature search strategies and a list of key search terms identified during the literature research. This is followed by a discussion of the two theoretical frameworks, CBTP approaches, and parent monitoring theory. The

chapter continues with the pertinent literature related to dual enrollment, challenges in high school students' transition to college, and parent/student communication challenges and implications that arise as a result of this transition. Finally, the summary in Chapter 2 discusses a gap in academic research that this dissertation research attempts to address and how possible results can contribute to academic knowledge and social change.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Recent research on variables affecting high school students' success as dual enrollment students in college classes has focused primarily on problems related to funding, counseling, preparation, and organization, as well as culturally related problems (Burns, 2010; Karp, Hughes, & O'Gara, 2010; Okagaki, Helling, & Bingman, 2009; O'Conner & Justice, 2008; Sigal, Thurston, & Tienda, 2010). Accordingly, much of the available literature on the phenomenon of dual enrollment tends to focus on student risk factors and obstacles rather than protective factors and parental involvement (Oliver, Ricard, Witt, Alvarado, & Hill, 2010). Little research has looked into the relationship between parental perception of academic information access and their dual enrollment high school students' success in their college classes.

Restatement of the Problem and Purpose

When high school students enroll fulltime as college students in a dual enrollment program, their parents' ability to access academic and behavioral information changes because of FERPA regulations (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). As a result, parents often do not learn whether their dual enrollment student has been successful in their college courses until the end of the semester when final grades are posted. Therefore, the lack of access to academic progress information leads to three potential scenarios that may negatively affect dual enrollment students and their parents (Williams & Southers, 2010).

In the first scenario, because course grades only arrive at midterm or in some cases, only at the end of the terms, parents of students in dual enrollment programs do not

become aware of their students' academic progress until it is too late to act (Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast, 2010). By then, it is too late to assist their student with their college courses for that semester. In some states, policies exist that regulate many of the aspects pertaining to dual enrollment programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). These policy regulations may include the number of credit hours taken, a minimum cumulative GPA standard, and the minimum number of class hours that they are allowed to fail and remain in the dual enrollment program (Gonzalez, 2009; Karp & Hughes, 2008b; Ortiz, 2008). Often, states, or individual school districts, have penalties for students who fail to meet these minimum requirements (Gonzalez, 2009).

In the second scenario, many states offer free tuition for high school students taking college courses. For instance, the state of Colorado has a compensatory policy known as the—Concurrent Enrollment College Agreement, whereby dual enrollment students who withdraw, dropout, or fail a college course are mandated to reimburse the school district for the cost of the tuition for those courses (Colorado Department of Education, 2014a; 2014b). According to this policy, parents must sign a form acknowledging financial responsibility. However, school districts are free to develop their own version of this contract agreement. By agreeing to have their student participate in a CBTP, parents are assuming their dual enrollment student remains successful in his or her college courses. Otherwise, parents face a potentially substantial financial penalty, and may be asked to repay the school district for the monies provided by the school district for their dual enrollment student to take college courses. For some families, this financial burden may effectively end a dual enrollment student's college career if the student was unprepared

or neglectful in their college courses. Finally, in the third scenario, students face double indemnity for a failed class, receiving both a failing grade on their high school transcripts as well as a failing grade on their college transcripts (Blair, 1999).

Parents of students who have continued to enroll in a regular high school program continue to have ready access to pertinent academic and behavioral information that their dual enrollment counterparts do not (Spera et al., 2009). Traditional high school structures are designed to allow and encourage parents to remain active participants in the monitoring of their student's academic progress (Born, 2006). Parents of students in a traditional high school program are accustomed to having access to people in authority, who have an impact on their student's academic progress (Born, 2006). This access allows and empowers them to act on the information they receive in a timely manner if they so choose. The dual enrollment experience creates a departure from this traditional high school experience. Parents of students in dual enrollment programs either have to proceed through a petition process each time they want information about their student's academic progress or wait until grades come out at the end of the semester (Oliver et al., 2010). This petition process makes effective parental monitoring more difficult, and often fails to provide for the ability for parents to proactively head off emerging academic problems.

As more states move to integrate CBTP at the high school level, hoping to improve college and workforce readiness, more late adolescents find themselves transitioned into a social and academic environment for which they are unprepared (Born, 2006; Hooker et al., 2010; Oliver et al., 2010; Wolk, 2005). Likewise, parents of these dual enrollment

students find themselves in an unfamiliar position, losing the tools for monitoring and addressing their students' academic progress if problems arise. Shifting the responsibility from the parent to the student changes the parental monitoring role. Thus, more responsibility is placed upon the dual enrollment student who may not be developmentally or emotionally prepared to handle these new experiences (Karp et al., 2008b). Therefore, the efficacy of parental support and monitoring may not occur in a timely manner for parents' active intercession on behalf of their student, resulting in a worst-case scenario with the dual enrollment student failing one or more college courses (Blair, 1999). The question arises: do parents with dual enrollment students perceive this change in academic information access as correlating to their high school students overall academic success?

This chapter first provides the literature search strategies and a discussion of the two theoretical frameworks was the basis for the study. Included is an in-depth review and analysis of the related literature supporting the frameworks and this research. The first theoretical framework relates to CBTP philosophy (Karp & Hughes, 2007; Sullivan-Ham, 2010) and the resulting dual enrollment programs with their changing roles for parents and students. Following the CBTP framework the second theoretical framework for the study, parent monitoring theory, is discussed. Parental monitoring theory addresses the relationship and actions taken by the parents in addressing, protecting, supporting, and monitoring activities, of their students. Parent monitoring can involve the monitoring of activities, related to both their academic progress, as well as activities unrelated to school and academics (Hamza & Willoughby, 2011).

The second section of this chapter is a review of the research literature, which examines three aspects of dual enrollment programs. The first aspect is the historical rise of dual enrollment programs in the American educational scheme. Included is an overview of the apparent successes and positive changes as well as challenges to education brought about by the evolution of dual enrollment programs. Second, the literature review discusses the issues experienced by students and parents as the dual enrollment student transitions from a traditional high school environment to becoming a fulltime college student, spending their entire time on a college campus.

The final section of the literature review covers at the research on communications dynamics between students and their parents during late adolescence-young adulthood. It also explored the perception parents have regarding changes in their ability to monitor their dual enrollment students' academic progress.

Literature Search Strategies

The majority of the research information was found through the Walden University Library. ProQuest, ERIC, and PsycARTICLE's searches helped locate research papers relevant to this dissertation. Frequently, the bibliography from relevant research studies served as valuable resources for finding other resources and research studies that were incorporated in the literature review. Occasionally, when the Walden Library failed to provide the necessary access, searches on GoogleScholar proved successful in locating the requisite resources. Finally, the Walden University Library Thesis and Dissertation archives served as a valuable resource in finding individual key research studies pertinent to this dissertation.

Key Search Terms

Key word searches included: *dual enrollment programs, early college programs, credit-based transition theory, monitoring theory, academic progress information access, adolescent secrecy, parent information solicitation-student information disclosure, FERPA regulations.*

Scope of Literature Review

Because dual enrollment or CBTP for high school students has become part of national expectations in only the last decade, their success and efficacy are just becoming evident (Berger et al., 2010; Berger et al., 2009; Duffy et al., 2009; Edmunds et al., 2010; Ewell et al., 2008; Karp & Hughes, 2008a; Marken et al., 2013; Mead, 2009; Swanson, 2008). Therefore, most of the research for this dissertation focused upon literature that has appeared after 2005 to the present. In researching the historical development and evolution of dual enrollment programs, earlier articles were referenced.

The research studies covering credit-based transition models and the theoretical framework focusing upon parent monitoring theory goes back as far as the year 2000. Likewise, research studies focusing on parent/student communication dynamics dates primarily from 2005 to the present. However, a few key references associated with adolescent secrecy and parent/student communications dynamics, predate 2005 and went back as far as 1989.

Theoretical Framework

Two theories form the basis for the research in this paper. CBTPs underscore the effort over the last two decades by educators to bridge the gap in lagging student

academic performance and student academic motivation. CBTPs created avenues for increasing student participation and readiness for postsecondary career advancement by offering academically challenging opportunities (Karp & Hughes, 2008b; Karp & Hughes, 2007; Sullivan-Ham, 2010). The second theoretical framework is based on the philosophies and strategies used by parents of late adolescents and early adulthood to monitor their students' progress, activities, and practices. Parent monitoring theory looks at the impact, motivations, and perceptions that parents express for monitoring their students' behaviors and activities. Parents express their parent monitoring activities as a way of assuring well-being and positive progress until the student becomes of legal age and eventually go out on their own (Hamza & Willoughby, 2011).

Credit-based Transition Programs

Karp and Hughes (2008b) define CBTPs as specialized secondary education programs that allow high school students an opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. These programs are not limited to dual enrollment-styled programs, but also include advanced placement (AP) programs, international baccalaureate (IB) programs, and certain TechPrep programs, as well (Cubberley, 2009; Karp & Hughes, 2008a).

Sullivan-Ham (2010) categorized these types of programs as a subset of a larger theoretical framework: functionalism. According to Sullivan-Ham, functionalism defined education as a fundamental element within society that can provide societal stability and productivity by ensuring that individuals acquire the necessary academic skills to specialize and diversify the workforce. As such, many states have used this philosophical

framework recently when drafting new statewide educational policies, expanding educational policies known as P-16 and P-20 initiatives tracking students from pre-school through high school and beyond. These initiatives include mandates for increasing high school student early access to college credit. Policy makers contend that the educational system, particularly at the secondary level, is the place to ensure that the necessary academic preparation begins for making individuals productive members of society (An, 2015; Brophy & Johnson, 2007; Howley et al., 2013; Marken et al., 2013; Ortiz, 2008; Venezia et al., 2003).

Functionalism emerged out of the work of Durkheim in the early part of the twentieth century (Durkheim, 1984). Durkheim equated society with organismic systems, and thought that organismic systems needed to maintain a systemic unity and homeostasis in order for health to be maintained. Society, like an organism, needs to maintain the unity and equilibrium throughout societal systems.

The challenges faced by secondary education in the last few years represents a challenge to societal unity by failing to produce knowledgeable, capable, and productive people for the evolving workforce (Venezia et al., 2003). According to Venezia et al., policy-makers decided it was necessary to mandate policies that sought to address this apparent shortcoming within the educational system. Therefore, individual state P-16 and P-20 initiatives sought to remedy this problem by developing and promoting a series of credit-based transition programs (Ortiz, 2008; Venezia et al., 2003). Lawmakers created remedies to address this by providing high school students increased access to college credit courses, thinking that student motivation for education would improve.

Following this increased motivational drive, therefore, increased curricular attainment and retention would increase, and students would graduate from high school better prepared for continuing their post-secondary education or entering the workforce (An, 2015; Karp & Hughes, 2008b; Sullivan-Ham, 2010).

In the research carried out by Karp and Hughes (2008b), five qualitative case studies were undertaken at five different school sites across five states, all hosting CBTP programs. The goal was to develop policy to assist low and middle achieving students increased access to CBTP and early college credit opportunities. Classroom observations and interviews were conducted with dual enrollment participants, faculty, and staff at each site. The researchers found that while CBTP did offer increased access and opportunity to low and middle achieving students, more work was needed in preparing, motivating, and supporting this population of students once they were in the program. Their findings were based upon the results of 118 interviews and 61 classroom observations.

Sullivan-Ham (2010) carried out an ex-post facto nonscientific mixed-method research study on archival academic records for 454 first semester college students. The sampling strategy purposefully sampled students, which were previously enrolled in high school dual enrollment program, and students who entered college without ever participating in a dual enrollment program. A one-way ANOVA was applied to student cumulative GPAs, demographic data, and the number of courses dual enrollment completed prior to graduating and re-enrolling as a fulltime, regular college student. The statistical analysis found that participation in dual enrollment program did increase the

likelihood of higher cumulative GPA attainment in college classes, once the graduate finished high school and continued on in with their post-secondary career. CBTP students tended to exhibit higher cumulative GPAs than their non-CBTP counterparts in the first semesters in college.

Parent Monitoring Theory

The second theoretical framework is based on the premise that parents keep track of the activities that their children engage throughout their academic career. The action of parents intentionally engaging in the act of monitoring their child's activities is referred to as parent monitoring. Parent monitoring is defined as the parent's perceived or actual knowledge of their whereabouts, activities, and friends (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000). Much of the literature surrounding the impact and efficacy of parent-monitoring focuses on early to late adolescent behaviors engaged in risk associated behaviors. These behaviors include such activities as substance abuse, delinquency, early sexual activity, gender difference, and teen depression (Bean, Barber & Crane, 2006; Borawski, Levers-Landis, Lovegreen, & Trapl, 2011; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Fletcher, Steinberg, & Williams-Wheeler, 2004; Hamza & Willoughby, 2011; Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; Laird, Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 2003; Rai, et al., 2003; Regner, Loose, & Dumas, 2009; Romanik, 2010; Tilton-Weaver & Marshall, S., 2008).

Darling and Steinberg (1993) made a distinction between parent-monitoring behaviors and parental control behaviors. They asserted that parent monitoring involves a greater degree of information solicitation by parents, accompanied by the voluntary response of student information disclosure. While parental control behaviors may

involve parent information solicitation, the responses may result in the student being less forthcoming in the nature and extent of information that they disclose. Conversely, Darling and Steinberg described a proper parent model as one that is authoritative. They described this as a parental relationship that displays emotional support, high standards, granting appropriate autonomy, and clear, bidirectional communications. In their case, they made a distinction between a relationship they perceived as authoritative and one that they perceived as controlling and lacking in one or more of the aforementioned elements. Rai et al. (2003) asserted that positive communications were more important in avoiding risk behaviors than attempts at overt control of the child's activities and environment, including the effect upon student academics and achievement as well.

Most of the investigators conducting research on parent monitoring as related to adolescent academic achievement agreed that parents serve as important role models for their children (Jacobson & Crocket, 2000; LeBahn, 1995; Romanik, 2010). According to Romanik (2010), parents serve to instill positive qualities in their children, such as hard work and a positive work ethic, discipline, the idea of the importance of education, and a general respect for teachers. However, the impact that parent monitoring played in the development of these attributes depended greatly upon the degree and level of parental involvement (LeBahn, 1995; Romanik, 2010).

Researchers have tended to agree, that parent monitoring decreases with the age and grade level of the student (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; LeBahn, 1995). Beginning in elementary grades up through middle school parents actively participate in parent-monitoring practices. However, parent monitoring appears to decline beginning in the

freshman through the early part of the junior year with a renewed interest and increased parent monitoring in the later part of the junior and senior years of high school as the student nears graduation (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000). Furthermore, Jacobson and Crockett (2000) asserted that the efficacy of parent monitoring might also be linked to personal attributes of both the parents and the student, as well as attributes linked to the nature and character of the family dynamics and setting. Accordingly, they found that a parent monitoring appeared to be positively related to socioeconomic status (SES), family structure (i.e. two-parent families versus one-parent families), and the highest level of education attained by either parent. In general, the higher the SES, the greater the impact of parental monitoring practices; two-parent families seemed to impart greater influence through parent monitoring than did single parent households. LeBahn (1995) attributed this difference in the impact of the one and two parent households' influence on the fact that single parent households often have less time to engage in parental monitoring behaviors. It is not uncommon that in single parent households the parent must hold down multiple jobs in order to get by.

Likewise, culture seemed to play a significant role in the efficacy and the level to which parents engage in some form of parent-monitoring behavior (Bean et al., 2006; Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; LeBahn, 1995; Rai et al., 2003; Romanik, 2010). For instance, Romanik's research conducted in connection with Miami-Dade County Public Schools determined that students brought up in Asian American families showed higher overall levels of performance and maintained higher cumulative GPAs, in general. Asian American students also exhibited higher test scores in mathematics and science, and

higher graduation rates than did their peers from other groups (i.e. black, white, or Hispanic). Romanik insisted that this difference in achievement levels remained a cultural choice made on the part of Asian American parents. These parents, according to Romanik, engaged more fully in parental-monitoring behaviors in all aspects of their students' lives than did parents from the other groups represented in Dade County. The explanation for this outcome revolved around the fact that Asian American parents have bought into the idea that education was the only way their children could achieve financial and social success. Thus, a strong educational emphasis coupled with a strong sense of familial obligation that children of Asian immigrants were expected to adhere to appeared to serve as a strong motivator for academic achievement.

In the research on parent monitoring and the effects, it had on at-risk behaviors, Jacobson and Crockett (2000) found that there was a significant difference between genders. Using bivariate analysis, Jacobson and Crockett interviewed 424, 7th through 12th grade students in a small rural school district. They found that the effects of parent monitoring impacts boys more significantly than girls in the adolescent to late adolescent age range. The less the parent monitoring parents exercised on the boys in this community, the less well the boys achieved in their academic work. Conversely, the greater the level the parent involvement through parent monitoring, the higher the overall cumulative GPAs and the greater the academic achievement experienced by the boys. They found that the academic achievement in girls was relatively unaffected despite the level of parent-related monitoring that occurred. Romanik's (2010) work with the Dade

County Public School system concurred that the parent monitoring differed significantly between the genders.

In an attempt to further define and distinguish between types and qualities of parental monitoring practices, Regner, Loose, and Dumas (2009) undertook a quantitative research study among French junior-high students. They looked at the relationships associated with perceptions of what constituted positive parent monitoring, versus what they construed as academic support. Accordingly, Regner et al. made their distinctions between two types of parent-monitoring practices. Both parent-monitoring practices were defined under the auspices of what they referred to as achievement goal orientations. Achievement goals were defined as a set of situational specific orientations that referred to the motivations and reasons that students gave for pursuing tasks that positively affected their academic achievement. Achievement goals also related to how the students saw parent monitoring as relating to their personal, academic experiences and their desire to perform academic tasks. They divided parent-monitoring orientation into two further types of orientations and expectations. One orientation identified by Regner et al. (2009) involved parents monitoring for what they referred to as mastery performance goals. Mastery performance goals focused upon behaviors involved in learning tasks and processes associated with academic success. The second orientation that the researchers (2009) identified in their study was that parent-monitoring orientations related to performance-related goals. Performance goals focused upon the students' perception of their ability to perform academically relative to their peers, and to demonstrate competence, also relative to their peers. Regner et al. found that parent

monitoring had a greater effect on academic achievement when mastery performance goals were set as the parents' focus while students perceived that performance goal orientation by their parents had less impact and influence on their overall academic performance.

In relation to dual enrollment students, the research findings of Regner et al. (2010) suggested that the parent monitoring might have a definitive effect on academic achievement and success. When parents placed greater emphasis on their students' mastery of the academic assignments and content material and less emphasis upon how well the student feels they were performing relative to their academic peers, the student demonstrated a greater likelihood for increased academic performance. If parents are able effectively to communicate this message in their parent monitoring practices, there remains a reasonable chance that the dual enrollment student continues to achieve academic success in their college courses.

Theory Rationale and Relationship to Study

Because the dual enrollment philosophy is based upon the simultaneous acquisition of both college credits towards a postsecondary degree and high school credit hours towards graduation, the CBTP theory satisfies both conditions. Likewise, since many states are rapidly moving to implement concurrent enrollment programs and expand upper level course offerings for students, CBTPs become more and more relevant, and a larger part of the educational policy dialogue (Ortiz, 2008). The prevailing trends in educational policy suggest that the number of CBTP continues to increase for the foreseeable future.

The ability for parents to access and act on information regarding their high school student has been and remains an important aspect of parenting. Traditional high school students' parents usually have ready access to relevant information for issues concerning their students' in their academics, sports, or aspects of their behavioral and emotional well-being while at school. Usually this access simply requires a call to the teach, principal, counselor, or coach, and the parent has the information necessary to address any problems or recurring issues that their student might be experiencing at high school.

This access to academic progress information changes dramatically when a high school student enrolls in college classes. Because of FERPA regulations (U.S. Department of Education, 2012) parents suddenly lose some of the same access they previously enjoyed. The regulations forbid the colleges and universities from giving out personal information about the students enrolled in their institution, regardless of the fact that the student is underage and legally dependent upon the parents. Parents can acquire information if their student submits a formal request releasing the pertinent information. Then the school can release the requested information to the parents. Each time a parent wishes to enquire as to the progress of their student they must follow this procedure. As a result, the dynamics surrounding parental information access changes. That is to say, parental monitoring strategies must change to adapt to the new circumstances. Parents must employ different approaches in the methods they use to solicit and obtain information about their high school students' progress and well-being in college.

Therefore, parent-monitoring theory plays a large role in how parents react and adapt to their high school student moving up to college classes. Parent-monitoring theory addresses the perceptions that parents' hold about their obligations to track their students' progress, and how they adjust their approach at soliciting pertinent information, both from the institution and their high school student. Parent-monitoring theory also addresses the changes that occur in the parent/student relationship and the exchange of relevant information that travels between each. Ultimately, this theory plays into the perceptions that parents might hold regarding the change in information access and the success their concurrent enrollment student is experiencing in their college courses.

Moving from the theoretical framework, the next topic is the research that exists regarding dual enrollment programs, the transitioning of dual enrollment students to the college environment, and the quality and the effect on parent/student communications when high school students become full-time college students.

Literature Review

The literature review section that follows covers three areas in depth directly associated with dual enrollment and parents' perceptions of academic information access and their potential correlation with their student's success in college courses. The first section addresses the historical evolution of the dual enrollment movement, the changes and the advantages the dual enrollment program has brought to secondary education and the areas where improvement might be made. The second section covers the literature that addressed the difficulty that students encounter in transitioning from a traditional high school setting to a college setting. These transitions involve both academic

readiness issues and social integration issues. The third section contains the extent research on the role and nature of parent/student communication dynamics and the role that these dynamics play in the parents' perception of student success in dual enrolment college classes.

Dual Enrollment

This section deals with three aspects related to dual enrollment programs as they have evolved in the American education system. I begin the discussion with a review of the historical evolution of dual enrollment programs from their early inception through various incarnations, ending with dual enrollment programs, as they presently exist in most states across the United States. Next, I discuss the successes and opportunities that dual enrollment programs have brought to high schools, universities, and community colleges throughout the nation in their attempt to extend high educational opportunities and better prepare students for after graduation. The final section addresses areas where dual enrollment programs have failed to live up to expectations and have failed adequately to serve segments of the populations that they were envisioned to help. That discussion begins to demonstrate a gap in the research literature related to parents' perceptions of their academic information access.

Dual enrollment history. High schools first began experimenting with dual enrollment in college as a way to develop academic offerings for students they recognized as needing increased academic challenges beyond the high school curriculum. According to Mohker and McLendon (2009) by 1980, only three states—California, Oklahoma, and Florida—had adopted dual enrollment programs. Their research revealed

that throughout the 1990's the number of states adopting some version of dual enrollment expanded to around 30 states by 2009. During that era of program growth, the emphasis remained focused upon increasing the rigor of secondary education curricula and strengthening the links between secondary and postsecondary institutions (Karp et al., 2007).

Beginning in 2002, the emphasis and philosophy of dual enrollment programs changed significantly (Golann et al., 2008). Instead of existing to provide support primarily for advanced students, suddenly it was viewed as a means of bringing an early college experience to previously underrepresented segments from the high school population. With this shift in orientation and purpose, many of the dual enrollment programs became principally funded through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation. The Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) was founded to meet perceived gaps in overall academic rigor and unpreparedness in United States secondary schools (Berger et al., 2010; Born, 2006; Oliver et al., 2010).

Accordingly, the overarching goal of ECHSI was to provide underserved students with access to college courses while still in high school (Berger et al., 2010; Oliver et al., 2010). The underlying hypothesis held that even reluctant or discouraged high school students who may remain unengaged in the traditional high school setting would become motivated to view themselves as successful by becoming part of the college experience (Berger et al., 2010). Thus, the new objective of the programs was focused upon bringing postsecondary educational opportunities to families that previously could not envision or

entertain aspirations of continuing after high school. The programs focused on students who might be the first in their family to attend or graduate from college and were often from the groups that met the requirements for free and reduced lunch program (Born, 2006). Increased state funding, as well as the private donations exemplified by the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, served to incentivize dual enrollment programs. Many underrepresented students saw an opportunity to attend college for the first time when funding became available for free or reduced tuition for college courses (Born, 2006).

By 2005, dual enrollment had established sufficient traction with at least 48 states offering some form of dual enrollment program (Mohker & McLendon, 2009). No Child Left Behind (NCLB) passed under the tenure of President George Bush increased pressure upon states to increase not only the standardized test scores but the college readiness of high school students (Mead, 2009). In 2006, President Bush submitted a budgetary request to Congress of \$125 million to improve access to dual enrollment programs with the intent of increasing the access for low income, African-American and Hispanic students (Karp et al., 2008a). Congress failed to pass the budget request expanding dual enrollment access.

In 1995, Governor Zell Miller of Georgia initiated a reform effort then known as the P-16 Council. The intent for forming a council was to evaluate the existing state educational system in Georgia with the idea of establishing a connected, cooperative system of public education from preschool through postsecondary school. His goal was to improve postsecondary readiness, enhancing the chances that all students were capable of achieving an associate, technical, baccalaureate, advanced, or professional degree (Ortiz,

2008). Initially, the P-16 movement did not catch on widely with only a few states creating their own councils and passing legislation. It was not until the NCLB legislation, followed by President Obama's Race to the Top, which states began to revisit the P-16 movement (Rodriguez et al., 2012).

Beginning in 2005, some states did begin to reconvene P-16 councils in an effort to re-address educational reform with an eye towards a consolidation of educational programs at a statewide level. The new initiatives became known as the P-20 Initiatives. Incorporated within the framework of the P-20 councils was a mandate to create opportunities for eligible high school students to acquire college credits while still in high school (Ortiz, 2008). As such, this mandate increased interest in credit transition programs, like dual enrollment (Rodriguez et al., 2012).

By the end of 2008, 38 states boasted statewide dual enrollment policies governing dual enrollment programs. Two states had an agreement with community colleges, allowing their students to enroll in community college classes, but students were on their own with no official agreement existing between the secondary and postsecondary schools. High school students just enrolled in college courses on their own. There was no guarantee that credit would be transferable towards high school graduation. Three states claimed to be developing statewide dual enrollment policies, which left six states where dual enrollment policies remained totally at the discretion of local school districts (Ewell et al., 2008).

According to Karp and Hughes (2008b), CBTPs smooth student transitions into postsecondary education by allowing students to acquire academic and social skills

necessary for success in college. Most states that have developed policies governing dual enrollment agreed that these programs were designed to achieve several important objectives (Pretlow & Wathington, 2014). According to CBTP proponents, these objectives include such items as, aiding in a smoother transition from secondary to postsecondary education by reinforcing both academic and soft skills necessary for college success. Furthermore, CBTPs serve as a source to motivate students to take more rigorous coursework and academically challenge themselves. As well as, providing students the opportunity to become accustomed to college expectations, and provide opportunities to students and their families who may otherwise not have access to postsecondary education.

Hooker and Brand (2010) determined from their research that dual enrollment programs serve to create a culture that has an understanding of “college knowledge” (p. 77), or the understanding for a student of what it means to be a college student. Therefore, dual enrollment programs allow high school students insight into the college culture, which they must face, and master, as they work towards higher levels of postsecondary educational success (Ozmun, 2013). They further asserted that dual enrollment programs serve to aid in the development of a college-going identity, smoothing the way for continuing in the postsecondary experience after high school graduation (An, 2015). Hooker and Brand (2010) insisted that individual dual enrollment programs enhance the relevancy of the high school experience by keeping students engaged and academically challenged. Dual enrollment programs meet the mandates of the various P-20 initiatives that mandate the increased improvement towards college

readiness by instilling college expectations at an earlier age (Oliver et al., 2010). These expectations span beyond just the academic by encompassing social behaviors, creating beliefs, and attitudes about learning that helped on the road to college success.

More recently, dual enrollment programs have found greater traction with local community colleges, more so than with the larger universities (Edmunds et al., 2010). However, the last few years have seen an increase in state and private universities beginning to develop dual enrollment programs of their own. The trend by states and colleges in initiating dual enrollment programs addressed a need by colleges and universities to compensate for a downturn in overall postsecondary enrollment numbers (Howley et al., 2013; Mokher & McLendon, 2009).

Mokher and McLendon (2009) employed event history analysis when they examined various factors that influence the timing under which states operated in adopting dual enrollment policies. Their research utilized a longitudinal data panel in several states dating from 1976 to 2005. The dependent variable was expressed as a function of “hazard rate” (p. 258). Hazard rate is a form of risk analysis, in this case regarding the risk inherent in adopting a dual enrollment policy for each state. The working definition for dual enrollment was based on the U.S. Department of Education’s 2006 definition, and was identical across all the states sampled. It was from these findings that universities expressed a greater risk assessment and a greater need for implementing dual enrollment programs. Mokher and McLendon found that the increased cost of implementing a dual enrollment program at the university was offset by the benefit of increased enrollment numbers.

In most versions of dual enrollment, enrollment remains primarily restricted to juniors and seniors in high school. However, some programs allow sophomores and even freshmen to participate if they meet the gate-keeping requirements (Born, 2006). School districts like the STAR Early College School working with Brooklyn College, a four-year liberal arts campus of CUNY, provided an early bridge program to dual enrollment beginning in the ninth grade (Newton & Vogt, 2008). In some versions of the dual enrollment program students take all or some of their upper division courses on the college campus. In other variations of the program, either a high school teacher or an adjunct professor associated with the cooperating college teaches the courses on the high school campus.

Dual enrollment programs have progressed a long way since the early inceptions in the nineteen nineties. With the push from NCLB, the Race to the Top Initiative, and the P-16 and P-20 initiatives, dual enrollment has almost become ubiquitous throughout the United States (Brophy & Johnson, 2007; Golann & Hughes, 2008). Lagging international test scores and a desire to create students that graduate high school better prepared to enter the workforce or continue further in their postsecondary careers have served to fuel the formation of more dual enrollment programs (Ortiz, 2008). Offering high school students more opportunities to earn college credits prior to graduation has garnered significant support from parents, students, and administrators at both the secondary and postsecondary education levels.

Research has found that differences in SES (Berger et al., 2010; Hooker et al., 2010; Karp & Hughes, 2008; Medvide & Bluestein, 2010) and culture and ethnicity

(Berger et al., 2009; Born, 2006; Medvide & Bluestein, 2010; Rodriguez et al., 2012) can hinder dual enrollment students, the assumption being that traditionally underrepresented populations (i.e. low income and minority) students often come to college lacking the social capital needed to succeed in maneuvering the college environment. These skills may include an inability to self-advocate or knowing how to seek and ask for assistance when problems arise. In some cases it may come down to the need to work outside of college in order to afford their education, which ends up competing with the time they can dedicate to their college courses.

Gender (Dornbusch et al., 1990; Sullivan-Ham, 2010) frequently plays a role in determining academic success in college. Presently, females typically demonstrate greater levels of success in college (Leal 2008; Sullivan-Ham, 2010). Finally, like SES and ethnicity, the level of parental education (Dornbusch et al., 1990), and being the first person in the family to attend college (Berger et al., 2009; Hooker et al., 2010; Oliver et al., 2010) are factors that have an impact on academic success for dual enrollment students in college courses, and for similar reasons. Students whose parents have not achieved higher levels of educational attainment, or students who are the first in their family to attend college, may lack the social capital or the cultural capital to provide the requisite support mechanisms to help them succeed in their college courses.

Dual enrollment successes. Dual enrollment programs were designed as CBTPs allowing high school students the opportunity of earning college credits while still in high school (Karp et al., 2007; Williams & Southers, 2010). As the name suggests, the program involved collaborations between secondary schools, local community colleges,

and universities. In most cases, a high school student earns simultaneous credit towards high school graduation and college credits towards an Associate of Arts degree (Berger et al. 2010; Berger et al., 2009; Brophy & Johnson, 2007; Duffy et al., 2009; Edmunds et al., 2010; Karp & Hughes, 2008a; Karp et al., 2007; Williams & Southers, 2010). Dual enrollment has been known by several other names, the early college program, and transition to college, dual credit program, middle and early college high schools, and TechPrep—to name a few examples (Karp & Hughes, 2008a). The structure of the different programs varies considerably, as well.

One study carried out by Karp et al. (2007) examined the structure and initial success of dual enrollment in two of the earliest states to implement dual enrollment programs. The study used quantitative methods to examine the efficacy of two dual enrollment programs in New York and Florida. Based upon two sets of large-scale administrative datasets from 2006 representing each state, the researchers employed non-experimental methods, which included ordinary least squares and logistic regressions. In their research, Karp et al. (2007, p. 3) focused on four critical research questions.

What are the short-term effects of participation in dual enrollment program, including those students enrolled career and technical education (CTE) programs as measured by high school graduation and college enrollment rates? What are the short-term effects of participation in dual enrollment program, for all students including CTE students, as measured by high school graduation and college enrollment rates? What are the long-term effects of participation in dual enrollment for all students including CTE students, as measured by their

persistence into the second year of postsecondary education, grade point average, and credit accumulation? [and finally]...Do program effects vary by race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or number of dual enrollment courses taken? (p. 3)

Karp et al. (2007) used pre-existing datasets compiled by the K-20 Education Data Warehouse for the Florida data, and datasets from College Now and Tech Prep programs associated with City University of New York (CUNY) for their New York data. The researchers found that the dual enrollment programs showed a positive relationship for both short- and long-term postsecondary and student outcomes. The data suggested a 4.3 percent greater likelihood of dual enrolment students attaining a high school diploma over their peers who did not participate in dual enrollment program of any type. The researchers were able to posit a number of short-term and long-term outcomes, as a result, of their statistical analysis of the datasets employed. The short term outcomes suggested that the two primary early college programs showed very different levels of success in preparing and motivating high school students to continue after graduation towards working towards and completing a baccalaureate degree. For instance, the research for the College Now program evidenced that enrollees were 9.7 percent more likely to continue in postsecondary education and pursue a bachelor's degree, as opposed to stopping with at the associate's degree. By comparison, in the other technical preparation program the researchers found that no statistically significant correlation existed between participants in the program and the possibility that they intended to continue further with their post-secondary career after high school graduation (Karp et

al., 2007).

The long-term outcomes were slightly conflicting. The statistical analysis carried out by Karp et al. (2007) found little evidence of the College Now program positively influencing student persistence to continue with their college career upon the completion of their high school graduation. Their findings are in contrast to the findings achieved internally by the CUNY, which had completed its own internal study of their College Now participants. The CUNY research demonstrated a greater likelihood that students would continue to persist towards a bachelor's degree, even after having met their high school graduation requirements and no longer a College Now participant.

Overall, this is marked contrast to what Karp et al. (2007) witnessed with the datasets used from the CTE program in Florida. The data showed 4.3 percent increased chance that a participant in the dual enrollment program would graduate from high school and that dual enrollment students were 18.1 percent more likely to enroll in college classes after graduation from high school. Florida dual enrollment students evidenced greater than five percent likelihood to persist in college after graduation and continue on towards the pursuit of a bachelor's or high degree.

Although the correlation in New York was not as strong as that in Florida, the researchers did find a correlation between student growth and positive feelings about participating in the dual enrollment program. The research suggested that a positive student growth occurred for those participating in a dual enrollment program. In both cases, New York and Florida, the datasets found an increased positive feeling towards college. Furthermore, both datasets showed an overall greater trend for higher student

cumulative GPAs for those participating in a dual enrollment program than their peers who did not participate in dual enrollment program.

The findings of Karp et al. (2007) were consistent with other research studies. A more recent research study by Swanson (2008) attempted to use restricted data sets and variables designed by the National Center for Education Statistics from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 and the Post-secondary Education Transcript Study. In this study, Swanson used a non-experimental quantitative approach to address similar questions to those posited by Karp et al. (2007). Using data drawn from the National Longitudinal Study of 1988 and Post-secondary Education Transcript Study, Swanson (2008) looked at the data for students who had graduated from high school in 1992 and then entered postsecondary education after their participation in dual enrollment program. Swanson's use of archived data was the first comprehensive investigation of a broad sampling of students nationwide who had participated in a dual enrollment experience. Swanson's outcomes were nearly identical to Karp et al. (2007) and demonstrated a positive correlation for participation in dual enrollment programs.

Likewise, Berger et al. (2010) and Berger et al. (2009) conducted research utilizing qualitative data taken from phone interviews, classroom observations, and quantitative results collected from both school and student surveys of graduates of dual enrollment programs across thirteen states. Their results coincided with similar findings by Karp et al. (2007) and Swanson (2008). By and large, students enrolled in early college high school programs or dual enrollment programs experienced increased successes in their postsecondary education. The dual enrollment students earned higher

cumulative GPA success overall; they were more likely to return to postsecondary education after graduation from high school and continue on to complete their A.A. degrees or continue into higher degree programs.

Brophy and Johnson (2007) while researching the Running Start early college program in Washington State found that students were drawn to dual enrollment programs mostly by word of mouth from other students already enrolled in the dual enrollment program. The students in the Running Start Program experienced greater success and satisfaction in their college courses, than they had in their previous high school courses. Because of positive experiences and their academic successes, they were more likely to encourage their peers to participate in the dual enrollment program, as opposed to remaining in their traditional high school program.

Williams and Southers (2010) interviewed twenty-four chief academic officers at several community colleges across North Carolina that hosted dual enrollment programs. Their intent was to gauge the efficacy of the dual enrollment programs as perceived by the chief academic administrators at the various community colleges selected. While the researchers found some drawbacks to having the dual enrollment program on campus, they were supportive of the concept. The general opinion was that the dual enrollment program added positively to the diversity that it brought to the community college.

Finally, Ongaga (2010) investigated the first graduating class from Maple Early College High School (MECHS) in North Carolina. Using a purposive” qualitative sampling technique, Ongaga interviewed twenty-one students from various grades. Ongaga (2010) focused on three factors that influenced students in the early college

learning experiences and their attitudes towards the program. The questions focused upon the principle reasons that students chose to attend MECHS, factors that attributed to their success in their early college classes, and any challenges that students experienced as part of the MECHS. The research found that aside from their peer influence and support, parental support was both necessary and vital for continued success. It was often an opportunity for the acquisition of early college credits and alleviation of college tuition that served as a major incentive for parents to encourage students to enroll in MECHS. The students found that the peer-peer and student teacher relationships tended to be both supportive and nurturing and was a significant motivation for remaining in the MECHS program once enrolled.

In general, reactions and responses for dual enrollment programs have been positive (An, 2015; Berger et al., 2010; Berger et al., 2009; Brophy & Johnson, 2007; Karp et al., 2007; Ongaga, 2010; Ozmun, 2013; Swanson, 2008; Williams & Southers, 2010). Most students enrolled in dual enrollment programs have experienced increased academic successes. Dual enrollment programs have served as a positive springboard for helping students get started in college and acting as an incentive for continuing with their postsecondary education (An, 2015; Ozmun, 2013). However, while most dual enrollment programs have been touted as serving to offer opportunities to students from underrepresented groups in society, problems of college readiness, as well as other problems still persist within the dual enrollment structure (Howley, et al., 2013).

Dual enrollment challenges. As discussed previously, research on the success of dual enrollment programs suggested that the success in college rested on knowledge base

that a rigorous and accelerated learning experience provides. This success, as a result, of participation in a rigorous and accelerated learning remains especially true when the program is supported by a close, supportive, and respectful school environment at both the high school of origin and the collaborating college (Karp et al., 2008a; Ongaga, 2010).

Some criticism has been directed at dual enrollment program support programs, both at the secondary level and the postsecondary institutions (Berger et al., 2008; Howley et al., 2013; Karp & Hughes, 2008a; Karp et al., 2008b). College support systems tend to be decentralized and spread out across campus. These decentralized support services often stand in contrast to what students were used to at a traditional high school setting where support services tend to remain centralized and more easily accessible. Karp and Hughes (2008b) asserted that the support services fall under five categories; academic guidance and counseling, academic supports (which includes academic tutoring), personal guidance and counseling, career counseling, and supplemental services, including childcare and transportation. Medvide and Blustein (2010) researched the effectiveness of support services and found that the inconsistent distribution of knowledge about available support services and the uncoordinated manner of connecting with the student body about their services tended to hinder their overall efficacy. Among nontraditional students this perception seemed to be especially prevalent, which were the very target population the dual enrollment had been designed to assist (Medvide & Blustein, 2010).

During the spring and fall of 2004, Karp and Hughes (2008b) conducted 118 student interviews and made 61 on-site observations of students enrolled dual enrollment programs in five different states. Their purpose was to create a model useful in developing policy concerning credit-transfer and dual enrollment programs. In several instances, many of the dual enrollment students were unfamiliar with the extent of the support services available on the college campus. Many students chose to rely on their high school support services, but found that the high school staff was ineffectual in answering their questions or providing adequate support in addressing the problems associated with the college setting.

According to Karp and Hughes (2008b), in their inception, support services were open to all students. However, they found that students who were minorities, from lower SES families, the first member of their family to attend college, or were representative of other marginalized groups, lacked the social capital for self-advocating and taking advantage of the support services offered them. Feelings of inadequacy, being overwhelmed, or displaying feelings of guilt over not being able to keep up academically, served as barriers to students seeking support.

Aside from the issues around student support, students in the research undertaken by Born (2006) voiced concerns regarding feelings that they were not adequately prepared for the college experience, academically or socially. In 2006, Born conducted a research study at two early college schools in New York City, Middle College and the Early College Schools. The research's conclusions were based upon interviews of administrators, faculty, students, and cooperating college professors, as well as statistics

from the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching, and teaching and development organization at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Born (2006) found that there was a general feeling among participants that as students progressed further in the dual enrollment process, the amount of support that they received decreased with time. Staff and faculty expected students to seek out advice and support when needed. For some students, this perception of decreasing support acted as an obstacle to adjustment and success at least in the early stages of their experience in the college classroom. According to Born, college professors had less time or were less inclined to offer the one-on-one assistance that students are often used to receiving.

Likewise, Ongaga (2010) found that students enrolled in the MECHS program experienced positive relationships within their dual enrollment courses, though often felt overwhelmed by the rigor and expectations of the classes they were taking. Some students felt that they were unprepared for the class assignments and that there was insufficient support by the professors for those who were struggling with the academics. The perception that there existed a lack of professorial support was especially true among some of the students from traditionally underrepresented groups. Some students voiced a need for staff members who could offer them greater cultural, social, and emotional support than what they experienced at MECHS. Students also felt the need for a greater diversity of teaching styles than the traditional lecture format they encountered in most of their college courses.

Many secondary schools sponsoring dual enrollment programs with collaborating colleges and universities sought to ameliorate this problem by offering special support

classes designed to aid students in taking college courses. Frequently, at the secondary school level these support classes became known as “college life-skill” classes (Berger et al., 2009; Edmunds et al., 2010; Newton et al., 2008). Likewise, community colleges and universities have begun to offer or require similar support classes often known by such names as “College Survival” or “College 101” to help students acclimate and learn the proper organization skills necessary to become successful in college (Karp et al., 2008c).

Dual enrollment students, because of to their age and level of social-behavior development, require additional emotional and social support more than their older counterparts (Oliver et al., 2010). Oliver et al. (2010) further asserted that most of research involving dual enrollment success has focused on risk factors and obstacles to academic success. Their conclusions were based upon answers given on the College Student Inventory, Part B (CSI-B) for nine hundred and forty-one dual enrollment students at the Early College High School in Texas. The researchers concluded that, in general, little had been done to investigate issues related to protective factors and resources for students that address the social and emotional transitions that occur when going from a traditional high school environment to a college environment. Such factors as family influence, the creation and nurturing of caring social relationships peer relationships, and student-parent relationships started to be perceived as essential elements towards college success for dual enrollment students (Ongaga, 2010). An understanding of the importance of these factors led to the realization that many students remain not only academically unprepared, but begin their college experience socially and emotionally unprepared, as well. In the transition to the college environment, underage

students are subjected to experiences, expectations, and influences from which they were often protected against in the traditional high school environment. Students were left to decipher and interpret the rules and expectations without the proper tools to guide or direct them (Tinto, 2006; Tinto, 1997).

Frequently, the dual enrollment students who remained successful often accomplish that through the formation of informal information networks systems, forged in the classroom with other peers. These information networks give them a conduit into expectations that the student may not initially comprehend, including access to social events and expectations (Karp et al., 2008b; Oliver et al. 2010). To overcome these obstacles it has been seen as necessary to develop coping skills, or mechanisms, to assist students through the experiences and influences they encounter (Oliver et al. 2010). One way of developing the necessary coping skills to assure success in college was by becoming integrated into the social life of the campus. When students achieved some form of successful integration on campus, the results showed that they also achieved a sense of belonging and a higher level of self-worth and success (Hooker & Brand, 2010; Mohker & McLendon, 2009).

Focusing on Tinto's (2006, 1997) model of integration framework, Karp, Hughes, and O'Gara (2010) conducted two sets of interviews with college students in their second semester of enrollment at two urban community colleges in the northeastern United States. Both colleges enrolled a significant number of minority and economically disadvantaged students. Participants were selected randomly, with 46 students participating in the interviews. According to their results, a major component of first

year college student success and persistence remained their ability to identify and become part of some social and academic life while on campus (Karp et al., 2010; Tinto, 2006; Tinto, 1997). Students who were able to find connections, both socially and academically, were more likely to persist in college compared to those that remain at the periphery and fail to make meaningful connections.

Academic integration occurs when a student becomes attached to the intellectual life of the campus (Karp et al., 2010; Tinto, 2006; Tinto, 1996). Often this happens when students connect with another student in their class or with whom they share multiple college classes. Equally important was the social integration in which students engage. Social integration involves the student creating relationships and connections outside the classroom, not necessarily related to academics. The feeling of belonging, according to Tinto (1997) was an integral to students remaining enrolled in college beyond their freshman year and even continuing to pursue higher post-secondary aspirations. In support of the above findings, Oliver et al. (2010) came to a similar conclusion from their research on creating college-advising connections. They found that student persistence and achievement was increased if students were able to make nurturing relationships on campus, which created a sense of family, well-being, and connectedness.

Besides network systems and support systems aimed at the individual student, it became apparent through Oliver et al.'s (2010) research that the families of dual enrollment students needed support mechanisms as much as their students. The perception of the absence of support was especially true among minorities, marginalized

college students who were the first in the family to attend college (Berger et al., 2010; Hooker & Brand, 2010; Karp et al., 2008a; Oliver et al., 2010; Ongaga, 2010).

Drawing upon already published data from the American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) and other sources, Hooker and Brand (2010) found that children of low income and first generation college-going students and their families lacked the social capital needed successfully to navigate the necessary pathways required for success in dual enrollment programs. This lack of the social capital could act as a hindrance toward student enrolment and persistence in a dual enrollment program. Such items amplified by this lack of social knowledge and capital included: knowledge and information about how to maneuver the paperwork necessary for enrolling in college classes. The lack of social capital also hindered their knowledge of how to access advising and support services available to assist them with their academic work, as well as, knowing how to access nonacademic assistance and formal support systems that may be offered by the college or university. These issues, accompanied by feelings of inadequacy or embarrassment because of their lack of social knowledge, kept many students of underrepresented families from successfully completing a dual enrollment program and continuing further in post-secondary education after graduation. That is why some form of familial network of support is considered necessary if dual enrollment programs want to encourage and keep one of the target populations that proponents of dual enrollment programs tout as a primary target for advancement and support.

It is apparent from the research discussed above (Berger et al., 2010; Hooker & Brand, 2010; Karp et al., 2008a; Oliver et al., 2010; Ongaga 2010) that problems exist

within the structure of some dual enrollment programs. The underrepresented segments of society that dual enrollment programs were philosophically targeted to assist and lift up academically have not always experienced as much success as had been hoped. The failure to adequately prepare students prior to entering into a dual enrollment program and taking college courses has led to frustrations, and failures on the part of some students. Couple these frustrations with the difficulties involved in transitioning from a traditional high school setting and structure to a less structured college environment, dual enrollment has not served all students equally or adequately.

Student Transitions: High School to College

When a high school student enters into a dual enrollment program and begins taking the majority of their courses principally on the college campus, the student faces a number of significant transitions. In making the transition from high school to college, students encounter both academic and social challenges that potentially affect their success in college courses.

Academic transition. Multiple researchers have investigated the academic readiness of high school students taking college classes (Berger et al. 2010; Hooker & Brand, 2010; Karp & Hughes, 2008; Mokher & McLendon, 2009; Oliver et al., 2010). Initially, researchers attributed this lack of academic preparedness to the high schools and asserted that better screening and preparation prior to beginning a dual enrollment program was necessary (Born, 2006; Jordan et al., 2006; Karp et al., 2007; Karp & Hughes, 2008). However, since dual enrollment programs have been around for more than a decade, the problem of readiness was recognized as a national problem. The

culmination came in 2009 when the U.S. Congress voted to allocate an increased federal stimulus fund to improve student achievement. It was believed that the increased funding would show a commitment to develop and implement rigorous college- and career-ready standards (Berger et al., 2010). By increasing the standards and benchmarks that K-12 schools had to meet, it was thought that graduating students would leave their secondary school better prepared for transitioning into post-secondary education or the workforce (Ortiz, 2008). This assumption extended to the academic readiness of high school students entering college early as part of dual enrollment programs.

When various researchers queried students as to the principle academic challenges they encountered when moving from high school level to a college course, most students consistently identified several key issues. These concerns included the increase in class sizes, and an increase in assignment expectation and rigor. Students also cited a lack of connection between the professor and individual student, and a greater need for personal discipline with individual perseverance (Born, 2010; Duffy et al., 2010; Johnson-Huntley & Schuh, 2003; Jordan et al., 2006; Mokher & McClendon, 2009; Newton & Vogt, 2008; Oliver et al., 2010).

This transition problem was especially felt among students who were the first generation in their family to attend college or came from marginalized and traditionally under-represented groups (Hooker & Brand, 2010; Oliver et al., 2010). According to Hooker and Brand (2010), these groups often lacked the necessary social capital necessary to understand the structure and expectations that post-secondary education demands. Furthermore, first generation college students often lacked a person at their

disposal that had previously attended college and could act as a role model and mentor when problems arose.

One significant item that dual enrollment students expressed that differed from their traditional high school experience and the college experience revolved around the overall structure of the teaching environment. Duffy et al. (2009) did a mixed method study of 20 early college schools (ECS) that included over 700 classroom visits to both college courses held on high school campuses and those taken at college sites. The visits entailed classroom observations with the researchers evaluating and scoring their observation experiences and follow-up interviews of students attending the observed classrooms. All the analysis was scored using the Atlas.ti qualitative data analysis program in order to arrive at a consistent dataset from each observation. The datasets were subjected to a statistical *t* test analysis to identify significant mean differences and correlation between qualitative domains.

Duffy et al.'s (2010) study looked at three elements of the classroom experience, measured according to the CLASS-S structure. The three areas involved differing levels and kinds of classroom support. These support concerns included the emotional support students perceived not having received from the instructor during their experience in the course. As well as, lack of support for dealing with the type and quality of the instructional support that the instructor failed to provide in class, and the nature and structure of the instruction employed by the instructor. The study found that students thought that an emotional support remained higher in classes held at the high school than in the courses on the college campus. They surmised that this was in part due to the

instructor's background and training as opposed to an increase in content rigor.

Furthermore, based on the research, there existed a perception on the part of many of the participants that there was a significant decrease in opportunities for students to offer perspectives and input into their college courses.

Students in the Duffy et al. (2010) study found instructional support for students in the traditional classroom learning experience to be commensurate with the college learning experience. However, they did find a lack of immediate instructional feedback in college courses as an obstacle in aiding them in their success and satisfaction with the college classes. Participants complained that many professors did not return their work in a timely fashion and often did not include adequate feedback when returned. They felt these two factors acted as an impediment to their success as they were not able to make adjustments and transitions soon enough. Many felt that by the time they figured out what the professor required, sufficient damage had been done to their grade in the course.

Finally, Duffy et al. (2010) found that students perceived little difference in the quality or nature of the classroom organizational structure between the regular high school class and the college course. The students' primary concern was that the college instructors used fewer instructional strategies in the way they delivered their lesson content, relying predominantly on a traditional lecture format. While bothersome to some students, others did not perceive this as a major impediment to their success in college once they made the transition to understanding the format of content delivery. These findings contrasted slightly from the findings of other research studies where students found these issues more troublesome and a greater obstacle to success (Born, 2006; Karp

et al., 2010).

Karp et al. (2010) and Mokher and McClendon (2009) found in their research that when students encountered difficulties in their college courses, they usually responded by rationalizing their own difficulties and failures, shifting the burden to themselves, as opposed to placing any responsibility on the college or university. Their rationalization usually blamed the students' own personal inability to adjust adequately to the increased rigor and course expectations. Study participants claimed that the responsibility to make the necessary adjustment and transition was incumbent on the individual student and not incumbent upon the institution to assume that responsibility.

Social and emotional transition. The second half of the transition equation involves the social and emotional transition of dual enrollment students to the college experience. This aspect is a more difficult issue to access as it involves many variables that cannot always be accounted for or controlled for by the institution. Ongaga (2010) listed four factors influencing the ability of the student to make a healthy and productive transition from the traditional high school classroom to the college campus. Ongaga asserted that a successful transition depended upon the family influence; the ability of the student to form caring relationships, the ability to maneuver and develop peer relationships, and the student-parent relationship prior to starting college courses.

Tinto (2006) and Karp et al. (2010) concurred in that the ability of the student to nurture relationships once they arrive on a college campus assists the student in the transition effort. Informational and social networks inside and outside class gave the dual enrollment student both a sense of belonging and a network of communications. Such

networks would transmit valuable information and support could be garnered. Berger et al. (2009) found in their discussions with dual enrollment students that most students at college respected one another and tended not to get into trouble. One reason for this outcome was a perception on the part of the dual enrollment students of the general increased level of maturity in other students that they experienced in their college courses. This perception of increased maturity in the classroom by dual enrollment students can be accounted for when taken into account the age ranges found in a typical college course. This perception is especially true for those dual enrollment students attending a community college where a greater diversity of age groups may occur in the same classroom. This is a situation found less frequently in the high school classroom where students are more closely related in age (Johnson-Huntley & Shuh, 2002).

However, besides the benefits gained by high school students integrating into a college setting, there were also disadvantages. As Oliver et al. (2010) determined that college brings with it a certain degree of freedom and independence. These freedoms and independence can serve as a disadvantage to the dual enrollment student who has difficulty with self-regulation. They pointed out that many students who were used to close supervision from both the traditional high school structure and their families may not have had adequate opportunities to develop the appropriate self-regulation skills needed to maneuver the college environment. Students' ability to adapt to new settings, the closeness and quality of their familial ties, and their susceptibility to outside influences may determine how successful they are at transitioning to life on a college campus. The unstructured nature of the college environment with its various enticements,

opportunities, and distractions most certainly works against the student who is not able to self-regulate their activities and associations.

It is apparent from the research discussed (Karp et al., 2010; Oliver et al., 2010; Ongaga, 2010; Tinto; 2006) that many challenges exist for high school students trying to transition from traditional high school classes to becoming college students. Aside from the academic challenges that they encounter in their college courses, attempting to maneuver and adjust to the opportunities, enticements, and distractions found on the college campus can become challenging and intimidating to many students. Developing support networks and finding a place within the college environment are essential for a healthy and productive transition. However, as high school students in the dual enrollment program grow and become more aware of themselves and their environment, sometimes communication between the parents and their dual enrollment students becomes an issue. The quality of the parent/student relationship can be challenged and tested as students seek to assert their self-autonomy associated with the college experiences.

The final section of the literature review includes research associated with familial interactions and the change in communication patterns. The focus is on the quality of the communication process experienced between student and parent and how it is perceived to influence student success.

Parent/Student Communications Challenges

A major component of parent/student relationships and college success is in the quality of the both to communicate when significant issues arise (Doo & Schneider,

2005). In the traditional high school structure, parents have the ability to monitor and regulate student behavior and activities. A call to the high school principal or teacher usually elicits the results desired by the parent. The parent can get immediate feedback regarding problems their student may be having in school. This process changes dramatically once a student becomes a college student.

Once a student enrolls in college or university class, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations (FERPA) prohibit the colleges and universities from sharing information about the students enrolled in their institutions (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). As a result, only the student can freely access information about their progress, grades, financial records, and other pertinent information during their association with that institution, but their parents are unable to request the same information. Parents can obtain this information by going through a petition process, whereby their student signs a waiver every time that information is requested.

Doo and Schneider (2005) asserted that for those parents who are used to strictly regulating their students' progress, this interruption in academic information access serves as a significant aggravation and impediment in being able appropriately to support their student in college, as they would like. Therefore, parents must rely on the nature and quality of the communication mechanisms they have in place between themselves and their student. Parents need to rely on the desire of their child to disclose relevant academic information in a timely fashion. Once again, this ability to solicit information comes back to the quality of the parent/student communication mechanisms and the quality of the parent/student relationship itself.

Three factors come into play in this relationship between a parent and the dual enrollment student. These factors include parental monitoring, student information disclosure, and secrecy or information withholding (De Goede et al., 2009; Doo & Schneider, 2005; Dornbusch et al., 1990; Finkenauer et al., 2004; Frijns et al., 2010; Geuzaine et al., 2000; Keijsers et al., 2010; Keijsers et al., 2009; Smetana et al., 2006). A distinction must be drawn between parent monitoring, parent information solicitation, and parent control. Parent monitoring involves the action by parents intentionally to engage in monitoring their child's activities (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000). Parent monitoring is defined as the parent's perceived or actual knowledge of their whereabouts, activities, and friends. Meanwhile, parent information solicitation is a non-invasive attempt by parents to obtain pertinent information from their adolescent with the purpose of remaining informed and in-the-loop with their child's activities (Frijns et al., 2010). On the other hand, parental control implies an attempt by a parent to exert overt control over the student's activities, contacts, behaviors, and free time.

Student information disclosure has been defined as a multifaceted social process that combines both dispositional and relational aspects of one's activities (Finkenauer et al., 2004). Disclosure includes the verbal communication of information about oneself (including personal information, emotional, and physical states) at the time, dispositions (likes and dislikes), and events in the recent past, and plans for the future. Voluntary information disclosure by students remains one of the primary sources that parents retain for obtaining knowledge about the activities and involvement of their adolescent (Finkenauer et al., 2004; Frijns et al., 2010; Geuzaine et al., 2000).

Unlike a disclosure, secrecy involves an investment of energy and implies an intention to hide information from a person engaged in soliciting the information (Finkenauer et al., 2004; Frijns et al., 2010; Geuzaine et al., 2000). Often secrecy has the unintended effect of creating unintended side effects and drawbacks. These may include anxiety, depression, and in some instances physical illness (Geuzaine et al., 2000). Secrecy entails a constant active monitoring, inhibition, and suppression of information control on the part of the adolescent. This active suppression activity in some cases can act as cumulative stress inducing behaviors, potentially leading to psychological and dysfunctional behaviors down the road (Frijns et al., 2010; Geuzaine et al., 2000). Much of the research pertaining to adolescent disclosure is directed at the relationship between adolescent disclosure/secrecy and its correlation to behavioral deviancy (Finkenauer et al. (2004); Geuzaine et al., 2000). Deviancy as it was defined included any behavior that falls outside the normal desired expectations associated with healthy adolescent behavior (Keijsers et al., 2010; Keijsers et al., 2009; Frijns et al., 2009). The researchers defined deviancy to include adolescent depression, delinquency, early sexual involvement, truancy, alcohol, tobacco, and substance abuse. Most of this research was undertaken in Europe with adolescent populations but remains relevant as it pertains to late adolescent information sharing strategies.

Researchers De Goede et al. (2009), Finkenauer et al. (2004), Frijns et al. (2010), and Smetana et al. (2006) agree that as adolescents age there is a tendency to disclose less and less information to parents, gradually being replaced by peer relationships that play an increasing important role in the adolescents' life. Information once shared with parents

now becomes information shared in peer relationships. Many researchers view secrecy as a part of the maturational and self-autonomy process. As they begin developing self-autonomy, adolescents find it necessary to keep certain elements in their life secret from their parents (Frijns et al., 2010) as a way of asserting and realizing their autonomy. Geuzaine et al. (2000) also pointed out that secrecy could have some positive benefits in establishing autonomy from parents.

Adolescents seek and desire more personal autonomy from their parents as they mature and develop relationships outside the familial sphere (De Goede et al., 2009; Smetana et al., 2006). The degree to which this self-autonomy begins remains important for the parent/student communication dynamic. Dornbusch et al. (1990) asserted that granting adolescent autonomy too early leads to lower overall effort and a decrease in academic achievement. Dornbusch et al.'s (1990) quantitative study in the San Francisco Bay area involved over 7,800 high school students in five districts. The participants completed questionnaires that asked about decision-making in the family and how much information the student shared with their parents. The participants represented multicultural groups and multiple SES classes. Gender was equally represented. The researchers found a correlation between early autonomy acquisitions and lowered academic performance. They attributed this relationship to the importance attached to the family processes within the student's family. Those processes seemed to contribute to a greater acquisition of knowledge and skills beyond familial structures and cultural factors.

Doo and Schneider (2005) assert that parents may serve to bridge resources and import information not otherwise readily accessible to adolescents depending on age and experiences the adolescent has already acquired. However, this bridging is only as good as the communication network that exists within the family dynamic. It remains true that parents can act as an invaluable tool for bridging bureaucratic channels and offering tips about information and support acquisition. If self-autonomy or information disclosure issues exist between a parent and their student, this familial resource loses a great deal of its potential efficacy.

For parents, the greatest source of information about academic progress came from their adolescent (Frijns et al., 2010; Smetana et al., 2006). The perception of the parent's authority over certain types of information was the focus of Smetana et al.'s (2006) study. In that study, 276 adolescents, ninth through twelfth grades, and their parents were given questionnaires soliciting information regarding each participant's perception in matters concerning information disclosure and parental authority. The data were subjected to ANOVA statistical analysis for determining correlations. The study found that students tended to disclose information concerning prudential matters, such as issues involving health, comfort, and safety. Students also agreed that parents had a legitimate authority over issues pertaining to moral and ethical concerns (justice, welfare, or questions of rights), conventional issues (etiquette, manners, and arbitrary social norms). However, adolescents tended to feel less obligated to disclose information of a personal nature, such as those issues pertaining to the control over the students' own body, privacy, and personal choices regarding issues such as clothes, hairstyles, or

recreational activities. Conversely, parents felt that they had more authority over personal and multifaceted issues and that adolescents were obligated to disclose that information.

Academic information was considered by the researchers (Smetana et al., 2006) to be prudential in nature. That is to say, academic information involved long-term implications that could carry with it the potential for either harm or benefit. The findings did not differ significantly between genders, but did vary with age. The older the participant, the less authority they perceived their parent had over their personal and private life, the less they felt obligated to disclose.

In dual enrollment programs, issues of disclosure and autonomy both arise. How does the placement of a late-adolescent youth into a less structured setting such as the college environment, affect this information disclosure dynamic between the parent and the student? Does beginning college as a junior in high school push the edge of Dornbusch et al.'s (1990) warnings about starting the self-autonomy route too early? As Dornbusch et al. (1990) argues adolescent decision-making was not wholly formed, and too-early autonomy granting was correlated with poorer academic performance and lower grades.

As Smetana et al. (2006) emphasized the quality and nature of the communications and interactions that parents and students share and experience remain dependent on the quality of the relationship in the first place. As dual enrollment students begin to approach the various freedoms, obstacles, opportunities, and enticements presented to them on the college campus, they begin to assert their self-

autonomy. Once they begin to realize their self-autonomy, this in turn begins to move them away from the influence of their parents. Likewise, communications dynamics may deteriorate as students begin to withhold the nature, type, and the amount of information they desire to disclose to parents. The decreased communications flow may become problematic, especially for those parents who are accustomed to monitoring and having immediate access to student academic progress information.

Summary and Conclusion

CBTP opportunities are continually becoming more prevalent and accepted, making it one more method to increase graduation readiness. State policy makers and educational policy writers continue to push high schools and postsecondary institutions to increase the number of concurrent offerings extended to high school students and their families. As more CBTPs are added to state curricula, the number of students transitioning to college while still in high school continues to increase. With that increase of high school students enrolling in college courses and transitioning to the college environment, particular challenges arise for both dual enrollment high school students and their parents. These challenges place more emphasis upon the relationship between a parent and their dual enrollment student.

Therefore, the conventional communications tools used by parents may no longer work for dual enrollment students and their parents. The change in communication may be seen directly to affect the parents' perceptions of their role in the education process. The change in the nature of information access may also be perceived by parents to have a direct correlation to the academic success of their dual enrollment students in college.

Therefore, it is important to know whether parents' perceive their academic information access as related to how well their students perform and achieve in their college. This gap in research knowledge is the subject of this study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the correlation between parents' perception of their access to academic progress information and their high school students' academic success in college-level courses. As more students enter the dual enrollment system, more parents find themselves needing to adjust their methods for obtaining student academic progress information. The conventional, more direct avenues that parents had access to for obtaining information about their students' academic progress in the traditional high school structure are no longer as easily acceptable in the college setting. This necessitates alternate methods for parents to obtain the same academic information. If there were a relationship between parents' perception of their access to academic progress information and their dual enrollment students' continued success and progress in college classes, there would be important implications for parental/school/student communications.

This chapter outlines the research design of this project and its rationale, including a description of the methodology: the characteristics of the target population, sampling process, procedures for data collection, discussion of instrument used, and data analysis plan. This is followed by a review of any threats to the external and internal validity related to the study and the data analysis approach, including ethical considerations that may be associated with this study. The final section provides a summary of the methodological process.

Research Design and Rationale

The independent variable was the parents' perceptions of access to the academic progress information of their dual enrollment student. The dependent variable was the students' academic success in college courses. Success was measured through students' archived cumulative GPAs. According to the office of SWCC institutional research, more dual enrollment students were taking vocational classes as opposed to core subject classes. Because students chose to take more vocational courses during their dual enrollment program, core subject grades did not exist to be evaluated statistically.

This quantitative study employed a correlational, non-experimental research design utilizing a survey instrument and archival student cumulative GPA data collected and maintained by the cooperating community college. The target population included all parents of dual enrollment students enrolled at a SWCC in western United States, during the winter of 2015. A convenience sample was employed consisting of those parents who return survey responses. Cumulative GPA and grades from only those students whose parents' returned the survey were included in the correlation with the parents' responses. This approach seemed appropriate as a valid method to answer the research question: "What is the relationship between parents' perception of academic progress information access and the success of their dual enrollment student in college-level courses?"

Methodology

The parents of dual enrollment students that were enrolled in the SWCC system during the 2014-2015 academic year, which forms the population for this research, were contacted through the mail using a voluntary survey instrument. SWCC provided the

contact addresses, and parents were sent a survey instrument that included some basic demographic information along with the research questions. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes were provided with the mailed survey to assist parents in returning the instrument when completed. Furthermore, SWCC provided a randomly generated alphanumeric identifier that was attached to parent address labels. The identifier allowed SWCC to supply me with the archived cumulative GPA of their dual enrollment students, while maintaining the student's anonymity. Parent survey results, demographics, and student's archived grades were analyzed using bivariate statistics.

Population

The target population consisted of parents of high school students enrolled in the dual enrollment program at SWCC. The community college was centrally located in the second largest urban area in that state. According to the 2013 U.S. Census Bureau report, the city and surrounding county supports an estimated population of approximately 161,451 people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). The central campus of the community college serviced twenty school districts, and thirty-three local schools. The SWCC had extension branches in three cities outside of the immediate area, with one branch not far away in a neighboring city, and the other branches located on the opposite side of the state. Dual enrollment within the SWCC system showed 955 students enrolled in 2014-2015 academic year at the time of this research.

It was estimated that about ten percent of those students registered in the SWCC dual enrollment program were over eighteen years of age. The over eighteen age group was not included within this study. This brought the sampling population down to

approximately 867 potential parents whose dual enrolment students were under the age of eighteen at the time of the study. Using the Roasoft (2004) calculator, 59 participants out of anticipated 867 potential parents were actually sampled, achieving a power of (59): $\alpha = 0.5$, with a 57% confidence level.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

For this study, the sampling strategy was based on a population of all parents with dual enrollment students under the age of 18 ($N = 867$), registered in the program at the SWCC during 2014-5 academic year. The students needed to have completed at least one semester of college courses in the population solicited for the study. Participation was voluntary, resulting in a convenience sample of parents ($N=59$) who actually responded to the survey from the population.

The process began with the identification by the SWCC Institutional Research Officer of those students under age 18 who were registered in the SWCC's dual enrollment program for the academic year of 2014-5, and who had already participated in at least one previous semester at the college. By focusing on parents of students under the age of 18, permission for access to archived student cumulative GPA and grade information need only be obtained from the parents, and did not have to include the extra step of obtaining permission from individual students to meet FERPA regulations. Parents with students under the age of 18 retain responsibility for information pertaining to grades at the end of the semester and cumulative GPA.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

The institutional research officer at SWCC generated a spreadsheet of alphanumeric codes and the addresses for parents for the 867 households with a dual-enrollment student under age 18. I then entered a corresponding code on each survey with informed consent letter and mailed them both with self-addressed stamped return envelope to the household on the mailing label. The SWCC institutional research office kept the list of non-identifying codes associated with each household in order to later supply me with the previous semester grades and cumulative GPA of students whose parents participated in the survey.

At no time did I have access to the list of student's names. I only had access to a corresponding alphanumeric code numbers, and the director did not have access to the survey results. This ensured that anonymity was maintained and student and parental identities protected. The informed consent letter in the packet mailed to parents also included a parental signature request for consent to access archived cumulative GPA and grade information for their dual enrollment student under age 18.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

The measurement instrument consisted of ten questions related to academic information adapted from a survey instrument piloted by Stattin and Kerr (2000) (Appendix A) from whom permission was obtained. A portion of Stattin and Kerr's (2000) survey was based upon a previous survey instrument, known as the Swedish Family Climate Scale (Hansen, 1989). There have been three other studies that used the

Stattin-Kerr (2010) instrument: Kerr et al., (2010), Tilton-Weaver et al., (2013), and Tilton-Weaver & Marshall (2008).

The original survey consisted of 170 questions including topics about parental monitoring beyond school issues. It was originally given to 703 adolescents, grades 7-12, and their parents from seven communities located in central Sweden. The full survey sought to measure the degree of knowledge their parents had about their adolescent's activities and relationships through parent monitoring practices, and how adolescents felt about disclosing information to their parents. The instrument tested the hypothesis that greater parent monitoring led to a decrease in deviant or unwanted behaviors in their adolescent children. Deviant behavior was defined as those actions considered detrimental or potentially harmful to adolescents. These behaviors included adolescent smoking, drug usage, criminal behavior, engaging in underage sex, and absenteeism (Stattin & Kerr, 2000). Stattin and Kerr (2000) determined from the study results that adolescent information disclosure depended upon multiple factors. According to the Stattin and Kerr (2000) the greatest factors involved in student information disclosure centered on the distinction between parent surveillance and control of student activities, versus enhanced parent/student communications. Regardless of the behavior that parents encountered in their adolescent, parents taking efforts to increase the opportunities to communicate more consistently with their child decreased the incidence of negative behaviors. Surveillance and control practices often confounded parent's attempts at monitoring the activities and associations of their children. More than not, surveillance and control practices caused their children to result to a reluctance to disclose information

when asked, or to even result to secrecy to avoid disclosing activities in which they may be involved.

Modified Stattin-Kerr Survey Questions

For this study, only those questions related to academic or school information were selected (Appendix A). In all, 10 of the Likert-style questions were selected for this study of parents of dual enrollment students. These 10 questions, or latent variables, were divided into five categorical, or latent constructs, based on the similarity of the information that each question attempted to solicit. The number of questions that made up each construct varied, with some constructs having more questions than others. In the Stattin and Kerr (2000) study, the researchers experienced a parent-report reliability with a Cronbach's alpha that ranged from $\alpha = .75$ to $.89$ for the questions used in this study.

On the questionnaire sent to parents a check box preceded each response selection for each question. No numerical weight was attached to the selections on the questionnaire so that each response appeared to have an equal value. Once the responses were received, I coded choices indicated for each question. The coding consisted of assigning values from 0 to 4, or 0 to 5 depending on number of response selections for each question. Some questions only offered four choices, while others offered five choices. The more positive the behavioral response indicated by the choice, the greater the value and higher the number ascribed to that choice.

Latent Variables or Constructs

The 10 questions comprising the latent variables in the modified survey (Appendix A) were divided into five categorical, or latent constructs. The number of

questions that made up each construct varied with some constructs having more questions than others. The latent constructs were (a) willingness to share, (b) disclosure of daily activities, (c) off-task behavior, (d) knowledge of daily activities, and (e) solicitation of academic information. All 10 questions related specifically to perceived behaviors surrounding how parents perceived dual enrollment students reacted when parents attempt to solicit academic information.

Willingness to share dealt with the type of behavioral reaction the parent's incurred in their communications between themselves and their dual enrollment students. Question 1 was the only question represented in this construct. Parents were asked how their dual enrollment student reacted when asked about items dealing with the student's homework or activities at college. They were given several choices of answers that reflected a totally adverse reaction, to a totally cooperative reaction (*becomes angry and refuses to answer, answers after several inquiries, delays, but eventually shares, gladly shares information*). A positive behavior reflected a student's willingness to share, while the least positive behavior reflected a student becoming angry or refusing to respond when asked.

Desire to disclose information included Questions 2 and 3. This construct had to do with the parent's perception of their student's desire to disclose information about their daily activities. Question 2 asked if the dual enrollment student generally wanted to share details about progress or activities at college. Again several choices were presented to parents ranging from their student becoming non-cooperative or refusing to engage in requested information disclosure, to willingly cooperative (*almost never, seldom, now*

and then, quite often, and very often). Question 3 queried parents about student's disclosure of information regarding academic progress in their different college classes. Parents were given the following choices: *keeps everything to themselves, keeps much information to themselves, but not all, partly discloses, but is not consistent with sharing, discloses much, and tells most everything*. The most positive behaviors included a student's willingness to share, while a least positive behavior reflected a pattern in which the student almost never shared or disclosed information about their daily activities.

Response to challenges involved Questions 4 and 5, where parents were asked about their perception about how their student reacted when faced with difficult academic challenges. These two questions dealt with how well parents perceived that their student was able to cope when faced with difficult challenges. Question 4 asked parents if they felt that they perceived that their dual enrollment student found it hard to cope with difficulties and that this difficulty affected their college academic performance. Parent choices included: *definitely applies to my student, generally applies to my student, occasionally applies to my student, or never applies to my student*.

Question 5 asked parents whether they perceived that their student tended to mentally become withdrawn when encountering academic challenges. The parents were given a range of selection items identical to those in Question 4 (*applies exactly, applies fairly well, does not apply well, does not apply at all*). In both cases, the most positive response stated that the adverse coping behavior did not apply to their student while a least positive behavior response stated that parent perceived that the adverse coping behavior applied to their student.

Parent knowledge had the greatest number of questions, Questions #6, #7, #8, and #10. These questions addressed the parent's general knowledge of their student's daily activities. These questions primarily dealt with how much information parents thought they knew about the student's academic progress, upcoming assignments and exams, and how well the students were performing in individual classes.

Question 6 queried parents as to their perceptions regarding how much knowledge they felt they had concerning the amount and extent of the homework load that their dual enrollment student had in their college classes. The parent choices sought to gage the frequency of this knowledge (response choices included, *never, seldom, it varies, most of the time, and always*). Likewise, Question 7 solicited the same response related to the frequency that parents perceived they had about upcoming exams or major assignments in their dual enrollment student's college classes. The selection of possible responses was identical to Question 6 choices.

Question 8 involved a similar vein of inquiry. It asked parents if they perceived that they had knowledge about how well their dual enrolment student was achieving in their college classes. Parent choices included: *nothing, very little, partly, quite well, complete knowledge*. Question 10 sought to gage the trust level that the parents perceived they had in their knowledge of their student's academic achievement and performance in their college classes. Choices included: *absolutely not, not quite, partly sure, quite a lot, and complete trust in their knowledge of their student's academic performance*. The most positive behavior response reflected that the parents perceived that they were certain that they were privy to assignment and exam schedules, and that

they were aware of how well their student was performing in their college classes. A least favorable response to the question by the parent reflected a parent perceiving that they had absolutely no idea of how well their student was performing, or when a particular assignment or exam was coming due.

Frequency of communications was represented by only a single question, Question 9. This construct related to how often parents indicated that students sat down with them while the parent solicited academic information from their dual enrollment student. This question asked parents about the frequency with which they sat down and had a conversation with their dual enrollment student regarding college activities and classes. The frequency choices that parents were given included: *almost never, seldom, now and then, quite often, and very often*. A positive parent response to this question reflected the propensity for the student to sit down and disclose details about their academic day with their parents on a frequent basis. Conversely, a least positive response reflected a parent's perception that their student almost never sat down and shared or disclosed information about their academic activities with their parents.

Operationalization of Variables

The independent variable was the parental perception of their access to academic progress information for their dual enrollment student taking college courses. This was measured and quantified based on responses received on the modified Stattin-Kerr survey instrument (Appendix A). The ten items on this questionnaire produced number values, with some questions based on a scale of one to five choices, and others on a scale based from one to four choices. The survey questions were manifestations of five underlying

latent constructs. For each participant, the survey items that measured each construct (manifest variables) were averaged, producing a mean score for each construct for each participant.

The dependent variables were dual enrollment students' archived cumulative GPAs provided by the SWCC Institutional Research Office. The cumulative GPA was requested in the form of a numerical value and the individual grades were requested in the form of percentages based upon the grading scale utilized by SWCC in their grading assignment scheme.

Data Analysis Plan

The research question for this research study was, "What is the relationship between parents' perception of academic progress information access and the success of their dual enrollment student in college-level courses?" At the completion of the research, the results of the statistical analysis on the demographic and survey results were shared with the SWCC institutional research office.

All data was built into a spreadsheet matrix that was then imported into SPSS software to analyze the data and determine the statistical relationships and correlations. The independent variable (perception of academic progress information access) was comprised of five latent variables, which were modeled separately in the data analysis. The dependent variable (student success) was determined by the students archived cumulative GPA. Initially it was anticipated that data on the student's grades for their core subject college classes, English, math, and science would also be considered as subsets of cumulative GPA. But because so many students in the sample had not taken

their core subject area classes, the data for core subject areas was too scant to be of any value in the correlation, and was thus not used. The correlation remained solely focused on the overall reported cumulative GPA. In addition to the five latent independent constructs, several demographic covariates were used to determine correlations between independent variables, covariates and dependent variables. The premise underlying this approach came from research completed by Woosley and Miller (2009). This research made the assumption that the higher the cumulative GPA, and the higher the grades in the core subject courses, the greater the communication that exists between a parent and their dual enrollment student.

In the correlation matrix, Pearson's product correlation coefficient (Pearson's r) was applied to measure the association between variables. Independent variables that are correlated significantly with the dependent variable, cumulative GPA were used in OLS regression modeling. After post-estimation diagnostic testing and model adjustment, final models were produced that are the best fit for the data and explain the greatest possible degree of variability. I then interpreted these models to test the hypotheses.

Threats to Validity

For a study to have external validity, the population sampling size should be adequate to represent the population being sampled (Frankfort-Nachmias, & Nachmias, 2008). Using the academic year 2014-15 registration numbers as the basis for the potential participant sampling population size, approximately 950 students were registered in the SWCC system dual enrollment program. Of the 950 reported dual enrollment students, only 867 were under the age of 18 at the time of the study. After

returned parent responses were received, only 59 parents actually responded to the survey instrument. This resulted in a confidence level of only (59): $\alpha = 0.5$, at a 57% confidence level (Raosoft, 2004). Another requirement for external validity was that the sample be representative of the population. Since this study was not randomly select participants, true representativeness cannot be assumed and therefore the results cannot be generalized beyond the sample.

Another potential threat to validity occurred with the initial assumptions involving parental involvement in their student's academic progress and the nature of the parent monitoring that individual parents employ. Although some parents do monitor and maintain a level of vigilance over the activities of their high school students, especially pertaining to academic progress and performance, it is not true for all parents. It was assumed for this study that the degree of monitoring differed from family to family, as did the quality and mode of the parental technique for monitoring. It was well-documented in the literature that as parent monitoring begins decreasing once a student reaches middle school, and decreases more significantly about the ninth grade (Jacobson & Crockett, 2000; LeBahn, 1995). The research for this study, however, made the assumption that the parents of dual enrollment students were more likely to practice student monitoring longer into the student's academic career because of the greater attention to their students' academic success and achievement. It was additionally assumed that the community college had a systematic and accurate record keeping system for student grades and was appropriately used to assign a non-identifying coding scheme provided to the researcher.

Internal validity was more difficult to ascertain and control for. Internal validity looks at both extrinsic and intrinsic factors that might affect the validity of the sample (Frankfort-Nachmias, & Nachmias, 2008). The extrinsic factors in this study were minimized as a total number of parents of dual enrollment students presently enrolled at SWCC were given the opportunity to respond. The delimiting factors came with the elimination at the outset of the parents who had students registered in the dual enrollment program, but were over the age of eighteen years of age. The second extrinsic factor resulted from the fact that the actual number of returned parents surveys was so few ($N=59$). This created a situation in which, the statistical confidence level became reduced to a level, ($N=59$): $\alpha = 0.5$, at a 57% confidence, insufficient to allow any meaningful correlation.

The biggest threat to validity came from the intrinsic factors associated with the study. Questions of intrinsic validity were related to the accurate parental responses on the survey itself. There is no way to control for the truthfulness of the parents responding to the survey. It was possible, however, to identify trends in the data that stood out as inconsistent, or that defied conventional wisdom. For example, if the majority of parents respond to the question on the survey, which asks, “Do you know how well your dual enrollment student achieves in different subjects in school?” with the response, “*always*,” a case might be made for questioning the truthfulness of the parent responses, and the internal validity of the instrument. Intuition suggests that it is not logical that all students tell their parents how well they are achieving in all their classes regularly, especially since students themselves are not regularly aware of their academic standing in a college

class at any given time, depending upon the reporting pattern and regularity for any given professor. It is not uncommon for student grades to be reported only twice during a semester, a mid-semester report, and a final semester report and final grade. Another intrinsic factor of some concern involved the historical background knowledge of the sampling population provided by the college indicating that parents as a large group typically have not responded and returned surveys sent out by the college in the past.

Ethical Procedures

The potential risk to the parents and the students was minimal, as all student data was drawn from already archived information, which is considered administrative use under FERPA. No on-going student data was used at the time during which the research was carried out. The SWCC institutional research office maintained control over student identifications and with provided me with a spreadsheet listing the household addresses and alphanumeric identifiers corresponding with the non-identifying alphanumeric codes. I had access to individual parent addresses and names, but never had access to the name of the students associated with that address. Each survey was coded with the corresponding code number attached to each label. When I received the responses, a spreadsheet of only the coded numbers were submitted to the SWCC institutional research office that then provided the cumulative GPA's and grades for each code number submitted. The institution never handled or saw the individual surveys, as they were sent and returned directly to me. I received only the cumulative GPA's and grades attached to the codes from returned surveys matched to the corresponding responses. At no time were personal names used in the research study. All identities remained

anonymous and confidential. Two copies of the parent Letter of Informed Consent, which required signatures from parents giving me access to archived grades of their students who were under 18, were attached to the parent survey. One copy was returned with the survey and the second kept by the parent. Prior to the date that data collection commenced and surveys were distributed, IRB approval was acquired from both the Walden University IRB Board, and the SWCC Institutional Review Board. The Walden IRB Board research granted conditional on approval on March 13, 2015, and issued a conditional approval number of 03-26-15-0200448. The SWCC Institutional Review Board granted approval to move forward with research on May 1, 2015.

Summary

This chapter provided the design and methodology for a quantitative study that used a convenience sample to survey parents of dual enrollment high school students to determine if their perceptions of access to academic information correlated to academic success of their students, as determined by archived student grades. The results are described in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the correlation between parents' perception of their access to academic progress information and their dual enrollment high school students' academic success in college-level courses. The independent variable was the parents' perceptions of access to academic progress information of their dual enrollment student. The dependent variable was the students' academic success in college courses. Success was measured through their archived cumulative GPA. The survey instrument sent to parents as part of the voluntary participation was a modified version of the Stattin-Kerr (2000). A portion of Stattin and Kerr's (2000) survey was based upon a previous survey instrument, the Swedish Family Climate Scale (Hansen, 1989). The research question and hypotheses of this quantitative study were:

What was the relationship between parents' perception of academic progress information access and the success of their dual enrollment student in college-level courses?

Null Hypothesis (H_0). There was no relationship between the parents' perception of their access to academic progress information and success of dual enrollment students.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There was a relationship between parents' perception of their access to academic progress information and success of their dual enrollment students in their college courses.

For Chapter 4, I tabulated the results from returned parent responses and conducted an analysis of the correlation between those responses and the archived grade

information of their dual enrollment students. The correlation included an analysis of the survey questions, the demographic information included with the survey, and archived student cumulative GPAs. All three sets of data were correlated against one another.

Data Collection

This quantitative study employed a correlational, non-experimental research design using a survey instrument and archival student cumulative GPA data collected and maintained by the cooperating community college. The target population included all parents of dual enrollment students under age 18 enrolled at a SWCC during the winter of 2015. A convenience sample was employed consisting of those parents who return survey responses. Cumulative GPA and grades from only those students whose parents' return the survey were included in the correlation with the parents' responses.

Access to information about parents and archived grades was facilitated through the SWCC institutional research office, which also provided me with a list of addresses for all parents who fit the sampling requirements. The SWCC institutional research office assigned a randomly generated alphanumeric identifier for each relevant student. I placed this alphanumeric identifier on all the survey instruments, and the self-addressed return envelopes. An independent post office box was procured in the city where the SWCC main campus was located, specifically to receive the parent surveys. Because I did not reside in the same city as SWCC it was feared that some parents might disregard the survey request outright due to a lack of familiarity with my place of residence. I decided to provide parents with a location that they would recognize and also to guard against a returned survey becoming intermixed with personal mail and potentially getting

lost or overlooked. As parents completed and returned the surveys, the alphanumeric identifiers were compiled on an Excel spreadsheet and submitted to the SWCC office of institutional research. They provided me the archived grade information for the student's whose parents had responded and returned the survey.

Demographic Analysis

SWCC provided a list of addresses for 867 families who were enrolled in the dual enrollment program on the main campus, or any one of their satellite campuses. Parents were asked to return the survey within two weeks. However, I accepted all that arrived within a month of the mailing. A total of 59 parents completed and returned the survey and demographic responses. These 59 returned surveys represented about a 6.8% sample of the total 867 surveys sent out. The percentages of parents responding to the survey from each campus was not seen as a limitation, as the response percentages roughly corresponded to the relative student population size of dual enrollment students enrolled at each campus site. Table 1 provides a breakdown and comparison of the total SWCC Annual Full Time Equivalent (AFTE) student enrollment for each campus for academic year 2014-2015, the percentage of AFTE that is represented by dual enrollment program for each campus. The point here was to demonstrate the significance of the size of the dual enrollment population as a component of the total community college population. It is interesting that even though the sample size was only 59 parents, the distribution of parents who responded were evenly distributed across all SWCC campuses (See Table 1).

Table 1

Convenience Sample Results for the Main SWCC Campus and the Three Satellite Campuses.

	Main Campus	Foothills Campus	East Campus	West Campus	Total
Total student Enrollment	2405	354	244	206	3210
D.E. Student Enrollment ^a	491(.20) ^b	199(.56)	146(.60)	30 (15)	867 (.27)

Note. N=59

^a Data represents actual counts of dual enrollment (D.E.) numbers taken from the list of students provided by the SWCC Office of Institutional Research.

^b The parentheses after each population count for each campus represents the percentage that the dual enrollment population represents for that campus' total AFTE.

Background Demographic Information

Attached to the beginning of the survey instrument was a series of seven questions aimed at soliciting some basic demographic background information (Appendix A). The questions included the approximate annual family household income, gender of the dual enrollment student, relationship of the person completing the survey instrument to their dual enrollment student, grade level and the number of semesters of college classes their dual enrollment students had attended at SWCC, whether their dual enrollment student was first member of their family to attend college, and what was the highest educational level attained by any parental member in the household. The results of the information acquired from the demographic questions and their statistical relevance are elaborated upon next.

Annual family household income. In the demographic information provided by the responding parents, the mean family annual household income across all SWCC campuses was fairly evenly distributed across all income levels (see Table 2). The SES

income group represented by the \$61,000 to \$100,000 range had a slightly higher representation than the other income groups, but not enough to be statistically significant. The lowest income bracket, those families making annual income less \$5000 per year, and the highest income bracket, those families with an annual income greater than \$100,000 annually were less well represented. These categories represent the extremes on each end of the economic spectrum. The U.S. Census Bureau records that the mean real income for the typical U.S. family of U.S. resident status at the end of 2014 was about \$54,974 (DeNavas-Walt & Proctor, 2014). Therefore, the majority of the parents (58%) who responded fell within the mean national average for family income for 2014.

Table 2

Yearly Income Level per Family with Dual Enrollment Student at SWCC

Annual Household Income					
<\$5000	\$5000 to \$30,000	\$31,000 to \$60,000	\$61,000 to \$100,000	> \$100,000	No Report
1 (.02) ^a	13 (.22)	15 (.25)	19 (.32)	9 (.15)	2 (.03)

Note. Data derived from parent demographic questions appended to the beginning of the Parent Survey Instrument (Appendix A). Parentheses represent the relative percentages based on a total of 59 parent responses.

Gender distribution. Female student enrollment comprises about sixty percent of the total student enrollment across the SWCC college system. Statewide, the percent of female enrollment in dual enrollment programs was slightly lower in 2014, with females comprising about fifty-five percent of the state community college enrollment. The male-female distribution in the returned demographic data in this study was consistent with that of the college as a whole with the exception of the west campus. The west campus

data had parents of male students outnumbering their female counterparts with a ratio of five to three (see Table 3).

Table 3

Gender Distribution of Dual Enrollment Student at Each Campus and Participant Sample

	Gender Distribution				Total
	Main Campus	Foothills Campus	West Campus	East Campus	
Female	18 (.53)	8 (.66)	3 (.38)	4 (1.0)	33 (.56)
Male	15 (.44)	4 (.33)	5 (.62)	0 (0.0)	24 (.41)
No Report	1 (.03)	0	0	0	1 (.02)
Total	34	12	8	4	59

Note. Data derived from parent demographic questions appended to the beginning of the Parent Survey Instrument (See Appendix A). Parentheses represent the relative percentages based on a total of 59 parent responses.

Relationship of parental respondent to dual enrollment student. Although family constellation was not one of the demographic indicators requested, and this information was not available for the greater SWCC college system, the parental relationship to the dual enrolled student was available. Mothers were more likely than any other type of respondent to complete and return the survey, according to the demographic information regarding which parent respondent claimed credit for completing the survey instrument. Mothers of dual enrollment students were 73% more likely to be respondent of record. Only 3% of respondents failed to clarify their relationship to their student by not answering this question. Despite the significantly higher numbers of mothers responding to the survey, no significant statistical importance can be attached to these results because there were no follow-up questions clarifying the

nature of the overall family structure. No significant conclusion can be drawn from this demographic data (See Table 4).

Table 4

Parental Relationship to Dual Enrollment Student

Parental Relationship						
Mother	Father	Grandmother	Grandfather	Guardian	No report	Total
43	11	2	0	1	2	59

Note. Data derived from parent demographic questions appended to the beginning of the Parent Survey Instrument (Appendix A).

Grade level and semesters enrolled. As anticipated, the majority of students whose parents responded to the survey were high school juniors and seniors. Dual enrollment programs were initially designed to supplement upper-grade level high school students in an attempt to provide challenging academic opportunities (Karp et al., 2007).

The returned demographic data tended to reinforce the expected pattern of student enrollment distribution for dual enrollment programs. Responding parents indicated that 88% of their students were either high school juniors or seniors while only 10% reported that they were parents of freshman or sophomores.

The total number of actual semesters that students had attended college was consistent with the percentage of dual enrollment students registered as seniors. The majority of students registered in the dual enrollment program through the SWCC community college system were either juniors with 29% or seniors with 59%. The remaining 12% were either freshman or sophomores in high school (See Table 5).

Table 5

Reported Grade Level and Number of Semesters of College Classes

Student Grade Level and Number of Semesters of College Credit						
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	No Report	Total
# of Students	4 (.07)	2 (.03)	17 (.29)	35 (.59)	1 (.02)	59 (1.0)

Number of semester hours taken by dual enrollment students						
	1	2	3	4	5+	No report
# of Semesters	21(.36)	21(.26)	4 (.05)	6 (.10)	2 (.03)	6 (.10)

Note. Data derived from parent demographic questions appended to the beginning of the Parent Survey Instrument (See Appendix A). Parentheses represent the relative percentages based on a total of 59 parent responses.

First generation students. Another question in the demographic survey determined the number of students who were the first generation in their family to attend college. Eighty percent of parents reported that their student was not the first generation to have attended college (See Table 6).

Table 6

First Member of the Family to Attend College or University

First Family Member to Attend College			
Yes	No	No report	Total
12 (.20)	47 (.80)	0	59 (1.0)

Note. Data derived from parent demographic questions appended to the beginning of the Parent Survey Instrument (Appendix A). Parentheses represent the relative percentages based on a total of 59 parent responses.

Educational level of parents who responded. Parents were asked to provide information about the highest level of education attained by either parent or guardian responsible for the dual enrollment student. Of the parents who responded, the majority had at least some post-secondary education. At least 78% of responding parents had

completed some level of college, with 51% of these parents attaining a bachelor's degree or higher (See Table 7).

Table 7

Highest Educational Level Attained by Either Parent in the Household

Highest Educational Level Attained							Total
M.S. (6 th – 8 th)	H.S. (9 th – 12 th)	A.A. or Vocational	Bachelor's	Master's	Ph.D.	No Report	
1 (.02)	12 (.20)	16 (.27)	15 (.25)	8 (.14)	7 (.12)	0	1 (.02)

Note. Data derived from parent demographic questions appended to the beginning of the Parent Survey Instrument (Appendix A). Parentheses represent the relative percentages based on a total of fifty-nine parent responses.

Demographic Information Summary

It was hoped that the demographic information might reveal some additional information usable in interpreting the correlation data in the survey. However, because of the small sample size ($n=59$ parents) the demographic information was not generally useful statistically. To summarize the demographic information, 79% of the parents responding to the survey earned between \$5,000 and \$100,000 in annual household income. Only 15% were either above or below these income limits. The gender distribution represented by the students of responding parents roughly corresponded to the percentages witnessed for community college enrollment, with females (56%) slightly outnumbering male student (41%). The gender distribution was roughly equal for each campus in the SWCC system, with the exception of West Campus, which had four parent responses, of which all were the parents of female students. No parents of male students responded from this campus.

Mothers comprised 73% of the respondents of the dual enrollment students. Fathers represented approximately 18% of respondents, with grandparents or guardians rounding out the last 9%. Of the returned surveys, 88% percent of the dual enrollments who parents responded were either juniors or seniors in high school. Only 3% were high school sophomores and 4% were actually freshman in high school. Likewise, due to the majority of dual enrollment students being either juniors or seniors, the average number of semesters in dual enrollment was less than three.

Survey Results

Descriptive statistics and Pearson's product-moment correlation (r) results are reported next. Because parent responses were low, it was determined that it was not possible to generalize the survey responses for all dual enrollment students in the SWCC system with any degree of certainty or reliability, with a confidence level of only 57% according to Raosoft's (2004) formula.

Pearson's r assesses the degree to which two variables are linearly correlated, which provides an index of the effect size. The r index ranges from +1 to -1, in effect measuring the degree how well high scores on one variable correlate with low scores on another variable. If variance between high r scores and low r scores are similar, significance can be said to exist and a correlation exists (Green & Salkind, 2010). In our correlation, the r values did not contrast reasonably well enough to indicate a significant finding between our parent responses to the survey questions and student success (cumulative GPA) at least a $p < .05$ levels

Descriptive Statistics

Looking at the mean average for each of the questions answered by the parents, it can be seen that the average mean (x) for most of the questions fell between 2.30 and 3.0, which was midway between the most desirable and the less desirable behavior responses. On average, respondents scored above 3.0 on Questions #7 and #9. Question #7 asked, “*Do you usually know when your dual enrollment student has an exam or paper due in their college classes?*” and Question #9, asked the “*How often do you ask your dual enrollment student to sit down and tell you what has happened on an ordinary day in school?*” Both questions received a more favorable response, suggesting that communications about impending exams and papers and the frequency with which parents communicated with their dual enrollment student tended to be both positive and frequent. Means are presented by individual question without respect to latent variable association (See Table 8).

Table 8

Average Mean Answer for Question #1 through Question #10 on Parent Survey Instrument

Average Mean Scores on Parent Survey										
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Mean	2.54	2.97	2.88	2.39	2.31	2.46	2.95	3.08	3.37	2.98

Note: N=59

As stated previously, the 10 questions that made up the parent survey instrument were grouped into five categories or latent variables based on the similarities of the information that each question solicited. Latent variable 1 included only Question #1 and was identified as, “*Willingness to share.*” Latent variable #2 included questions #2 and

#3 on the survey instrument and was categorized as, “*Desire to disclose.*” Latent variable #3 included questions #4 and #5 and was categorized as, “*Response to challenges.*” Latent variable #4 included questions #6, #7, #8, and #10 and was categorized as, “*Parent’s knowledge.*” Finally, latent variable #5 included only question #9, and was categorized as, “*Frequency of communications.*”

Assuming that all five latent variables addressed parent perceptions regarding their access to their dual enrollment students’ academic progress information, the average mean remains very similar. The arithmetic mean response across all five latent variables lies at around 2.729. Again, due to the limited number of parent responses, the standard deviation varied greatly from a low of .628 to a high of 1.023. This range was consistently too large to be statistically significant (See Table 9).

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for the Latent Variables

	Independent Variable Statistics				
	Latent 1 Willingness to share	Latent 2 Desire to disclose	Latent 3 Response to challenges	Latent 4 Parent knowledge	Latent 5 Frequency of communications
Mean	2.542	2.924	2.331	2.869	2.983
Std. Deviation	.628	.908	1.023	.763	.900
Variance	.390	.826	1.048	.583	.810
Skewness	-1.043	-.407	.652	-.093	-.847

Note. N=59.

The results obtained from the descriptive statistics of the survey results, average mean response ($x=2.729$) by parents to the survey questions, suggested that according to the set of parents who did chose to respond, most enjoyed a positive communication experience between themselves and their dual enrollment student.

Correlational Statistics

A bivariate correlation procedure demonstrated that for the 59 parent responses, no significant correlation existed between archived cumulative GPA's and any of the latent variables. Despite the small sample size, the alternative hypothesis is accepted on the assumption that had the sample size been larger it is possible that alternative hypothesis would have been demonstrated to be true. Therefore, I failed to reject the alternate hypothesis. It is possible that had more parents responded a stronger correlation might have been made supporting the alternative hypothesis (See Table 10).

Table 10

Correlation between Cumulative GPA and Latent Variables.

	Latent 1 Willingness to share	Latent 2 Desire to disclose	Latent 3 Response to challenges	Latent 4 Parent knowledge	Latent 5 Frequency of communications
GPA					
Pearson's <i>r</i>	.931	.100	-0.420	.061	.050
Sig. (2- tail)	.816	.453	.750	.648	.705

Note. $N=59$

Likewise, I ran a correlation matrix for individual questionnaire items and cumulative GPAs. The purpose was to determine if, on the individual question level, there might be a particular question pertaining to parent perception that was statistically significant and related to parents' feelings about student success. However, as with the correlation between the latent variables and cumulative GPA, no statistically significant correlation appeared. The results were consistent between the two correlation matrices (Table 11).

Table 11

Correlation between Cumulative GPA and Individual Survey Questions.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
GPA										
Pearson's <i>r</i>	.033	-.014	.194	-.034	-.033	.021	.109	.002	.716	.118
Sig. (2-tail)	.807	.918	.145	.800	.804	.873	.415	.990	.716	.379

Note. $N=59$

Another bivariate correlation was run looking at within category relations between the latent variables. In this case, when the latent variables were correlated against one another, significance between latent variables was demonstrated. Latent variable #1, "*Willingness to share*," corresponded significantly with latent variables #2, (*Desire to disclose*), at $r(59) = .636, p < .01$, latent variable #3, (*Response to challenges*), at $r(59) = .335, p < .01$ level. Latent variable #1 also demonstrated significance when correlated against latent variable #4 (*Parent knowledge*) at $r(59) = .441, p < .01$. However, it did not demonstrate significance to latent variable #5 (*Frequency of communications*). This result suggested that parents were 99% likely to respond to questions related to latent variable #1, #2, #3, and #4 similarly, but frequency of questioning (latent variable #5) did not necessarily correlate to the nature of information disclosure or student response to difficulties (See Table 12).

Table 12

Correlation within Categories between Latent Variables.

	Latent 1 Willingness to share	Latent 2 Desire to disclose	Latent 3 Response to challenges	Latent 4 Parent knowledge	Latent 5 Frequency of communications
Latent 1 Pearson's <i>r</i> Sig. (2-tail)		.636** .000	.335** .010	.441** .000	.201 .128
Latent 2 Pearson's <i>r</i> Sig. (2-tail)	.636** .000		.463** .000	.644** .000	.357** .000
Latent 3 Pearson's <i>r</i> Sig. (2-tail)	.335** .010	.463** .000		.302** .020	.053 .690
Latent 4 Pearson's <i>r</i> Sig. (2-tail)	.441** .000	.644** .000	.302** .020		.536** .000
Latent 5 Pearson's <i>r</i> Sig. (2-tail)	.201 .125	.357** .006	.053 .610	.536** .000	

Notes. *N* = (59)

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Further clarification can be demonstrated with individual questions correlated against one another. Significance was found between individual questions within the survey. Significance was found at both the .03 level $r(59)=10, p < .03$ and at the .05 level, $(59)=10, p < .05$. Question #1 (*Willingness to share*) was found to correlate significantly to Questions #2, #3, #5, #6, #7, #8, and #10, at the $(59)=10, p < .03$ level. Questions #2 and #3 constituted latent variable #2 (*Desire to disclose*). While Questions #6, #7, #8, and #10 constituted latent variable #4 (*Parent knowledge*). This means that parents were mostly likely to respond similarly to each of these questions ninety-seven percent of the time ($p < .03$).

Conversely, latent variable #5 (*Frequency of communications*) consisted of just one question on the survey, Question #9. Question #9 asked, “How frequently do you sit down with your dual enrollment student and talk about academic progress and activities at college?” Question #9 correlated with Question #2, “Does your dual enrollment student usually want to tell how he/she is doing in school?” at $r(59) = .360, p < .01$. Question #9 also correlated significantly with Question #3, “does your dual enrollment student tell how he/she is doing in different subjects in school?” at $r(59) = .305, p < .05$. This significance suggested that parents were likely to respond similarly to these three questions ninety-five to ninety-seven percent of the time (See Table 13).

Table 13

Bivariate Correlation: Pearson's r and Significance Results between Individual Survey Questions and Cumulative GPA within Questions.

	GPA	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
q1											
Pearson's r	.033	1	.752**	.440**	.128	.489**	.402**	.316**	.463**	.222	.533**
Sig. (2-tail)	.807		.000	.001	.337	.000	.002	.016	.000	.094	.000
q2											
Pearson's r	-.014	.752**	1	.710**	.255	.599**	.482**	.382**	.657**	.360**	.649**
Sig. (2-tail)	.918	.000		.000	.054	.000	.000	.003	.000	.005	.000
q3											
Pearson's r	.194	.440**	.719**	1	.258	.512**	.454**	.448**	.664**	.305*	.400**
Sig. (2-tail)	.145	.001	.000		.051	.000	.000	.000	.000	.020	.002
q4											
Pearson's r	-	.128	.255	.258	1	.368	.089	.118	.296	.037	.004
Sig. (2-tail)	.034	.337	.054	.051		.004	.505	.378	.024	.780	.979
	.800										
q5											
Pearson's r	-	.489**	.599**	.512**	.368**	1	.401**	.367**	.486**	.140	.345**
Sig. (2-tail)	.033	.000	.0000	.000	.004		.002	.005	.000	.293	.293
	.804										
q6											
Pearson's r	.021	.402**	.482**	.454**	.089	.401**	1	.846**	.512**	.284**	.413**
Sig. (2-tail)	.873	.002	.000	.000	.505	.002		.000	.000	.000	.000
q7											
Pearson's r	.109	.316*	.382**	.448**	.118	.367**	.846**	1	.557**	.187	.451**
Sig. (2-tail)	.415	.016	.003	.000	.378	.005	.000		.000	.159	.000
q8											
Pearson's r	.002	.463**	.657**	.664**	.296*	.486**	.512**	.357**	1	.248	.660**
Sig. (2-tail)	.990	.000	.000	.000	.024	.000	.000	.000		.060	.000
q9											
Pearson's r	.049	.222	.360**	.305*	.037	.140	.284*	.187	.248	1	.110
Sig. (2-tail)	.716	.094	.005	.020	.780	.293	.031	.159	.060		.413
q10											
Pearson's r	.118	.533**	.649**	.400**	.004	.345**	.413**	.451**	.669**	.110	1
Sig. (2-tail)	.379	.000	.000	.002	.979	.008	.001	.001	.000	.413	

Notes. $N=59$

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Bivariate correlations were run relating cumulative GPA to the demographic questions asked of the parents. From among the seven questions asked to parents on the survey instrument, two appeared significantly related—SES and highest educational attainment by a parent in the household. None of the demographic indicators demonstrated a significant correlation to cumulative GPA and students' success.

Significance was demonstrated between the demographic indicators for SES and highest educational level attained by parent or parents in a household, $r(59) = .302$, $p < .05$. This suggested that there remains a correlation between the highest educational level attained by a parent or other responsible adult in the household and the annual economic income that is represented by that household. It does not indicate any relationship to student's ability to achieve or perform in their college courses (See Table 14).

Table 14

Demographic Correlation between SES and Highest Educational Level Attained by a Parent in the Household.

Demographic Correlation		SES
Highest educational level attained by parent in household	Pearson's r	.302*
	Sig (Two-tailed)	.023

Note. $N = 59$

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

However, when statistics were run between cumulative GPA and individual questions, splitting the cases using the demographic indicators, five interesting correlations appeared. First, a significant correlation was identified between cumulative GPA and Question #4—*“Do you have a feeling that it's hard for your dual enrollment student to cope with things, making it hard for him/her not do as well in school academically as he/she normally does?”* – for students whose parents who lacked any college experience. For these students, higher grades were correlated with parents' perception that it was difficult for their students to cope ($r(30) = .511$, $p < .01$ level, see Table 15).

In a second instance, cumulative GPA and Question #7—*Do you usually know when your dual enrollment student has an exam or paper due in school?*—were correlated for newly enrolled students. Students enrolled for a single semester whose parents knew when exams or assignments were due had higher grades ($r(21) = .560$, $p < .01$ level, see Table 15).

For parents whose annual household income fall between \$5000 to \$30,000, related to Questions #3, and Question #10 were correlated with cumulative GPA. Question #3 was, "*Does your dual enrollment student tell how he/she is doing in the different subjects in school?*" and Question #10 was, "*Do you trust that your dual enrollment student is doing his/her best in school?*" The correlation result for Question #3 was $r(15) = .525$, $p < .05$ and the correlation result for Question #10 was $r(15) = .562$, $p < .05$ level (See Table 15).

Negative significance was found for those families that had an annual household income between \$30,000 and \$60,000. Using this SES indicator to investigate a relationship between cumulative GPA and the survey questions, a negative significant correlation was found with Question #8—*Do you know when your dual enrollment student has an exam or paper due in school?* Parents of this middle-income bracket demonstrated a negative relationship between their perceived knowledge and the success of their dual enrollment students in college. This subgroup of parents contended that they perceived that they have knowledge of how well their dual enrollment student was performing in college, yet their students had lower overall cumulative GPAs. Significance was demonstrated at $r(19) = -.475$, $p < .05$ level (See Table 15).

Finally, for those families who identified their student as the first member of their family to attend college, a significant finding occurred with Question #4—*Do you have the feeling that it's hard for your dual enrollment to cope with things, making him/her do not as well in school academically as he/she normally does?* A significant correlation ($r(12) = .699, p < .05$ level, see Table 15). was found between parents' who perceived that their student had difficulty coping with challenges in their college courses, and their student's cumulative GPA. This correlation existed among those parents whose students who were the first member in the household to attend college. Parent's responses for this subgroup suggested that the parents perceived that they were aware of their student's academic performance, yet their students continued to have lower cumulative GPAs.

Table 15

Demographic Indicators as a Condition for Correlating Cumulative GPA and Survey Question Responses.

Demographic Indicators	Q #4	Q#7	Cumulative GPA		
			Questions Q#3& Q#7	Q#10	Q#8
Parents lacking any college experience	Pearson's <i>r</i> .511** Sig (2-tailed) .004 (n=30)				
Only having one semester college as dual enrollment student		Pearson's <i>r</i> .560** Sig (2-tailed) .008 (n=21)			
Annual Family Income between \$5000-\$30,000			Pearson's <i>r</i> .525* Sig (2-tailed) .045 (n=15)	Pearson's <i>r</i> .562* Sig (2-tailed) .029 (n=15)	
Annual Family Income between \$30,000-\$60,000					Pearson's <i>r</i> -.475* Sig (2-tailed) .040 (n=19)
First member in the family to attend college.	Pearson's <i>r</i> .669* Sig (2-tailed) .017 (n=12)				

Note. *N* = 59

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Limitations

There were a number of mitigating factors that occurred during the data collection process limiting the results.

1. The sample size was smaller than hoped ($N=59$), providing for only a 6.81% sample out of $N=867$ possible parents who were sent the surveys.

2. 60 parent surveys out of the 867 possible were returned as undeliverable, as the mailing address information provided by SWCC was incorrect. This apparently has been a problem for both the college as many of its families were mobile and often slow to update new address information.

3. Individual grades for specific core courses in English, math, and science were missing in too many cases to warrant statistical analysis.

4. Since ethnicity data was not collected, there was no way to correlate this variable with educational attainment. Given the diversity of the population represented at the various campuses, other correlations might exist but could not be determined from the demographic information collected.

Summary

This chapter explored the relationship between the parents' perceptions regarding their ability to access timely academic progress information about their dual enrollment students, and students' success in college courses, measured by cumulative GPA. Based on the initial results of the correlation where cumulative GPA and the latent variable categories were correlated, no significant relationship was discerned. A second statistical analysis was run between cumulative GPA and the individual survey questions. No significant relationships were demonstrated. A third statistical approach used bivariate analysis to split cases, whereby cumulative GPA and individual survey questions were

correlated using the demographic indicators as conditional factors. In this case six relationships were found as significant relating parent perceptions to student success.

A significance was found to exist between cumulative GPA and Question #4 for parents who lacked any college experience themselves. Question #4, relating to parents' perception about their students having trouble coping when college courses became difficult. Significance was also seen between cumulative GPA and Question #7 among those parents whose student was in his or her first semester of taking college classes. Question #7 asked if parents were aware when their student had a major paper or exam due.

For parents whose annual household income was between \$5000 and \$30,000 significant correlations were found between cumulative GPA and parent perceptions about their student's disclosure of how well they are doing in their different college subjects (Question #3) and if parents had trusted that their student was doing their best in their college courses (Question #10).

The second SES correlation occurred among the families with an annual household income ranging between \$30,000 and \$60,000. These responding parents perceived that college success and cumulative GPA was negatively related to how well parents perceived that they had sufficient information to know how well their students were performing in their individual college subjects (Question #8).

Finally, significance was demonstrated with those parents whose student was the first member in the family to attend college. For these parents there was a connection

between student success and parents' perception of the ability of their student to cope when college classes became challenging (Question #4).

Despite the fact that I was not able to directly find a significant correlation between the latent variable categories, nor the individual questions directly associated with student success, correlations were demonstrated when demographic data was included as a conditional indicator. Because of the small sample size, it is unknown whether the alternative hypothesis would be better supported with a larger sample. For the entire sample the alternative hypothesis was not supported; however, there was support for the alternative hypothesis when the sample was divided into subgroups with some categories indicating that significance existed for some of the factors of parental perception. For these subgroups null hypothesis was rejected.

The responding parents made up only 6.8% of the total dual enrollment parents who were sent survey instrument. However, when the distribution of the parents who responded was compared to the distribution of dual enrollments students registered at each campus, the proportions of parents who responded and the number of students actually enrolled at each campus were similar. Given the proportion was representative for each campus and respondents, it was possible to conclude that the sample might be considered representative of the dual enrollment population for the SWCC system overall.

The results obtained from the descriptive statistics of the survey results showed an average mean response ($x = 2.729$) by parents to the survey questions. This suggested that according to the parents who did chose to respond, most enjoyed a positive

communication experience between themselves and their dual enrollment student. This may account for lack of significant correlation.

Demographic data demonstrated a relationship between students who were the first generation in their family to attend college and those students' success. Based upon the background of the parent who returned the surveys, the majority of the parents had at least some post-secondary college experience. Statistical significance was found to exist between annual household income (SES) and the highest level of education attained by a parent or guardian in the household.

The implications from the statistical analysis and instrumentation validity will be discussed further in Chapter 5. Implications and suggestions for further research into parent perceptions and dual enrollment student success will also be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the correlation between parents' perception of their access to academic progress information and their dual enrollment high school students' academic success in college-level courses. The independent variable was the parents' perceptions of access to academic progress information of their dual enrollment student. The dependent variable was the students' academic success in college courses. Their archived cumulative GPA measured student's success. Parents' responses from the survey instrument and the student's cumulative GPA's supplied by SWSS were correlated using Pearson's r , looking for significance. No significance was demonstrated when the cumulative GPAs and the survey questions were correlated against one another. However, when cumulative GPAs and survey questions were correlated using split cases with the demographic indicators, six interesting correlations appeared. Outside of these split case correlations, correlations between parents' perception of information access to academic information and student's success was not demonstrated.

Interpretation of the Findings

Dual enrollment programs were designed CBTP programs allowing high school students the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school (Karp et al., 2007; Williams & Southers, 2010). Other researchers (Berger et al. 2009; Berger et al., 2010; Karp et al., 2007; and Swanson, 2008) found that students enrolled in dual enrollment programs experienced increased successes in their postsecondary education. The result of that research suggested that dual enrollment students earned higher

cumulative GPAs overall. It also suggested that those students were more likely to continue postsecondary education after graduation from high school and complete their AA or higher degrees. It was therefore apparent that the research agreed with the results found by Doo and Schneider (2005) that quality communications between the parents and their students was a major component in increasing student academic success.

The research for this study focused on parents' perception of their ability to access timely academic progress information as a method of exercising parent monitoring of their dual enrollment students. The modified Stattin and Kerr (2000) survey instrument sought to measure the perception by parents of the efficacy of their parent/student communications practices given the difficulties encountered in acquiring direct information from SWCC.

Initial analysis failed to find correlations between reported perceptions of parent monitoring practices and student success. Student success was identified by using the dual enrollment student's cumulative GPA scores as provided by SWCC, correlated against parent responses to the modified Stattin and Kerr (2010) survey instrument. The survey questions were grouped together into five latent constructs according to the nature of the information they were designed to solicit from the parents. These included latent constructs: (a) willingness to share, (b) desire to disclose, latent construct, (c) response to challenges, (d) parent knowledge, and (e) frequency of communications. Using Pearson's r in a two-tailed bivariate analysis, no significance was demonstrated to exist between the 59 responding parents' perception of their ability to access academic information relating to their dual enrollment student and the student's academic success (Table 12).

This lack of visible correlation was explained by the demographics represented by the sample population of parents who responded to the survey instrument. If the demographic make-up of the responding parents is considered, it can be seen that the majority of respondents to the survey had at least one parent in the household who identified themselves as having at least some level of post-secondary experience. In fact, the majority of parents who responded (78%) had at least some community college experience or higher (Table 7). Because most responding parents had some previous college experience, they may have had the social knowledge about the college experience that allowed them to understand the demands that occur when students become involved in college classes. This high level of monitoring is reflected in their responses on the survey and made it difficult to assess possible effect of low level monitoring. These parents seemed to have known the importance of closer parental monitoring and appeared to have developed a better avenue of communications with their dual enrollment student. In addition, parent/student communication practices, although not accessed in this research, may be an important component in understanding the results.

Not finding a correlation between the dependent and independent variables, an additional analysis was conducted with cumulative GPA and each individual survey question. Like the analysis executed between GPA and the latent variable categories, no significance was demonstrated in the Pearson r values. Although that outcome might have been expected, I felt it important to at least run the correlation between individual questions.

The analysis between GPA and individual survey questions demonstrated some

direct significance between the selections that parents chose to answer for certain questions. An examination of the Table 13 results found that the parents' answers to Question #1 (*willingness to share*) was found to correlate significantly with Questions #2, #3, #5, #6, #7, #8, and #10. Questions #2 and #3 constituted latent variable #2 (*desire to disclose*). While Questions #6, #7, #8, and #10 constituted latent variable #4 (*parent knowledge*).

Question #9 correlated with Question #2, "*Does your dual enrollment student usually want to tell how he/she is doing in school?*" Question #9 also correlated significantly with Question #3, "*Does your dual enrollment student tell how he/she is doing in different subjects in school?*" (Table 13). This result would suggest that parents perceived that they had a satisfactory to above satisfactory level of communications with their dual enrollment student. When parents solicited information about their student's academic progress, either as to their overall progress or regarding individual subjects, their student was most likely to disclose this information in the parents' perception. Once again, this might be related to the higher level of academic background represented by the sampling population who chose to respond to the survey.

These results were consistent with previous research into parent monitoring. Darling and Steinberg (1993) found that when parents were more involved in the monitoring of their students' academic performance, there was a tendency for students to perform at a higher level and experience greater success in college. Hooker and Brand (2010) suggested that parents who did not have post-secondary experience may lack the social capital in the form of "college knowledge" (p. 77) necessary to provide assistance

to their dual enrollment student that parents with post-secondary experience might have. Parents with college experience are likely to have an increased awareness of the demands presented by college level courses. Because of the higher level of educational background experience for the parents in my research sample, this may explain the greater level of perceived academic success in the research sample.

Finally, another analysis was executed using split-case correlations where cumulative GPAs were correlated with the individual survey responses with the inclusion of the demographic indicators acting as a conditional variable. When all the responses were run against the cumulative GPAs and each demographic indicator was included in a split-case conditional analysis, six statistically significant relationships instances were found.

A significant relationship was determined to exist between cumulative GPA and perceptions of coping skills (Question #4) for parents who did not have any post-secondary education. Parents without college experience, who were concerned about their student's coping skills, had students who performed well academically. Their students demonstrated higher levels of success in the first year of the dual enrollment program (Table 15). This result appeared contrary to the finding that the students who had at least one parent with postsecondary experience tended to be more successful. This correlation, however, might suggest that, at least initially, parents who lacked postsecondary experience might exhibit a closer level of parental monitoring, due to increased concern about their student's coping skills. This conclusion might suggest that these parents realize the opportunity their student is receiving and hope they take

advantage of an opportunity that they, themselves, may have been unable to experience.

A second relationship was found to be significant between cumulative GPA and students who were in their first semester of college courses in the dual enrollment program (Question #7). This question dealt with parents' perception that they were aware when their student had a major paper or exam due in their college courses. Like correlation with Question #4, parents of new students in the dual enrollment program perceived that they had adequate information about their dual enrollment student's academic success in college courses. Once again, this may be a result of their students being new to the program and the parents wanting to exercise greater diligence in their monitoring practices to assure their student gets off to a solid start in college.

Significance was also demonstrated when cumulative GPA was correlated in a split-case analysis with survey questions #3 and #10, and the SES. The group of parent respondents representing the annual household income between \$30,000 and \$60,000 demonstrated a strong significant relationship between Questions #3 and #10, and cumulative GPA (Table 15). Question #3 dealt with how willing a student is about disclosing how he/she is doing in their different college subjects while Question #10 related to the level of trust that a parent has in their perception that their dual enrollment student is doing his/her best in college. The parents in this SES group felt more confident that their students were disclosing adequate information about their college performance in different subjects, and that they trusted that their students were doing their best in college.

Significance was demonstrated with the group of families whose annual

household income was in the \$60,000 to \$100,000 income bracket when correlated against cumulative GPA and Question #8. Question #8 referred to whether parents are aware of how well their students are achieving in their college courses. Parents in this income bracket appeared to feel reasonably comfortable that they were aware of their student's academic achievement. However, the correlation was negatively expressed, suggesting that parents were less worried and their students were also not doing as well. Otherwise, it is unclear at this point as to why this correlation existed.

Finally, a significant relationship was demonstrated in the split-case analysis among parents whose student was the first member of the family to attend college when correlated against cumulative GPAs and Question #4. Question #4 dealt with the parents' perception whether their student had difficulty coping when faced with academic challenges in the college classes. These parents whose students are the first in the family to attend college perceived their student was experiencing difficulty coping; however, these students were more successful. This relationship may point to additional concern on the part of the parents if they perceive that their student is having trouble coping. This concern may translate into a higher degree of parent interest in their student's academic performance resulting in an increase in parent monitoring practices and increase in the level of parent solicitation of academic information.

In summary, because the sample was so limited in the number of parents who responded, it is hard to say with any assurance that direct correlation existed between parental perceptions of the ability to access timely academic progress information and the success of their dual enrollment student in college. Bivariate analysis with Pearson's r to

correlate cumulative GPAs and the parents' responses to the survey instrument was unsuccessful. No significance could be established that demonstrated a relationship between the way parents overall responded to the survey questions and the cumulative GPA of their dual enrollment student. Because most of the respondents had at least one parent in the household who had at least some college experience (78%) this might explain the similarities in the pattern of parent responses.

The most interesting development occurred when a split-case analysis was carried out, when cumulative GPAs were correlated with the individual survey questions using a demographic conditional, as an "If" condition. In that analysis, six significant relationships were discovered. One involved the students whose families claimed not to have had any post-secondary background. The dual enrollment students in these families tended to have higher cumulative GPAs. Another relationship was demonstrated between first-semester dual enrollment enrollees and their GPAs. Parents of these students reported perceiving that they had a greater handle on student performance and knowledge of student progress, leading to a propensity for their dual enrollment students having higher cumulative GPAs in their first semester.

Two significant relationships between two SES groups were also identified. In the households with an annual income between \$30,000 to \$60,000 annually, there was positive correlation between parents' perception of how their student was performing in their different college subjects and their student's maintaining a higher cumulative GPA. The second relationship that demonstrated significance related to SES involved those families who reported an annual household income between \$60,000 and \$100,000. The

interesting aspect of this correlation was that it was the only negative correlation to appear throughout the research analysis. A negative relationship appeared in families in this SES income bracket, where these parents perceived that they were aware of their student's progress in their individual college subjects and their students tended to have lower cumulative GPAs overall.

Lastly, a relationship was demonstrated between parents who reported that their student was the first member of their family to attend college and college success. Parents in this group indicated that they thought that it was their student found it difficult to cope with the increased challenges posed by the college courses. Conversely, their dual enrollment student's tended to have higher cumulative GPAs.

To summarize, when the sample was divided into subgroups, a significant relationship between a perceptions that students found it harder to cope with increased college academic demands and a high cumulative GPA was found for parents of first generation college goers. Perhaps parents who perceived their student as having an increased difficulty in coping may increase the degree of parent monitoring in order to assure that their student is successful in their college courses. A larger sampling size may or may not have found this pattern to be consistent for all first generation college goers across demographic boundaries.

The same can be stated for families who reported that neither parent in the household had post-secondary experience. In the sample of families who responded to my research, significant correlation existed between parents' perception that their students had difficulty coping with the increased demand associated with college classes

and cumulative GPA. These findings suggest that parents who do not have post-secondary experiences—either in the form of a past student in their family having attended college, or themselves having college—may be more vigilant in their parent monitoring practices, or, due perhaps to their lack of first-hand knowledge, worried more about their student’s coping compared to parents who have had college experience. This vigilance may be a result of these parents recognizing how important this college experience is for their student due to their inexperience or opportunity to access to a post-secondary education.

Another question raised from the research results would be why do the parents in the upper middle SES bracket (\$60,000 to \$100,000) perceive that they know how well their high school student is performing in college, but their student actually has a lower cumulative GPA? It is unclear what underlying factor would make parents in this SES group feel that their access to information is adequate, despite the fact that their students perform less well.

It remains unknown to what extent the demographic groups underrepresented, or absent from my sampling population practice parental monitoring of their dual enrollment student. It is unknown how often, or to what extent non-sampled parents attempt to solicit academic progress information, either through formal pathway, such as through the SWCC system itself, or through less formal pathways such as soliciting information from their student. The results obtained from my research do not adequately address this question or concern.

Despite the limited sample size, there was enough positive evidence to accept the alternative hypothesis that parent perception of their access to academic progress information was associated with the success of their dual enrollment student in college, but only for certain demographic subgroups. Regardless of the source of the progress information, student disclosure or institutional solicitation for information, most of the parents in the survey were confident about their knowledge and access as it related to their student's academic success.

Limitations of the Findings

Previous research in the area of dual enrollment programs had been limited to the perceptions held by dual enrollment student participants, professors in the cooperating community colleges who were forced to teach high school students, administrators for both high schools and cooperating institutions, and politicians seeking to advance policy initiatives. Little if any research included the perspective of the parents of dual enrollment students and their perspectives on the success or failures of the programs for their students. This research study sought to attempt to fill that gap and advance the dialog regarding the continued success of CBTPs heading into the future by including the parent's voice to the dialog. The small number of parents who responded limited the outcomes of this research, and therefore, the results must be tempered with a certain degree of caution. If there had been a larger response from parents, increasing the sample size, a greater degree of certainty and clarity might have been obtained.

Another limitation within the data set remained the nature of the demographic relationship of the parents who chose to respond to the survey instrument. The majority

of those parents who responded professed to at least one parent in the family having had post-secondary experience and having earned a post-secondary degree. One of the primary goals of CBTP's is to provide opportunities for not only those students needing further academic challenges, but also as an opportunity for marginalized populations, minority populations, and students who are the first generation in their family to attend college (Karp et al., 2007; Ortiz, 2008). These populations were underrepresented in my sampling population. Of the 867 households who were sent survey instrument, only 59 families chose to respond, a sample size representing 6.81% of the total population of students enrolled in the SWCC system that were high school dual enrollment students under the age of eighteen years old. Demographic information reported for the state dual enrollment programs and the local geographic area serviced by the SWCC system suggested that there should be a broader demographic representation than what the sampling population that responded suggests. Reported demographics suggested that there should be a greater number of families from lower SES income brackets, plus more families representing first generation college attendees, and a larger number of families that did not have either parent member with post-secondary experience of a college degree. Local reporting also suggested that there were larger numbers of students identified as the first person in their family to attend college. However, my sample population only reported 22% of families reported that their student was the first member of their family to attend college.

The final limitation was related to the methodology used to connect with the parents of dual enrollment students in the SWCC system. Because so many of the

families in the SWCC system do not have access to the internet at home, the only avenue left for contacting the sampling population was through a mass mailing. As the director of the SWCC Institutional Research Office pointed out in our initial conversations regarding permissions to use the SWCC system as the cooperating institution, the SWCC system itself has not had an overall positive success with parents responding to mailed surveys. The limited response to my survey mailing bore out this observation, which resulted in a small number of participants responding to the research request.

The original research question asked whether parents' perception of their ability to acquire timely academic progress information about the academic achievement of their dual enrollment students in their college classes would be perceived as a hindrance to their students' college success. The reason behind the difficulty in information access was created by the FERPA regulations limiting the access to personal information, including grades, which the institution can give out regarding the student enrolled at that school. The sample size did not allow me fully address this question.

Recommendations

More research needs to focus on the parents of several demographic groups underrepresented in my research. Based on what was known about local and statewide demographics only limited data was obtained from certain demographic groups of parents in this study. A focus on the underrepresented demographic groups could add to the results and understanding of parental monitoring and student academic success. One method of gaining access to the underrepresented groups would involve onsite visits to the individual high schools represented in the SWCC system or another school system.

At the beginning of each new school year or possibly even each new semester, it would not unreasonable to expect that each high school with a dual enrollment program through might offer a parent/student orientation meeting to discuss issues related to the program or orient new participants. A researcher might be able to coordinate with the high school counselor or program coordinator for an opportunity to meet with the dual enrollment parent/student participants during these orientation meetings. As part of this meeting, the parents could be asked to voluntarily fill out the survey instrument and accompanying consent form. Additionally, it is possible that a researcher might be able to get the cooperating high schools to arrange a special meeting for both orientation and research purposes since the population of families enrolled in the dual enrollment program.

Information on parent monitoring practices, not just their perceptions, for those parents of dual enrollment students might clarify some of the correlations obtained in this study. The onsite visits by a researcher could provide an opportunity to approach such research from a qualitative perspective. During the site visit the researcher could conduct individual interviews with parents. The interviews could be used to delve more deeply into parental monitoring practices and more detailed demographic background information. The information might provide useful in determining additional relationships between SES factors and student success and parents' perception regarding their ability to remain actively informed about their student's academic performance. Likewise, it might also provide some insight into the role that parental college knowledge or experience plays in those families where the parents who do have personal post-

secondary experience. Or, research could be specifically focused on parents who did not have post-secondary experience.

Other researchable questions were generated from the results of this study. One related to the number of dual enrollment students registered in the SWCC system who were first-year participants. Since some significance was demonstrated between the perceptions held by first-year parents regarding their ability to attain information about when their student had important assignment due dates and the success their student was having in their college classes, three possible research questions arise: (a) Were the parent's positive feelings about their information acquisition a result of parents' post-secondary experience? In other words, do parents with some college experience know to be more diligent in their parent monitoring and have established a more meaningful dialogue with their student about academic matters? (b) Would the insight and attention to deadlines and assignments translate to dual enrollment families where the parents in the household lack post-secondary background experience if training and orientation to the dual enrollment experience were studied? Since parents without post-secondary experience were underrepresented in my research it would be interesting to know whether these parents exercised the same degree of parent monitoring and felt as confident in their knowledge of their students important assignments due dates as parents with college experience; (c) Does diligence in parental monitoring continue after the first semester or the first year? Once a student has completed their first semester or first year in the program with some degree of demonstrable success, do the parents continue to monitor at

the same level of diligence and intensity, or do they assume that their student just naturally continues to perform at the same degree of achievement? These are avenues of inquiry that a qualitative interview setting might be better at assessing.

A third area of inquiry would be the relationship that is hinted at from my research results: “Why do the parents in the upper middle SES bracket (\$60,000 to \$100,000) report that they perceive that they know how their high school student is performing in college, but their students have lower cumulative GPAs and academic success than other SES groups?” These results suggest that some underlying relationship exists that would make parents in this SES group feel that their access to information is adequate, but yet their students perform less well when compared to other groups. Further research into this relation is recommended as this SES group represents a transitional level between traditional boundaries between the middle class and what is considered the upper-class SES groups.

Another area of inquiry could involve the future of orientation programs offered to students by CBTPs related to choice of academic pursuits. Since my sample was heavily biased towards families who had at least one parent with post-secondary experience, and the majority of these parents held a bachelor’s degree or higher, why were students of more highly educated parents taking vocational classes, as opposed to core academic classes as part of their dual enrollment experience? Is this a local phenomenon, or is this a larger trend that is nationwide? Do colleges need to relook at the vocational programs that they offer to dual enrollment students and consider how they are positioned in relationship to core academic courses? Community college systems are

uniquely positioned to develop and offer vocational programs. Could or do vocational programs include core academic courses that dual enrollment students are avoiding? The results of this research reinforce the need for continued dialogue about the nature of curriculum offered as part of the dual enrollment programs.

Finally, additional research needs to be more inclusive beyond the demographics of the families who chose to respond in this study. Insights into how parents perceive the success of CBTPs could provide a starting point for colleges and universities to begin to assess the success of their dual enrollment programs, particularly for first-generation college students whose parents have no post-secondary education.

Implications

Parents of dual enrollment students in this study appeared to maintain an active role in monitoring their student's academic progress. Although FERPA regulations have made formal access to information somewhat more difficult, the results of my research suggested that despite these regulations parents maintain informal mechanisms for acquiring information and still feel positive that they are obtaining that information from their students. Families with prior experience with post-secondary education with either one or an older sibling appear to have the college knowledge capital to recognize the challenges presented by a high school student attending college. These families as seen by the respondents in my research have a positive perception of their access to academic progress information. Colleges and universities could build on this parental perception by supporting parents with no post-secondary education experience, particularly because they tend to fall in the SES group that represents a transitional level between traditional

boundaries between the middle class and what is considered the upper-class SES groups. If the goal of education is social mobility and economic opportunity, parents with no post-secondary experience could benefit from some support for the dual enrollment experience of their students in order to maintain parental support and involvement.

Another outcome from this research related to positive social change concerned choices of core academic courses of dual enrollment students. In this study, their choices of college courses were outside the core courses in English, math, and science. If CBTPs are interested in advancing the skills of high school students in the core academic areas, the results of this study point to a programmatic need to address student choice of college courses. As states and politicians continue to develop policies for providing increased opportunity for high school students to obtain post-secondary experiences as a method of preparing students for success after high school graduation, a need persists to keep the role of vocational careers in the forefront of their planning. Community colleges can have a significant role in providing a renewed and reinvigorated demand for careers not traditionally linked with academic pursuits, but ones that could be. Likewise, community colleges need to realize that increased demand for developing vocational programs potentially provides them with a niche not traditionally offered by larger universities.

CBTPs provide an opportunity for challenging high school students that the traditional high school may not be able to offer. They also offer a gateway for marginalized communities, minorities, and the first-generation student to enter the post-secondary world that may not have previously been available to them. Additional

mechanisms may be needed to help them develop parent monitoring strategies to assist their student and assure that he/she is successful in their college courses.

This research was related to the role that dual enrollment parents play in monitoring the academic progress of their students in their college courses. Parents monitoring success is predicated upon the quality of the communication relationship that they have or can establish and maintain with their dual enrollment student throughout their dual enrollment career. It is hoped that the present research could serve as an indication for high schools sponsoring dual enrollment programs and their sponsoring post-secondary partners to realize the importance that the role parent monitoring plays in student success. High schools could use a portion of the orientation time to apprise parents of the limitations that they will encounter due to federal information regulations (FERPA) once their students begin taking college courses. Parents who have remained actively involved in monitoring their student's academic progress through their elementary and secondary careers could benefit from the information regarding how their monitoring practices will be adversely impacted. Furthermore, high schools might be able to act as a conduit for information for student's success during the semester for parents, as they have access to information at an administrative level that respective parents lack.

Findings in this research established that SES and parental educational levels might play a significant role in the success of dual enrollments students. All dual enrollment students must pass the gate-keeping minimum academic achievement to participate in the dual enrollment program. That does not indicate the degree of success that they will achieve with the transition to college courses. College preparedness, social

maturation, and parental support appear to vary among families. Are these also affected by SES levels or by the educational background of the parents? Do parent/student actual communication practices vary according to SES levels, cultural backgrounds, or according to parental educational levels? These are all areas of future research that might have important implications as to whether students continue with their college career after high school graduation to pursue higher post-secondary education.

Finally, the move towards more students gravitating to vocational classes in dual enrollment programs should serve as an alert to secondary and post-secondary institutions to the changing values of society. These organizations might want to reassess the resurgence of society's move back toward once again accepting vocational careers as a viable alternative to academic and professional careers.

Conclusion

CBTPs have become an important supplement in the secondary educational scene over the last decade. These programs have allowed secondary institutions to provide continued academic challenges to those higher achieving students who previously were underserved and unchallenged in the traditional secondary educational setting. Likewise, they provided a gateway to college for many underrepresented communities, minority families, and lower SES families that they otherwise would have had the opportunity to experience.

Despite the popularity of the CBTPs, one of the key elements to success remains the parents' ability to monitor and provide academic support for their dual enrollment student. Time-sensitive academic progress communication between high schools and

parents of dual enrollment students could serve to provide parents with important knowledge about their students' academic demands and progress. CBTPs may also be able to increase the nature of that academic support by programs to provide families with no previous post-secondary experience and first-year students, with understanding of how to maintain communication with their students in order to continue academic success in college.

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Appendix A: Modified Stattin-Kerr Survey Instrument

The purpose of this survey is to aid in my research for my graduate Ph.D. dissertation in Education from Walden University. This research involves understanding how parents perceive the change in their ability to acquire academic information from the community college about their high school dual enrollment student. The research will compare parental perceptions with student performance and success in college classes. The actual research question asks, "What is the relationship between parents' perception of academic progress information access and the success of their dual enrollment student in college-level courses?"

I realize that your time is important and completing surveys can be perceived as inconvenient. I appreciate your participation and assure you that your input will be valuable to █████ and other colleges and universities elsewhere. The actual survey and demographic questions should only take about 15-20 minutes of your time to complete. Once completed, please sign the Parent Consent Form and place both the consent form and survey in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided in the packet.

This survey is to be filled out and returned only by parents of dual enrollment students before ***June 14, 2015.***

Family Demographics and Background

Participant Identifier # _____

I am the mother
 father
 stepmother
 stepfather
 guardian/legal guardian

Number of semesters your high school student has been enrolled in a dual enrollment program and has taken college courses? _____

Present grade level of your high school student _____

Annual Yearly Family Income: less than \$5000 \$5000 to \$30,000
 \$31,000 to \$60,000 \$61,000 to 100,000
 more than \$100,000

Is your Dual Enrollment student the first member of your household to attend college?
 Yes No

What is the highest level of education mother or father attained?

- Middle School High School Associate's Degree or Technical Degree
 Bachelor's Degree Master's degree PhD or equivalent

Dual Enrollment Parent's Perception Survey

Participant Identifier # _____

Please respond to each question below by checking the box next to the response best reflect your perceptions or opinion. Do not check more than one box per question. Please check the response for each question that most accurately reflects how you personally feel. Please, only select one answer per question.

1) During this semester, how has your dual enrollment student reacted what you asked what homework he/she had or what has happened in school during a regular weekday?

- Becomes angry and refused to answer – or did not care to answer
 Told after you had asked several times
 Told a little bit briefly
 Is glad that you asked and told a lot

2) Does your dual enrollment student usually want to tell about how he/she is going in school? (How he/she is doing in different subjects, relations with teacher, etc.)?

- Very often
 Quite often
 Now and then
 Seldom
 Almost never

3) Does your dual enrollment student tell how he/ she is doing in the different subjects in school?

- Tell almost everything
 Tell quite much
 Partly
 Keeps a lot to him/ herself
 Keeps almost all to him/ herself

- 4) Do you have the feeling that it's hard for your dual enrollment student to cope with things, making him/her not do as well in school academically as he/she normally does?
- Does not apply at all
 - Does not apply well
 - Applies fairly well
 - Applies exactly
- 5) If something is about to go wrong with your dual enrollment students' schoolwork, does he/she have a tendency to find ways to withdraw in order to cope?
- Does not apply at all
 - Does not apply well
 - Applies fairly well
 - Applies exactly
- 6) Do you usually know what homework your dual enrollment student has?
- Almost always
 - Most of the time
 - It varies
 - Seldom
 - Never
- 7) Do you usually know when your dual enrollment student has an exam or paper due in school?
- Almost always
 - Most of the time
 - It varies
 - Seldom
 - Never
- 8) Do you know how well your dual enrollment student achieves in different subjects in school?
- Yes, completely
 - Yes, quite well
 - Yes, partly
 - No, very little
 - No, nothing

9) How often do you ask your dual enrollment student to sit down and tell you what has happened on an ordinary day in school?

- Very often
- Quite often
- Now and then
- Seldom
- Almost never

10) Do you trust that your dual enrollment student is doing his/ her best in school?

- Yes, completely
- Yes, quite a lot
- Yes, partly
- No, not quite
- No, absolutely not

Thank you for participating!

Please place this survey and your signed Parent Consent Form into the self-addressed, stamp envelope and drop in the mail before **June 14, 2105**. Keep a copy of the consent form for your records.