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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

BLACK BUSINESS STUDENTS' POST-BACCALAUREATE

EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS:

WHAT ARE THEY AND FROM WHERE DO THEY ORIGINATE?

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

Lynn W. Payne
Norman, Oklahoma
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BLACK BUSINESS STUDENTS' POST-BACCALAUREATE
EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS:
WHAT ARE THEY AND FROM WHERE DO THEY ORIGINATE?

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY

Wuey B. Long
Sara Ann Beach
Raymond
Harpeck
David L. Van

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to generate grounded theory concerning post-baccalaureate employment expectations of Black college students enrolled in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs.) The objective has been addressed by determining the post-baccalaureate employment expectations, both realistic and unrealistic, of Black business students on a Black campus and by identifying where their expectations originated. The importance of this research has theoretical and practical implications for faculty and administrators involved in program planning at HBCUs. This study was based on the theoretical orientation that organizationally different types of institutions of higher education contain student bodies manifesting diverse expectations of the college experience and post-baccalaureate employment. As a holistic inquiry, this research includes a study of all identifiable elements present in the setting where the inquiry takes place. The investigation centered on an understanding through personal interviews of the social, cultural, academic and historical perspectives of the students' post-baccalaureate expectations. Participants were drawn from the School of Business roster of juniors and seniors for the summer and fall terms of 1997. The results of this study show a variance between student expectations and the realities of employment in corporate America. The data collected for this study reveal that social encounters can drastically influence an individual's view of himself and his expectations in

business. The findings indicate that unrealistic ideas concerning workplace expectations come from family, friends and a strong influence from mass media exposure.

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

The transition between the campus and the “real world” is becoming an issue of increasing interest within education, business and industry. Issues such as personal and financial autonomy, finding and adapting to a job, and personal and interpersonal issues are no longer seen as outside the higher education mission (Astin, 1993). Research about Black college students on Black college campuses is limited. That which is available has focused on student attributes and persistence, not of their college and career expectations. The attributes, backgrounds, and records of persistence described in the literature indicate that different expectations should be a fertile area for study. The student retention work of Beal and Noel (1970) reaffirms the notion that too much research has been done on the effects of family size, social status, intelligence and similar “fixed” variables rather than on those variables about which colleges can do something.

Background and Magnitude of the Problem

Many Black students enter college with inaccurate perceptions and expectations of the nature of higher education as well as with educational deficiencies and questionable motivation (Miller, 1981). Satisfying student expectations demands that educators identify, acknowledge, and address appropriate expectations for the college

experience and the workplace. In general, preparation for the workplace is affected by the degree to which college expectations are met (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Administrators of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) do not have much information on how well their curricula and environments meet the expectations of the Black students. Hedegard and Brown (1969) noted that on White campuses, Black students are generally less satisfied than Whites with their college experience. HBCUs enroll only twenty percent of all Blacks enrolled in higher educational institutions, but graduate thirty-eight percent of the baccalaureates awarded to Blacks by all degree-granting institutions (Cheek, 1989). The literature on the unique characteristics of the expectations of Black students on historically Black campuses is sparse (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

This study identifies post-baccalaureate employment expectations of Black business students at an HBCU, and the sources of their expectations. In order to meet student expectations, they must first be identified. It must then be determined which of these expectations are realistic, which are misguided, and the sources of these expectations. Administrators and faculty can then develop and/or modify plans to meet realistic student expectations, while they correct the misguided expectations students may have. Students with properly managed

expectations for college and their future workplace should become more satisfied with their college experience and better prepared for the realities of the workplace.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to generate grounded theory concerning post-baccalaureate employment expectations of Black college students enrolled in HBCUs. The objective has been addressed by determining the post-baccalaureate employment expectations, both realistic and unrealistic, of Black business students on a Black campus and by identifying where their expectations originated. Two major research questions that guided the study are as follows:

1. What kinds of post-baccalaureate employment expectations do Black business students have at an HBCU?
2. Where do the expectations of Black business students at an HBCU originate?

Significance of the Study

The pursuit of unreachable goals may lead to frustration and apathy. Students have been known to turn down respectable job offers believing they are worth much more. In some cases, this has lead to prolonged unemployment, increased dissatisfaction with the “system”, and the development of a bad attitude when the student realizes that

nothing better is coming along. This information is based on students who graduated before the participants of this study. Students who are unprepared for the challenges and responsibilities of the workplace are likely to fail. This may cause an individual to fall back to his parent's socioeconomic class instead of moving forward. The occurrence of this phenomena is not only bad for morale and race identity, but is damaging to our economic development as well.

The results of this study have provided information that will help us to modify our curriculum content in the School of Business so that we can better prepare our students for the realities of the work place. Graduating seniors with false hopes and expectations may not provide the most productive work force. With continued monitoring of reality versus expectations, we should be able to produce a well prepared and eager work force for business and industry.

Cross (1981) has identified the need for more in-depth interviews, focusing on what students hope to gain from their learning. She states that hard data, such as those provided when respondents are asked to check options on a questionnaire are inadequate. There is a need for greater depth of understanding through more insightful probing into students' expectations. Hence, the importance of the research has

theoretical and practical implications for faculty and administrators involved in program planning at HBCUs.

The importance of designing learning experiences that meet the expectations of students seems clear. The results of this study have been used to develop grounded theory that may better address the problem of unrealized expectations causing diminished motivation in the workplace. Administrators and faculty may utilize this theory to develop programs and provide experiences, to better meet student expectations for the workplace, and to dispel unrealistic expectations.

Theoretical

This study has generated a theory concerning post-baccalaureate employment expectations of Black college students enrolled in HBCUs. The study was based on the theoretical assumption that organizationally different types of institutions of higher education are comprised of students that manifest diverse expectations of the college experience and post-baccalaureate employment. HBCUs conforming to this postulate could enable students to achieve greater integration of their expectations and reality. This would tend to reduce student frustration as well as culture shock upon entry into the workplace.

Practical

It is possible that college students' ideal image of college preparation for the workplace represents more fantasy than reality. Nevertheless, whether fanciful or realistic, the wide discrepancies between actual and ideal should be a source of genuine concern for faculties and administrators. Disparity between unrealistic expectations and appropriate expectations should stimulate the introduction of new programs and new emphases designed to bring the actual and the ideal closer together. With knowledge of the kinds of post-baccalaureate employment expectations students have, colleges can better prepare business students for the realities of the workplace. By determining where various expectations originate, counselors, faculty and administrators can provide guidance towards realistic expectations earlier in students' education and thus promote a more satisfying college experience and more realistic preparation for the workplace.

Assumptions

By purposely selecting a wide range of subjects to observe, it is more likely that a full array of "multiple realities" relevant to the inquiry will be uncovered (Borg & Gall, 1989). The selection of junior and senior business students supports the assumption that the students selected will be representative of the population of business students at

Langston University during the 1997-98 school year. There are no known reasons for believing that this school year is not typical of the School of Business student population from this HBCU.

Limitations

The application of the findings of this study are limited. The subjects of the study are upper division business students at Langston University, Langston, OK. No information has been gathered from White students to compare results between races. Any generalizations of the findings of this study beyond the study population should be done cautiously.

Satisfaction, or realization of expectations, is difficult to assess because of the subjective dimension. Covey (1991) defines an expectation as a human hope, the embodiment of a person's desires and wants of a situation. It first must be determined whether or not the expectations are realistic. There is a difference between an expectation and reality. An expectation is an imaginary map, a "should" map rather than an "is" map. When expectations are romantic, meaning they are not based on reality, they often come from fantasy (Covey, 1991). Realistic expectations are those determined to be the norm by our society. That is, those practices that our mainstream society considers to be reasonable and appropriate.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are provided in order to clarify the understanding of this study.

Academic performance - grades or class rating achieved while participating in higher education.

Academic preparation - the level of confidence an individual has in his/her skills, knowledge, and ability to perform work tasks.

Emotional preparation - the ability of an individual to handle stress, decision making, work performance, personal discomfort, and ethical situations in a professional manner.

Entrepreneur - a person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture.

HBCU - Historically Black College or University

Job placement opportunities - the possibility of gaining employment in the field in which an individual has academic preparation.

Nontraditional - as used in this paper refers to an individual who assumed one or more adult roles while attending college.

Perception - an individual judgment made by a student.

Predominantly Black institution - a college or university that is

historically comprised of a Black majority student, staff, and faculty population.

Predominantly White institution - a college or university that is historically comprised of a Caucasian majority student, staff, and faculty population.

Realistic expectations - logical human hopes and desires based on fact and experience.

Social preparation - the comfort level of an individual in a given situation among other people.

Unrealistic expectations - unreasonable human hopes and desires based on fantasy or incomplete media coverage.

Summary

This study provides much needed information and grounded theory concerning post-baccalaureate employment expectations of Black college students attending HBCUs. The importance of the research and knowledge gained as a result of examining student post-baccalaureate employment expectations has both theoretical and practical value in the area of future program planning. The study was based on the theoretical assumption that organizationally different types of institutions of higher education are comprised of students that manifest diverse expectations of the college experience and post-baccalaureate

employment. Appreciation of the disparity between unrealistic expectations and appropriate expectations should stimulate the practical introduction of new programs and new emphases designed to bridge the gap between fantasy and reality in the workplace. The results of this research may enable administrators and faculty of HBCUs to better prepare students for the realities of the workplace.

It was assumed that the junior and senior business students who participated in this research were representative of the population of business students at the chosen university. This does, however, limit the application of the findings of this study. Although all students have expectations, it can not be assumed that students attending all universities will match this data.

CHAPTER TWO - REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Most of the national studies on minority participation in higher education were conducted during the mid 1970s through the mid 1980s. Since then, higher education and its students have changed in many ways, and many of the findings from studies conducted during this period may be outdated (Astin, 1993).

After the Civil War, Black colleges, by legal mandate, were established for the express purpose of providing higher education for Black Americans (Garibaldi, 1984). As the transition between the campus and the “real world” becomes an issue of increasing interest within education, business, and industry, issues such as personal and financial autonomy, finding and adapting to a job, and personal and interpersonal issues are no longer seen as outside the higher education mission (Astin, 1993). As student outcomes become more of a concern, it is necessary to determine how or where this group of students achieves optimal intellectual development and preparedness for the work force. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) suggest that Black students demonstrate greater development in critical thinking and concept attainment at predominantly Black institutions than at predominantly White ones.

Studies have been few, but identify many conflicting results. According to a study made by Hardeman (1983), the distribution of grades of Blacks on predominantly White campuses is higher than the grades of Blacks on predominantly Black campuses. Researchers of adult and higher education, (Cross, 1981; Garibaldi, 1983; Jackson, 1981; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991) do not address the issue of predominantly Black institutions meeting the expectations of Black students. Rather, they concentrate on why Black students have a more difficult time getting a degree than do White students. Little research exists that distinguishes between successful and unsuccessful Black college students on Black campuses. Much of the literature has focused on Black students on White campuses.

Related Literature

Business Experience of Black College Graduates

Literature concerning the immediate college to career experiences of Black college graduates is practically non-existent. Keeling et al. (1994) found that Black students need reality testing of career aspirations and expectations. Many have great confidence in their potential for success, but lack a clear understanding of what would be expected of them or what they would face in the world of work. Cameron (1989) stated that most minority people entering corporate

America experience some degree of corporate culture shock within the first two to three years, which are very critical in the overall success of these new hires. Most of the literature on post-college experiences focuses on discrimination and lack of support for middle level Black managers. For example, Jones (1986), found 90 percent of the Black managers sampled viewed the climate of support in their work environments worse than that of their non Black peers. Dickens & Dickens (1991) trying to support retention, developed a model for career transition for Black managers that included phases of entry, adjustment, planned growth, and success. Dickens and Dickens, as did others, pointed out that Black managers felt they must develop a higher degree of job skills than their White peers. Nkomo and Cox (1990) found that Black male managers have the biggest gap between aspirations and expectations of upward mobility. Cameron (1989) showed that most minorities desire for recognition, increased salaries, and promotions would cause a head-on collision with the built-in competition that today's corporate culture helped to create.

Function of the Black University

DuBois (1970) defines the two goals of Black institutions as follows: first, that Black colleges continue to train a critical mass of students for leadership roles; and, second, that the Black institutions

utilize the expertise on their campuses to provide historical, political, and economic information and advice to elected and appointed local, state, and federal officials on issues that affect the total community and the Black community specifically. In other words, the primary objectives of the Black colleges were to produce teachers for Black children and leaders for the Black community. But, according to recent college entrance data, the majority of Black students now choose to go to predominantly White colleges. It is not clear whether or not today's Black students are aware of these traditional roles as identified by DuBois (1970). Furthermore, if these institutional objectives are still in effect, how do they affect the students' experience and preparation for the workplace?

An analysis as to the affect of the function of the university on Black student perceptions must acknowledge that there are actually two functions – the ideal and the real. Hemmons (1982) defines the ideal as a goal that is stated and publicized. The real is the actual implementation of pragmatic school objectives in terms of political, economic, social, and educational forces. The ideal function influences Black students' attitudes insofar as the student has a standard (i.e., expectation) to compare with what he or she actually encounters (i.e., experience). The difference then, between the expectation and the

experience of the Black student is what results in a measurement of dissatisfaction.

Historically, Black universities have provided positive social and psychological environments for African-American students that compare with those experienced by White students who attend White universities. Allen (1992) describes the importance of psychosocial elements to student success. In the social aspect, the important ingredients are an extensive network of friends, numerous social outlets, and supportive relationships. In the psychological aspect, the key ingredients are multiple boosts to self-confidence and self-esteem, feelings of psychological comfort and belonging, and a sense of empowerment/ownership – a sense that “this is our campus.” When these psychosocial ingredients are present in optimal combination, the chances that a student will be successful increase dramatically. Allen further suggest that future studies of African-American student outcomes should examine the importance of the relationship between social context and student outcomes; apparently it is quite complex, and researchers need to understand better how historical, cultural, social, and psychological factors exert an independent, powerful influence on student outcomes.

Realities of Black Students

The literature on the unique characteristics of the experiences of African-Americans on historically Black campuses is sparse, (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Furthermore, little evidence exists that the identity development of African-American students is accounted for in the aggregate research literature (Cheatham & Berg-Cross, 1992).

Increasing cultural and socioeconomic diversity in the higher education student body requires educators to identify, acknowledge, and incorporate the needs and experiences of minority students into their practice (McEwen, Roper, Bryant, & Lang, 1990).

The National Study of Black College Students, University of North Carolina (UNC) Chapel Hill, was formed to capture specific realities of Black students. From 1976 -1979 several waves of data on African American students attending UNC Chapel Hill were collected. In 1980 the first comparative data were collected, comparing Black students who attended UNC to those who attended the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. From a critical view, the literature on Black students in higher education was found to be underdeveloped theoretically. Few studies were found to provide an overarching theory or to emphasize a theoretical approach to the problem. The UNC Chapel Hill study described researchers as having tended to approach

the question narrowly, ignoring the relationship of Black student status in college to the status of Blacks in the larger society. Allen, Epps, and Haniff, (1991) found that the theoretical underdevelopment of research in this area is associated with a noticeable lack of sophisticated methodological and statistical approaches. Researchers have relied heavily on data that were not specific to the experience of Black college students on Black campuses. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991), for example, describe why more Black students are not successful on integrated campuses, but fail to provide in depth examinations of their experiences on Black campuses.

School Choice

Over the decades, researchers have studied who attends higher education, what motivates people to attend higher education, what are the differences in institutions of higher education, academic performance in higher education of various socioeconomic and ethnic groups, and what effects predominantly White institutions have on Black students (Altman, 1970; Astin & Cross, 1979; Berry & Asamen, 1989; Brazziel & Brazziel, 1981; Cross, 1981; Hardeman, 1983; Fleming, 1984; Gurin & Epps, 1975; LeMelle & LeMelle, 1969; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Scott, 1989; Stikes, 1984; Thomas, 1981). The literature summarizes the reasons for Black students attending Black

institutions as feeling that they will be more comfortable in a Black environment and will be treated more fairly than in a White institution, producing a climate more conducive to learning.

The research has consistently shown that the experience of Black students in White institutions is substantively and qualitatively different than the experience of White students in White institutions (Love, 1994). Choosing to attend a college or university that is predominantly Black in its student and faculty population is a conscious decision based on very specific reasons. Factors leading up to this decision vary from parental and peer pressure, to a level of comfort in being with people of similar race and backgrounds, to choice based on academic curriculum (Cross, 1981).

Gaines (1979) found that only 33 percent of the students surveyed at three Black institutions preferred a Black college. The majority reported that their choice of institution was based on the availability of strong academic programs--a finding not only consistent with the college selection criteria of entering students nationally, but also with those of both Black and White students attending predominantly White institutions. Gaines also noted the role of parental preference in the college choices of these students. Twenty seven percent of the students sampled made their college choice based on their parents' wishes. Yet, a

more recent sampling of 2,000 of the 5,000 participants in a survey of the viewpoints of Blacks on a wide range of social, political, and economic issues demonstrates the ambivalent feelings many Black parents appear to have toward the Black colleges (Black Enterprise, August 1980). "Although a large proportion of the participants (42 percent) preferred their child to attend a predominantly Black college, more than 54 percent preferred other institutions. Ninety percent of them agreed that "there is a difference for Black students who attend Black colleges" (Black Enterprise August 1980, p. 82). Unfortunately, the results of the study provided no clue to the meaning of this finding. The implication could be that the perception Blacks have of HBCU is either inadequate work place preparation, or that there are better job opportunities from White schools. Astin and Cross (1979) and Morris (1979) also noted the importance of relatives and significant others in influencing the college choices of Blacks. They found that, in addition to seeking good or special academic programs and low tuition costs, Black male students depend heavily on the advice of relatives (15.8 percent) teachers (10.9 percent), and friends (12.6 percent). These findings were less true for Blacks in predominantly White institutions and least true for Whites in similar institutions.

Desegregation

One major criticism of desegregation plans by officials at historically Black institutions was that Black administrators had little input into the planning process (Haynes 1979, 1980). In some cases they were asked to submit data, but institutional self-studies and other plans were disregarded. Desegregation planning has resulted in a closer scrutiny of historically Black institutions in various states. Not only were these institutions underfunded in the past, but they were given far less political, technical, and management support than other institutions. Now, as states attempt to desegregate these institutions, the management and fiscal abilities of the administrators are being called into question. Numerous historically Black schools are undergoing management reviews that are resulting in administrative changes from presidents on down (Christy & Williamson, 1992).

In some cases, the states' new activities recommended for historically Black institutions appear to alter the roles and missions of these institutions. As Haynes (1979, 1980) noted, some desegregation plans show little evidence of any sound rational or logic for determining the academic requirements of the historically Black institutions. The concern appears to be to develop academic activities at the Black institutions to attract White students, rather than to address the needs

of the institutions and the state and local communities. Black institutions generally have not been successful in attracting White students. Yet there has been a significant increase in the number of Black students attending predominantly White institutions. Enrollment at historically Black institutions continues to drop as Black students have greater access to other educational settings including community colleges, proprietary schools, as well as the White institutions (Brazziel & Brazziel, 1981). The desegregation plans do not adequately address the problem of the decreasing numbers of Blacks who are entering colleges and universities.

Sims (1994) discusses diversifying HBCUs for the good of the students, rather than desegregation for political reasons. Her research provides a force field analysis diagram for approaching change within institutions, providing some examples of reforming the academic curriculum to value diversity efforts. A model is presented for diversifying HBCUs and identifies some issues that must be resolved if the diversity program is to be successful. She describes the HBCU as having a dual mission in developing the educational and social functions of today's youth. Historically, these institutions have served as an access point to higher education for low-income gifted students. Socially, HBCUs provide a meaningful option for students who prefer a

type of educational environment that is not socially threatening but is rich in positive Black history and tradition. She reminds us that they provide educational experiences that are consistent with the experiences and values of many Black families.

Persistence

Persistence and overall experience in college have been the focus of research on historically Black institutions and have been studied extensively by psychologists and education experts (Deskin, 1991; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Fleming, 1991). Persistence appears to be greater at those institutions that are better prepared to offer more remedial courses, and those that have a more supportive environment. Students who persist are found to be more confident, more involved in campus activities and more interactive with faculty (Constantine, 1994). The student retention work of Beal and Noel (1970) reaffirms the notion that too much research has been done on the effects of family size, social status, intelligence and similar “fixed” variables rather than on those variables about which colleges can do something. The primary focus on outcome assessment has been upon academic achievement, while the attitudes and behaviors affected by the campus experience are equally important. Pascarella, Smart, and Stoecker (1989) performed research in the area of college race and status attainment; they stated that the

study of the influence of college racial composition on such outcomes as student social and academic adjustment, and academic learning, is a significant direction for further study.

Related research by Fleming (1991) suggested that Blacks in White college environments have difficulty adjusting and a major complaint was alienation. Examination of minority student retention by Griffin and Brinson (1990) identified isolation, academic integration, and social integration as key barriers to college success. Levin and Levin (1991) identified six factors that have the greatest impact on minority student persistence - academic preparedness, adaptability, commitment to educational goals, willingness to seek academic assistance, self-confidence, and reasons for pursuing a college degree.

Motivation

Seminal studies done by McClelland (1953), Atkinson (1966), and Maehr (1974) suggested that students achieve when they are motivated; moreover, these researchers contend that motivation must be intrinsic and supported by a strong sense of self-esteem. Based on these theoretical frameworks, policymakers concluded that providing access to adequate materials and skill building techniques was the avenue to building that motivation; therefore, programs were designed ranging from Head Start for preschoolers to Upward Bound at the high school

level to address the students' needs, that is, to compensate for what was viewed as the deficit model of African American life, such as is exemplified in poor schools, the lack of cohesive families, and cultural deprivation.

Welch and Hodges (1977) describe the Lana Turner syndrome of some young Black students as the conviction that fulfillment of potential and statements of intent are sufficient to assure realization of one's career or academic goals, provided the right set of circumstances exists to insure "discovery". They believe that the success stories of Aretha Franklin, discovered while singing in her father's church, Hammer, whose rapping was first noticed on a street corner, and the super athlete Michael Jordan who achieved greatness by being in the "right place" with the "right stuff" at the "right time" helps to support this theory. The assumption is that potential and circumstances accounting for recognition and success is predictable because the media rarely discusses the hours of practice and discipline required for outstanding performance.

Welch and Hodges (1997) conclude that, the perception in some quarters of the Black community, because of pervasive inequalities in American society, long-term ambitions which involve competition and achievement, do not assure them of the array of career choices and level

of success of their White counterparts; and a perception, reinforced by images in the media and sports, leading some Blacks to assume that potential is the overarching criterion for achieving future goals, even when academic performance does not match that potential.

Student Expectations of the College Environment

Stanfiel and Watts (1970) conducted a study concerning expectations and perceptions of the university environment. They found that students, both Black and White, have unrealistic expectations of the college environment, but the students soon achieved a more realistic view of college life.

Gibbs (1973) discussed the expectations of Black students and the expectations of the administrators and faculty members of the college environment. She based her study on her observations and examined the two sets of expectations. She observed that the first expectation of the Black students was that the university would be very flexible in responding to individual needs. They also expected the college curriculum to be a continuation of the curriculum they had in high school. A greater diversity of lifestyles, activities, and a greater contact with the Black community surrounding the campus were other expectations held by the Black students.

The literature also reflects the fact that perceptions of the college environment by freshman students will change with time. This was made evident by Kennedy (1971), who stated that first year students expect an environment much different from the environment perceived by upper-class students.

Profile of the Black Student

Miller (1981) was one of the first to report evidence that many Black students enter college with inaccurate perceptions of the nature of higher education as well as with their own educational deficiencies and questionable motivation.

Yankelovich (1972), in explaining the values and attitudes of Black students from an extensive survey he conducted, concluded that the Black student is the most confused young person on the American campus. Black students recognize the opportunities that will be open and available to them when they receive a college diploma. They also have a deep sense of commitment to uneducated and discriminated-against Black people. He found that the mood of the Black student is tense, serious and sometimes frustrated.

Hedegard and Brown (1968) described the characteristics of a group of Black and White freshman students at a major public university. The data from their study suggested that the Black student

and the White student differ most strikingly in family characteristics, such as income, occupation and education of parents, and in the nature and frequency of academically relevant pre-college experiences. They also concluded that, as a group, Black students tended to define their primary goals in terms of vocational preparation.

Hartnett (1970) compared two samples of Black collegians. He divided them into students attending traditionally Black colleges and students attending integrated institutions. His research indicated that Black students entering integrated institutions were more independent, liberal and concerned with social injustice. He also found that the students who entered integrated institutions had relatively higher family status backgrounds than those who entered predominantly Black institutions. Furthermore, he concluded that the predominantly White universities were attracting Black students with higher ability as measured by the Scholastic Aptitude Test than the predominantly Black universities.

Despite their high educational and career aspirations, Black students continue to experience a large disparity between their aspirations and actual attainments (Portes & Wilson, 1976; Thomas, 1980). The literature portrays Black students on historically Black campuses as satisfied, engaged in the campus life, and well adjusted.

These students come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, however, and they score lower on absolute measures of academic achievement by comparison with their peers of both races on White campuses. Black students on Black campuses evidence more positive psychosocial adjustments, stronger cultural awareness and commitment, greater *relative* academic gains during the college years, than Black students on integrated campuses (Thomas, 1984; Fleming, 1984; Gurin & Epps, 1975). It does not appear that this “comfortable” feeling is being transferred to the workplace. The gap between career aspirations and actual attainments has not diminished.

Using the Questionnaire on Student and College Characteristics, Centra (1970) compared the similarities and differences between Black students and White students at predominantly White institutions. He found that there were large differences in socioeconomic background between Black and White students in the samples. Forty-three percent of the fathers of Black students, compared to only 15 percent of fathers of White students, were unskilled, semiskilled, or service workers. There also were differences in student employment patterns. Two-thirds of the Black students worked part-time or full-time, while only one-half of the White students were employed. Moreover, Black

students worked an average of eight hours per week, which was almost two hours longer than their White counterparts.

In the same study, Centra (1970) found that more Black students than White students planned to attend graduate or professional schools. His research in the area of involvement in various college activities continued to show noticeable differences. White students were involved in organized college activities, particularly those which centered on the campus. Black students generally were more involved with activities directed at improving the position and condition of Black America.

Grades and Job Performance

Tinto (1987) suggested that high social integration is a precondition for high academic performance, and that the combination of these factors assure student retention. While Jencks and Reisman (1968) reported that it seemed reasonable to anticipate a relationship between the grades that students receive and subsequent success in a profession, a review of the literature on the subject has shown that the relationship between course grades and occupational success was extremely low or non-existent. Stein, Galetto and Harmison (1986) indicated that there was no study to support a correlation between grades and job performance. More importantly, employers indicate that important factors are: ability to reason with common sense, diverse

experiences, specific professional and technical skills, good work ethic, ability to motivate, well roundedness, positive attitude, self-confidence, tenacity, effective communication skills, and good work habits (Keeling, Parker, et al., 1994).

Perceptions of Campus Climate

Hazzard (1988) studied the attitudes and perceptions of White students attending Black institutions in the South. His study focused on the characteristics of White students attending these institutions, the educational climate of these institutions, and Black institutions and White student enrollment conflicts. He found that White students generally had few complaints.

Fleming (1984) conducted a study relative to the perceptions of stress and satisfaction in the college years of Black students who attend predominantly White institutions. The study was performed to determine the impact and effect of these attributes upon Black student development in these two types of educational environments. She found that stress was generally higher among Black students attending integrated schools than their Black counterparts attending predominantly Black schools. In 1985, Fleming conducted a comparative study of students' success in Black and White institutions to determine if either group was better served at the majority Black or White

institution Black students perceived less satisfaction on an integrated campus, but did not seem to be less prepared for the workplace upon graduation.

Research evidence by Abraham and Jacobs (1990) strongly suggests that a student's race is often not the major factor in determining his or her opinion or perceptions about campus climate. Instead, it seems that opinions or perceptions are determined more by the student's membership in the minority or majority group on campus and to a lesser extent, by the type of institution they attend.

The majority of these studies were conducted among institutions located in the South. Although similar in nature, the results for each study were based on different objectives including; (1) to gauge student perceptions by campus type, (2) to study the levels and impact of stress and satisfaction on particular campuses, (3) to make regional comparisons of student experience, and (4) to ascertain the impact and perceptions of various fixed campus variables upon student experience.

Social Interactions

Fleming (1985) concluded that Black students on White campuses may divert energy away from intellectual mastery toward filling the "interpersonal void" created by alienation and loneliness of being Black on a White campus. In regard to White student perceptions of their

relationships on the Black campus, Stevens-Burghardt (1976) reported that more than one-half of survey respondents did not participate in social activities on campus because they felt they did not belong and thus were not a part of the school spirit. Both Black and White students agreed that social or interest groups were determined by race or ethnic background. Brown (1980) found that White students attending traditionally Black institutions appeared to be highly motivated, hard-working individuals whose determination, self-confidence, and maturity overcame social adjustment problems.

Academic Interactions

Survey responses by White students attending Black institutions (Standley, 1978) revealed that 70% felt satisfied with their educational experiences. It is in the classroom where White students become involved and develop levels of personal contact with Black students and teachers which apparently is satisfying, enriching and meaningful. She cited strong agreement among White students relative to the level of competency and access to Black instructors. She found that this level of trust in the learning process was reinforced by the high percent of agreement to statements regarding student involvement in planning, course selection and career preparation. Stevens-Burghardt (1978) conducted research relative to Black college environments; she reported

that 68% of White students surveyed believed that their courses were challenging and that most faculty cared about students.

Brown (1978), in his survey of White students attending traditionally Black institutions, found that White students rated the quality of instruction and faculty-student relationships on the Black campus higher than did Blacks on either type of campus. Jones (1979) conducted a survey among Black students enrolled at White colleges. He reported what appeared to be negative feelings about social life on campus; 70% of the Black respondents agreed that their feelings toward the White institution was determined more by their academic experience than by their social experiences. In concurrence with this finding, Standley (1978) reported that White students enrolled at Black colleges believed that their feelings toward the Black institution was more influenced by their academic experiences than by their social experiences. It appears that no matter the demands of the academic environment (Smith, 1981), the capacity of minority students both Black and White is seriously diminished by the social context in which their academic pursuits take place. Evidence reported by Allen (1986), suggests that college grades will be the highest where students are happier and more satisfied with college life.

Student-Faculty Relationships

Faculty-student relationships have also been shown to be an important aspect of the college experience. Frequent faculty contact outside the classroom is associated with higher grades, and Black students at White institutions have less contact with faculty than do White students (Nettles, 1988). While Black students on Black campuses experience better relationships with faculty than Black students on White campuses, there is no difference in faculty-student relationships among White students on the two types of campuses. In spite of the smaller enrollment, smaller faculty pool, and the existence of a critical mass of White faculty at predominantly Black schools, White students on both campuses experience the same relationships with faculty.

The association between faculty-student relationships and student achievement is further illustrated by studies conducted by Tidball (1973) and Thompson (1973). Tidball found a positive relationship between the number of female faculty at a college and subsequent student achievement. Similarly, Thompson (1973) made the observation that the majority of the country's Black leadership were educated in Black colleges where there is a majority of Black faculty. It appears that by providing students with similar race or sex role models,

the interests, motivations, and success of minority students will be enhanced (Solomon & Wingard, 1991).

Althauser, Spivak, and Ansel, (1975), ask the following questions: Do Black and White men find that their resources, when equal, produce rewards of equal value in the marketplace of human competition? and — To what extent can equal opportunity between groups yield equal results for those groups and, hence, the reduction of discrimination? They compared Black and White classmates from institutions offering education of comparable quality, with roughly the same grade point average and from families of the same social class. Their findings were broken into the following categories: (1) estimate of the absolute effects of resources on rewards, for example, the income or job-status value of years of experience since graduation, (2) estimate of the relative effects of different resources, for example, education and experience, on such rewards as job status. (3) the differences in average incomes of Black and White graduates into three components. Within the three categories, Whites responded at slightly higher levels than the Black participants.

Academic Environments

A number of researchers have investigated the relationship between educational environment and student achievement. Brookover

and Lezotte (1977) identified school characteristics that were related to increased student achievement. As an ethnographer, Lightfoot (1978, 1980, 1983) has captured a picture of recent educational environments as well as any other researcher. Regularly she cited the significance of relationships between families, school, and community. Central to these relationships is an understanding and appreciation for individual cultures and lifestyles. In productive institutions she found high expectations for all students. Poverty was seen as a condition, not an offense.

Edmonds (1980) went beyond the relationships essential for effective education and provided specific factors crucial to education, especially to Black students. Chief among these was strong leadership, high expectations, and an atmosphere conducive to learning.

Achievement Gap Between Blacks and Whites

Reports from organizations such as Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB), the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have all cited what must be viewed as a major gap between White student achievement and Black student achievement. Scholastic Aptitude Test scores consistently show Blacks reporting an average of twenty-three points lower than Whites.

Socioeconomic theory, or the importance of social class was interwoven into the studies of cultural deprivation (Havighurst, 1976; Della-Dora, 1963; Cleft, 1961). The idea that one's social class can explain educational performance has been disputed by a number of theorists (Lipton, 1962; Bloom, 1964; Landers, 1964). Due to numerous conflicting theories regarding the abilities and inclinations of Black students, it can be assumed that there is no one answer as to why Blacks achieve or do not achieve.

It has been suggested that academic achievement is viewed by many Blacks as a characteristic of Whites and that they resist "acting White" (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). Other factors that have been identified as playing a negative role in Black education are difficulty in crossing cultural/language boundaries, and distrust of White people and the public systems (Ogbu, 1987).

Self-concept Theory

The study of self-concept has resulted in a proliferation of research. A conceptual framework has been established through a review of key theories and studies. Sophisticated studies related to self generally date back to James (1890). James' work provided the foundation for many of the theorists that followed. Reduced to the fundamental precepts, James presents his ideas within three main

constructs: 1) the constituents of the self, 2) the feelings of self, and 3) the actions of self. He believed that there could be as many selves as a person needed in presenting himself to various groups.

Mead (1934) also had a major impact on studies of the self. Similar to James, Mead's theory of the self existed only as it related to others. The self reacts to itself as it perceives others responding to or considering it. Not only did the self exist as a result of this relationship to others, but, Mead theorized that there could be different selves for different group settings. He suggested that there could be a family self, a social self, and a school self, among others.

Allport (1937) was less convinced of the need to have a separate concept of self. In 1961, Allport identified seven aspects of selfhood that develop over time. They were, in order of appearance, 1) a sense of bodily self, 2) a sense of continuing self-identity, 3) self-worth, 4) the extension of self, 5) the self-image, 6) self-awareness of the ability to reason, and 7) intention, or long range goal setting.

Lecky (1945) presented an optimistic view. He not only believed that the self can create unified personality, but that such unification is very important. Pleasure in life was seen as a by-product of that unification, and not an end in itself. External contact with others was a very important aspect of self. Regardless of the changes occurring in

this external world, the self remained at the center. Lecky theorized that, although flexible in its various functions in the world, the individuals concept of self was held firm.

Modern theorists were represented by Rogers, (1951) and Syngg and Combs (1959). Rogers developed a theory of self as a result of conducting therapy in a clinical setting. His theory has become known by the term client-centered. Rogers (1951) determined that behavior is basically the goal-directed attempt of the organism to satisfy its needs as experienced and in the field as perceived. Two predominant needs identified by Rogers are the need for positive regard and the need for self-regard. As the self-concept develops it is strongly affected by perceptions of the self as to the regard of others.

In analyzing the perceptions of the self as accurate or inaccurate, Rogers stressed the fact that each individual has his own reality. As a result, each responds to situations and experiences in life differently.

Snygg and Combs (1959) saw the self as phenomenal. They saw all behavior as a result of what a person thinks or feels. The experiences one encountered in the phenomenological field were seen as most significant in the development of these perceptions. Nevertheless, Snygg and Combs (1959) did not develop a theory of self as object. Instead, they saw the self as product and producer. The experiences

form the thoughts and feelings which in turn motivate the behaviors which impact on the world outside the self.

A summary of the various theories of the development of self-concept suggested that a fundamental precept of each is interaction of the individual with others and the internalization of those interactions. This precept has tremendous implications for education as a process for preparing students for workplace interactions.

The Relationship of Achievement to Self-concept

In a landmark study by Brookover, Thomas, and Peterson (1962) it was found that even when the measured IQ is controlled, there is a significant, positive correlation between self-concept and achievement. Although they found that the self-concept correlated significantly and positively to the perception of how others evaluated the student, it is the composite image rather than the images of specific others that appear to be most closely correlated with the student's self-concept in specific subjects.

Fitts (1872) observed that the student's concept of self appears to be a significant variable in academic performance when such performance is considered in a broad sense. When more narrow criteria of performance such as achievement tests are considered, the relationship with the self-concept is clouded and relatively insignificant.

The literature provided more than ample evidence of a relationship between self-concept and achievement. A brief overview of the literature related to self-concept, and achievement by Wylie (1963) suggested an interrelationship. In addition, the research provided a foundation for the consideration of the race of the teacher as a significant factor in the achievement of Black students. The limited number of studies that examined the relationship of the teacher to achievement generally concluded the following: 1) Expectation of the teacher is crucial to achievement, 2) Black teachers have higher expectations of Black students, 3) Teacher expectations can affect self-concept, 4) Self-concept has been directly related to achievement, and 5) The presence of Black teachers has been related to a decrease in attrition for Black students.

Desegregation and various efforts to provide compensatory education have not closed the gap between recorded academic achievement for Blacks and Whites. Research in the areas of achievement and self-concept provided sufficient evidence of the significance of each to education and strongly suggested an interrelationship between the two.

Rowser (1990) suggests that students enter the university with rather well-defined self-perceptions of their academic preparation,

personal/social needs and career aspirations. They felt less prepared for college academically, after completion of their freshman year. It was noted that African-American students realized that they have many more adjustments to make, personally and socially, to adapt to a predominantly White environment. The university must, therefore, assess ways in which it, too, can change in order to create an adaptable environment to help students prepare for the workplace.

Qualitative Research Methodology

In dealing with qualitative materials, analysts *make* problems, grounding them in everyday realities and meanings of social worlds rather than *taking* problems from policy makers, general theorists or others. Analysis implies being artful (Guba & Lincoln, 1981) and playful (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). These authors describe it as being not a structureless process, but it should be imaginative, flexible, and methodical.

Tesch (1990) identifies several key characteristics of qualitative data analysis that can be viewed as commonalities of the analytical process. She cautions that no characteristics are common to all types of qualitative analysis but suggests that there are a number of regular features. These include: Analysis is a cyclical process and a reflective activity; the analytic process should be comprehensive and systematic

but not rigid; data are segmented and divided into meaningful units; and data are organized according to a system derived from the data themselves. Analysis is, on the whole, an inductive, data-led activity.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) describe the qualitative researcher as employing a variety of strategies and methods to collect and analyze a variety of empirical materials. In terms of a common thread linking all data types and analytic approaches, qualitative data analysis deals with meaningful talk and action.

Dey (1993) describes qualitative data analysis in terms of identifying and linking analytic categories, analysis being the process of resolving data into its constituent components to reveal their characteristic themes and patterns.

Miles and Huberman (1994) believe that qualitative analysis can identify mechanisms, going beyond sheer association. Because it is local, it deals well with the complex network of events and processes in a situation. Wolcott (1994) extends data beyond a descriptive account with a careful and systematic attention to the data identifying key factors and key relationships. Because codes are links between locations in the data and sets of concepts or ideas, they are in a sense heuristic devices for discovery. Categories are then used to generate

broader conceptual frameworks. The guiding principle of theorizing being the identification of patterns and association.

At the heart of “grounded theorizing” lies a form of abductive reasoning. The authors discussed use an approach that seems to capture more productivity of how researchers in all disciplines actually think and work. Abductive inferences seek to go beyond the data, to and to locate the data in explanatory or interpretive frameworks. There is a repeated interaction among existing ideas, former findings and observations, new observations, and new ideas. Abductive inference is thus especially appropriate for qualitative work, in which an open-minded intellectual approach is normally advocated (Kelle, 1995b). Abductive inferences lead us from specific findings toward generic levels that allow us to move conceptually across a wide range of social contexts.

This section discussed basic beliefs that led to the selection of a qualitative methodology to answer research questions. The subjective experience from the personal perspective is highly valued in this study, so a qualitative methodology is appropriate.

Summary

Most of the national studies on minority participation in higher education were conducted during the mid 1970s through the mid 1980s.

This literature review has examined publications in the following topical areas: Business Experience of Black College Graduates, Function of the Black University, Profile of Black College Students, Choice of School Type, Persistence, Student Expectations of the College Environment, Perceptions of Campus Climate, and Self-concept and Achievement. Much of the literature has focused on Black students on White campuses rather than on Black campuses.

More recent research by Keeling (1994), Nkomo and Cox (1990), and Cameron (1989), has revealed that Black graduates generally experience a greater degree of culture shock when entering the corporate environment than do their White counterparts. Most of the literature in this area focuses on discrimination and lack of support for middle level Black managers. A salient feature of these writings is the gap between aspirations, expectations and actual achievements of Black graduates.

Comparisons of student achievement and persistence on both Black and White campuses reveal that historically, Black universities have provided positive social and psychological environments for African-American students. Black students are portrayed as generally coming from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and having grown up with less emphasis by the family on education (Hedegard and Brown,

1968). The literature summarizes the reasons for Black students attending Black institutions as feeling that they will be treated more fairly, and will be more comfortable in a Black environment. The extensive network of friends, a feeling of belonging, and supportive relationships with staff and faculty have been described by Allen (1992) and others as dramatically influencing student self-confidence, self-esteem, and student outcomes. The primary focus on outcome assessment has been upon academic achievement, when attitudes and expectations are equally important.

Studies of student expectations of college conclude that students, both Black and White, have unrealistic expectations of college until the first year has been completed. Most assume college to be a continuation of high school. The gap between expectation and reality appears again when graduates enter the corporate world. This period of surprise lengthens the time it takes an individual to gain confidence and become productive (Dickens & Dickens, 1991).

As Rowser (1990) suggests, African American students may have many more adjustments to make, personally and socially, to adapt to a predominantly White environment. In order to determine what to do about helping students make the transition from a protected university environment to the corporate world, and how to do it, we must

determine what student expectations are concerning their work and careers, and where and how these expectations originate.

CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY

Design

A review of the literature has identified certain attributes of Black students enrolled in Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Generally, they come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, their families do not emphasize educational attainment, and they score lower on absolute measures of academic achievement by comparison with their peers of both races on integrated campuses (Thomas, 1984; Fleming, 1984; Gurin & Epps, 1975). One major deficiency in current literature concerns expectations that Black business students on Black campuses have concerning their work and careers. Therefore, this study was designed to address questions about what kinds of post-baccalaureate employment expectations Black business students at HBCUs have, and where and how these expectations originate. Based on the questions to be answered, a qualitative format appears to be the best way to address the inquiry.

As a holistic inquiry, this research includes a study of all identifiable elements present in the setting where the inquiry takes place. The investigation centered on an understanding through personal interviews of the social, cultural, academic, and historical perspectives of the students' post baccalaureate expectations.

Participants

Participants were drawn from the School of Business roster for juniors and seniors for the summer and fall terms of 1997. Individuals were selected to represent the population with varying ranges of geographic location and socioeconomic status. In an attempt to obtain input from a representative cross section of upper class business students, the sample consisted of the following categories: Male/Female, Traditional/Nontraditional, Urban/Rural, Children/No children, Married/Single, In-state/Out-of-state, Low income/Middle income/High income, and Athlete/Non-athlete. By choosing students from each of these categories, the small population was expected to be equitably represented. These sixteen students represent approximately 19% of the population. It was expected that a first order of saturation would be reached using this group. That is, new and relevant information would cease to be generated from additional interviews.

Research Perspective

There are, of course, both positive and negative implications in choosing any method of data collection. The advantage to an interview approach is that more in depth information can be obtained based upon the students' responses. Nonverbal cues and observations of a participant's reaction to a question can be helpful in gaining deeper

insight. Personal interviews allow time to make the participant feel more relaxed, and provides an opportunity to explore opinions based on the participant's responses, rather than on a standard set of questions which may not adequately capture the participant's thoughts. Semi-structured interviews, generative in nature, provide the greatest opportunity for discovery.

A major disadvantage to the use of personal interviews for data collection is that biases of the interviewer may be reflected in the questions asked, the intonation used, and non-verbal behaviors. Interviewer bias cannot be eliminated totally, but can be reduced in the following ways: First, the interviewer should openly acknowledge any biases in the summary of the data, thus the reader can take these biases into account; Second, the interviewer should consciously separate the two types of relationships that exist in an interview: rapport and neutrality (Guba & Lincoln, 1989); rapport being the person-to-person relationship, neutrality referring to the interviewer's relationship to the information.

Establishing rapport with the participants transpired through verbal interaction and candy. The students in the School of Business frequent any office that has candy available. By making small talk about the weather, campus activities, internships, and personal

résumés, the students generally become at ease. Most students in the School of Business already know my reputation as a “straight shooter” who is not a racist, but interested in preparing them for “real life” situations. To reduce bias, I attempted to relate to each respondent with warmth and enthusiasm and relate to the content with objectivity.

The aim was to gather an “authentic” understanding of the students’ expectations. Open-ended questions were the most effective route towards this end. Audio recordings of the naturally occurring interactions along with field notes of observational data provided a highly reliable record to return to while developing a new theory. The use of everyday contexts rather than experimental conditions places quantification in a subordinate role. Seeing through the eyes of the subjects and avoiding concepts and theories at an early stage made this study a candidate for a qualitative design. The grounded theory offers an approximation of the creative activity of theory-building found in good observational work (Silverman, 1993).

Procedure

Interviewing establishes a perspective that is independent of preconceived notions. By purposely selecting a wide range of subjects to observe, including “outliers”, it is likely that the full array of “multiple realities” relevant to the inquiry would be uncovered (Borg & Gall,

1989.) Participants were drawn from the junior and senior classes in the School of Business for the summer and fall terms 1997. Interviews were scheduled to begin in June and were completed by mid-October. Each student participant received an explanation for participation, and was required to sign a consent form. Each participant was interviewed twice for one hour at a time in my (the interviewer's) office. Each interview was recorded on tape for later transcribing, coding and analysis. Notes were taken during each interview to record visual behavior of the interviewees.

My office was a convenient location for the interviewees, an area with which they were familiar, and where they were relatively comfortable and at ease. All business classes are located in this building, as are most of the business faculty offices. Students frequent the faculty area for scheduling, counseling, administrative work, assistance in letter and résumé writing, as well as just spending their time between classes. This is a busy but friendly environment. Students do not hesitate to enter faculty offices for personal, academic, financial, or professional guidance, and they are ever present.

A semi-structured interview guide was used to ensure that each participant was queried in a similar manner, following specific categories of inquiry, as well as being sufficiently flexible to include any

information obtained from individual interviewees. Open-ended interviews in the initial phase allowed each individual to personally chronicle and assign meaning to his/her post baccalaureate expectations for the workplace. The second interview took place after the first round had been completed (three to six weeks later), and additional areas of inquiry had been discovered. The second interview targeted areas discovered in the first set of interviews, but were not discussed with particular individuals in the first round. As a result, a coding system that addressed all responses adequately was developed.

Upon completion of the coding, three additional steps were taken. First, a table, Table 1, of coded material (key words and phrases only) was constructed. This table is too lengthy to include in this narrative so a condensed form is used for illustration.

Table 1

Key Words and Phrases

Ellen	After five years I will have my masters degree.
Antonio	You have a lot of opportunities available to you with a higher degree.
Clarissa	I want to work five years then go to graduate school.
Melinda	I'm not going to work. I am going directly to graduate school.

Second, a table of frequencies, Table 2, was constructed from the matrix to identify common themes. A number is recorded for the number of times each students mentions each of the eight categories. This table has also been condensed for the purpose of illustration.

Table 2

Common Themes and Frequencies

Name	Grad Degree	Entrepreneur	Success	Self Image
Ellen	4	1	3	5
Antonio	4	3	3	6
Clarissa	3	4	2	3
TOTAL	11	8	8	14

A description of the students' expectations and their origins was then produced.

Data Analysis

Utilizing an inductive strategy, concepts and theory were generated through discovery and constant comparative analysis of the data (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Information was collected from related research, personal interviews, and data forms completed by the participants. Categories of topics, patterns and themes were developed

from the tape recorded interviews, interview notes, and data forms completed by the interviewees. The overarching categories of topics such as family structure, socioeconomic status, enrollment, and pre-college experiences came from Abraham & Jacobs (1988); Astin & Cross (1979); Constantine (1994); Fleming (1991); Pascarella & Terrenzini (1991) and the review of literature. Using Patton's (1990) six basic dimensions of interview questions: Experience/Behavior; Opinion/Values; Feelings; Knowledge; Sensory; and Background/Demographic Characteristics, an inductive coding system was developed to sort the information in conjunction with the software program Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing (NUD*IST). The coded material identified both major themes and outliers. Responses from personal data sheets were coded to match up with the first and second round interviews.

The software program NUD*IST, supports grounded theory research. It assists the researcher in identifying and explicating meanings emerging from data. All codes were arranged in hierarchically structured trees. For example, entrepreneurship materialized as a major theme. The code given was Ent. The developing structure that made up Ent consisted of father owned business, mother owned business, grandfather owned business, uncle

owned business, aunt owned business, my own business, myself as an entrepreneur, something that is mine. Each of these branches were given a code. The codes were arranged in relation to one another, with orders of generality or specificity. The result is a conceptual framework indicated by the index system itself.

This process was intuitive and emergent in nature. A theory of HBCU business students' post-baccalaureate expectations of the workplace and their sources, that is grounded in the data provided by the participants and interpreted by the researcher has emerged. The results of the process are presented and discussed in the following chapters.

Summary

One major deficiency in current literature concerns expectations that Black business students on Black campuses have concerning their work and careers. Therefore, this study was designed to address questions about what kinds of post-baccalaureate employment expectations Black business students at an HBCU have, and where and how those expectations originate. The investigation centered on an understanding through personal interviews of the social, cultural, academic and historical perspectives of the students' post baccalaureate expectations.

Participants were drawn from the School of Business roster of juniors and seniors for the summer and fall terms of 1997. A holistic inquiry, semi-structured interviews, generative in nature, provided a good opportunity for discovery. Each student was interviewed twice for one hour at a time. Each interview was recorded on tape for later transcribing, coding, and analysis. Categories of topics, or themes, were developed from the tape recorded interviews, interview notes, and data forms completed by the students. A theory of HBCU business students' post-baccalaureate expectations of the workplace and their sources, that is grounded in the data provided by the participants and interpreted by the researcher has emerged.

CHAPTER FOUR - RESULTS

This study is characterized as inductive, generative, constructive, and subjective in nature. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) describe this strategy as involving a scan of the data for categories of phenomena and the relationships among such categories. The strategy then is to develop a working typology and hypothesis upon examination of initial cases, then modifying and refining them on the basis of subsequent cases that do not fit.

This chapter reports demographic information, describes the participant profiles, identifies recurring themes and categories, and provides a summary of the study results. The names of participants have been changed to protect their anonymity. Profiles presented in the following pages are influenced in part by general impressions gained through a variety of contacts with the study participants. Selected actual written and verbal comments are included in this chapter to emphasize main points. The nature of the information reported includes: (1) interview data, (2) data sheets completed by the participants, (3) visual observations and personal interactions during the interviews, (4) other professional contacts with the participants as their instructor, mentor, and/or advisor.

General Descriptive Information

Sixteen study participants were interviewed using an interview guide as included in Appendix B. The sample included 10 females and 6 males. This is representative of the female/male ratio for the School of Business. The age range was 21 to 45 with 4 participants over the age of 25. Of the 10 students reporting their class as senior, 3 will be attending an extra semester to complete their requirements. The remaining 6 students reported their class standing as junior. Additional descriptive information is provided in the summary of descriptive data following the participant profiles presented next.

Participant Profiles

ELLEN is articulate, and dresses neatly in sorority sweatshirts and nice slacks or pant suits. Ellen can be both collegiate and professional, depending on the situation. She has a young son and is currently going through a divorce. An only child born to a middle class family, Ellen's father passed away when she was seven years old. Her mother and other family members have been very supportive throughout her life. Ellen's family is in another state, which has made her divorce rather difficult. During the interview Ellen said, "I am so thankful that when I really need some spiritual strength and support

from my family, I know they care, even though they aren't right here with me. I really miss my family right now."

Ellen is an excellent student who continually outperforms her peers. She has a serious attitude toward her schoolwork, career, and life in general. Going out of her way to greet people, Ellen usually carries a natural smile. She has an exuberant personality and is eager to participate in class discussions. Her eyes seem to sparkle and dance when she speaks, especially about her son, or the job offers she has recently received. She is a natural leader. Occasionally it requires a real effort to encourage her to speed up a story and get to the point, as she likes to talk. Ellen is well liked by her classmates who do not resent her eagerness, rather, they hasten to be in her work groups.

ANTONIO is another talker. In fact, he often engages in both sides of a conversation. Here is a short excerpt from his interview to illustrate. "I will open my restaurant and work while my friend gets her masters degree. Then she will say, well okay now I'm through with my education and its your turn now. So then I'll go back to school and tell her, well, I'm in school now so its your turn to work. And then she will be the CPA and I'll be the manager and she will say, oh, you're such a good manager I'm so glad we did this."

Antonio appears to be interested in immediate gratification. He rationalizes away what he should do in lieu of what he wants to do. He recently explained not showing up for a scheduled make-up test because he looked outside and thought that the weather looked bad. It was dark and cloudy. He is very generous and thoughtful, is very polite, and verbally acknowledges the responsibilities he has as a student. Unfortunately, he nullifies this responsibility by his poor attendance. He can be seen around campus and in classroom buildings with head phones on, totally oblivious to the rest of the world. He has repeated several courses, and has changed his major to one more analytical than computational. When he applies himself he does very good work. His problem is staying focused. In conversation, oral presentation, and even in his writing, he tends to drift off into imagined conversations he is having with a third party. While presenting the facts of a case study in class, he suddenly left his script and began acting out a conversation between himself, the service provider, and imaginary customers. This added nothing to the case study, but provided him with a few minutes of fantasy. It is possible that he may occasionally suffer from substance abuse. He is a free spirit, but always dresses neatly and responds politely. He is eager to participate when engaged, but seldom takes the initiative. He has not proven to be a reliable team player.

Antonio's family background is that of a single parent home. He has older siblings who left home before he began grade school. The extended family of his mother and neighbors who lived close by made sure that he was raised with solid principles of right and wrong and sense of community. Although his mother is dependent on state aid, Antonio has expensive shoes, many music CDs, and states that he travels a lot by car on the weekends with friends.

CLARISSA has a sad story with a happy ending. She is extremely shy and petite in stature. Although she has some very good ideas, she has been afraid to speak up in class for fear of sounding foolish. She makes a noticeable attempt to dress appropriately for any given occasion. In fact, she often will solicit my advice on her choice of clothing and accessories for interviews and presentations. She lived her childhood in the shadow of her brother who received more attention, more material things, and performed well academically. Clarissa feels that she was always compared with her brother and told that she would never amount to anything because she wasn't as smart as he. She provided this statement during her first interview, "People said, why do you want to go to college? You know you're not smart enough. You're not that attractive so you should probably just stay here and hope that somebody will want you." Sexually abused when she was very young,

she has had a hard time relating to people. After her parents divorced, she had difficulty feeling that she belonged anywhere. Her father is an entrepreneur and her mother has struggled raising the family as a single parent.

Clarissa was afraid to attend an HBCU because she was afraid of Black people. This seems a contradiction, being Black herself. She had always been around White people, other than family, and shared the same fears of Black people held by some White people. She said, "I was afraid to come here to college because they were all Black people. I didn't know how to act around them and I was afraid they would beat me up or steal my things." Fortunately, Clarissa's internship experience was very rewarding. She appears to be a new person and now radiates with confidence that previously did not exist. She now speaks openly of her career aspirations. She walks around campus with a bounce in her step, and a smile that was absent for too many years.

CINDY is very personable and tall. She dresses as a typical conservative college student and does not overindulge in material things or entertainment. She is conscious of her limited budget, and seems to have her financial priorities on those things related to her education and the community. From her conversation, it is evident that her lower-middle class family has gone through a series of financial ups and

downs as well as frequent legal separation. Cindy, along with her younger brother and sister, keep their family problems inside.

Unfortunately, the sadness shows on the outside.

Cindy is at the top of her class and is concerned about keeping her GPA no lower than 3.8. With a soft voice she does not often show her leadership capabilities, as do the louder, more vociferous students. She has much better command of small groups, but she is a natural leader. She can be counted on to come through in difficult situations. Campus activities that have a community emphasis interest her. In these areas, she is a hard worker and generally puts in more effort than most of her classmates. She now seems to have a touch of senioritis, however, and is not as dedicated as in the past. The prospect of leaving the security of college life now has her contemplating an extra year to pick up a second major. Her family life has been shaken up once again, and fear of the unknown has caused her to implement some delay tactics. The most recent has been deciding at the last minute to spend a semester abroad. Cindy received an excellent job offer pending graduation as a result of her internship experience this past summer. With two semesters left, Cindy had a very bright future to look forward to on the east coast. When her parents split up again, she suddenly decided to delay graduation and the job offer by spending a semester in

the Dominican Republic. She said, "I'm still young and I really don't want to get tied into something yet. I'm not ready to work. It's too hard."

LORIBETH is a single mother, overweight and rather quiet. I learned more from her in this interview than I have in the past two years with her in my classrooms. Her course work was inconsistent. Sometimes very good, other times just average. I had categorized her as lazy and disinterested. From the interview, however, I learned that she is quite articulate, and recognizes her own laziness as a student, wishing to change, now that she has one semester left. I was surprised at her lack of motivation to "succeed." Her primary goal is to just "get by" comfortably. Loribeth said, "I just want to be there for my daughter. I want her to have clothes and food and be happy. I want to be there to know where she is going and what she is doing." There seem to be no real aspirations other than providing adequately for her daughter. I didn't even know she had a child before the interview.

Loribeth has matured a great deal in the last year. She recently sent me a note thanking me for taking the time to listen to her and helping to guide her toward higher goals. Although her lower-middle class parents provided a good home for her, as an only child, she said, "They tended to tell me what I wanted to hear, not what I needed to

hear.” She was very grateful that I provided options for her to consider, and a picture of what her capabilities are.

FRANCES is a beautiful young woman by any cover model standards. She is very thin, a single parent, and the product of a wild mother, in her words, and a broken home. Her father worked two labor intensive jobs to provide for Frances and her brother. She has tremendous respect for her father. She said, “I never remember him complaining. Even when he didn’t have a way to get to work he would start out extra early, walking, so he wouldn’t be late. Somehow he always got there on time. Sometimes he got a ride. But my mother, she was wild. She was never there. That’s why my dad decided to take us.”

Frances has a flare for fashion. She dresses and chooses accessories as if she were modeling for the cover of an executive glamour magazine. Not a good student, she needs some personal discipline. She is very bright, but does not attend classes regularly. Frances is always dabbling in an entrepreneurial enterprise as she does not intend to ever work for anyone else. This may prove to be best, as Frances has her own timeline.

JANET is polite, and blends well with other traditional college students. She is often late for class, does not have good attendance, has average grades, and does not participate much in class. Her lack of

participation may be because she has a husky voice which she admits embarrasses her. Also, she has trouble communicating in complete sentences, and relies on the phrase, "I don't know." Janet's mother went back to school for her MBA when she was laid off from her job of seventeen years. Her mother is recently divorced and her younger sister has just become pregnant. Janet feels pressure from her mother to go home every weekend and fix the family's problems. This summer Janet moved out of her mother's house because of the stress and constant fighting with her mother. She is living with her aunt. This seems to be a reasonable temporary solution. She is working two part time jobs and rarely sees her aunt or other family members. Janet feels the need to concentrate on her own problems (like getting through school) without carrying her mother's burdens as well. She feels that she is expected to be the mother for her younger sister. Janet said, "You know, I'm really tired of this. I'm working as hard as I can to graduate and she keeps dumping all this on me like its my fault because I'm the older sister and I should be the one to keep her straight. That's her job. I can't do it all." Although Janet has tremendous respect for her mother and her accomplishments, she wants her mother to be the mother and let her be the child. She keeps a low profile and seems satisfied with C work.

JEFFREY's football playing weight has loosened up a bit since he stopped playing. He is polite and is very interested in presenting what he thinks is the right image. He has difficulty maintaining direct eye contact during a conversation and his writing skills could use improvement. Although his language skills are adequate, his grammar and spelling can use some work.

Jeffrey's father was never a significant factor in his life. His mother's brother was a father figure and role model for Jeffrey as he was growing up. In fact, it was his uncle who encouraged him to go to college. His uncle would have him look at his calloused hands and explain that with college Jeffrey would not have the hands of a laborer. Jeffrey said, "My uncle is a good man. He never let me get into trouble or he would kick my butt. Of course he never had to. Ha ha."

Jeffrey attended a magnet high school out of state that focused on the arts. He was a stage performer and had several key roles. He describes his high school as being "on the hill." Even though he came from a poor family, the school had a reputation for being for rich students. This was a problem for him because his friends in the neighborhood resented his being associated with the other crowd. Now that his neighborhood has quite a bit of crime in it, he hopes that his mother and new baby sister can find a safer place to live.

Jeffrey's class attendance is not quite exemplary and he often turns in assignments late. He is a natural leader and does well in group work. He is eager to participate in class, and is a welcome contributor. His GPA is a stable C. He doesn't always buy the books that are required for class and tries to talk me into leniency. This seems to be a dichotomy since he has a good analytical mind, yet always tries to find the easy way out. Whether there is a lack of money or he doesn't care enough is hard to discern.

KATHERINE is separated, has two young children and does a good job balancing work, school, and motherhood. She is very polite and dresses neatly. She participates when called upon, but requires encouragement before she volunteers. A slightly above average student, her writing skills are excellent. She has a beautiful smile and is a delight to engage in conversation. Her internships have given her enough experience to question ethics in the workplace, and how she might seek employment where she is more comfortable in the environment. Like many other students with one semester left, she questions her choice of major and is desperately trying to take courses that are of interest to her and useful to pursue a slightly different career direction. When asked about life in the broadcasting business, she said, "You know, I don't really think I could live like that. I know I couldn't.

They do some things that really exploit bad things in peoples' lives and I just can't do that."

Katherine comes from a well educated middle to upper-middle class family. Her parents, grandparents, and several aunts and uncles have college degrees. Many members of her family have contributed to the university in various ways, and even have campus buildings named after them. This does not seem to have brought pressure on Katherine, rather, it has made the quest for education a way of life for her.

LINDA brings a ray of sunshine into each day. Even on a bad day she can be found smiling and giggling. I believe she truly enjoys her life. She left college and came back to finish several years later. She has a solid value system for work and personal situations, and is concerned about the lack of professionalism she witnesses on a daily basis where she works. Divorced after an early marriage, Linda returned to school to take life more seriously. She said, "I finally realized I had to do something with my life. I had been having too much fun and really not preparing for the future. So here I am again, and this time I know why I'm here." She grew up in a large city and was strongly influenced by the surroundings. During her high school years, Linda was taken under her aunt's wing in a "nicer" part of town. There, she learned how a proper lady acts and dresses for success. Her brother

stayed with her mother in the “bad” part of town and continues to get into trouble by running with the wrong crowd. Linda was able to excel without a father figure; her brother could not.

Linda always dresses as if she were on her way to work, occasionally over does her finger nails. She has such an expressive face, I always feel good after talking with her. Her bubbly personality and concern for the well being of others are a very good combination for her chosen field of the hospitality industry.

MARGARET came back to finish college after raising her children. Both she and her husband work full time. She keeps a low profile in class and participates only when directly confronted. This could be a result of her childhood. Her older sister took the responsibility of taking care of her, as their mother often disappeared and they had no father in the home. Margaret said that whenever she had a problem she could always go to her sister. They were very poor, but didn't notice that they were any different from anyone else they knew. She said, “I never thought about it, really. But when I look back on it, it's a wonder we even survived.”

Margaret is completing her degree for self-satisfaction, not for career enhancement. She has no interest in pursuing a different job. Self satisfaction is her true motivation. In her own words, “I realized

people were talking about things that I knew nothing about. So I decided I had to go back and finish my degree.”

MICHAEL keeps a high GPA, is quite personable and often times wears a business suit to class. (This is not uncommon in the School of Business.) He is extremely arrogant about his abilities and opportunities. Michael said, “I expect to work in international business after I get my law degree. With my education and capabilities I’m not sure how I will decide which offer to accept. Well, obviously it will be the one that pays the most. Probably about \$75k to start. But I won’t stay there long. Then everyone else will want me too.” He can be counted on to do exemplary work and is often selected to represent the university at various functions. He has excellent presentation skills, and is quite comfortable before any size audience. He is very tall, and uses his height to his advantage in demanding attention. He is a natural leader, but tends to lead autocratically.

Michael comes from a well educated family. Even his grandparents had Ph.Ds. He is very well traveled and spent many years overseas. Michael makes a point of networking with those who he believes will prove to be advantageous to his pursuits.

JASPER is a soft spoken football player. He participates readily in class, and is more polite than his classmates in waiting for his turn to

speaking. He is very conscientious in classes where he feels he needs to place more effort. He dresses as a typical college student, and has a quiet smile.

Jasper is also well traveled. Having had extended vacations around the world with his parents, he has a much broader perspective of life than his peers. A product of mixed parentage, his father from Africa, his mother Caucasian, college attendance was expected and was not an option. He had a fairly strict childhood, most of which was spent in a Catholic school. Self-discipline seems to radiate from him. Jasper makes an effort to work with his teammates on and off of the football field. He is a natural leader even though he is soft spoken. A great deal of his time is spent with youngsters teaching them the value of staying in school and staying away from drugs. His vision of his future is based on his parents' present situation. Because his parents are very successful and well educated, as a sophomore, before this study was initiated, Jasper had the misconception that a college degree would position him for a starting salary of \$100,000. This expectation has since been modified slightly. Now Jasper says, "Well, I hope to work my way up through NCAA coaching jobs. Eventually, I hope to be making several million, but then I'll just get fired and have to find another coaching job."

PETER is beginning to be more involved with extra curricular activities. A quiet student, he is becoming more involved in projects and clubs; however, he speaks in class only when encouraged to do so. Where there was silence before, he now mumbles, so at least I know he has a comment to make. He dresses neatly, wears two small studded earrings, and has a winning smile.

Raised in a typical middle class family, Peter was influenced by a church sign across the street from his high school. Every week there was a different motivational message for which he decided to strive. He worked on achieving the attributes described in the message one week at a time. He remarked at his disappointment the few weeks that the sign did not change. He said, " You know, I always looked for that sign every Monday morning because it would say something different, like, to get ahead you must work every day. Things like that. But one day, the sign didn't change and I was really mad because I didn't have something new to concentrate on that week. I should have complained about it. Maybe they would have found something to put up."

Now a member of several organizations on campus, Peter's work shows a growing maturity and flare for creativity. He has taken on the responsibility to lead one of the campus organizations after the president did not return the following semester.

REBECCA is the student we all wish, or fear, having in our classrooms. She is bright, spunky, says what she means, and has very specific ideas about the world. She is not afraid of a challenge, and eagerly participates in class, sometimes leading me down a road I don't wish to travel. She is a challenge to keep on track without discouraging her enthusiasm for debate and controversy. She rarely directly seeks advice, but frequently takes the opportunity to engage in conversation with those from whom she feels she can learn. She is very conscious of her race and the inequalities she believes exist in the world, specifically in business. She is not out to prove anything per se, rather, she is fighting to succeed in spite of her perceived disadvantage.

When I asked Rebecca to describe her neighborhood she said, "The ghetto." I asked why she described it that way and she replied, "Well, you know, ghettos are characterized by really poor Black families and run down boarded up vacant buildings. That's what is in my neighborhood." Coming from a very poor family, she did attend a magnet high school. The oldest of four children, she was the inspiration for a younger sister by always achieving good grades and staying involved in school activities. Her family situation is not good, however. There is conflict between her parents, one sister is now an unmarried mother and the brother stopped going to high school.

Rebecca is a natural leader, and is usually dependable, although her activist activities sometimes take priority over her school work. She is very active in NAACP, she created her own chapter of Professional Negro Women on campus, and was very excited about attending the Million Women March in Philadelphia this year.

Rebecca has a sound mind for business, and has made her strong appreciation for Afrocentric goods a part of her career goals. This limits her opportunities, but she knows what she wants and is going after it.

RALPH is very pleased with how he sees himself. He is rather short in stature, and tries very hard to present himself as a successful businessman at all times. He dresses the way he thinks he should to present what he perceives to be the proper image. He participates without hesitation and enjoys a good debate. Like Rebecca, he has very strong views about the inequalities he perceives for "his people" in business and industry. He said, "I think its important for my people to become financially independent and help each other in different situations." He tries to use a large vocabulary and frequently makes incorrect word choices.

Ralph's father has a college degree, works on commission, and has preached entrepreneurship to his children. Ralph comes from an average middle class family but has expectations of greatness. He will

settle for nothing less than to be a millionaire. He may get there, but I believe his achievement will come after the age of 45, not before, as he intends. As motivated as he appears to be, he lacks focus and follow-through. With the interview prospects he has ahead of him, he may be quite successful in a Fortune 500 company. His dreams of becoming an entrepreneur will most likely be sidetracked as he builds a reputation for himself along with material wealth on someone else's payroll.

Summary of Demographic Data

The largest number of students came from the \$30,000 - \$60,000 group. Summary data from interviewees in Table 3 show that more students came from lower income groups than higher. All of those within the \$30,000 - \$60,000 considered their families to be middle class.

Table 3

Family Income

<\$30,000	>\$30,000<\$60,000	>\$60,000	TOTAL
7	6	3	16

As shown in Table 4, a summary of data collected from personal data sheets revealed that overall, the mothers of the participants had more education than their fathers. Of the interviewees whose parents only attended high school, however, more fathers completed than mothers, and of those who went on to college, more mothers completed than fathers. Three of the parents, one father and two mothers, were second generation college graduates.

Table 4

Parents' Education

	Dropout	High School	2 YR College	4 YR College	Grad/ Prof.	TOTAL
Mother	2	5	3	4	2	16
Father	2	8	2	2	2	16

Family household data are summarized in Table 5. Representation was close to equal with 56% of the participants coming from single parent homes and 44% coming from two parent homes. Of the single parent households, 66% were the result of death of a spouse or divorce.

Table 5

Number of Parents in Household

Single Parent	Two Parents	TOTAL
9	7	16

The home town size of the participants was evenly distributed as represented in Table 6. For the purpose of this study, a large city was considered to have over 500,000 residents, mid-size was between 100,000 and 500,000 residents, and a small town having less than 100,000 residents.

Table 6

Size of Home Town

Large City	Mid-Size City	Small Town	TOTAL
5	5	6	16

Table 7 is provided to illustrate a summary of the student characteristics from this study.

Table 7

Student Characteristics

	Male	Female
Traditional	6	7
Non-Traditional	0	3
Urban	2	5
Rural	5	4
Children	1	5
No Children	5	5
Low Income	1	6
Middle Income	3	3
High Income	2	1
Athlete	2	1
Non-Athlete	4	9
Not Married	6	8
Married	0	2
In State	1	7
Out of State	5	3
Internship	2	5
No Internship	4	5

Recurring Themes and Categories

Analysis of the information emerging from the interviews focused on the two research questions:

1. What kinds of post-baccalaureate employment expectations do Black business students have at an HBCU?

2. Where do the expectations of Black business students at an HBCU originate?

It is evident that the identified themes/categories were reflected by at least 50% of the sample. Each of the eight themes/categories is discussed in the pages that follow. In addition, quotations from transcripts of interviews are provided. The recurring themes and categories related to expectations are:

1. Graduate degree as a means for advancement
2. Entrepreneurship as a goal
3. Success - money
4. Self image after college - leader
5. Reason for college - to better myself
6. Retirement age and personal savings - 45 years old with several million dollars
7. Community - family and neighborhood centered, very local
8. Sources of expectations - family second to the environment

Figure 1 quantifies the number of student responses to each of the eight themes/categories. The coding system grouped like-responses that allowed for categorization of each response. Areas that consisted of eight or more responses were included as major themes/categories.

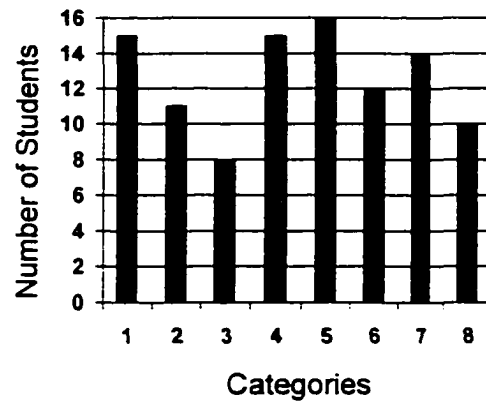


Figure 1. The number of students responding similarly to each of the eight themes/categories is indicated in the bar graph.

Table 8 provides a more detailed category profile as it represents the categories mentioned by each student. Selecting key words and phrases from the interviews, a shaded cell indicates that a particular student made comments related to one of the eight categories. Not every student mentioned every category, but it is evident from this illustration where the common themes lie. Only three categories were not mentioned by every student.

Table 8

Frequency of Expectation Categories by Student

CATEGORIES								
NAME	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Ellen								
Antonio								
Clarissa								
Cindy								
Loribeth								
Frances								
Janet								
Jeffrey								
Kathrine								
Linda								
Margaret								
Michael								
Jasper								
Peter								
Rebecca								
Ralph								

Graduate Degree as a Means for Advancement

Participants were not asked about plans for graduate study during the interview, however, fifteen of the sixteen students who repeatedly mentioned graduate school as the perceived requirement for personal success in business, plan to attend graduate school at some point in time. Antonio said, "You have a lot of opportunities available to

you with a higher degree. It helps to have a master's degree."

Similarly, Katherine responded with, "Having a degree and a master's degree is the only way to move ahead."

The number of respondents were nearly equal choosing graduate school, 7 immediately after the baccalaureate degree and 8 returning to school two to five years after working in the field. Without prodding, Ellen said, "After five years I will have my master's degree."; Clarissa said, "I want to work five years then go to graduate school."; Linda said she would like to work for two years before going back to school for a master's degree; Janet plans to attend graduate school right away; and Peter is the lifelong learner who said, "My education will never really be finished." The perception is that a master's degree equals a measure of success. The common expectation of this group is that advancement can be achieved through the possession of a graduate degree. A pattern of graduate school timing was revealed, but not solely on the basis of the variables identified in Table 7. Margaret was the only participant who was not interested in graduate school. This is because she has no desire for a career change, only the knowledge and respect that she believes she will achieve with a baccalaureate degree. As to when a student preferred to attend graduate school, those with lower GPAs, who also came from lower income families, and those who were a bit insecure

about their goals, not necessarily related to family income, reported that they would attend graduate school immediately following the baccalaureate degree requirements.

Although eleven of the students expressed a desire to get an advanced degree in a business field, all revealed an interest in a specialty other than their current major field of study in business. For instance, Michael plans to get an MBA and a JD in International Business and Corporate Law, Frances wants to go to Culinary School, Linda expects to get a master's in Public Relations, Cindy is planning on getting an MBA in Marketing, and Clarissa hopes to get her master's in Counseling.

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship seems to be a goal expectation for a majority (68%) of the students; five did not refer to entrepreneurship as a goal. Family members of 4 of the 16 students had experience with owning their own businesses. All four included grandparents, and two of the four also included one parent. It can be noted that each of these four were in the lower middle to lower income categories, suburban or small town. One student whose family had experience with entrepreneurship stated, "I've seen what its like and I don't want to go that way." The other variables in Table 7, (whether the student is considered

traditional, with or without children, athlete or non-athlete, married or unmarried, in or out of state, and having an internship or not) did not differentiate this group. The remaining students who did mention entrepreneurship but did not have family members engaged as entrepreneurs, did not reveal a pattern in their characteristics. The general theme, however, was a desire to be in control. Clarissa stated that she wanted to have something that was her own. Frances said, "I plan to not work for anybody but go off on my own." Katherine was very sure of herself saying, "I want to own my own business so I will be on top." Several students made comments similar to Peter's, "I really don't think I could work for anyone else." Ralph and Michael have grand plans of being able to set their own schedules and never leave the house to work. The majors of the students in this study include computer science, management, communication, accounting and finance, however, five of the participants expressed a desire to own restaurants after working in the corporate world to gain experience. They believe that the management and business skills they will pick up in "corporate America" will prepare them for entrepreneurship. A relationship can be drawn concerning the timing of entrepreneurial enterprises and the financial expectations of such an adventure. Those with lower GPAs and those from lower income families seek entrepreneurship

immediately after graduation and expect to make their “millions” running their own businesses. Those with better than average GPAs and from higher income families plan to make their “millions” first, then go on to running their own entrepreneurial enterprises. No other variables differentiate this group.

Success

The expectation of success was described broadly, ranging from “being happy with what I am doing” to “having a good job” to “a lot of money.” Students with a combination of lower grade point averages and/or having come from low income and single parent homes, more frequently address success in terms of millions of dollars compared to the other respondents. Frances, for example, hopes to “have a few million.” Seemingly, the poorest vocalize the highest unrealistic monetary expectations. Those from moderate income families consider success as being comfortable and not having to worry about paying the bills. Cindy and Jeffrey both mentioned being stable, having a family and being able to take care of their families as primary components of success. While those from higher income families take for granted that success will enable them to live a comfortable life style, they also consider the intrinsic value of having achieved whatever their personal goals were as a measure of success. As Jasper stated, “I think it’s a

state of mind. When you think you have done everything in life you need to do, your family is comfortable, you don't have to worry about bills, whatever you plan to accomplish you have, that's your personal success at a certain level." Ralph believes that because Deion Sanders lives in the same town as his own family, that it is realistic to assume that Ralph will have the same kind of estate after he makes his mark in business. Ralph met someone on an airplane who mentioned knowing someone who was making in excess of \$125,000 annually before he was thirty. This achievement seemed reasonable to Ralph, who considered it being successful. Ralph plans on obtaining a six figure salary in less than two years.

The common thread in the definition of success for the participants was peace of mind and happiness. Even though half of the students expect to have at least one million dollars in twenty years, all 16 mentioned being happy with what they are doing, the ability to care for a family, and not having to worry about household expenses as elements of personal success. Landrine and Klonoff (1996), present a scale devised for measuring acculturation among African Americans, along with powerful studies that empirically explore the role of culture and acculturation in African American behavior and psychology. Their findings help to explain the tendency of these students to link success

with not only meeting basic needs, but for some, acquiring personal financial wealth at a rate that seems achievable to them, but in reality is obtained by only a very small percentage of the American population.

Self Image After College

Fifteen of the sixteen participants believe college will enhance their image and will give them ready made credibility and respect. The “image” is very visual as the following statements reveal: “I can walk in carrying my briefcase and people will respect me” and “I’ve always wanted to be that woman on TV with her business suit and briefcase.”

Without exception, the responses identified higher education as a means to an end. Responses such as, “I like to be a leader and be out in front,” “Having a degree and a master’s degree is the only way to get ahead,” “Education will open a lot of doors for me.” Antonio believes people will look up to him because he went to school. Rebecca intends to have all of the responsibility of a business to herself, and Ralph believes he will be a leader in the firm he chooses and will continue to break earning records beginning with his first year out. The expectation of the students in this study is that with a degree comes respect and leadership. Other than Margaret, who is closer to retirement, they have very high aspirations for themselves.

Reason for College

One of the interview questions was, "Why did you decide to go college?" Only five of the sixteen participants were raised in an environment where higher education was expected, not debated. In other words, the goal, or expectation of a college degree, was determined by the values of the family, not the student. The other eleven gave similar responses such as: "To better myself," "I wanted to build a future for myself," "I wanted a better life for myself," "I feel like college is the only way out in life; to further yourself with knowledge through education." The common belief is that education is important for personal, social, and economic advancement. They all believe that certain opportunities are available only to college graduates, and they all consider it a step toward self-improvement and gaining personal respect.

Retirement Age and Personal Savings

This category contains two parts, retirement age and personal savings, because upon analysis of the data, they always appeared together. It is important to mention salary expectations as they appear in conjunction with personal savings to get a sense of computation, or the lack of it. The nine students who had completed their internships at the time of the interviews had more realistic expectations of their

starting salaries after graduation than those who did not have an off campus internship experience. The seven students who have served internships have been quite eager to share their news of job offers with me. These have ranged from \$20,000 - \$35,000 pending graduation. There is no general characteristic to describe the students who have and have not yet served internships. This is a function of the internship coordinator, although he does place students with higher GPAs and charisma earlier in their academic careers. Those who have not yet served internships still believe they will be offered starting salaries of \$45,000 just because they have a degree. All but Loribeth, who plans to go into teaching, and Margaret, who doesn't plan to leave her current job, believe their annual incomes at retirement will range from \$100,000 to \$3,000,000. Twelve of the 16 students expect to retire between 45 and 55 years of age and have several million dollars in savings at that time. Their accumulated wealth will come from personal savings and investments. Those who intend to work until age 65, or as Frances put it, "I'll never retire, just slow down a little," have grandparents, aunts or uncles in their lives who are working well into their 60s and 70s. Eleven of the sixteen plan to retire as entrepreneurs. The common (14 of the 16) life goal sequence is to work for a major corporation to gain experience and pay for graduate school, or let the

company pay for graduate school, accumulate a great sum of wealth enabling them to become entrepreneurs, then retire at a young age as entrepreneurs with enough in savings to live lives of leisure. The expectations of what a graduate degree will mean monetarily were surprising as well. Peter expects that a starting salary with an MBA will be at least \$45,000, while Michael expects to make \$70-80,000 his first year after graduate school. Some Fortune 500 companies in high cost areas have made those offers to graduates of prestigious business schools who have been hired as fast track professionals. An informal telephone survey of twenty major companies in the state (telephone interviews, October, 1997) revealed that they rarely offer more than \$40,000 for new MBAs with virtually no work experience. While students who do not plan on attending graduate school right away expect their employers to pay for their graduate degrees, the telephone survey revealed that most large companies with over 250 employees, offer reimbursement for at least part of graduate school tuition, but do not regularly offer full payment of graduate work as a benefit.

The frequency of promotions within a firm and the related salary increases are in keeping with the students' inflated salary expectations. The majority of the participants expect promotions every six months with at least a \$5,000 pay raise with each promotion. They did not see

pay raises without promotions. Twelve of the sixteen expect to be division or regional managers at the end of three years. Upon retirement, the entrepreneurs believe they will be CEOs, the others, except Loribeth and Margaret again, believe they will be vice presidents of companies or major universities.

Community

The sense of community in these students is strong and clearly that of propinquity. Extended families and immediate neighbors play a vital role in daily routines. All but Frances, described their neighborhoods as being family oriented. Even when they felt that the streets were not exactly safe, they described their immediate neighbors as looking out for one another. Clarissa, who suffered sexual abuse as a child as well as suffering from a physical challenge, thinks she can help other people with their problems. But the desire to help others is not limited to those with troubled pasts. Jasper, who comes from a hard working, church going and well educated family, loves to work with young people trying to keep them in school and off of drugs. Rebecca and Ralph have an awareness of, in their words, "their people" and think it is very important for African-Americans to work together to take care of themselves and prosper. This attitude is more prevalent in conversation than activity.

The general observation is that they rely on each other, feel safe when they are close to friends and family, and feel an obligation to pay back the community for what they feel they have been given. This has not been described in monetary terms, but in community outreach through planned activities.

The preceding discussion of themes and categories reveals a general agreement among the students on major aspects of their future and general expectations. Table 9 provides a summary of the expectation categories and their corresponding sources in order of occurrence.

Table 9

Summary of Expectations and Sources of Expectations

EXPECTATIONS	SOURCES
Graduate degree as means for advancement	Friends, Environment
Entrepreneurship as a goal	Family, Friends, Environment
Success	TV, Business and Popular Magazines, Friends, Family, Environment
Self-image after college	Family, TV, Movies, Business Magazines, Environment
Reason for College	Family, Environment
Retirement age and personal savings	Friends, TV, Movies, Magazines
Community	Family, Church, Environment

In terms of the student characteristics in Table 7, differing attitudes appear to be clustered around income, age, and internship experience. Those students who had left college and came back after the age of 25, had more realistic expectations regarding salary, lifetime goals and job responsibilities. Lower income students tended to discuss success and career achievement in terms of rapid promotion and millions of dollars. Middle income students discussed success in terms of covering basic needs at a comfortable level and working up the ladder, while upper income students visualized a life of leisure with vast material wealth to include luxury cars, large estates, frequent international vacations, plenty of time at the country club, and dressing in designer clothes. The internship experience modified beginning salary expectations for those with the internship experience, but all other expectations were in keeping with the students who did not yet have internship experience.

Several questions from the Interview Guide (Appendix B and Appendix C) helped to provide a better understanding of the students' personalities and background, but did not provide trend data. The questions producing results that were not significant include: Describe your high school, Describe places you have visited outside of your home state, What kinds of non-academic campus activities do you participate

in, How important are social skills in the workplace, What do you think your first job will be, and What kind of car do you drive?

Source of Expectations

In the past, people would spend more than 20 years building a career. These students expect to achieve the same status in 20 months. The perception is that they arrive, learn the ropes, make their mark and move on to the next opportunity. During their sophomore year, before this study formally began, these students appear to have had outrageous expectations of starting salaries. The exposures and experiences they have had subsequently, have modified their expectations and brought them closer to reality. In their junior and senior years, the students in this study had many opportunities to interview with various companies and talk off-line with speakers from different types of business and industry. A valid source of expectations has been internship experience and interaction with professionals.

Home and family were the most frequent responses to the question, "What do you think is the source of your job related expectations?" Over half of the participants came from single parent homes. In each case, there was a significant aunt, uncle, older sibling, or neighbor who took the responsibility for physically watching out for them and teaching them how to be good citizens. The very strong bond

between family and community is evidenced in the high regard these students have for the people who were influential in their lives. Most of the home environments stressed independence. Peter's parents taught him to think for himself, Ellen's family exposed her to many different things so that she could make up her own mind, and Janet's family impressed upon her the importance of doing something for yourself. The second round of interviews revealed even stronger commitments to independence and self-reliance. Various family members were the driving force of the attitude, "don't work for anyone but yourself." This was not always a parent, but frequently was a grandparent, aunt or uncle.

Although family, friends, recruiters, coaches and teachers all played a part in molding these students into who they are, other external factors have had a major impact on their expectations. The desire to get ahead through education is a combination of self motivation, people of influence, and the immediate environment. But the expectations of retiring young, having high earnings and savings of millions of dollars, along with frequent promotions in a management hierarchy, appear to come more from magazine feature articles and TV talk shows and sitcoms than from reliable sources.

As business students, all of them indicated that they read either Fortune, Business Week, or Money Magazine and Black Enterprise on a regular basis. The feature stories in these magazines often focus on the few extremely successful business people who earn in excess of \$300,000 annually. Latest figures from the U.S.Census Bureau (1998) show that the lower limit of the top 5 percent in 1996 was \$128,000. Clearly these students are confusing the top percentile of the population with the norm. Whenever surveys are included that offer examples of starting salaries, they include Ivy League Schools and Fortune 500 companies operating in high cost areas such as New York, San Francisco and Chicago. This group of students believes the figures in magazines to be representative of nationwide averages. The other magazines frequently read by this group of students include Ebony, Essence, Vibe, and Jet. The focus is on young professionals and success stories of movie stars and professional athletes. The examples do represent living in luxury and achieving a great deal before the age of 40. This could produce a false sense of reality.

The participants of this study are not heavy TV watchers, however, the programs most often watched include *Living Single* and *Moesha*. The characters portrayed are parallel to the lifestyle with which most of the students are familiar. But the actors themselves are

featured frequently in magazines and talk shows such as Oprah, where their million dollar salaries and lavish life styles are material of interest. Aside from the nightly news, which covers sensational stories that usually include felonies, the press actively attempts to portray young African-Americans as being successful in terms of well above average salaries, lavish life styles, media attention, and fine jewelry and clothing. Even the advertisements in magazines targeted to young Black business audiences are upscale as well featuring Volvo, Chrysler, Remy Martin, Crown Royal, Tiffany & Co. and Smith Barney. This appears to be the material side of what these students desire. Features such as "Making It" in Black Enterprise emphasize the earnings of individuals. Jill Patton, 31, purchased a specialty basket business for \$12,000 and anticipates increasing revenues to \$5 million over the next five years; Charles Payne, after five years in the Air Force and a brief tour at E.F. Hutton as an analytical asset management employee, invested \$9,000 to start his own New York based independent investment research firm. He now provides technical analysis of the stock market to over 5,000 subscribers and more than 250 brokerage firms in the U.S., United Kingdom, and Canada (Gite & Brown, Black Enterprise, October, 1997.) The media focus is not on giving back to the community, making the world a better place, or the hard work and

perseverance it takes to accomplish one's goals. College students hear about the "bad boys," their multimillion dollar contracts and lavish lifestyles. The recent TV movie "Bad As I Want To Be" chronicling the life of Chicago Bulls' million dollar bad boy, Dennis Rodman, promotes excess rather than hard honest work and an ethical lifestyle. Students do not hear about how a young dancer from the ghetto worked around the clock to make good grades and pay for his way through Juilliard so he could have a chance to be a respected professional dancer.

In terms of the variables in Table 7, several observations have been made regarding the sources of the students' expectations.

1. Traditional students are more likely to be influenced by friends, TV, movies, magazines, and family than are non-traditional students who tend to seek more empirical data.
2. There appear to be slight differences in the sources of expectations for urban versus rural or suburban dwellers. Urban or suburban students place a greater emphasis on friends and professional magazines, while rural students tend to place a higher emphasis on TV, movies, and popular/ contemporary lifestyle magazines.

3. The sources of expectations for those with children do not differ from those without children. Friends, family, and various forms of media are sources for all.
4. Income does play a role in the sources of expectations. Students from lower incomes are more strongly influenced by the media, and older family members. Middle income students are strongly influenced by their parents, followed by the images of athletes, movie and TV stars, and both business and popular magazines along with friends. Students from higher income families are influenced more by their surroundings, social encounters and family, followed by professional magazines and friends.
5. With only three athletes in the group, no differences were found in the sources of their expectations compared to non-athletes.
6. Marriage did not appear to affect the sources of expectations. With only two married students in the group, a trend could not be established.
7. In-state students had a greater tendency to rely on information from friends than did out-of-state students, but out-of-state students relied on information from casual acquaintances and strangers.

8. It is evident that the internship experience was the most influential exposure in terms of expectation modification for this group of students. The seven students who served their internships prior to the interviews had a much better grasp of reality in terms of workplace expectations than did their peers. To clarify, their expectations of the amount and type of work to be done in a day were in keeping with reality. Most having received job offers, had a more realistic expectation of starting salaries. Their life time goals and achievements, however, in terms of personal savings, level of achievement and retirement, are still up with the top 5% of the nation.

Summary

This chapter profiles the participants, presents recurring themes and categories, and summarizes the study results. The findings concerning expectations are discussed in eight themes as follows:

- Graduate degree as a means for advancement

The majority of the students repeatedly mentioned graduate school as the perceived requirement for personal success in business.

- Entrepreneurship as a goal

Entrepreneurship and a desire to be in control is a common goal for this group of students.

- Success

Success was described broadly, ranging from being happy, to having a good job, to having a lot of money.

- Self image after college

Without exception, the responses included higher education as a means to an end. The majority of the group believes that college will enhance their image and will give them instant credibility and respect.

- Reason for college

The common belief among these students was that education is important/necessary for personal, social, and economic advancement. Self-improvement and personal respect are accomplishments made possible with college.

- Retirement age and personal savings at retirement

The common life goal sequence is to work for a major corporation to gain experience and pay for graduate school, or let the company pay for graduate school, leave in five years with enough money to start a business, retire young as an entrepreneur with enough in savings and investments to live a life of leisure.

- **Community/propinquity**

Primary relationships are very important. The strong bond between family and community is evidenced in the high regard these students have for the people who were influential in their lives.

- **Sources of expectations**

Although family, friends, recruiters, coaches and teachers all played a part in molding these students into who they are, other external factors, such as the media, have had a major impact on their expectations.

The findings indicate that student expectations for business careers are not consistent with reality. Table 10 provides a generalized version of realistic/unrealistic expectations according to the student characteristics previously described in Table 7.

Table 10

Degree of Expectation by Student Characteristics

CHARACTERISTIC	REALISTIC	UNREALISTIC
Traditional		
Non-Traditional		
Urban	NA	NA
Rural	NA	NA
Children	NA	NA
No Children	NA	NA
Low Income		
Middle Income		
High Income		
Athlete	NA	NA
Non-Athlete	NA	NA
Married	NA	NA
Not Married	NA	NA
In State		
Out of State		
Internship		
No internship		

- A darkened rectangle represents strong views
 - Medium shading represents a slight inclination
-

CHAPTER FIVE - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was designed to generate grounded theory concerning post-baccalaureate employment expectations of Black college students enrolled in HBCUs. Two major research questions that guided the study are as follows:

1. What kinds of post-baccalaureate employment expectations do Black business students have at an HBCU?
2. Where do the expectations of Black business students at an HBCU originate?

Participants were drawn from the School of Business roster for juniors and seniors at a historically Black university for the summer and fall terms of 1997. Individuals were selected to represent the population with varying ranges of geographic location and socioeconomic status. The aim was to gather an “authentic” understanding of the students’ expectations. Open-ended questions were the most effective route towards this end. Audio recordings of the naturally occurring interactions along with field notes of observational data provided a highly reliable record to return to while developing a new theory. Interviewing each participant twice, along with the collection of personal data sheets, provided for the development of a coding system

that addressed all responses adequately. This process was intuitive and emergent in nature.

Discussion

Society in general and higher education in particular for at least 50 years, instilled the monetary value of a college education. Business degrees have become passports to money. Hence we have a culture that has promoted business degrees as the way to make a lot of money. The media has reinforced the image of the exceptionally successful business person. With the increasing accessibility to the business community by young Black men and women, they have entered a “new” arena with the fabricated images gleaned from anecdote and the media. With young Black students leaving the familiarity of the college campus about to venture into the harsh realities of business life, the questions to ask are:

1. What kinds of post-baccalaureate employment expectations do Black business students have at an HBCU?
2. Where do the expectations of Black business students at an HBCU originate?

The data collected for this study reveal that social encounters can drastically influence an individual's view of himself and his expectations in business. For example, Antonio comes from a poor and uneducated family. He sees himself as having very little worth if he follows the job

track of his family and friends. Antonio respects people who have college degrees and higher incomes. Although he respects his family members for their modest accomplishments, such as being featured in local newspaper articles, he wants to reach a higher level of social and economic status. From his experience and observations, Antonio believes the way to achieve social respect and material wealth is through education. Persons who are important to us do affect the way we define ourselves and our expectations. Maehr (1974) states that as people are confronted with various stimuli, within groups, certain regularities emerge. These value systems, ideologies and expectations are critical features of the culture.

Class is not equivalent to culture, but insofar as it designates a pattern of interpersonal communication and interaction and specifies opportunities for experience, it does tend to be associated with the development of distinct cultural patterns (Maehr, 1974). Either by circumstance or by choice, the individuals of this study behave in response to smaller segments of the larger society or class. Each person has various specialized and limited reference groups that conform in some way to general standards. These groups, which are primarily made up of family members, peers and the media, prompt a person's goals and how to attain them.

The goals and expectations of people tend to cluster based on reference groups, environments, and interactions within those environments. The students participating in this study are no exception. General themes of expectations have emerged.

Graduate Degree as a Means for Advancement

With one exception, the students correlate professional and social advancement with graduate work. Students from both educated and non-educated families believe they will not succeed in business without an advanced degree. For those from non-educated environments, a graduate degree is their door to opportunity. As Antonio said, "The more education I will have the more people will look up to me and respect me because I have an education and I went to school." An interesting observation was that those students who did not have college educated parents had difficulty maintaining eye contact. As they talked about the importance of graduate school, their eyes would slowly glance around the room, seeming to focus on the office full of books and the awards and diplomas hanging on the walls. Those students whose parents had college degrees were much more natural in maintaining eye contact. Students from families with at least one parent having a college degree had higher self-esteem. They saw the graduate degree not so much as garnering respect, but paying off in a higher salary. Ralph,

who comes from a nice middle class neighborhood is at ease in most social, academic, and professional situations. He believes he is just as competitive in the job market as anyone from an integrated college or university. Cindy, on the other hand, is afraid she won't fit in because her upbringing did not expose her to social situations outside of friends and family. She is afraid that people will look at her and know that her background was not the same as theirs.

Entrepreneurship

Independence is both the goal and method of achievement to some extent for each of the groups of influence; the groups being friends, family and media. The expectation of self-sufficiency is directly related to the home environment of these students. It is believed by elder family members, and passed down through each subsequent generation, that setting one's own time table, goals and objectives is preferred to following someone else's lead. Comments such as, "I could never work for someone else," and "I want to be able to work when I want to," are typical of the respondents and reflect what is taught by their elders. The belief that monetary success cannot occur when someone else is in charge seems to be passed from one generation to the next. It seems to be believed that when working for someone else, an individual will always be "held back" from achieving. This attitude is described by the

students as coming from real or perceived race discrimination experienced by themselves and others.

Success

Success in America has usually meant making money and translating it into fame and status (DeVitis and Martin, 1996). The participants of this study share the romantic notion that with a college degree and graduate degree, one can rise quickly to the top of the occupational ladder. This concept comes not so much from family as from peers and the media. Students “hear” about potential earnings and starting salaries from other students. Similar to playing the game of telephone, each person who communicates the message modifies the content slightly, so by the time the end receiver gets the message it bears little resemblance to the original message. Jeffrey knows he will make at least \$100,000 because a friend of his knows someone who at only 33 years old is making \$150,000. The story becomes a typical anecdote and becomes accepted as the norm; thereby contributing to the myth of average wages. The myth is reinforced by the way the media portrays successful young athletes, TV, and movie personalities who have lavish lifestyles and multimillion dollar contracts. Such portrayals encourage young people to set their individual expectations well beyond the range of average achievement.

Earning power is extremely important to this group. The desire goes beyond want for material things, to the perception that with an education and monetary wealth comes prestige and respect. Those from lower socioeconomic environments believe that a college degree and vast sums of wealth can be used as a social symbol creating respect and facilitating upward mobility. As Clarissa said, "...and when I walk into the room with my fine business suit and leather brief case, people will respect me. Then I will have more opportunities." Those who are more familiar with at least a middle class environment see education and money as signs of independence. They already believe they have respect by virtue of their family status and education. Wealth will allow them to work from home when they feel like it, retire young, and live a life of leisure. For example, Michael demands respect with his presence. He already considers his time to be more valuable than the time of some corporate managers who may wish to interview him. He believes that he will attain such professional stature that he will be able to choose to work or play golf on any given day.

Self-image After College

The predominant self-image of life after college was that of a leader. Taking charge and being in charge of either an entrepreneurial venture or a major organization is the general expectation. Those from

educated families see leadership as the next natural step in life. They were brought up understanding that college was something you just did; it was not debated. People who did not attend college could not be successful in life. This came directly from parents and extended family members. Of the college graduates more fathers than mothers had college degrees, and of the high school graduates more mothers than fathers graduated. Families tended to live in closer proximity to the mother's family. In those cases, there was a stronger influence by the mother's family when the mother did not have a college degree. The college educated fathers demanded independence of their children. That is, the students had to find their own way to pay for college and living expenses. The mothers, both college educated and non-college educated remained the nurturers. Most of these mothers at least attempted to send the students money at school, sometimes without the father's knowledge. Those without educated parents were seeking confirmation of self-worth. By obtaining a college degree, one could rise in status and become a leader instead of a dependent follower.

Reason for College

All participants of this study saw college as a way to better themselves. The common belief is that education is important for personal, social, and economic advancement. There were no differences

due to sex, environment, family education, family income, or any other variable. This concept is value driven from parents, extended families, and the church. Without exception they consider college education as a step toward self-improvement.

Retirement Age and Personal Savings

Twenty years of work is all that they expect to put in before becoming independently wealthy. This twenty year myth is difficult to explain because none of the influencers of these students have been able to retire after twenty years of service. The idea seems to be self generated, aided by peer group confirmation. The expectation that they will retire at age 45 with over one million dollars in assets does not reflect reality. They are subscribing to an unrealistic expectation without examining typical accomplishments. The majority of the respondents see promotions and raises at a rate not evident in business practice. Where initial promotions from management trainee to manager may occur in the first year, the average industry annual salary adjustment is 1.5 - 3 percent, and promotions occur every five to seven years (U.S. Census Bureau, 1998). The students in this study see athletes, movie and TV personalities accumulating great wealth at early ages, and have transferred those accomplishments to their expectations of a successful business career.

Community

The strong bond between family and community is evidenced by the high regard these students have for the people who were influential in their lives. As they grew up, their families depended on the extended family and neighbors for safety, shelter, and encouragement. Without exception, they express an obligation to pay something back for what they feel they have gained. This, too, comes from family and church. When asked about their philanthropic roles after their careers stabilize, none of the responses included monetary contributions. All of their community relations are seen through outreach and planned activities. They will volunteer time and effort whenever called upon. Money, however, is what they earn for themselves. The common belief is that they have worked hard to get where they are, referring to generations of oppression, and what they earn is their own.

Source of Expectations

Before the internship experiences and exposure to guest lecturers from business and industry, 12 of the students expected starting salaries to be around \$100,000. This expectation came from the few salaries they were aware of from magazine articles about successful young people in the media's eye. After exposure to reality through

lecture and work experience, these expectations were modified to reflect a closer relation to reality. The expectations of promotions, ending salaries, accumulated wealth, and retirement age have not yet been modified, however. Students seem to be relying on hearsay from friends and the glitz of magazines and TV to form their personal workplace expectations. The work ethic taught at home, in church, and in the classroom of “work hard and you will be rewarded,” works much slower than these students are willing to contemplate. They have grown-up in an instant gratification society surrounded by fast food, fast service, fast technology, and faster technological development. The concept of *wait* is not appealing to them. It is conceivable that they have transferred the fast pace of life to fast development, promotion, and success in the workplace.

Conclusions

Conclusions concerning the two research questions are as follows:

1. What kinds of post-baccalaureate employment expectations do Black business students have at an HBCU?

Post-baccalaureate employment expectations cluster in seven related general topical areas: graduate degree as a means for advancement, entrepreneurship as a goal, success in terms of dollars, self-image, reason for college, retirement and accumulated wealth, and community.

Succinctly stated, the students expect to complete college, start at an unusually high salary, earn general respect, have their MBA degrees paid for by their employers, accumulate great wealth and move on to early retirement or an entrepreneurial adventure. They believe they will be socially and financially successful, provide leadership to their communities and retire wealthy at an early age. Although these expectations are ultimately achievable, they are not consistent with empirical data provided by industry and census reports. This does not fit the status attainment theory of Blau & Duncan (1967) that found that the socioeconomic level of the father's occupation was positively related to the career aspiration of the student. The expected ultimate level of position, salary and accumulated wealth did not vary among students regardless of the fathers' occupations or levels of income, nor did the goal of entrepreneurship.

2. Where do the expectations of Black business students at an HBCU originate?

Sources of the preceding expectations are less easily clarified than the expectations themselves. It appears that sources include family and home environment, friends, the media, and internships or professional contacts. It is apparent that family members have the greatest influence on choices students make such as choosing to attend college,

which college to attend, what major course of study to choose, and goals of entrepreneurship. Career expectations, however, are more frequently influenced by friends and the media. Friends are influenced by the media, and as peers, have tremendous influence on other students. This magnifies the influence created by the media. Three figure salaries in the first three years, retirement at age 45, and several million dollars in personal assets and investments is the message these students seem to have received from popular magazines, TV programs, and movies. This would lead one to believe, based on the participants of this research, that the employment expectations and their sources are based on the culture of the race, the generation of this group, and/ or perhaps the region where the university is located.

Implications

The results of this study may contribute to the development of a grounded theory of Black business students' post-baccalaureate employment expectations based on the following tenants:

1. Higher education is the way to improve one's current economic condition. Black business students at an HBCU see higher education as the way to improve their current economic condition. Personal and environmental factors seem to be relevant to the formulation of these Black students' employment expectations.

Education as a means to personal, social, and economic advancement is a concept shared by all socioeconomic backgrounds. The value of self-improvement is driven by families, extended families and the church. The observation that older friends and family members without education had to work hard their entire lives and have little to show for it, then, a college degree should allow an individual to receive greater rewards at a much faster pace. When “local” role models upon which to base their expectations are not available, students turn to the mass media for their vision of anticipated success. The image of wealth depicted through magazines, movies, TV, and talk shows becomes their vision of work place reality.

2. Higher education is the means to improve one’s status and level of respect in one’s community. Black business students see higher education as the method to improve their status and level of respect in their communities. The image of being a successful business person brings credibility and recognition to their academic and professional accomplishments. Confirmation of self-worth is obtained through the community’s perception of their achievements. Many generations of Black Americans lost

opportunities, therefor, it is important for these students to become and be seen as leaders.

3. Acquisition of an advanced degree is the means to quickly acquire high management positions in the business environment. Black business students see the acquisition of an advanced degree as the means to quickly secure high management positions in the business environment. Leadership opportunities and accumulated wealth seem to be achievable only through higher education and advanced degrees. Higher education is recognized as a stepping stone for corporate advancement. The perception of rapid advancement and accumulated wealth is depicted by the mass media and readily accepted as representing the rewards of a college graduate.

4. Personal success is equal to accumulated wealth. Black business students see accumulated wealth as personal success. Earning power is directly related to prestige and respect. Pride in one's self and the perception by others, is obtained through accumulated wealth. The accumulation of monetary wealth enables one to work flexible hours, purchase luxury items, travel at whim, and garner respect from others.

Theory

Grounded theory emerging from this inquiry suggest that Black college students at Historically Black Colleges develop some important, but unrealistic expectations. The expectations revealed in the interviews appear to be explained by several facts. Speculation based on the information available is as follows:

1. Post-baccalaureate expectations of Black college students at HBCUs are exaggerated versions of commonly held beliefs about the benefits of a college education. That is, a college education, and especially a graduate education, increases one's income potential. In turn, income is associated with a variety of other conditions such as personal success and image, career development, and eventual retirement.
2. The post-baccalaureate expectations held by Black college students at HBCUs appear to be founded on a variety of social communication phenomena such as culture, family, environment, and popular forms of media. Black parents' difficult choices and perceptions of racial struggles become part of the lives of their children (Feagin, Vera, and Imani, 1996). The white-normed spaces of business and industry are more than demographically white; they are white in their basic cultural components. The

challenge, then, is to offer an explanation for the “exaggerated” or unrealistic aspects of the students’ expectations. The theoretical explanations may reside in the interaction of sociological theory concerning minority expectations and traditional communication theory.

Recommendations for Further Study

Although this research was successful in determining the work place expectations of Black business students on a Black campus, and the origins of those expectations, several follow on studies are recommended. The results could be further substantiated by duplicating this study on other HBCU campuses. Comparing these results with other HBCUs would allow us to see if results would be similar in other similar environments, or if each institution has a unique makeup of business students with varying degrees of expectations. The majority of the students in this study participated in integrated high schools. A larger sample from multiple HBCUs, the population of each HBCU traditionally being very small, to include an equal representation of former integrated schooling and predominantly minority schooling, may provide additional cultural information pertaining to the source of employment expectations. If this is determined to be a cultural phenomena, preparation for the realities of

employment could begin much earlier in the students' academic careers. Planned and more frequent interaction between students and Black business professionals, beginning with recent college graduates, may help to foster more realistic expectations of the workplace.

Another study to be pursued would be to compare these conclusions to both Black and White students on integrated campuses. This would bring in many more variables to compare, but may determine whether these results are cultural or generational. Determining whether post-baccalaureate employment expectations are cultural is necessary to develop a comprehensive plan for bringing minority student expectations closer to reality. If the identified factors are similar for all races, then a more general approach can be taken. If the results show a difference by race, then more specialized approaches must be established. If a new study determines that the generation as a whole has similar unrealistic expectations coming from similar sources, then we may find a national level phenomena that can be addressed.

The last recommendation would be to engage in a longitudinal study beginning with first year Black college students to determine when their expectations are modified throughout their academic and professional careers. Once these points have been identified it may be possible to augment an individual's experience with exposure to additional education, reading lists,

national conferences and chat groups to better prepare for the next set of professional challenges.

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Appendix A
Self Report Data Sheet

Section A: General Characteristics

1. Sex _____ 2. Age _____ 3. Marital Status _____
4. Number of Children _____ 5. State of Birth _____
6. Highest level of education of mother _____ 7. of father _____
8. Income range for household in which you were raised \$ _____
9. Family structure in which you were raised _____

Section B: Classification

10. Classification: (Circle one) Junior Senior
11. Are you a resident student _____ or non-resident student _____.
12. Do you reside in campus housing? Yes _____ No _____
13. How many credit hours are you carrying? _____
14. What is your major field? _____
15. What degree is your ultimate goal? (Circle one)
Bachelor's Master's Doctorate Law Medicine
16. What is your current grade point average? _____

Section C: Sources of Income

17. What is the principle source of income for your college expenses?

- ☐ a. Aid from Parents
- ☐ b. Scholarships and Grants
- ☐ c. Student Loans
- ☐ d. Other sources (please explain)

18. Type of employment of senior male member of household where you were raised _____

19. Type of employment of senior female member of household where you were raised _____

Section D: Enrollment

20. Did you enroll in this institution immediately after graduation from high school? ☐ yes ☐ no

21. If you were delayed in beginning your college education please indicate the reason(s) that caused the delay:

- ☐ a. uninterested at the time
 - ☐ b. needed to support family
 - ☐ c. got married
 - ☐ d. maternal (raising children)
 - ☐ e. other (please explain) _____
-

22. Are you a transfer student? ☐ yes ☐ no

23. If you are a transfer student, did you transfer to this institution:

- ☐ a. from a predominantly white institution?
- ☐ b. from a predominantly black institution?
- ☐ c. from a community college?

24. Have you served your internship yet? ☐ yes ☐ no

Appendix B

Interview Guide

FACTORS AFFECTING ATTENDANCE

1. Why did you decide to attend college?
2. Who influenced you most to attend college?
3. Why did you decide to attend this institution?
4. Who influenced you most to attend this school?
5. Explain any concerns you may have had about enrolling here?
6. Why did you decide to major in Business?
7. Describe your comfort level with the decisions you have made concerning your education choices.

EXPERIENCE PRIOR TO COLLEGE

7. Describe your high school; its location, academics, activities, students, faculty, and counselors.
8. Describe the neighborhood in which you were raised.
9. Describe places you have visited outside of your home state.

NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

10. What kinds of non-academic campus activities do you participate in?
11. How important are social skills in the workplace?
12. Who has been a significant role model in your life?

CAREER ASPIRATIONS

13. What do you think your first job will be?
Why?
14. What do you think your starting salary will be?
Why?
15. Describe your career goals at the following times:
1 year after graduation
5 years after graduation
At the end of your career?
16. What level of responsibility do you expect to reach - What level is your goal?
17. How often do you think you will receive promotions?
18. How often do you think you will receive a pay raise? How much will it be?
19. How long do you think you will work for the same company?
20. How old do you think you will be when you retire? What will your salary be then?
21. How much money will you have in savings when you retire?
22. Do you think you will have a secretary?
What will her/his responsibilities be?
21. When will you buy your first house?
How much will it cost?
22. What kind of car do you drive?
23. What will you be driving five years from now?
24. What do you think is the source of your career expectations?

Based on Personal Data Sheet

- 25. Why do you want an advanced degree in?
- 26. Where was your internship?
- 27. What have you learned from your internship experience?

Appendix C

Second Interview Guide

GRADUATE EDUCATION

1. Does anyone in your family have a graduate degree?
2. Who, if anyone, has encouraged you to seek a graduate degree?
3. What do you think you will gain from a graduate degree?
4. How will you pay for a graduate degree?
5. Will you attend another HBCU for graduate school or will you select an integrated school? Why?

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

1. Has anyone in your family owned their own business?
2. What influence, negative or positive, has this had on you?
3. Why do you want/not want to own your own business?
4. What revenue must you generate to feel that you are successful?

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

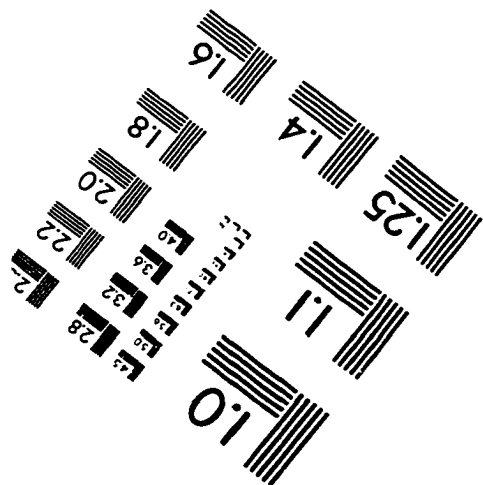
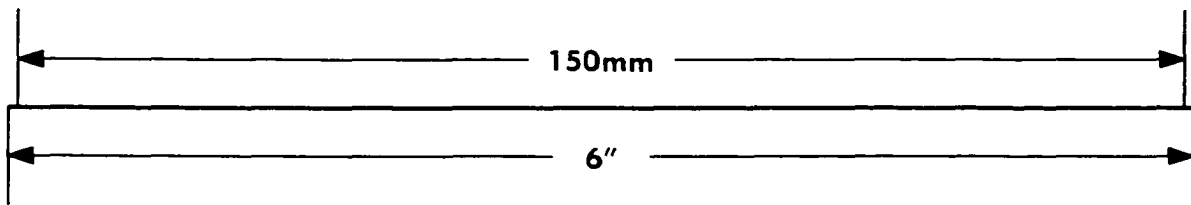
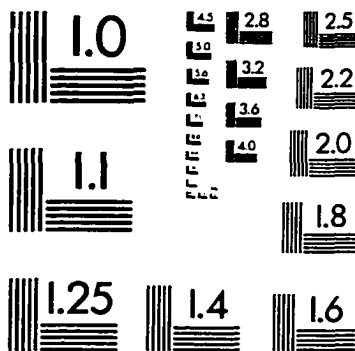
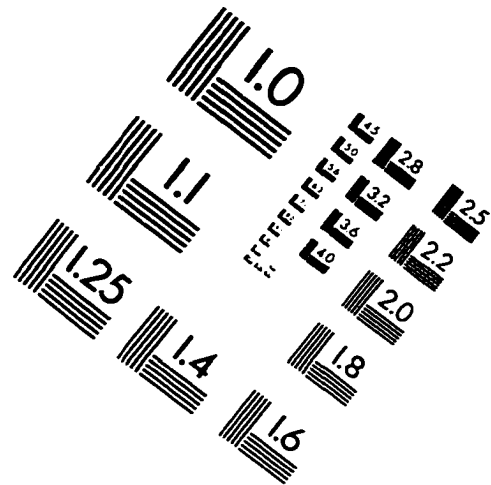
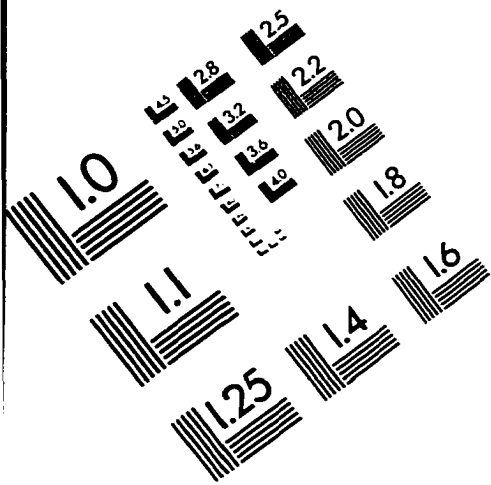
1. What TV shows do you watch regularly? Why?
2. What magazines do you read regularly? Why?
3. What kinds of books do you enjoy reading? Why?
4. When you go out with friends, what kinds of activities do you prefer? Why?

5. Aside from immediate family members, who has had the greatest influence on your academic decisions and career expectations? Why?
6. What role, if any, has the church played in your life?

SUCCESS

1. What does success mean to you?
2. How do you plan to achieve it?
3. How is your vision of success the same or different from that of your family's, friends', and neighbors'?
4. Where has your vision of the work place, your career progression and earnings come from?

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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1653 East Main Street
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Phone: 716/482-0300
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