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Collegiate Concerted Cultivation: The Influence of Class and Family on Higher Education

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COLLEGIATE CONCERTED CULTIVATION:
THE INFLUENCE OF CLASS AND FAMILY
ON HIGHER EDUCATION

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Sociology
in the Department of Sociology
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ABSTRACT

The 1966 Coleman Report and subsequent research identifies social class as an important determinant of educational outcomes, but after decades of research it is still unclear exactly why. This study purports to explore one possible explanation, collegiate concerted cultivation. The focus of this study was to explore the existence of collegiate concerted cultivation as a sociological concept. Collegiate concerted cultivation provides a theoretical framework to more deeply explore the relationships between social class, family factors, and familial support of education in order to better understand differential outcomes in achievement in higher education.

Using a mixed method approach, the study examined the effects of socioeconomic indicators, institutional and demographic factors on collegiate concerted cultivation. In addition, this study analyzed student experiences of collegiate concerted cultivation in order to establish the archetype characteristics of the new concept. Results of this study indicate that collegiate concerted cultivation does exist, includes a series of defining characteristics, and is influenced by parental socioeconomic indicators.

The day after I met the love of my life I called my father to tell him the good news. I was elated and in love. I knew I had met my life mate, my partner in crime and my best friend. When I shared the news with my dad, he let out an audible sigh and replied, "Meghan, Let's not get too caught up in love. We have this Ph.D. to finish." Subsequent calls about weddings, babies and promotions have all garnered the same response. I dedicate this project to my Dad. We did it, Dad. We're finished.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The question of differential educational outcomes among students is one of the most controversial questions of equality in the United States. In 1966, James Coleman and his associates published the "Coleman Report". The notorious findings identified family factors as the determining variables in educational outcomes. The research of the last 50 years corroborates the report's findings. According to the research family factors as they relate to social class are the fundamental issues to be addressed in in order to better understand the relationship between education and social inequality.

As outlined by the literature, the influence of class on education is substantial from primary school to college. The focus of this study was to explore the existence of collegiate concerted cultivation as a newly proposed concept within the sociology of education. Collegiate concerted cultivation provides a theoretical framework to more deeply explore the relationships between social class, family factors, and familial support of education in order to better understand differential achievement outcomes in achievement in higher education. The study examined the effects of socioeconomic indicators, institutional types, and demographic factors on the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation. In addition, this study analyzed student experiences of collegiate concerted cultivation in order to establish the concept's archetype characteristics.

Higher Education Today

As politicians, policy-makers, educators and sociologists continue to struggle to find ways to improve outcomes for at risk students, higher education has garnered national attention and interest. Post World War II the 1944 G.I. Bill focused on increasing higher education enrollment. For years it was believed that simply removing admissions barriers for disadvantaged students would equalize the educational system and give low socioeconomic status students the chance to increase their educational and social achievement. Through the mid-1970s, admissions barriers on the basis of race, class, and gender were eliminated. Admission policies were modified, financial aid packages reworked, and scholarships and loans established to support low socioeconomic status and minority students (Ravitch, 1983). As a result, increased levels of poor and working class students went to college, but the breakdown of higher education barriers mostly benefited middle class Americans (Hurn, 1993). With the changes in admissions criteria, and federal financial support, middle class Americans went to college.

More recently, in the wake of a devastating economic downturn and rising student loan debt, the nation has begun to question why increased enrollment rates have not resulted in increased graduation rates. The question of retention has eclipsed the question of enrollment, and calls have been issued to better understand the relationship between higher education and social inequality. Enrollment and graduation literature identifies social class inequalities as the explanatory factor of variance in retention and graduation rates. Thereby, suggesting a

fundamental issue of socioeconomic class in the relationship between higher education achievement and social inequality.

Increasing Enrollment and Unequal Persistence

In the United States today, more students than ever before expect to go to college. Academic aspirations and expectations have risen over the past decades as a result of the national push to remove barriers and open access (Roderick, Nagoka & Coca, 2009). From 1980 to 2002, the number of high school students who believed they would earn a bachelor's degree doubled to 80 percent of students (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

The U.S. Department of Education reports that enrollment in degree-granting institutions increased by 11 percent between 1990 and 2000. Comparatively, 2001-2011 saw an enrollment increase of 32 percent from 15.9 million to 21 million students (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). However, neither expectations nor enrollment seem to be translating into degree attainment.

While enrollment rates increase, already low graduation rates have stagnated. Just 59 percent of students who enrolled as first time, full-time students seeking a bachelors degree at four-year institutions in 2006 graduated within six years. In comparison, the 1996 cohort graduation rate was 55 percent (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2014). So while higher education saw steep hikes in enrollment, it saw only a three percent increase in graduation rates. More students than ever are going to college, and more students than ever are coming home without a degree.

Unequal Persistence

Financially disadvantaged students lag significantly behind their peers in college completion rates (Horn & Carroll, 2006; Terenzini, Cabrera & Bernal, 2008). Low socioeconomic status students are eight times less likely to graduate from college compared to their higher socioeconomic status peers (Levine, 1995). In a study of a 2003 cohort, Mortenson (2005) found that three quarters of students in the top income quartile graduated with a bachelor's degree. In the second quartile, less than a third graduated, and in the third and fourth quartile thirteen and just over eight percent respectively graduated with a bachelor's degree.

Between 2000 and 2010 degree attainment increased for all U.S. residents, but the increase occurred disproportionately. Students at private, nonprofit institutions graduated at a higher rate, 66 percent, compared to their peers at public institutions, 57 percent, and at a rate of 32 percent at private for profit institutions (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2014). In regards to gender over half of both men and women graduate, with 56 percent and 61 percent graduation rates respectively.

By race, Asian/Pacific Islander students graduate at the highest rates (70%). Over three-fifths of white students make it to graduation within six years (63%). Just over fifty percent (51%) of Hispanic students and one-third of Black and American Indian/Alaska Native students earn a degree (40%) (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 2014).

The convergence of race and class as it relates to education is critical. Differential educational outcomes on the basis of class are identified across the educational system. The

review of enrollment and graduation rates indicates that further, deeper and more intentional review of the factors that influence collegiate achievement, particularly as they relate to class and family life, must be undertaken.

Extending Concerted Cultivation to College

The proposed research question for the study introduces the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation, which requires a definition of Annette Lareau's concept of concerted cultivation. In 2003, Lareau's book *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life*, introduced the concept of concerted cultivation. The concept explained the links between socialization, education, and social reproduction. Lareau identified the middle and upper class parenting style as concerted cultivation and the working class style as the accomplishment of natural growth (Lareau, 2003).

The concept reframed cultural capital theory by stating that educationally beneficial interactions, skills, and knowledge are not only socialized at home, but that they are inherited and transmitted over time in relation to socioeconomic class (Lareau & Weininger, 2003). Her ethnography entailed in-depth case studies of third graders. The qualitative approach made it possible to investigate the lives of children, and Lareau was able to identify the middle class experience as significantly different from the working class experience. Whereas, under concerted cultivation, families may focus on training students for educational success, the accomplishment of natural growth is defined by the focus on immediate needs of children (Lareau, 2003). For example, Lareau found that middle class parents spent a considerable amount of time, energy, and money to schedule their students into activities and experiences

that would grant their students a competitive educational edge. For example, these third graders were often chauffeured by parents from school to violin lessons, to soccer practice, and to tutoring appointments, sometimes all in the same night. Middle class moms and dads assisted with homework, finished science projects, and volunteered at school. Parents spent weekends at play dates, children's birthday parties and traveling with youth athletic teams. On the other hand, children of natural growth experienced far less parental involvement. These children were often left to their own devices after school. In many families, they were left in the care of older children or other family members while parents worked. These third graders spent time with groups of neighborhood children, siblings, or cousins. Parents had little involvement at school. Lareau's concepts of concerted cultivation and natural growth will be further expanded in chapter two.

Collegiate Concerted Cultivation

The research questions of this study focused on understanding if students continue to experience concerted cultivation throughout college. The concept is characterized by intense, educational focus and involvement on behalf of college students on the part of parents and families. The introduction of the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation for study entails a significant amount of theoretical framing. The first theoretical assumption is that that students who experience collegiate concerted cultivation engage in a great deal of discussion and collaborative decision-making with their parents and families. The parent-student relationship is defined by discussion and negotiation well into college. The second assumption is that parents encourage and support education experiences emotionally and financially. The third

assumption is that parents and families provide a significant level of financial support for the college experience. The final assumption is that students recognize educational opportunities as important to increasing achievement later in life. It is anticipated that students experience collegiate concerted cultivation differently, in a way that is constrained by social class; these assumed theoretical characteristics will be confirmed and further developed in this study. More plainly, the socialization process demonstrated by Lareau's third grade sample will become evident among the college student sampled in this study.

In summary, this project aims to explore the existence and characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation. Specifically, it aims to examine the effects of socioeconomic indicators, institutional types, and demographic factors on collegiate concerted cultivation, and establish the archetype characteristics of the concept.

The following chapter outlines the theoretical sociological perspectives that frame the study. Chapter three reviews the significant literature. Chapter four reviews the methods of the study, including a theoretical model and analytic plans for both the quantitative and qualitative portions. Chapter five outlines the results of the survey analysis. Chapter six outlines interview analysis of the defined concerted cultivation characteristics, and chapter seven describes the archetype characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation. Chapter eight concludes the study with a summary, review of study limitations, and potential policy implications based on the findings.

CHAPTER TWO: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

The two main perspectives on education and inequality within the sociology of education are rooted in structural-functionalist and conflict theory. The functionalist model of education identifies education as the creator of opportunity. The theory states that education is the social mechanism for upward mobility, social achievement, and opportunity. Accordingly, the theory purports that schools provide a public opportunity for equality by instituting a system of merit. In the structural-functionalist system, individuals can overcome handicaps to acquire wealth and status, and education actively works to dismantle disadvantage and support the attainment of the American Dream.

The conflict theory offers the contrasting educational perspective. Conflict theory argues that education replicates social inequality, transmits privilege and preserves the status quo. Schools provide the elite with a system and structure to preserve power and socially reproduce inequality. These two perspectives of education and inequality have prevailed within the sociology of education since the mid-1900s. The past 30 years have seen a further development of the theoretical foundations of the field, including the major contributions of Pierre Bourdieu and Annette Lareau, whose work provides the conceptual framework for this study.

Creating Opportunity: The History of the Functionalist Perspective

Education in the United States has long been touted as the great equalizer. In line with the functionalist perspective, the educational system has been identified as the single greatest institution for creating opportunity in America (Katz, 1971). The first theoretical paradigm to

emerge was rooted in the work of Durkheim and the functionalist perspective. For Durkheim, interested predominantly in the division of labor in society, the role of education was to promote and maintain social order (Durkheim, 1933). Specifically, education was intended as the socializing agent of society. Schools provided a moral education for young citizens, which served to create a more cohesive social structure and order (Durkheim, 1961).

Skill Building

In Durkheim's perspective, the principal utility of schooling was to provide a rigorous and measured communal experience that was more akin to the experience citizens would have with the state, which he believed to be a vastly different experience than home life. One of the main roles of schools was to teach children to follow rules, work on a schedule, take direction, and obey authority. Durkheim identified these lessons and experiences as imperative to a child's ability to understand and appropriately participate in collective life (Durkheim, 1961). For functionalists, schools convey knowledge and skills to the next generation and serve to maintain social order (Hollingshead, 1949; Lynd & Lynd 1929; Meyer, 1970; Peshkin, 1997).

Talcott Parson's contribution to the functionalist perspective offered a twist on Durkheim's view of moral education. Parsons agreed that schools bridged home and collective life for children. He also believed that schools socialized students into the meritocracy. He claimed that students must be socialized to value individualism, competition, talent and effort because these would be the constructs that were valued and rewarded over privilege and birthright within the meritocracy (Parsons, 1959; Parsons, 1961).

Socialization

Immigration at the turn of the nineteenth century created a critical need for socialization or “Americanization” in the United States. Schools were identified as the best means to combat disparate ideals and ensure a national commitment to democracy (Brint, 2006; Fuller & Robinson, 1992). The transmission of core American values to students allowed for the preservation of societal ideals and beliefs (Fuller & Robinson, 1992; Lasch, 1995; Wuthnow, 1996; Brint, 2006). The crux of Parson’s theory rested on the notion that a strong belief in meritocracy was a product of socialization (Parsons 1961).

Sorting

Durkheim and Parsons laid out two of the three main tenants of educational theory in the functionalist perspective: skill building and socialization of citizens for a meritocratic and democratic society. The third tenant of the perspective is the sorting of talent in order to serve the economic structure. In order for social order to be maintained, the economic structure relied on schools to sort students by merit into specific job tracks (Brint, 2006). Brint believed that sorting or social selection was one of the most severe implications of modern-day education. Brint’s identification of sorting via meritocracy is the fundamental difference between the theory of education as creating opportunity and education as the lynchpin of social reproduction.

In regards to sorting, functionalism asserts that the system requires schools to identify the best students to be doctors, lawyers, leaders, etc., and less capable students to do less difficult, but no less necessary, work (Kingsley & Moore, 1944). Students who succeed in the

classroom are tracked to move into accelerated coursework and eventually higher education. Less academically successful students were tracked into vocational work. In this way, the social system at large is able to maintain social order.

The Great Equalizer Theory

In addition to skill building, socialization and sorting, the functionalist paradigm frames education as a purveyor of opportunity. The theory contends that compensatory, public education provides equal access and opportunity on the basis of merit. Equal access paired with a strong belief that education neutralizes privilege means that education and economic outcome are the product of ability (Hurn, 1993). Differential outcomes on the basis of educational level provide support for the perspective.

Blau and Duncan (1967) introduced status attainment theory, which suggested that both achieved and ascribed factors played a role in status attainment. Blau and Duncan argued that individuals could move both economically upward and downward, and that education was related to positive upward movement. The status attainment model was based on the supposition that parental social status and an individuals' cognitive ability affect educational outcomes and attainment (Sewell and Shah, 1967).

The decade leading up to the 1990s saw incomes increase across the board, but degree holders continued to earn at a much higher rate, giving further support to the perspective that education creates opportunity (Murnane, Willett & Levy, 1995). As of 2002, Americans with master's degrees earned twice as much as high school graduates and three times as much as high school dropouts (Day & Newburger, 2002). In the last 50 years, a Masters in Business

Administration from a reputable graduate school has been closely tied to economic attainment and executive level career paths (Useem & Karabel, 1986).

In 2004, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported that U.S. college graduates made 86 percent more than high school graduates, giving the United States the largest gap by educational level across the industrialized world. Such data show distinct differences in occupation and income in relation to education and provides support for the creator of opportunity paradigm. Additionally, increased educational attainment of women in recent decades validates education as the creator of opportunity and great equalizer theory. Many industrialized countries have seen a significant upswing of women in education. In countries like the United States, women have surpassed men in educational attainment (Jacobs, 1996).

A second set of research also supports schools as equalizers, but contends that underperforming schools and time out of school greatly contributes to differential educational outcomes. Farkas (1993) argues that failing schools contribute to social reproduction, but he does not believe that overall education reproduces inequality. When schools fail in the primary years, at-risk students are put at an even greater achievement risk. Differential learning outcomes, Farkas believes, are the result of a bad school, not a bad system. Beyond failing schools, there is research to support that learning gaps expand when students are out of school for the summer (Downey, VonHippel & Broh, 2004). If learning gaps grow and shrink dependent on school attendance, it holds that schools do equalize learning and opportunity, but that time spent out of school or, perhaps, in underperforming schools, is the issue.

In accordance with the functionalist theory, differential outcomes among students are to be expected and even encouraged on the basis of merit in order to best serve the economic structure. In this manner, education is seen as the equalizer of opportunity, not the equalizer of resources or gains. This functionalist theory identifies education as the means of overcoming handicaps, achieving greater equality, and acquiring wealth and social status for students who deserve it. The educational institution expects, condones and facilitates differential outcomes under the credence that the system offers the same opportunities, but outcomes are achieved on the basis of aptitude and ability. The system operates in a meritocracy and as a meritocracy, ensuring that all citizens are afforded the same opportunities, and thus differentials are the result of merit.

The explicit connection of the functionalist perspective to collegiate concerted cultivation is in whether family factors like class, and thus collegiate concerted cultivation, impact students' educational performance before the matter of merit can even come into play. If concerted cultivation and ultimately collegiate concerted cultivation is occurring, then the outcomes achieved through the educational system are not the result of aptitude or ability. Those outcomes are instead the result of parental style and educational training, as it is related to social class.

The impact of class and the existence of collegiate concerted cultivation are further called to question by the relationships that are known to exist in regards to differential educational outcomes and race, class and gender. Contrary to the functionalist assumptions, gender, race, and ethnicity are connected with differential educational and occupational

outcomes (Sexton, 1961; Coleman, 1966; Guthrie, 1971; Gorard et al., 1999; Heath & Cheung, 2007; Sullivan et al., 2011).

In terms of class, Bowles and Gintis' (1976) work saw a substantial diminishing of the effects when controlling for socioeconomic status. Parental socioeconomic status has proven a stronger predictor of future income than IQ and school achievement (Jencks, 1979). In fact, familial socioeconomic status remained a strong predictor of achievement since the 1920s, suggesting that, despite educational equality and advancement, equalization has not been occurring as functionalist theory suggested (Blau & Duncan, 1967). The functionalist perspective serves as a long standing sociological theory of educational achievement, but the questions that emerge as a result of social class are ultimately tied to a deeper understanding of collegiate concerted cultivation. In this way a better understanding of the existence of collegiate concerted cultivation becomes imperative to understanding differential outcomes.

Transmitting Inequality: The History of the Conflict Perspective

Similar to the long-standing functionalist perspective on education, the conflict perspective concedes that schools and societies are inextricably bound. Conflict theorists agree with functionalists that schools teach students a set of cognitive skills and that, by and large, skills and abilities of students increase as the result of attending school. However, the agreement with functionalism regarding the purpose of education ends there. The conflict perspective vehemently contends that the education system, whether designed to or not, transmits inequality (Hurn, 1993).

Social reproduction theory rests on the classic conflict assumptions, beginning with the assumption that society is conflict-ridden and scarce resources are acquired through competition. Within these assumptions, the educational system is an institution, of which groups compete to control. Conflict theorists dispute the fact that education is a social need, and instead suggest privileged groups utilize it to protect group interests and advantage. Conflict theorists argue that schools serve the elite interest of maintaining the status quo (Hurn, 1993). While conflict theories around education and social reproduction do diverge into neo-Marxist and non-Marxist thinking, all conflict theorists agree that the main consequence of education is to serve the interests of elites.

The Myth of Meritocracy

Perhaps the most famous social reproduction theory is Bowles and Gintis (1976). Bowles and Gintis theorized that schools in America serve to protect capitalism. Their argument challenged the idea that schools socialized for the common good and suggested instead schools socialized to maintain a capitalist regime. *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976) asserted that different schools taught different things. Vocational schools, for instance, socialized students to be low-status workers. These students learned things like punctuality, respect, submission, and trade work. Whereas, elite schools socialized students to become leaders by teaching things like independence, decision making skills, dealing with ambiguity, and encouraging innovation. Bowles and Gintis expressed this as the reason for development of vocational and technical schools compared to college prep schools and universities.

Furthermore, Bowles and Gintis purported schools allow for social reproduction to occur efficiently based on the structure of school systems. Public education operates on a neighborhood model. Local communities fund neighborhood schools, which results in high and low socioeconomic schools, mirrors of the communities they serve. Children for the most part are constrained to their neighborhood school. Once in schools, chiefly divided by class, children are socialized and taught different things resulting in differential outcomes, and ultimately the reproduction of inequality. Social reproduction theory believes that schools prepare children for a life of work in accordance with their familial social class. In this way, schools do not create opportunity for students. In fact, they exist only to prepare students for the social class group membership, and to perpetuate the myth of meritocracy in order to preserve the status quo.

Bowles and Gintis offer an interesting theory as it may relate to collegiate concerted cultivation. Students in different types of schools determined by neighborhood and in accordance with different social class levels could be receiving different socialization not just within school walls, but within family relationships as well. Parents and families prepare and encourage students for different educational experiences on the basis of class. An aligned set of expectations between school and parents as to what students are expected to achieve educationally constrains aptitude and merit, and it serves to regiment students to their familial social class. As a result, understanding if, how and to whom collegiate concerted cultivation occurs becomes an important research question.

Further supporting the tie between social reproduction theory and the existence of collegiate concerted cultivation, the Bowles and Gintis (1977) data indicate a correlation

between college graduation and social class that has remained stable across the twenty years of their research, despite increased enrollment and expansion.

Credentialing

Randall Collins offers a second conflict theory that depicts social reproduction as the purpose of education. He theorizes that education is about credentialing. The system essentially sets up a false system of qualifications for the workforce. Earning different levels of qualifications deems a student eligible for certain types of work and therefore economic gain (Collins, 1979). As such, a high school degree is a credential that only permits an individual to certain types of work, and the credentials rise from there from a high school diploma to a graduate degree. Collins believes that it is a highly irrational system as it prevents large numbers of otherwise qualified workers from doing certain work.

Collins believes that the educational system uses credentialing and the concepts of meritocracy and technocracy as excuses when the true function of education is social reproduction. He alleges that schools exist to perpetuate the socialization of class-based culture (Collins, 1979). Students who live in low socioeconomic schools will be tracked into vocational training. Their ultimate degrees will be high school diplomas, GEDs, and skilled technical training. By and large, they will never be able to move beyond blue-collar work with these credentials. Elite students are sent to college prep public schools or exclusive private schools. These schools will prepare them for universities, graduate degrees, and white-collar work. Beyond training them for a skill set, school socializes them to be part of elite culture.

In this way, the school structure operates in tandem with a concept of concerted cultivation and collegiate concerted cultivation. Families, schools, and communities, differentially prepare and train students for educational opportunities and social achievement. Familial social class, in particular, could have an impact at the collegiate level where tuition and fees may begin to become a determining factor in which types of institutions students enroll. Collegiate concerted cultivation suggests that family financial, and even emotional encouragement and expectations may serve to determine what type of institution from which a student will attend and graduate. Ultimately, familial socioeconomic status is reproduced because students attend and succeed in certain schools on the basis of class and are fated to earn certain credentials.

Social Reproduction Theories

Data and evidence that support social reproduction theory demonstrate the relationship between differential outcomes of students and the disparities within the school system. Condron and Roscigno (2003) provided a study of within-district spending and the effect on student achievement in a large, urban district. They found that schools with the highest number of students in poverty were disadvantaged as the result of lower funding. This proved particularly concerning given that higher spending is correlated with higher rates of achievement. Student attitudes about education differed between schools as well. Students identified different skills and attitudes depending on the different socioeconomic community in which they were schooled (Condron & Roscigno, 2003; Hemmings & Metz, 1990; Metz, 1990). Difference in attitudes and behaviors in regard to education have been studied extensively.

The impact of social class in primary and secondary schools on student achievement as a result of spending and student/parent attitudes and expectations is evident. It begs the questions: Can socioeconomic indicators influence parenting styles through college enrollment? Do parents continue to influence educational outcomes in a way that is correlated to socioeconomic indicators? An understanding of collegiate concerted cultivation would further define if and how social class influences students and parents at the collegiate level.

The study of collegiate concerted cultivation would further define social reproduction theory in a way that is consistent with education and social class theories to date. Hochschild (2003) insists the poorest students receive the worst educational experience, and then, predictably, experience lower educational and social attainment outcomes as a result of social reproduction (Pagani, Boulerice, & Tremblay, 1997). Students from low-socioeconomic families have a higher dropout rate and ultimately achieve less educationally and economically (Duncan & Gunn, 1997; Fine, 1991; Haveman & Wolfe, 1994). The economic achievement research insists that businesses and economic opportunity are often inherited (Robinson & Garnier, 1985), and that skilled and labor trades tend to be regulated by strict familial and group networks (Bailey & Waldinger, 1991).

Early sociology of education conflict theory is not yet 50 years old, but the last 20 years of research have provided considerable support for social reproduction. American students are receiving separate and unequal educational experiences, resulting largely in the reproduction of their social class. These sociological perspectives and the research that supports them provide evidence to support that, not only is academic achievement actively replicated, but

that tracking and achievement is regulated in a way that promotes social reproduction at home and in the classroom. The evidence implies an imperative to further study how socioeconomic indicators serve to constrain parenting styles in a way that influences education and achievement of students.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role of Family Factors and Class in Improving Educational Outcomes

The U.S. Civil Rights movements spurred a national focus on education in the 1950s and 1960s. Concern about integration, power, and equity rose to prominence, and the question of education and inequality was recognized as a principal element of advancement. In response to the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, the U.S. Department of Education commissioned James Coleman and his associates to analyze educational equality nationally. The Coleman Report, formally titled *Equality of Educational Opportunity*, sampled 650,000 students to study the effects of schools on student achievement.

The intention of the U.S. Department of Education was to show that differential educational achievement was the result of unequal educational opportunity (Hurn, 1993). It was believed that school factors caused differential outcomes among students. Prior to the Coleman Report, it was commonly thought that children from minority and low-socioeconomic backgrounds attended second-rate schools. The educational system was recognized as separate and unequal. Due to the structure and funding of the public school system, schools in economically depressed communities had less funding and fewer resources, higher student-teacher ratios, and less qualified teachers and staff. The shared belief was that lower rates of achievement were the result of poorer, inferior schools (Hurn, 1993).

The U.S. Department of Education and Coleman hoped the analysis would document the perceived relationship; provide support to increase funding to schools in disadvantaged communities, and serve to reduce the achievement gap (Hurn, 1993; Hodgson, 1973). The

conclusions did not turn out as hoped. The findings found little connection between school quality and student achievement. Instead, it was determined that educational outcomes were more strongly determined by familial and social factors, such as class and parental education, than by school factors such as class size, teacher training, quality of instruction, spending per student, or school resources and environment (Coleman et al., 1966).

Perhaps the most interesting finding of the Coleman Report was the lack of relationship between a student's test scores, measures of student learning, and school quality factors. Coleman's findings indicated that a student's intellectual ability and home life affected test scores far more than school factors (Coleman, 1966). The reality of family background and socioeconomic status affecting educational outcomes more significantly than school resources rocked longstanding beliefs of education as the means to opportunity and the country's great equalizer. The findings of the Coleman Report were quite controversial, even as the study got replicated and reanalyzed.

Influencing Factors

To date, the Coleman Report is still recognized for identifying the importance of family factors over school factors in relation to educational outcomes. Almost a half-century has passed since that report was first issued, research on the topic has progressed and continues to corroborate the importance of family factors. Research to date continues to suggest that improving educational outcomes involves a constellation of factors. Family and background factors, intellectual ability, educational aspirations, and school factors influence educational outcomes. The variables within the constellation, however, all seem to be influenced by

socioeconomic status. While ability and school factors matter, they are influenced by class, which is recognized as a family factor. The Coleman Report provided the initial set of research for further understanding the effect that family factors have on the entire set of factors that influence educational outcomes. A thorough study of collegiate concerted cultivation could result in the extension of the Coleman results into higher education.

Family Factors

In 1972, Christopher Jencks and his colleagues published a complex and technical analysis that reaffirmed the Coleman findings. Jencks' study included point-in-time and longitudinal student and school quality data, school achievement measures within particular schools, and student demographics and IQ measures. Jencks' predictive model estimated that the effect of school characteristics on outcomes was negligible comparative to the effects of IQ and familial socioeconomic status.

The research suggested that once demographics were controlled there was little effect of school characteristics on student achievement (Jencks et al., 1972). Class sizes, per-student spending, teachers, and environment did not have the expected effect on student achievement. As a result, Jencks believed that increasing school quality for all students would increase outcomes by a few percentage points, but negligibly compared to the differences that exist by race and class (Jencks et al., 1972). Jencks' research confirmed the Coleman Report by demonstrating that school quality measures were not adequate predictors of achievement and did not account for differential educational outcomes. The findings of this study could continue

to corroborate these studies in terms of explaining the effect of family factors and social class in higher education.

The Wisconsin Model

William Sewell and Robert Hauser's (1976) research served to explore the differential outcomes in school achievement as it related to students' backgrounds. Their model later became known as the Wisconsin Model. The decade long, longitudinal study surveyed a large cohort of students, focusing on higher education retention and the number of years it took to complete a degree. The research was impactful for its introduction of specific variables in assessing student achievement. Sewell and Hauser studied the relationships between class-status, academic ability, high school grades, student expectation and aspirations, parental encouragement, and peers as they relate to retention and years to degree completion. The findings indicated that students from high socioeconomic status families were far more likely to go to college than students from a lower socioeconomic category (Sewell and Hauser, 1976).

The Wisconsin Model was replicated resulting in similar findings repeatedly (Alexander, Ecklan & Griffin, 1975; Jencks, 1979). The findings allowed for a research set that could aid in a better understanding of the effects of individual variables on educational attainment. The results suggested that ability mattered. In fact, the Wisconsin Model studies determined that prior grades and socioeconomic status had no effect when controlling for IQ.

Sewell and Hauser (1976) hypothesized that educational outcomes were the compounding effect of environment and ability. They argued that high socioeconomic students had higher aspirations and parents with higher expectations of academic success.

Additionally, peers with similar aspirations and familial expectation surrounded them. These increased aspirations and expectations coupled with increased ability led to higher educational outcomes. Sewell and Hauser's work proposed different aspirations and parental expectation as the factors that influence the educational gap. However, their study along with others attempted to explain the origin of differential aspirations and parental expectations. This study focusing on the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation lays out a research question and methodology that would allow for a deeper study and understanding of how a student's aspirations and parents expectations may be constrained by social class.

Community Factors

Upon review of familial factors as the primary influencing factor in education, researchers began to delve deeper into other factors to explain differences. Cultural deprivation theory emerged as the first explanation of an environment's effect on intelligence. The theory posited that the home environments of low socioeconomic status and minority children culturally and materially deprived them of the things that stimulated and developed ability and intelligence (Hunt, 1965). The theory stated that disadvantaged children experience a lack of intellectual stimulation and out-of-classroom learning. The cultural deprivation theory attributed intelligence, IQ measurements, and differential learning outcomes to culturally rich environments.

Cultural Deficits

In 1966, Oscar Lewis theorized that a certain set of values and beliefs permeated poor communities. He believed the culture of poverty was based on a sense of learned helplessness. In this way, members of very poor communities invested in luck over ability or potential, were riddled with individuals who were only focused on the present, had low achievement aspirations, and could not control impulses (Lewis, 1966). Lewis' theory proposed class specific culture as the explanatory factor in differential educational outcomes.

Lewis' culture of poverty theory quickly came under attack. Sociologists responded calling Lewis' conception implicitly racist (Valentine, 1975; Baratz & Baratz, 1975). Critics argued that Lewis' conception of depravity was in fact cultural difference. Valentine (1975) and Baratz and Baratz (1975) reasoned that language and familial structure differences were different not worse. Critics suggested that history and racial difference in the country accounted for differences in a way that distinguished them from base cultural conditions. Baratz and Baratz emphasized that while linguistic and familial differences may contribute to disadvantage in the classroom, it was critically important to recognize them as differences not deficits.

Valentine (1975) asserted that school environments and standardized tests measured middle-class qualities and attributes. His notion suggested that these measurements truly measured the middle class ideas of intelligence. In that way, disadvantaged children attend schools that are incongruent with the culture they learned at home. It is the incongruence of cultures that accounts for differential educational outcomes. The claim that educational

performance measures are class-based is an ongoing argument amongst sociologists and educators (Fischer et al., 1996).

While the culture of poverty theory was quickly dismissed as racist and devoid of historical context, it did lay the groundwork for understanding how family environments may be more or less congruent with school environments, based on a family's social class. The Coleman Report and subsequent corroborating research continue to suggest that family matters; the culture of poverty theory argued that it matters on the basis of lower class family and community environments, with expectations being distinctly different than those instituted within schools. Ongoing study of concepts such as collegiate concerted cultivation tie into this body of research in their development of how familial environments may be more or less congruent and encouraging of schools.

The Role of Schools in Improving Educational Outcomes

While the Coleman Report indicated that school quality was only faintly linked to educational attainment, there have been some data to date that have suggested a stronger link. In fact, James Coleman himself published a series of works indicating that school climate mattered (Coleman, Hoffer & Kilgore, 1982; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). Coleman, Hoffer, and Kilgore reported substantially higher educational outcomes in Catholic schools as compared to public schools. The comparison of public and parochial schools indicated significantly higher test scores for students in their sophomore and senior years of high school. Coleman attributed these differential outcomes to higher levels of homework, higher educational expectations, higher enrollment in advanced courses, and fewer disciplinary problems in parochial schools.

Met with a startling difference that directly contrasted his earlier findings, Coleman did recognize that a lack of longitudinal data prevented drawing any strong conclusions regarding schools factors.

In an effort to compare public and private schools with longitudinal data, Coleman and Hoffer (1987) found similar results. The study analyzed more than fifteen thousand students across three years in order to better understand the effects of school environments. The longitudinal data indicated that school characteristics matter. In verbal and mathematic tests, sophomores in Catholic schools scored significantly higher than their public school peers. In verbal tests, students enrolled in private non-parochial schools also scored better than their public schools peers.

Coleman believed that parent and peer communities create the difference in school environments. He argued the community created in parochial schools allows for parents and teachers to mutually reinforce educational attainment expectations. Consistently, self-fulfilling prophecy research purports that when teachers have high expectations, they teach differently and students achieve more. Additionally, Coleman believes that parochial schools are not subject to the same deviations from and weakening of curriculum that public schools have endured through standardization and public policy (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987).

The relationship between educational achievement and school characteristics, even once ability and family demographics were controlled, reiterated Coleman's conclusion (Chubb & Moe, 1990). The research indicated that different school characteristics seemed to exist in parochial schools compared to public schools. These differences included an emphasis on

academic excellence and goals, motivating principals, good teachers, strong disciplinary practices, and a college prep focus. Chubb and Moe's (1990) findings purported that schools with higher scores across these variables also scored higher on student learning and achievement variables.

The Coleman parochial school findings shed light on how educational outcomes may increase when students experience congruence between family environment and school environment. In fact, dissenters argue that students who enter parochial schools are distinctly different than public school attendees, perhaps the result of concerted cultivation as Lareau outlines. Further research does substantiate Coleman's parochial school findings. Schools with high achievement ethos foster high expectations and demonstrate high rewards for increased educational outcomes (Attewall, 2001; McCabe, 1999). Schools shape specific kinds of peer groups, and peer groups are highly influential of student outcomes and behaviors (Coleman, 1961; Ryan, 2001). Peer groups influence social involvement as well as educational achievement and aspirations (Garner & Raudenbush, 1991).

The research indicates that family environments impact educational outcomes as a result of their congruence with the educational institution. It seems consistent to ask the question: how exactly do families continue to influence education in higher education? Furthermore, it seems reasonable to believe that the more encouraging a family is of higher education and the more congruent a family environment is to the educational environment, the more likely a student may be successful. As a result, collegiate concerted cultivation becomes a plausible latent construct influenced by socioeconomic indicators and controlled by

institutional types and socio-demographic factors. All of this research lays the groundwork for further study of collegiate concerted cultivation.

Pierre Bourdieu's Theoretical Contributions

Pierre Bourdieu has significantly contributed to educational theory through his analysis of the preservation and transmission of elite privilege in society. Bourdieu's contributions to the sociology of education directly contrast the functionalist perspective of opportunity through education. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and cultural capital, in particular, significantly contribute to education theory (Bourdieu, 1984; 1990; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Field, Habitus and Doxa

Like Weber, Bourdieu believed that analyzing society solely on the basis of socioeconomic class was mistaken. He believed that cultural and social factors were critical to the analysis. In order to best study society and the interplay of cultural and social factors, Bourdieu was interested in finding constructs to study both the objective and subjective realities of society. As a result, he introduced the concepts of field and habitus to study the objective/subjective paradox. Bourdieu's concept of field allowed for a study of objective social realms and spaces, such as education, politics, the economy and the arts. These structured social spheres included individuals and their relational social positions. Bourdieu believed individuals' social positions were the result of the specific rules of the field, as well as the individual's habitus and capital. (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

In contrast to the objective field, habitus is Bourdieu's subjective concept. Habitus refers to an individual's system of dispositions through acquired and lasting schemes of perception, a person's thoughts, notions, behaviors and preferences. Bourdieu defined habitus as "a durable, transposable system of definitions" (1992: 134). The habitus developed as a result of an individual's interaction with the objective field. Habitus is the adoption and embodiment of the field's rules and requirements in the individual's subjective experience. Bourdieu believed the habitus to be flexible and determinant, structured and structuring for an individual (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Bourdieu's habitus is similar to the concept of socialization, except that, it assumes a more pervasive role upon the individual. Embodiment of the habitus is a critical condition of the construct. Habitus is neither explicit nor conscious. It is deeply rooted within the subjective experience of the individual (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Habitus is derived from a shared set of historical, social group dispositions, the result of social group membership and the everyday experiences and expectations of the group (Bourdieu, 1990).

Bourdieu believes that children develop these schemata consciously and unconsciously as they engage with their families. The family provides the dispositions and characteristics of a child's primary habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). As such, an individual's habitus is the corollary of family membership, socioeconomic class, race, ethnicity, gender, educational attainment, and ideology.

In addition to habitus, Bourdieu offers the concept of doxa. Doxa are the self-evident, universal truths that individuals hold in regards to certain fields. These collective veracities

favor protecting the status quo of the field. A doxa works to maintain the rules of the field and protect the dominant influences and privileges. In this way, doxa assures that the habitus is congruent with the social rules of the field. Congruence of the habitus and field allows for the easy reproduction of social structures and systems of privilege. For an individual in a doxic state between habitus and field, the social structure is coherent, commonsensical and inevitable, even if it is unequal and the privilege is unmerited (Bourdieu, 1990).

The interplay of field, habitus and doxa is critical to social reproduction theory and the sociology of education (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). For individuals, habitus produces and normalizes daily life, as well as provides a deterministic reality by regulating individual's expectations and aspirations to only those that are socially possible.

Consequently, individuals consent to social reproduction by never aspiring to that which is categorically denied (Bourdieu, 1990). Individuals recognize the habitus as being of their own preference, which is harmonious with their peers and their environment (Bourdieu, 1990). Bourdieu's concepts are critical to social reproduction theory. Habitus explains how and why individuals reflexively acquiesce to social reproduction and the systems that perpetuate it. The concept of habitus is directly related to individual and social mobility, attainment, and opportunity as it relates to the sociology of education and social reproduction theory.

Cultural Capital

In addition to the concept of habitus, social and cultural capital influence educational achievement. The concept of cultural capital provides insight on how race, class, and achievement are related. In 1973, after an exploration of differential educational outcomes

among children in France, Bourdieu introduced the concept of cultural capital. The concept of cultural capital refers to any material or symbolic items that could be used within the system of exchange in a field, including accumulated cultural knowledge that grants power and social status to the individual owner (Bourdieu, 1986).

Bourdieu identified three different types of capital in his original text: economic, social, and cultural. Economic capital included cash, assets, investments, and any other economic resources an individual may own or access. Social capital includes group memberships, social networks, relationships, and support systems. Social capital depends largely on formal and informal networks of mutual connections. Cultural capital entails all non-financial possessions and resources an individual might own or obtain in order to gain financial or social mobility. Bourdieu identified these things as cultural knowledge, education, attitudes, intellectual style, dress, taste, interest in the arts, etc. (Bourdieu, 1986).

In *The Forms of Capital* (1986), Bourdieu outlined embodied, objectified, and institutionalized capital. Embodied cultural capital included items that are consciously or unconsciously inherited through socialization, such as language, traditions, appreciation of classical art, and manners. Bourdieu's second form is institutionalized cultural capital, which entails valuable physical goods such as houses, property, paintings, and jewelry. These items are valuable in regards to economic worth and symbolic cultural worth. Institutionalized cultural capital includes credentials and qualification, such as educational degrees. Educational credentials bear economic meaning and worth, which play a key role in job placement, career development, and long-term economic and social achievement. While educational degrees

may not be transmitted, the ability to gain access to educational structures and credentials can be transmitted. As a result, an increased capacity for institutionalized cultural capital can be transmitted or inherited (Bourdieu, 1986).

Cultural capital is the result of habitus formation. As an individual's habitus is developed, so too is cultural capital or lack of cultural capital. Language, traditions, erudite manners, and art appreciation are the result of socialization within the family at a young age (Harker, 1990). Cultural capital is the result of family habitus, and family habitus is the result of socioeconomic class.

Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and cultural capital are key constructs in how social reproduction occurs. Children from high socioeconomic families develop very specific habitus' that transmit high levels of embodied, objectified, and institutionalized cultural capital. Bourdieu believes that children who enter school with high levels of cultural capital are more likely to succeed in school. Although nebulous in his definition of skills and demeanors, Bourdieu argues that the school system rewards students with high levels of cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passerson, 1973; Kingston, 2001). Elite children are socialized into a class-based habitus that is rewarded by culturally biased educational standards and structures. Consequently, differential educational outcomes, and ultimately social achievement and success later in life, are the result of differential cultural capital, not individual student ability (Bourdieu and Passerson 1973; Kingston 2001).

As a result, cultural capital is unequally reproduced, perpetuating class differences and allowing for the preservation of the dominant culture. When class-based habitus and cultural

capital are rewarded by the educational system, it allows for the legitimation and reproduction of the status quo. Moreover, regardless of class level, individuals and groups believe that such reproduction is normal and reasonable, and that achievement is the result of meritocracy.

Since Bourdieu's introduction of habitus and cultural capital, a great deal of theory and research has been focused on creating a specific definition of cultural capital in order to better understand its effect on education. DiMaggio (1982) contends the possession of elite and prestigious culture attributes and practices is the definition of cultural capital. Accordingly, the possession of cultural capital is operationalized through participation in high status culture (DiMaggio, 1982).

Numerous researchers have evaluated DiMaggio's work, and to date his research has been reliably replicated (DiMaggio & Mohr, 1985; Robinson & Garnier, 1985; De Graaf, 1986; Ganzeboom, De Graaf and Robert, 1990; Robinson & Katsillis, 1990; Aschaffenburg & Maas, 1996; Kalmijn & Kraaykamp, 1996; Roscigno & Ainsworth, 1999; Dumais 2002; Eitle & Eitle 2002). Within the conflict perspective, cultural capital has come to be seen as an educational resource. The concept has been repeatedly operationalized as elitist, "highbrow" culture, which strongly influences educational ability and achievement (Lareau & Weininger, 2003).

Annette Lareau's Theoretical and Research Contributions

Concerted Cultivation

In 2003, Lareau's book *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life*, introduced the concept of concerted cultivation. The concepts of concerted cultivation and natural growth

attempted to further explain the links between socialization, education, and social reproduction. Her work became a natural extension of Bourdieu's concept of habitus, cultural capital, and educational theory. Her theory and concepts reframe cultural capital theory. She moves away from engagement with elitist culture and centers on micro-level interactions, skills, and knowledge as it is rewarded in schools. In accordance with the transmission of cultural capital, Lareau believes these interactions, skills, and knowledge are not simply socialized at home, but that they are inherited and transmitted over time in relation to socioeconomic class (Lareau & Weininger, 2003).

Concerted cultivation is based on Lareau's research of socialization and academic achievement in relation to social class constrained parenting styles. Her ethnography entailed in-depth case studies of 12 families of third graders. The qualitative approach made it possible to investigate the lives of children, and identify the middle class experience as significantly different from the working class experience. Lareau identified the relationship between social class and parenting style, and concerted cultivation and the accomplishment of natural growth emerged (Lareau, 2003).

Lareau identified the middle class parenting style as concerted cultivation. The concept focused on an intense, child-centered socialization and education, or intentional habitus building on behalf of parents. Parents involved children in rational discussion and decision making, encouraged an inquisitive nature, and allowed for the questioning of authority. The parent-child relationship was defined by discussion and negotiation (Lareau, 2003). Parents

scheduled children into culturally, educationally, and socially important activities things like soccer leagues, music lessons, tutoring, Girl Scout and Boy Scout clubs, and play-dates.

In interviews, parents explained such opportunities as important to increasing achievement later in life (Lareau 2003). Lareau believed middle-class parents recognized the specific institutionalized standards and evaluation mechanisms that children would be subjected to at school. Understanding academic expectations and evaluation gave parents the ability to transmit privilege by training children on how to be successful in the academic environment. In addition to supporting a student's ability and skill building, parents trained students on the micro-interactions that would be expected of them academically (Lareau & Weininger, 2003). Middle class children who experienced concerted cultivation developed what Bourdieu would call an academically congruent habitus. Students were trained on how to be successful in school. Such parental training seems to empirically result in increased social and educational achievement (Lareau, 2003). Lareau believed that concerted cultivation is tied to the middle class because it takes a significant time and resources. Concerted cultivation emerges once the immediate needs of children are met (Lareau, 2003). Parents who do not need to worry about feeding, housing, or safety can focus on intense education and socialization.

Natural Growth

The accomplishment of natural growth emerged from Lareau's research as the parenting style of working class parents. It is defined by the focus on feeding, housing and safety of children with little oversight or coordination of socialization and education. Children

who experience the accomplishment of natural growth attend school, but are rarely enrolled in extra-curricular activities. Children socialize with their siblings, cousins, neighborhood children, and others in close proximity. In regards to education and socialization, these children are left to their own natural development (Lareau, 2003). Lareau indicated that the accomplishment of natural growth is not the result of not caring about children. It is a consequence of low socioeconomic status.

Differential Outcomes Based on Class

Lareau's research clarifies the relationship between parenting styles and class and the effects on social and educational achievement. Lareau's theory suggests that middle class children raised with concerted cultivation go to school prepared with a broad and well-defined set of academic skills, strong reasoning and language skills and an understanding of what to expect in the classroom. They have had access to books, toys, and practice to prepare them. Additionally, they continue to have access to adults who can help them in attaining additional resources and refining skills. Such skills, resources, and academic confidence result in a sense of entitlement around school and achievement. The definitive result is cultural capital that allows for the perpetuation of achievement across the lifespan (Lareau, 2003).

Bourdieu and Lareau identify education as the fundamental social system for the generational transmission of privilege and inequality. Whereas Bourdieu's concepts lay the theoretical foundation, Lareau's concepts define the framework for understanding the relationship between parenting styles, social class, and differential outcomes in academic and social achievement. Lareau's introduction of concerted cultivation and research across the

primary educational years provide strong evidence to suggest the crucial role of families and class on educational achievement. As the country becomes more interested in outcomes in higher education, the question of how far concerted cultivation may reach becomes fundamental to proposing better public policy.

The Role of Colleges in Improving Educational Outcomes

A review of the literature in the last half century shows there is still a preponderance of evidence to support the Coleman Report's claims. Researchers have shown that educational outcomes of low socioeconomic status students are far lower than their higher socioeconomic status peers due to a unique set of barriers that disproportionately affect low socioeconomic status groups (DiMaggio & Mohr, 1985; Lareau, 1989; Useem, 1992; Horn & Carroll, 2006; Terenzini, Cabrera & Bernal, 2001; Bowen, Chingos & McPherson, 2009; Carroll, 1989; Paulsen & St. John, 2002; Cabrera, La Nasa & Bibo, 2012).

From primary school on, low socioeconomic status parents are less likely to be involved in a student's educational process (Lareau, 2003; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Gutman & Eccles, 1999). It is believed that less involvement is the result of these parents having less familiarity, knowledge, and experience on how to advocate and prepare students for the academic environment (Lareau, 2003; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Flint, 1993; Ikenberry & Hartle, 1998; Lohfink & Paulsen, 2005; McDonough, 1997; Plank & Jordan, 2001; Useem, 1992).

The Role of Parents in College

Research indicates that when parents understand and can navigate the educational system they often have more information about college admission and success. They are better able to help students make decisions about how to be successful upon admission, which results in higher retention and graduation rates (King, 1996; Wimberly & Noeth, 2005). The lack of knowledge on how to support students seems to result in lower success rates regardless of a parent's aspirations for a student (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Catsambis & Garland, 1997; Cunningham, Erisman & Looney, 2007; Rowan-Kenyon, Bell & Perna, 2008).

It seems evident that socioeconomic status influences parenting and parenting influences education. Just as is the case in primary and secondary school, low socioeconomic status parenting is linked to lower achievement and graduation rates in college. In this way, one of the fundamental issues in the relationship between education and social inequality is how socioeconomic status matters in regards to educational outcomes and achievement.

Research Questions

The research to date across primary and secondary education corroborates the Coleman Report and reaffirms that family factors, specifically socioeconomic status, is the most influential factor in educational and social achievement. It becomes critical that further work be done to study the relationships between social class and parenting style as they influence educational achievement. Such work would allow educators, policy makers, and families to better address differential outcomes in higher education retention and achievement.

On the whole, the fundamental issue in the relationship between education and social inequality is that socioeconomic status is positively related to educational achievement variables. Educators and researchers have begun to recognize the fundamental issue in education is the differential effect of socioeconomic class on educational outcomes. In response, a number of different programs and interventions could be enacted to reform the educational system and increase the outcomes for at risk students. Such improvements already include early education programs, school lunch initiatives, parenting education courses, subsidized healthcare and childcare, and on the post-secondary front, increased financial aid packages and federal subsidized loan programs, access to community and state institutions, academic support, and support for the transition to college. While these programs and interventions may be fiercely supported as public policy, they only treat symptoms. Ultimately, they have may have little impact on the effect of socioeconomic status on family, specifically parenting style.

Based on the gaps in the current research, three research questions emerge. The research questions center on the exploration of the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation. They seek to further explore the proposed concept of collegiate concerted cultivation in order to determine if it exists, what the archetype characteristics are and how social class influences the concept. The following research questions emerged:

- Do students experience collegiate concerted cultivation differentially based on their social class background?

- If so, are parent socioeconomic indicators (educational level, employment status and rank) correlated with differing levels of collegiate concerted cultivation?
- What are the defining characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation as a latent concept?

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

Present Study

This study focuses on the influence of socioeconomic indicators on education through the exploration of collegiate concerted cultivation. The methodology of this study was intentionally designed to explore the research questions outlined in chapter three. The study employed a mixed methods approach to address the three questions. The first question being the determination of whether or not students experience differential levels of collegiate concerted cultivation. In order to do this, a survey that develops and analyzes a collegiate concerted cultivation index (C3 index) was developed and implemented. The second question of the study was to examine the effects of socioeconomic indicators, institutional, and demographic factors on the concept. The third question of the study was to delve more deeply into the archetype characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation. The interview portion of the study allows for a deeper exploration of the archetype characteristics. The mixed methods approach allows for discovery and exploration of the collegiate concerted cultivation phenomenon.

Theoretical Model

Given the intent to discover and explore the collegiate concerted cultivation concept, the development of an intentional theoretical model was essential. The model is based on the sociological perspectives and literature as laid out in the previous chapters. It begins with the identification of parental socioeconomic indicators as influencing factors of collegiate concerted cultivation. The model then develops collegiate concerted cultivation from an index

of factors, the C₃ Index. The model recognizes that institutional types and socio-demographic factors may serve to control the index. Figure 1 lays out the theoretical model of the study.

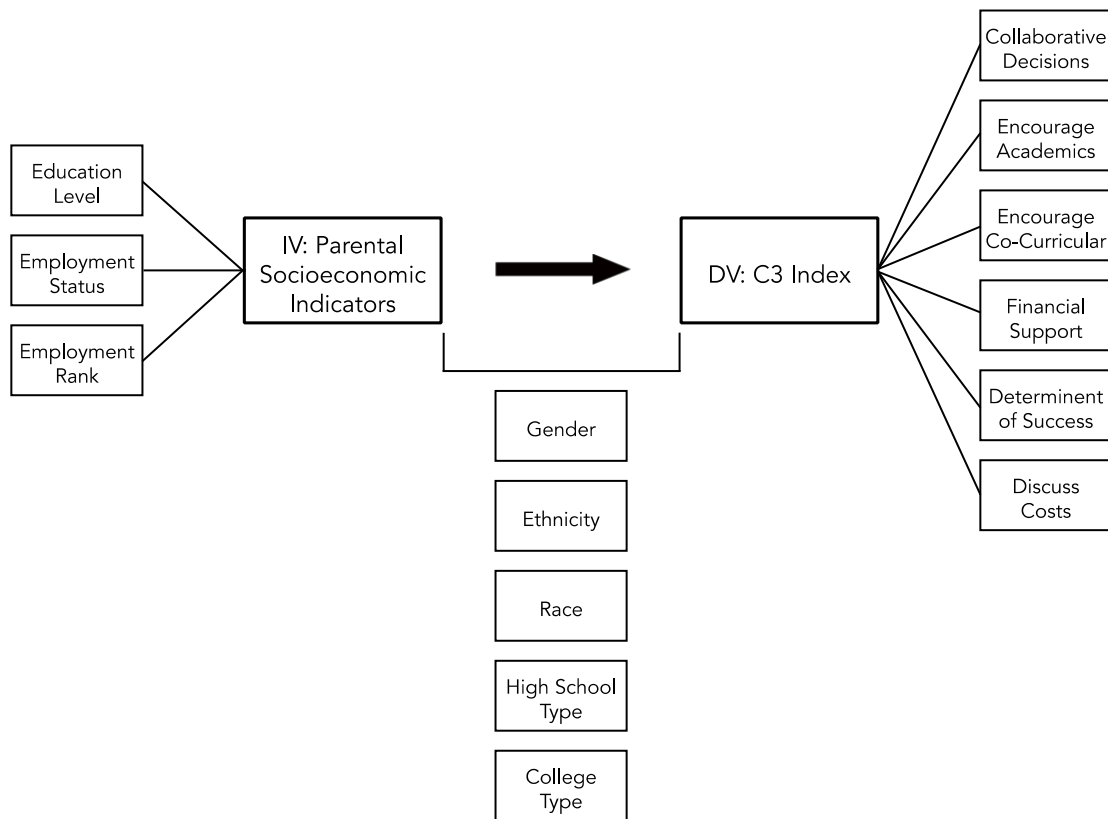


Figure 1: Theoretical Model of the Positive Influence of Parental Socioeconomic Indicators on Collegiate Concerted Cultivation Controlling for Institution Type and Socio-Demographic Factors.

Sample Institutions

Specifically, the study focused on students at the University of Central Florida and Rollins College, both located in Central Florida. The institutions were chosen for both theoretical and pragmatic reasons. Theoretically, public and private institutions are correlated with differential levels of academic achievement (Coleman, Hoffer & Kilgore, 1982; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). Pragmatically, they were chosen for proximity and accessibility. The study aimed to explore if those difference held constant in higher education. For these reasons, two fairly

different institution types were chosen. U.S. News & World Report classifies Rollins College as a four year, private, not-for-profit, Master's Carnegie classification institution (2013). Rollins is a small, applied, liberal arts institution with an undergraduate enrollment of approximately 1,890. In 2014-2015, the tuition and fees estimate was \$43,080, plus room and board costs of approximately \$13,470, required for students whose home address is more than 50 miles from the college. This equals upwards of \$56,000 per year (U.S. News & World Report-Rollins College, 2013)

U.S. News & World Report classifies the University of Central Florida (UCF) as a four-year, public, Research Carnegie classification institution. UCF is a large, research-intensive institution with an undergraduate enrollment of approximately 51,269. In 2014-2015, the tuition and fees estimate was \$6,368 for in-state students and \$22,467 for out of state students, plus room and board costs of approximately \$9,300 per year. This equals upwards of \$15,000 and \$31,000 for in-state and out-of-state students per year (U.S. News & World Report-University of Central Florida, 2013).

Hypotheses

Given the mixed methods approach, the major research questions provided the basis for the hypotheses of the quantitative portion of the study. The hypotheses focus on exploration of collegiate concerted cultivation as a latent construct, and how it was be influenced by key socioeconomic indicators and controlled by institutional types and socio-demographic factors. The hypotheses set included:

H1: Higher parental educational levels are significantly associated with an increase in the C₃ index.

H2: Higher parental employment ranks are significantly associated with an increase in the C₃ index.

H3: Higher parental employment statuses are significantly associated with an increase in the C₃ index

Survey Data

Survey data was collected to determine if students experience differential levels of collegiate concerted cultivation in a way that is correlated to socioeconomic indicators and controlled by institutional types and socio-demographic factors. Survey data was collected from currently enrolled undergraduate students at UCF and Rollins College over the course of the 2014 spring semester. Survey participants were recruited via email requests disseminated at Rollins from an list provided by the college's Office of Institutional Research. At UCF, email requests were sent via the Department of Sociology's Undergraduate Coordinator and included as an extra credit opportunity in some undergraduate sociology courses. The email invitation read:

Hello!

You are being invited to take part in a research study being completed by Meghan Harte Weyant as a part of her dissertation research. The purpose of this research is to study the influence of class and family on higher education achievement.

What you will be asked to do in the study:

You will be asked to participate in survey, which will take approximately 15 minutes. You will be able to take the survey on your own time and from wherever you are with internet access.

If you are willing and interested you may also be invited to participate in an interview with the principal investigator where you will share your experiences and perceptions on class, family, and education. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes to complete. The interview will be held in a location of the participants choosing. Location options include the UCF Department of Sociology, Rollins Office of Student Success, or an agreed upon on-campus public location. Interview participants will be compensated with a \$5 gift card.

In order to be eligible to participate in the study, you must:

- Be 18 years or older
- Be a student at Rollins College or the University of Central Florida

Benefits:

There are no direct benefits for participation in the study.

Investigator Contact for Further Information:

If you have questions about the study or about participating, please contact: Meghan Harte Weyant, Graduate Student, Sociology, College of Sciences, (810) 499-1093 or by email at mharte@knights.ucf.edu,

You may access the survey from the link below to participate in the study: XXX

Please consider participating,
Thanks,
Meghan Harte Weyant
Principal Investigator
University of Central Florida

Figure 2: Survey Invitation

Variables

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study is the C₃ Index. The C₃ index was measured by combining six variables into a scale: collaborative decisions, encourage academics, encourage co-curricular, financial support, determinant of success, and discuss costs, which are based on the latent construct of concentrated cultivation (Cronbach's alpha=0.79) (Lareau, 2003). Each of these variables were collected on a four-point scale (1-4) where students reported how often they made collaborative decisions with parents; how often parents/families encouraged academics and co-curricular activities; how often parents/families financially supported education; how often students discussed with their parents/families education as a determinant of future success, and how often students discusses with parents/families the costs of education. The six variables were then summed together to create the C₃ index with a 6-24 point range. In review of the 464 surveys completed, C₃ indexes could not be created for three students due to missing variable data that prevented the computation of a complete index. These three students were omitted from the analysis

Independent Variables

Independent variables in this study are characteristics of parental socioeconomic indicators including parental educational level, employment status, and employment rank. Data for these measures were based on student reports. Socioeconomic indicators of parental education, employment status, and rank were intentionally used as opposed to familial annual

income level. While familial annual income would serve as a strong proxy for social class level, it does not speak holistically to cultural capital and familial habitus development (Bourdieu, 1990). Pragmatically, asking students to recall and correctly denote familial annual income seemed hopeful at best. It seemed more plausible that students would be able to identify parental education and employment indicators allowing for the study of socioeconomic indicators beyond income levels.

Parental educational levels were measured for mothers and fathers based on the highest level of education parents completed on a six-point scale. Parental employment status for both mothers and fathers was based on determination of whether each parent was employed full time in the labor force or not (labor force mother: 1; labor force father: 1; non-labor force: 0). The intention of identifying full-time labor force parents was a determination that full-time employment of mothers and fathers in the labor force, and therefore outside the home, would theoretically influence the C₃ index due to less time spent in the home. It was also based on a question of how full time labor force participation might be correlated differently for mothers than for fathers. Similarly, employment rank was measured in a dummy fashion with determination of both mothers and fathers based on a high level employment ranking (top rank mother: 1; top rank father: 1). This was based on a theoretical assumption that the employment rank of parents could be differentially correlated with the C₃ index. One or both parents engaged in top rank employment positions would influence the index different than parents in lower rank position. As well as, a question of whether or not those differences would

be similar or different for mothers and fathers. Parental education, employment and rank questions were asked irrespective of the relationship of parents.

Control Variables

Based on the research to date, five control variables were included in the analyses: undergraduate institution (Rollins: 1), high school type (private: 1), race (white: 1), ethnicity (non-Hispanic: 1), and gender (male: 1). The dummy variable groups were identified based on determinations of which groups would theoretically have a higher categorical effect based on the research to date. Data for all these measures were collected via student report.

Survey Analytic Plan

Descriptive statistics are presented for all of the variables of interest in Table 1. Preliminary bivariate analyses indicated between groups variance of the dependent variables, therefore multiple regression was chosen to test the independent variables. Two multivariate models were estimated. The first model includes the C₃ index and the independent variables, and the second model includes the C₃ index, the independent and control variables. Table 3, which is shared in the results chapter, presents both models.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Proportions for Concerted Cultivation Index, Parental Socioeconomic Indicators, Institution Types, and Demographic Variables

	Mean	St Dev	Minimum	Maximum
C3 Index	18.27	4.22	6	24
Mother's Education	3.79	1.9	0	5
Father's Education	4.03	2.05	0	5
Labor Force Mothers	.51	--		
Labor Force Fathers	.70	--		
Top Rank Mothers	.31	--		
Top Rank Fathers	.57	--		
Rollins Students	.76	--		
Private High School	.21	--		
White Students	.79	--		
Non-Hispanic Students	.82	--		
Male Students	.28	--		
N=461				

Interviews

The second intention of this study was to delve more deeply into the characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation. The study consisted of 17 interviews completed with students who participated in the survey. To enroll and recruit students, a question about interest in participating in the interview was asked upon completion of the survey. Students who indicated willingness to be interviewed were contacted via email. All interviews were held in person at the UCF's Sociology department or at Rollins' Office of Student Success. All students who were interviewed gave consent as required by the UCF's Institutional Review Board. The interviews were intended to be exploratory in nature and open-ended. The interviewer asked questions about the student's education, family, and the students perceived influence of family on education. Interviews were semi-structured around the following question topics:

- Share a bit about yourself, and how you got to this institution.
- Do you think your family has influenced your education?
 - If so, how?
 - Why do you think that is?
- Share specifics about how your parents/family are involved with your education.
- What motivates you or drives you to earn a degree?
- Are your parents/family a part of that motivation?
- Share a little about your relationship with your parents?
- Do you get encouragement/support from your parents/family?
 - How?
 - What does it look like?
 - Financially?
- Tell me more about how your parents/family support your academic work, extra-curricular activities?
- In your family is education a determinant of success?
- In your family would it be acceptable for you not to complete your degree or to dropout?

Analytical Interview Plan

The intention of the interview analysis was to delve more deeply into the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation, and its respective explanatory characteristics. All 17 of the

interviews were recorded and transcribed; the primary researcher then coded the transcriptions, and had a research assistant analyze and code a portion of the studies to establish reliability. The interview notes were analyzed using the theoretical frameworks of concerted cultivation and collegiate concerted cultivation. The theoretical frameworks provided the foundation of the research and serve to frame the quantitative finds. Use of theoretical frameworks in qualitative work can be appropriate when the intent is to build on previously identified theoretical frameworks as is the the case in this study.

Throughout the analysis, the primary researcher worked to ask specific and consistent questions in a way that allowed for the detailed analysis and the development of theoretical notes. Given the nature of students' interest in talking about their experiences in a way that can be tangential and wandering, the coding process often required an intentional return back to the exploration of the characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation.

The coding process began with a thorough review of each interviewed student's socioeconomic indicator and control variables in order to better understand the students that volunteered to be interviewed. The descriptive statistics are presented for all interviewed students in Table 2.

Table 2: C3 Index, Parental Socioeconomic Indicators, Institution Types, and Demographics of Interview Participants

Inter. #	C3 Index	M. Ed	F. Ed	M. Lab Force	F. Lab Force	M. Top Rank	F. Top Rank	HS Type	Race	Ethn.	Gender
Rollins Students											
1	6	Unk	Unk	0	0	0	0	Public	Multi	N.His	M
2	9	Bac	HS	0	1	0	0	Public	White	N.His	F
3	17	Bac	Bac	1	1	1	1	Public	White	N.His	M
4	18	Bac	Mas	0	1	0	1	Home	White	N.His	M
5	12	Bac	Mas	1	1	0	1	Priv	White	N.His	M
9	14	HS	HS	1	0	0	0	Public	White	His	F
10	21	Bac	Mas	1	1	0	0	Public	White	N.His	F
11	17	Bac	Unk	0	1	0	0	Public	White	N.His	F
12	14	Asc	Bac	0	0	0	0	Public	White	N.His	F
13	18	Mas	Bac	0	0	0	1	Public	White	N.His	M
14	19	Doc	Mas	1	1	1	1	Public	White	N.His	F
15	15	Mas	Mas	1	1	1	1	Public	White	N.His	F
16	24	Bac	Bac	0	0	0	1	Priv	White	N.His	F
17	12	HS	HS	0	0	0	0	Unk	White	N.His	F
UCF Students											
6	12	HS	Unk	0	1	0	1	Public	White	N.His	F
7	21	Asc	Bac	1	0	1		Public	White	N.His	F
8	22	Unk	HS	0	1	0	1	Priv	Asian	N.His	F

The primary researcher then read each of the transcripts entirely before coding. The interviews were initially analyzed using the theoretical frameworks of concerted cultivation and collegiate concerted cultivation. In this way, the analysis included breaking the data apart to analyze the theoretical frameworks, identifying the emergence of additional related concepts, and then reviewing and analyzing the relationships between the expected concepts and their characteristic parts.

Initial analysis focused on the high level theoretical constructs, and then deeper analysis focused on characteristic parts of the broader latent construct. As a result, two categories or

themes were developed: expected constructs and explanatory characteristics. Explanatory groupings were identified as the more specific components of the expected constructs.

In order to determine the validity of the coding scheme, an interrater reliability analysis using the Kappa statistic was used to compare 57 selections from the data. The interrater reliability was found to be $Kappa = 0.78$ ($p < .0.000$). Generally, Kappa values from 0.61 to 0.80 are interpreted as substantial agreement between coders (Landis & Koch, 1977).

CHAPTER FIVE: SURVEY RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the dependent, independent, and control variables (N = 461). The C₃ index had a mean of 18.27 (S.D.=4.22) on a scale of 6-24.

Educational level was measured on a scale of 1-5, some high school/certification to a terminal degree. On average, mother's educational level was 3.79 (S.D.=1.9), on average a bachelor's degree, and father's educational level was 4.03 (S.D.=2.05), on average a bit more than a bachelor's degree. In regards to employment status, students reported 51% of mothers and 70% of fathers were employed full time in the labor force. Students reported 31% of mothers and 57% of fathers were top rank employees.

Descriptive review of the control variables indicated that 76% (sk=-1.22) of the students attended Rollins College. Under a quarter, 21% (sk=1.40) of students reported attending a private high school. Over three quarters of students, 75% (sk=-1.45) identified as being white and non-Hispanic, 81% (sk=-1.65). Just over a quarter, 28% (sk=1.9) reported being male.

Multivariate Analysis

Prior to this analysis, a check for multicollinearity was conducted with each of the variables that make up the C₃ index. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for mother's educational level was 1.34 and the tolerance level was 0.74. The VIF for father's educational level was 1.32 and the tolerance level was 0.75. The VIF for mother's full time labor force employment was 1.07 and the tolerance level was 0.93. The VIF for father's full time labor force employment was 1.07 and the tolerance level was 0.94. The VIF for top rank employee mothers

was 1.12 and the tolerance level was 0.93. The VIF for top rank employee fathers was 1.15 and the tolerance level was 0.87. According to these values, there were no issues of multicollinearity.

Table 3 presents the results of the multiple regression for the effects of parental socioeconomic indicators, institution types, and demographic variables on the C₃ index. An interpretation of Model I multiple regression results of the effects of parental socioeconomic indicators on the C₃ index indicates that the model was statistically significant and accounts for over 18% of the variance ($R^2=.18$). Mother's education, both parents full time status in the labor force, and father's employment rank were identified as statistically significant variables. Father's education and mother's employment rank were not significant.

When all other variables are held constant across the model, mothers employed full-time in the labor force compared to mothers not employed full-time in the labor force increased a student's C₃ index by 1.51 ($b=.185$ $p<.01$). As such, having a labor force mother increased a student's C₃ index. Fathers in top rank employment compared to fathers at lower ranks increased a student's C₃ index by 1.38 ($b=.176$ $p<.01$). As a result, having a top rank father increased the C₃ index. With every level of education completed by mothers, there is a .472 ($b=.170$ $p<.05$) increase in the C₃ index. As such, increases in mother's educational level increased the C₃ index. Fathers employed full-time in the labor force compared to fathers not employed full-time in the labor force increased a student's C₃ index by 1.14 ($b=.123$ $p<.05$). As a result, having a father full-time in the labor force increased the C₃ index.

An interpretation of Model II multiple regression results of the effects of parental socioeconomic indicators, institution type, and socio-demographic variables on the C3 index indicates that the model was statistically significant and accounts for 20% of the variance ($R^2=.20$). Mother's education, both parents full time labor force status, father's employment rank, and attending Rollins were identified as statistically significant variables. Father's education, mother's employment rank, attending a private high school, being white, non-Hispanic, and male were not significant.

When all other variables are held constant across the model, mothers employed full-time in the labor force compared to mothers not employed full time in the labor force increased a student's C3 index by 1.48 ($b=.183$ $p<.01$). As such, having a mother employed full time in the labor force increased a student's C3 index. Fathers in top rank employment compared to fathers in lower ranks increased a student's C3 index by 1.38 ($b=.176$ $p<.01$). As a result, having a top rank father increased a student's C3 index. With every level of education completed by mothers, there is a .435 ($b=.157$ $p<.05$) increase in a student's C3 index. As such, increases in mother's educational level increased a student's C3 index. Attending Rollins compared to attending UCF increased a student's C3 index by 1.26 ($b=.139$ $p<.05$). As such, attending Rollins increased the C3 index. Fathers employed full-time in the labor force compared to fathers not employed full-time in the labor force increased a student's C3 index by 1.14 ($b=.123$ $p<.05$). As such, having a father full time in the labor force increased a student's C3 index. It appears that of the statistically significant variables in Model II full-time labor force mothers and top employment rank fathers have the strongest effects on the C3 index.

Subsequently, a mother's education level, attending Rollins, and a full-time labor force father seem to affect the C_3 index in that order. Father's education, mother's employment rank, attending a private high school, being white, non-Hispanic, and male were not significant.

The hypotheses of the study focused on the exploration of the latent construct, beginning with the first hypothesis that: *H₁: Higher parental educational levels are significantly associated with an increase in the C_3 index.* The analysis indicates that is partially true. Higher educational level of the student's mother does result in a higher C_3 index. The null hypothesis was rejected. The second hypothesis specified, *H₂: Higher parental employment ranks are significantly associated with an increase in the C_3 index.* The analysis indicated that this was also partially true. A higher employment rank of a student's father does result in a higher C_3 index. The null hypothesis was rejected. The final hypothesis specified employment status, *H₃: Higher parental employment statuses are significantly associated with a increase in the C_3 index.* The analysis indicated that higher employment statuses of both mothers and fathers do result in a higher C_3 index. The null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Results: The Effects of Parental Socioeconomic Indicators, Institution Type, and demographic variables on the Concerted Cultivation Index

	Model I	Model II
Mother's Education	.472/.170* (.184)	.435/.157* (.187)
Father's Education	.177/.067 (.175)	.114/.043 (.177)
Labor Force Mothers	1.51/.185** (.488)	1.48/.183** (.497)
Labor Force Fathers	1.14/.123* (.554)	1.21/.130* (.573)
Top Rank Mothers	.394/.046 (.517)	.252/.030 (.530)
Top Rank Fathers	1.38/.176** (.484)	1.41/.181** (.496)
Rollins		1.26/.139* (.560)
Private High School		.133/.014 (.570)
White		.364/.035 (.613)
Non-Hispanic		.192/.017 (.658)
Male		-.338/-.040 (.509)
Intercept	14.426	13.722
N	254	244
R Square	0.183**	0.200**
Adjusted R Square	0.163**	0.162**

Note: Cell entries are given as unstandardized regression coefficient/standardized (beta) coefficient with the standard error in parentheses. * p<.05, ** p<.01

Interview Analysis

As stated in the previous chapter, the interview analysis resulted in a set of expected and exploratory codes based on the theoretical framework. Student experiences of concerted cultivation and collegiate concerted cultivation were identified as expected categories. Over 107 references were coded as experiences of concerted or collegiate concerted cultivation accounting for close to 57% of the coded references. Analysis of the concerted cultivation

concept lead to the identification of three characteristic parts: (1) parental involvement in educational decisions and/or at school, (2) parental assistance with skill building and schoolwork, and (3) hiring outside help to support student success. All three of these characteristics are consistent with the theoretical framework and literature (Lareau, 2003). Analysis of the collegiate concerted cultivation concept lead to the identification of four characteristic parts: (1) financial support, (2) collaborative decision-making, (3) encouragement, and (4) social safety nets. All of these characteristics are consistent with the theoretical framework of the study.

Discussion

Research continues to identify the influence of social class and family factors on educational outcomes. From the 1966 Coleman Report to Annette Lareau's ethnography on concerted cultivation (2003), Social class and family continue to emerge as the strongest link to education and achievement. Across the primary and secondary school experience, socioeconomic status is positively related to educational achievement, and that relationship appears to hold across higher education (DiMaggio & Mohr, 1985; Lareau, 1989; Useem, 1992; Horn & Carroll, 2006; Terenzini, Cabrera & Bernal, 2001; Bowen, Chingos & McPherson, 2009; Carroll, 1989; Paulsen & St. John, 2002; Cabrera, La Nasa & Bibo, 2012).

This study applied the same theoretical framework to the exploration of collegiate concerted cultivation, focusing primarily on the constructs relationship to parental socioeconomic indicators. The intent of this study being to explore and better illustrate the concept. The results indicate that mothers and fathers who are employed full time in the labor

force and fathers who hold high rank positions are the most significantly related to a student's experiencing high levels of collegiate concerted cultivation. This is consistent with the hypotheses. Additionally, the education level of mothers seems to matter as it is related to students' experiences of collegiate concerted cultivation, also consistent with the hypotheses. Lastly, while not outlined by the hypotheses but included as controls, it does seem to matter what type of institution a student attends. Students attending the private higher education institution seemed to experience higher levels of collegiate concerted cultivation. Given the costs of the private institution studied, this variable may be more a proxy of parental socioeconomic indicators than it is indicative of characteristics of the institution itself.

The resulting analysis indicates differing C₃ indexes for the students surveyed, demonstrating that variance in how students may experience collegiate concerted cultivation exists, and indicating that the phenomenon of collegiate concerted cultivation exists. Moreover, analysis of parental socioeconomic indicators suggests a relationship between social class and collegiate concerted cultivation. In light of this, it seems reasonable to determine that students do experience differential levels of collegiate concerted cultivation in a way that is related to social class.

This analysis provided evidence to the discovery and exploration of collegiate concerted cultivation, particularly as it is related to the intention of determining whether or not students experience differential levels of collegiate concerted cultivation correlated to socioeconomic indicators and controlled by institutional types and socio-demographic factors.

Further intentions of the study to delve more deeply into the characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation are reviewed in the next chapters with the analysis of interview data.

CHAPTER SIX: "THEY WERE ALWAYS FACILITATING": EXPERIENCES OF CONCERTED CULTIVATION

The Groundwork for Collegiate Concerted Cultivation

The theoretical framework of the study anticipated concerted cultivation would emerge from the interview data, and it did. Concerted cultivation rests on the theory that the transmission of cultural capital happens at home and in relation to socioeconomic class. Lareau believes that middle and upper class parents intentionally develop children for success in academic environments through interactions, skills, and knowledge (Lareau & Weininger, 2003). Concerted cultivation is characterized by parent facilitated rational discussion, decision-making, and negotiation. Deep parental involvement in school enrollment, with homework, and through the engagement of children in activities that parents believe will support academic and social achievement (Lareau, 2003). Lareau tied the characteristics of concerted cultivation to social class, specifically middle and upper class parents who have the resources and ability to focus on education (Lareau & Weininger, 2003). In the interviews for this study, examples of both concerted cultivation and natural growth emerged, and the explanatory groupings that emerged around them seemed to hold consistent with the literature.

Concerted Cultivation

Fifteen students spoke to experiences that were coded as concerted cultivation or natural growth, and 23 (72%) of the 32 references were examples of concerted cultivation, and nine (28%) were examples of natural growth. Students spoke to experiences coded as concerted cultivation and gave examples of the type of facilitation and transmission of cultural

capital. This provided the basis for expecting collegiate concerted cultivation to emerge from the interviews. Based on the anticipation that if students experienced concerted cultivation, then that level of facilitation would hold through the college experience, resulting in collegiate concerted cultivation.

When students spoke about concerted cultivation, they either explicitly stated or alluded to explanatory characteristics such as parental involvement in educational decisions and involvement at school (6), facilitation with skill building and schoolwork (5), or hiring outside help to support student success (4) (Lareau, 2003). All three of these characteristics serve as indicators of social class and financial capacity. The ability of parents to engage in this way and with this level of resources is distinctive from parents who are able only to focus on the immediate needs of children.

Parents as Decision Makers

As students spoke to their experiences in primary and secondary school, two students spoke about how their parents made decisions about the type of schools. This type of parental engagement is an example of what promulgated Lareau to connect the parenting style to social class. One student shared that his parents made the intentional decision to send him across the country to attend a boarding school where they believed he would have the opportunity to experience a higher level of socialization and educational resources. He shared:

I lived in a really small, ski town for most of my life and it has, like a really small K-12 public school and there is, like thirty people in each class. My parents and I both kind of thought that there weren't as many resources there that I could be taking advantage of towards, like, getting into a better college and setting

myself up well. So we kind of both made the decision to start looking at some private boarding schools in, mostly, New England.

This type of decision to remove a student from the family experience with the intention of increasing their educational opportunities speaks to how seriously a family may take concerted cultivation. It also speaks to social class through recognition of the type of family resources it takes to enroll a student in a private boarding academy across the country. It seems reasonable to expect that a parent's involvement, expectations, and support in this way might hold constant through college.

Providing another example of parental decision making as it relates to primary institutions, one student spoke about how her parents made decisions to get her to the best local schools:

I went to Catholic School until I was in 6th grade, and then I went to the public junior high because they had a very strong arts program. We lived in Dubuque, Iowa, so we're rated number 8 in the nation for public school. They were like 'it's fine. You're going to get just as good of an education,' and I secretly find out later we're not really Catholic.

The student shared this story in a way that put an emphasis on her finding out that they were not even Catholic, a possible indication that her parents placed decisions about her educational institution over and above congruence with religious identity. The story also brings with it a set of assumptions about additional parental time and tuition costs that usually accompany parochial schools. Her story provides another example of how parents may make educational decisions and how those choices are constrained by the class and financial capacity of a family.

Multiple students spoke about their parents making educational decisions for them in a more nuanced way. The students spoke about the hiring of tutors or support staff to assist them academically. They referenced private college counselors and the staff at private schools who worked to prepare them for admission into college. In this way, parents were not making decisions to change a student's institution, but instead to bring resources to the student. This distinction is critical in that it continues to characterize the concerted cultivation parenting style as it is constrained by class.

Parents as Facilitators

Students spoke to their experiences of concerted cultivation through a depiction of parents as facilitators. Multiple students spoke about how their parents provided time and instruction to help learn skills and behaviors that would serve them in school and life. One student shared how his parents facilitated his development and socialization through deliberate conversation and dialogue development. He shared:

We would always have dinner together every single night. And, like, my parents would prod us on, like, we would talk about current events or like my dad, he is an international business consultant, he would tell us about it and ask what we thought about it. So they were always facilitating...

He recognized that his parents worked to facilitate conversation, discussion, and dialogue in a way that would ultimately teach higher-level engagement skills. This facilitation, while not specific to skill building or even assistance with homework, is critical to the concept of concerted cultivation as it recognizes the transmission of cultural capital (Harker, 1990).

In another example, a student spoke to how his father assisted him in developing specialized skills that would later serve his educational and achievement outcomes:

(In) high school it was my dad who helped me set up a (savings) account and I started putting money in savings and keeping track of, like, budgeting and financing. He kind of instilled it. It was something that we were supposed to do. Even things such as investing, he said, like, go ahead and go look at these stocks and see if they are worth investing in. And that kind of made me think of, along with learning how to schedule and stay on top of things and learning how to budget and finance... they have taught me those things. They have taught them to me in a way that is not really quantifiable, I guess.

This is a critical reflection because it not only notes the transmission of a skill and knowledge, but specifically it references skills and knowledge around the accumulation of resources and wealth. This is particularly interesting as recognition that this type of knowledge is often inherited (Bourdieu, 1986). It seems probable to expect that, as this parenting style exists in the primary and secondary years, it would continue to develop and scaffold the student for success in and beyond college.

Different Roles

It seems important to note that as students named the type of facilitation and support they received from parents, there felt like a distinction between the roles played by mothers and fathers. The two students above named their fathers. When students spoke about their mothers they seemed to do so in a different way. They spoke about their mothers as being involved by helping with homework and being involved at school. Students spoke about mothers as chaperones, room mothers, girl-scout leaders, and soccer coaches. A slight distinction, but perhaps an important one as it relates to how students experience concerted

cultivation and how it may relate to social class and parent roles. One student provided a good example of such reflection. She said:

In elementary school my mom was very involved. I feel like they did those kinds of things where you had a parent come in and help, like with the spelling questions. She'd be the one to do those when it was her turn. She was the Girl Scout leader and the soccer coach, the lacrosse coach when that became more of the thing than soccer. My dad was also there, he'd come to the games and stuff like that but it wasn't always as much. He's also the major breadwinner.

Where students talked about fathers as intentional skill builders they spoke to mothers as intuitively knowing what support children needed. Multiple students indicated a sense that their mothers “knew they had to be involved” in order to keep the educational process on track for their students. One student ruefully noted that his mother knew she had to be present or else he would not have made it through school. He shared:

I think my mom realized early on that if she was on campus and she knew the teachers on a personal level, they'd allow me some grace.

The reflection captures the recognition that students who have highly involved adults in their educational process will experience higher rates of academic and social achievement, perhaps the motivation for a parent to engage in concerted cultivation (Lareau, 2003). It also captures this potential distinction between the role of mothers and fathers in this class constrained parenting style. It captures this sentiment of mothers as coaches and shepherds, different from fathers as leaders and facilitators.

These student reflections provide evidence to support the idea that parents who engage in concerted cultivation recognize that children can be nurtured toward higher educational outcomes. The research to date corroborates the existence of culturally biased

educational standards and structures. These children go on to experience greater educational outcomes and higher levels of social achievement as the result of this cultivation (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1973; Kingston, 2001; Lareau, 2003). It seems probable to expect that this parenting style would not just change or fall off as students enter college. Furthermore, it seems probable that collegiate concerted cultivation continues to add to student achievement and ability across higher education, and potentially across the lifetime.

Natural Growth

In addition to providing insights and examples of experience of concerted cultivation, some of the students interviewed also spoke to their experiences of natural growth. Nine of the references were coded as natural growth. The accomplishment of natural growth is linked to the working class. It is characterized by a focus on providing for basic needs. Lareau indicates that natural growth entails minimal levels of parental involvement or coordination around education (Lareau, 2003). The students interviewed spoke to experiences of natural growth in a consistent manner. Within the nine references, two explanatory characteristics were identified: first, students feeling that parents did not understand the educational process (2) and, second, students feeling left on their own (4).

As students shared experiences of natural growth, they indicated a sense of being solely responsible for their educational path and success. One student said:

My biological mother, who I lived with for most of my life, was not very involved with my education. She wasn't the kind of person to sit down and do homework with me or read to me or things like that. Those were things I figured out on my own.

Another students said:

It was like you go to school you do your thing and that is it. The most involved my mom would get is she would drop off and pick me up from the school every day.

Both students echoed the sentiment of this educational endeavor being up to them.

Suggesting that parents provided the basics, but not assistance and support as it related to education.

A few students seemed to suggest that it was not that their parent(s) left them on their own, but more an issue of parents not understanding the educational process and system, and thereby not able to help. One student said:

Since my parents were not really good in school, and they didn't really have motivation for school they didn't really help me when I was in school. I don't think they even knew how to help me. Like, when you go home, and ask help for your homework I could not do that. Language arts, English, sociology, geography, that kind of stuff I was okay on my own.

In reference to preparing for higher education, one student said:

I feel like my parents... and especially the whole process of applying to schools, as well. My mom knew it was important, the basic things. Oh, you have to take the SAT or ACT, but she didn't really know how to help me. Basically, I don't think they ever understood the level of difficulty it is. It's hard, but they don't really know how hard.

Such a sentiment expresses that parents did not leave them because they did not care, but instead because they really did not know what the educational structure and system required.

This is an important distinction even if the outcomes are ultimately the same.

Student reflection of being educationally left alone and/or parents not being able to help because of not knowing hold consistent with Lareau's accomplishment of natural growth. This is a recognition of a parenting style so constrained by class that it prevents parents from being able to support beyond immediate needs. These examples speak to how cultural capital is not and cannot be transmitted among the working class in the same way it occurs with middle and upper class students.

The students interviewed for this study provided strong examples of concerted cultivation and natural growth. The exploration of how students in this study experienced concerted cultivation was important to the theoretical assumption that the parenting style students experienced would not simply end with high school graduation. The theoretical assumption supposed that students who experience concerted cultivation would continue to experience collegiate concerted cultivation. The following chapter delves into the exploration of collegiate concerted cultivation and its defining characteristics.

CHAPTER SEVEN: "LOTS OF SUPPORT, EMOTIONAL, FINANCIALLY, 100%": EXPERIENCES OF COLLEGIATE CONCERTED CULTIVATION

The quantitative portion of the study provided judicious reason to assume that students do in fact experience differential levels of collegiate concerted cultivation, and that those experiences correlate to socioeconomic indicators. The qualitative analysis began with a review of students experiences around concerted cultivation under the theoretical premise that students who experiences concerted cultivation may go on to experience similar parental involvement as they moved through higher education.

Consistent with the theoretical framework and hypothesis of the study, the students interviewed did speak to experiences that were coded as collegiate concerted cultivation. Of the 17 students interviewed, 14 indicated experiences were coded as collegiate concerted cultivation. The students made 71 references that were reflective of collegiate concerted cultivation, and their references centered around six characteristics. When students spoke about the concept, they most often referenced parental financial support, collaborative decision-making, encouragement, and safety nets. Three students referenced not experiencing collegiate concerted cultivation, indicating lack of encouragement and financial support, which is consistent with the characterization of the accomplishment of natural growth at the collegiate level.

Financial Support

Consistent with the idea that collegiate concerted cultivation is related to social class, students spoke most about parental financial support of their higher education. Students

spoke about parental financial support in 29 different references across the interviews.

Multiple students spoke to having no financial worries when it came to financing their degrees.

One student said:

I have been fortunate. Of all the other things a kid needs to worry about, figuring out a way to pay for school hasn't been one of them.

One student summarized her parent's philosophy of the financing of her education. She shared that they had instructed her accordingly:

'Focus on school, you don't have to work, you don't have to take care of the finances, you are our child, we will take care of you.'

Similarly, another student shared:

Like I said, my family has been really big with education. My parents made sure I don't have to pay anything. I don't have any student loans to pay off because their parents made sure ... When I have kids, my job is to make sure that they won't have any student loans. I'll figure out something. I was never worried about the finances.

These reflections provide evidence to suggest that parental financial support at the collegiate level is happening, and is making higher education possible for some of the students interviewed. Not only is the support making higher education possible, it is making it possible by completely or near completely reducing the anxiety of financing the costs. One student spoke of finances as an afterthought, a rare sentiment in today's higher education landscape:

Finances are always there, but it is an afterthought. The first step is get accepted, get what you want the rest will be figured out later, like I said, I do come from a somewhat privileged family. I have never been denied anything in terms of needs.

Perhaps more rare is the idea of finances and access to support resources as being a non-issue on account of it being certain. A different student, when asked if her family provided resources to support her academic endeavors, stated that she may even be over-resourced:

Probably to a certain extent over-resourced...I understand that my situation is not the norm for a lot of other students. Because I know a lot of other students now who pay for four years and now that the four years is up to their parents are, like, 'I guess you have to move back home...'

She explained over-resourced as having access to really anything and everything she could possibly need to be successful academically. She named a private college admissions counselor, academic tutors, student success coaches, her family covering tuition costs and graduate school costs, living expenses, and the additional costs of studying abroad, etc. The sentiment of having no financial worries or concerns was echoed again when a third student alluded to the fact that, where expectations were met, resources were abundant. She stated:

It was always expected that I would be motivated and make the most out of the resources I was given, but any resource that I wanted I was kind of given.

These three references suggest a level of parental support that erases financial anxiety and concern. This sentiment differentiates another level of collegiate concerted cultivation, as suggested by the survey portion of the study. It seems there are experiences where parents and students figure out together how to cover costs, and then there are experiences where parents are able to remove any and all financial barriers.

The consistent references to parental financial support corroborate the theoretical premise that collegiate concerted cultivation is tied to social class. Parental support, as it is

related to financial elements, seems to range from the philosophies parents share with their students to actual tuition dollars they contribute.

An Agreement

In two specific instances, students spoke to financial agreements with parents. The students spoke of the agreements as if they were business deals. These reflections of having a formal business deal with a parent supports the idea that parents transmit cultural capital through skill and knowledge building to students (Bourdieu, 1986). One student spoke of the agreement as being clear, albeit informal. The student stated, "There is kind of an agreement, as long as I am working hard they will pay for it, that type of thing."

Another student spoke about a formal agreement she had with her mother: the family would finance her education to the full extent that she wanted to receive one. The student spoke of taking full advantage of the agreement with little intent of leaving college, and definitely without the intention of a traditional four-year timeline. The student said:

I am more than willing to be in school for as long as my mom is willing to pay for it, which is turning out to be a very long time. So yeah for next semester, fall of 2014, I am actually planning on studying abroad in Australia for an English Exchange Program, which I am very excited to do, then I will come back in the spring and I will complete all of my other classes, graduate in the spring, have a nice summer off to do absolutely nothing and then I will be going to grad school to get my masters in English and then after that I want to go to law school because the ultimate goal is to be a lawyer, and my two top schools are Columbia or NYU.

This idea that not only are students supported financially, but that they are taught about financial deals through the process holds consistent with the research. Researchers have

long insisted that families regulate economic achievement, business, and economic opportunity and ultimately inherited (Robinson & Garnier, 1985; Bailey & Waldinger, 1991).

Wouldn't Be Here Otherwise

The financial support characteristic was further corroborated by the sentiment that if it were not for parental financial support, then student would not have made the achievement gains they had, or may not have come to college at all. This characteristic of collegiate concerted cultivation strongly reinforces the theory that education serves social reproduction by sending the elite to school (Hurn, 1993). One student acknowledged that if it were not for the financial support of parents, she would not be in college:

If I had to support myself financially, I would not have been able to be where I am right now, that is a fact. So I think that has a lot to do with it.

Her statement echoes this idea that cultural, social and economic capital puts students on the shoulders of giants. Theorists have long argued that schools work to scaffold students into a world of work dependent on familial social class (Bowles and Gintis, 1976). Very specifically, one student noted that if it were not for his family covering his tuition and living expenses, he never would have chosen to come to college at all:

I mean I can definitely tell you myself that if I wasn't always set up to it and I had to make all the money myself to go to college, I am not sure that I would.

This statement is a pretty clear confirmation of how family social class perpetuates educational achievement and then ultimately social achievement regardless of individual ability or interest.

Based on the interviews, financial support rose to the top as one of the preeminent characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation. Repeatedly, students spoke about parental

financial support as being the lynchpin of their higher education experience. The theoretical framework of collegiate concerted cultivation anticipated that financial support would be paramount to the phenomenon; the students interviewed for this study demonstrated that theoretical expectation.

Collaborative Decision Making

Another theoretical characteristic of the collegiate concerted cultivation is collaboration with parents in the decision-making process. Research to date has indicated that the role of parents in higher education has been to help navigate the educational decision making process. In some ways, this is a shift from concerted cultivation where parents have navigated the process for students. The transition to college has meant that parents begin to allow students to take a more active lead, perhaps a fair expectation. Parent involvement in educational decision making at the college level results in higher rates of admission and achievement (King, 1996; Wimberly & Noeth, 2005). It is important to note that parent involvement in higher education decision-making is often based on a parents' knowledge of and experience with higher education. In this way, socioeconomic indicators continue to influence parenting around higher education.

The students interviewed made numerous mention of engaging with their parents in collaborative decision-making. Of the students interviewed, 21 references were coded as collaborative decision making with parents. The students spoke about how parents were heavily involved in admission processes and decisions, as well as with major decisions. A few

students spoke to how their parents would respond if they quit college and what daily decision-making looked like with parents.

Navigating the Admission Process

The admissions process and the final enrollment decision was one of the top things students talked about when reflecting on how parents were involved in college. Repeatedly, students' referenced mom and dad as selecting which schools to consider visit and apply to. In some cases, parents had expectations set before students even began. One student shared:

My mom went to a liberal arts school. She went to a small school and my dad went to (a large public school). They wanted liberal arts because they wanted me to have a well-rounded education. That's why they were very adamant about me going to the liberal arts school.

Another student shared that his parent involvement was specific to his mother teaching him about the admissions and enrollment process. He referenced that his mother had always been a part of his educational process, which extended into his college admission process:

I guess it really was ultimately, my mom helped me initially and because of the way that schooling had me going it always started with- I learn something new, my mom helps me the first time, and then after that I can do it on my own. So really it was just the first time signing up for classes she helped me. And because we already had that dynamic of I will teach you how to do this now do it, I was able to do it from there on out.

One student indicated how involved both her parents were in the decision-making. She shared that her mother took her to visit one college six times, but she then went on to say that her parents are not really that involved because her mother ultimately did not make the decision. She shared:

I did pretty much my applications on my own, but my mom... Well, my dad doesn't live with us, so he came for some college visits because he wanted to be part of the process, as well, because he's still a very much part of my life. It was

mostly me and my mom going to visit a bunch of schools. She drove me to (XXX) six times I wanted to check just one more time on (XXX). She was really supportive just in terms of making sure I had all the information I wanted to have to make the decision. It's always been very frustrating in that she'll never tell me her actual opinion and I'm, 'where should I go?' She's, 'oh, wherever you want to go.' I'm, 'where would you go?' She won't tell me. She's very much always stepped back and trying to make sure she doesn't have too much of a hand in my decisions.

This account shows a very high level of parental involvement. In some ways, the students shared a similar sentiment of being theoretically independent, but being practically navigated through the process.

The students interviewed corroborated the idea that assistance with and navigation through the college admissions process was part of their experience. It seems to hold that students are experiencing this continued guidance through admission proceedings, an integral part of collegiate concerted cultivation. This finding was theoretically anticipated and supports the research to date.

Major Decisions

For the students interviewed, parental involvement in collaborative decision-making did not appear to let up once students left for college. One of the fulcrum notions of the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation was that, in addition to financial support and emotional encouragement, students would experience collaborative decision-making *through* college. Of the student interviewed, the notion seems to hold. Ten different students spoke explicitly to how their parents were involved in daily and major decision-making. These

students talked about conferring with parents about academic majors and programs, studying abroad, course scheduling, and considerations of graduate school.

Collaborative decision-making is a hallmark to the theoretical framework of collegiate concerted cultivation. Parents involving children in rational discussion and decision-making is one of the leading characteristics of concerted cultivation. The parenting style centers on a parent-child relationship defined by discussion and negotiation (Lareau, 2003). The extension of this behavior and relationship to college is a core finding for collegiate concerted cultivation.

One student summed it up when she shared a consultative almost communal decision:

It's not so much so that I spoke to them about it. We all came to that conclusion together that number one, I should change my major or that I should choose sociology. My family was just up in arms about me changing majors because it would extend the time period of me being in school...To this day, it's 'why are you not done?' I'm graduating this semester. Even now, my dad is like, "Have you heard from the school yet about graduation?"

She shares that the decision about her academic major was not hers alone, but was a family-wide discussion and decision. She goes on to share that her father continues to be highly involved, and it does not sound like his involvement will decrease any time soon.

Another student talked about how, when she brought a discussion to the family table, she always wanted to be well prepared. The student said:

I want to show her...hey I am bringing this to the table for you; here is the determination factor and the commitment level. Here is all the information I just kind of need you approval on it.

Five different students talked about how quitting school without a discussion would not be an option. Most of them flatly stated that their parents would not be happy, if they even

allowed it, an interesting sentiment from recognized adults. One student referenced how her parents would have expected her to use logic, and would have engaged rational decision-making to talk her "off the ledge." When asked what her parents would have done if she tried to quit, she replied:

I don't know. They would have tried to talk me out of it, but ultimately if I had been enough in my conviction of it, they would have let me, probably. It would have been many conversations. It would have been like oh, okay. I don't think that's a good idea. A lot of logic probably would have gone into talking me off the ledge. Probably you've already taken out "x" amount in student loans, why waste it? Which speaks to me in volumes. You've already spent "x" amount of time, why waste it? A college education is really important. One thing my dad did say to me many times is I know you can't see it now, but you'll get it one day. I still don't think I have quite the scope on that that I need to agree with him, but I trust him. That would have been a big thing, I think, said again. A lot of pushing. I'm honestly at this in between of; I think they would pretty much try to force me to stay. To a fault, I think that I had to go to college. There was no option.

Their comments emphasize some of the major characteristics of the collegiate concerted cultivation. She speaks to engaging in collaborative decision making defined by a parent-child relationship of logic and negotiation. She speaks to shared discussions of finances and covering the costs of college. She speaks to academic encouragement, as her parents would ultimately try and force her to stay in college. Finally, she speaks to the idea that she never really had an option at all. This harks beyond Lareau's (2003) concerted cultivation to the heart of Bourdieu's field, habitus and doxa. These are critical components of social reproduction theory, which argue that familial expectations are socially regulated in a way that is deterministic of individuals' expectations and aspirations (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). In this way, individuals like this student consent to social reproduction by achieving that which is

categorically expected (Bourdieu, 1990). Her comment reflects social reproduction in that she could not have quit because she ultimately never *actually* had any choice but to finish.

Collaborative decisions are an archetypal characteristic of collegiate concerted cultivation, and the students interviewed gave resounding examples of how they experienced collegiate concerted cultivation through collaborative decision-making. The finding was theoretically anticipated and clearly supports social reproduction and educational achievement theory to date.

Encouragement

Encouragement of collegiate work, both academic and co-curricular, was an anticipated characteristic of collegiate concerted cultivation. The characteristic is born out of Lareau's (2003) original work around concerted cultivation and Bourdieu's (1990) theoretical constructs of social reproduction, as they socially frame familial socialization and ultimately individual achievement.

Twelve students spoke to experiencing family encouragement of their college experiences. They referenced family encouragement on everything from homework and papers to internships and graduation. Overall, it seems that when the students in this study received encouragement to go to college, they received a great deal of it.

Helicopter Encouragement

As students talked about encouragement from their families, a few of them referenced daily encouragement. They spoke about the little things that reminded them over and over

that their family was on their side and wanted them to do well. One student talked about her family's encouragement of her graduating from college through a postcard. She said:

My brother literally went to Kennedy Space Center... and he got me a postcard that says, "Failure is not an option," which was a quote, I believe from one of the astronauts there. He gave it to me. He's like, "here's the postcard. Put it on your mirror. Here's the pen that also says it."

She shared the reflection laughing a bit. She indicated that there was no doubt she was encouraged.

Another student noted that his parents were involved in academic encouragement, even though they were in different states:

My parents are divorced. My dad lives in (XXX), my mom lives in (XXX). My dad is very goal oriented, he started his own company, he is very like, always giving me pieces of like things I should do things I should look into like internships or when it was college like applying to colleges. He knew I wanted to do business so he actually liked Rollins because he looked into Rollins himself. Um, my mom was always, they just recently got divorced like four or five years ago, so for most of when I was growing up they were together. My mom was more like she is a stay at home mom, or she was, and she would kind of like be the one that says like as long as you are trying hard like follow your dreams. And my dad is more like a little more pragmatic. Let's see, now they influence me to do work but they don't, they aren't necessarily pushy about it unless I am doing very poorly.

He mentions the different ways his parents have encouraged him. He notes his father's insights as being more pragmatically centered on his educational next steps, and his mother focusing more on his pursuing his passions. It is interesting to note that he does not find his parents to be particularly pushy, unless he finds himself to be doing poorly in school. This sentiment holds consistent with Lareau's (2003) definition of concerted cultivation, and how it was anticipated that collegiate concerted cultivation would unfold. In this way, it is expected that middle and

upper class parents will allow their students a bit more leeway if the student is performing well. However, these parents will never allow students to have enough latitude to get themselves into too much trouble. They have been likened to helicopters hovering above or nearby like a helicopter, awaiting a chance to swoop in and make corrections to either the child or the educational system (Fay & Cline, 1990).

This type of vigilant and pervasive encouragement seems to be a hallmark of the collegiate concerted cultivation experience, just as it is the concerted cultivation experience. The reality that parents and families are always watching, reminding, co-piloting or even piloting the educational experience seems to hold strong in college.

Rock Steady Encouragement

Some students did not talk about their parents and families as having a helicopter effect, but they spoke about them as having a grounding effect. One student talked about the extensive support her parents provided. She said:

Well in terms of my family, I think that my mom has been like the rock while I've been here. I definitely have some struggle bus moments and she's always willing to talk to me or have me talk at her on the phone for two hours about what's going on and what's frustrating to me. I think that would have been really hard without her, just to be able to call at any moment to complain. My decision-making processes a lot are just me talking and I just need to talk out loud. Yeah, she's always willing to echo stuff back to me kind of thing to help me come to conclusions. I think that's been a huge part of my time here and feeling supported by her all the time. With my dad, not so much, but he is more separated from my life than she is, so it makes sense the amount of involvement that he has. He's also super supportive. He comes to every concert that he's able to.

The identification of her mother as a rock, and her needing extensive encouragement and support through academic decisions and processes, speaks to her experience of collegiate concerted cultivation. Another student was less specific, but still noted a consistent level of encouragement:

I called them a lot freshman year and was very homesick so I was very much trying to get that. I Skyped them a lot, I did a lot of that kind of stuff.

This high level of involvement, particularly once a child has transitioned to college, is starkly different than the parenting style Lareau (2003) attributes to working class parents, the accomplishment of natural growth. Lareau's theory argues that this type of constant encouragement is beyond the scope of care of primary needs. In this way, the identification of this behavior at the college level is consistent with the theoretical expectations of the study. Familial encouragement of both the helicopter and rock steady variety seem to be a core characteristic of the collegiate concerted cultivation experience.

Safety Nets: Networks, Bailouts, and Hired Help

Over the course of the interviews, students also brought up other aspects of their experiences that seemed to be quintessential to collegiate concerted cultivation. The references to safety nets through access to networks, bailouts and hired help illuminated an aspect of the concept that seems indisputably related to social class. Access to such resources is what perpetuates social reproduction, particularly given that school systems reward high levels of cultural capital (Bourdieu & Passerson, 1973; Kingston, 2001).

It is access to economic and cultural capital safety nets by way of the networks, bailouts and hired help that causes the differential educational social achievement outcomes (Bourdieu and Passerson, 1973; Kingston, 2001). An example of these types of resources, one senior student talked about how her parents were highly involved in her job search, helping her identify potential opportunities and connections. She said:

They have access to more... and things that help me find jobs, but not in the pushy parent way, in the-we want you to do well and we understand it's hard for your generation (kind of way).

She went on to share that her mother helped edit her resume and cover letters, stating, "I have my own mini staff at home that I can go to that understand this world." Her comment names an incredibly high level of support and networking that seems prototypical to collegiate concerted cultivation.

One student gave an example of having to take a medical leave from school to avoid academic trouble, which seems to be a strong example of a safety net. He stated that he had to call home for help. He shared:

So I just called my mom during finals week in tears... I can't finish. I don't know what to do please bail me out...I've never asked you to bail me out before, but like please figure out what I need to do. So... they had a doctor down here...write a letter to the school, like it all worked out.... I never asked my parents to like get a lawyer and like come down and sit with me during hearings. Even though a lot of the other people involved did have that.

His example is interesting. He states not knowing what to do, and so calls home to ask for help, support, and a bailout. He alluded to knowing that his parents were there waiting and able to help when he needed resources and support. He talked about having quick and seemingly easy

access to a doctor to write a letter on his behalf to support a medical leave. He referenced that he did not ask for his parents to provide a lawyer or travel down to sit with him through judicial hearing-like procedures, though he notes that would have been out of the realm of expectations, based on what his peers had done.

This access to resources and support, both financial and emotional, is critical. It speaks to the reality that the collegiate concerted cultivation experience provides a safety net. The support protects against for short falls and creates a safety net of resources. A student's access to a bailout that protects him or her from major social repercussions is an aspect of privilege that is only available to middle and upper class students. When a student gets in trouble, not only are low socioeconomic status parents and families less able to access the resources a student may need (such as doctors and lawyers), they are also far less knowledgeable about how to advocate for students within the academic environment (Lareau, 2003; Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Flint, 1993; Ikenberry & Hartle, 1998; Lohfink & Paulsen, 2005; McDonough, 1997; Plank & Jordan, 2001; Useem, 1992).

Beyond networks and bailouts, some students spoke about the ability to hire help when they found themselves in trouble, which is a continued mark of higher social class families. Multiple students spoke about parents hiring tutors or college counselors to support their academic achievement and success. One student shared that her first-year she ran into academic trouble. She stated that she needed management help. She shared:

Starting this sophomore year, I had tutors. I still have a tutor, which is helpful. A private tutor I use twice a week, but it's now my schedule. I take care of the meetings and I cancel them if I choose to. I knew what worked for me and what

didn't. Now it's like, I'm getting better at doing it on my own. My dad still likes me to call him once a week to tell him my grades and what I have coming up...

She shares that her parents hired a tutor for her to meet with multiple times a week, in order to help her learn to manage herself and ensure academic preparation. She suggests a sense of false independence because she is the one who schedules and cancels the appointments. It seems certain that this is characteristic of a parenting style that is heavily involved educationally and deeply constrained by social class.

Another student spoke about her experience with a college planner hired by her mother. She shared that access to a college planner allowed her to find a college that fit her needs. She shared the difficulties of making her voice heard when it came to working with a person her mother hired. This account, much like the ones above, suggests a mitigated level of student independence given the high level of parent involvement and oversight. It also continues to illuminate a level of privilege associated with middle and upper class students.

Networking, "staff help," bailouts, tutors, and college planners are all indicators of resourced support that is specific to students based on how they are parented. This parenting style is inextricably bound to social class given the amount of time and money associated with it.

Discussion

Consistent with the theoretical framework and hypothesis of the study, the interviews delved deeply into the archetype characteristics that define collegiate concerted cultivation.

Parental financial support, collaborative decision-making, familial encouragement, and safety nets were all depicted across the analysis of the interviews.

First, financial support emerged as the preeminent characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation, based on the high level of referencing by the students interviewed. The students clearly recognized their familial financial support as being critical to their success in college. Second, interviews went on to corroborate the theoretical framework of collegiate concerted cultivation by identifying collaborative decision-making, particularly as it related to the admissions process and major decisions. Third, the depiction of familial encouragement, in multiple ways, upheld the assumption that it was a core characteristic of the collegiate concerted cultivation experience. Finally, anecdotes of created safety nets through networking, "staff help," bailouts, tutors, and college planners all provided support to the idea that students engaged academically in ways that were facilitated by their parents.

All of these characteristics more fully illustrate the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation, as well as provide major insight into the defining qualities of the parenting style that seems to accompany some students to college. It seems evident that these characteristics are class specific given the amount of time and money required.

The qualitative portion of this study set out specifically to delve more deeply into the archetype characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation given its assumed existence through the analysis of the C₃ index in the quantitative analysis. The students interviewed for this study provided insight to do just that. A focus on families that provide financial support, collaborative decision making, pervasive encouragement, and access to educational safety nets

emerged as the standard characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation. This is what it looks like when concerted cultivation goes to college.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This study sought to explore the existence of collegiate concerted cultivation as a concept within the sociology of education. The study examined the effects of socioeconomic indicators, institutional types and demographic factors on collegiate concerted cultivation. In addition, this study analyzed student experiences of collegiate concerted cultivation in order to establish the archetype characteristics of the new concept.

Three research questions were answered in this study: (1) do students experience collegiate concerted cultivation differentially? (2) If so, are parental socioeconomic indicators (educational level, employment status and rank) correlated with differing levels of collegiate concerted cultivation? (3) What are the defining characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation as a latent concept? These three research questions were answered through a mixed methods approach that allowed for the exploratory analysis of the concept, as well as a set of measurable hypotheses for evaluation.

The first research question aimed to determine whether students experienced differing levels of collegiate concerted cultivation. The construction of the C₃ index allowed for the study of the latent concept through the study of six direct measures collected through survey data. The C₃ index development and analysis indicated that the students surveyed did report differential levels of collegiate concerted cultivation.

The second research question aimed to determine the influence of parental socioeconomic indicators on collegiate concerted cultivation when controlling for race,

ethnicity, gender, high school type, and college institution. This question was answered through the three stated hypotheses associated with the survey method of the study. The first hypothesis specified *higher parental educational levels are significantly associated with an increase in the C₃ index*. The analysis indicated that as partly true. When mothers have higher levels of education, students do report higher levels of collegiate concerted cultivation. The second hypothesis specified *higher parental employment ranks are significantly associated with an increase in the C₃ index*. The analysis indicated that this was also partially true. When fathers have top rank employment positions, students do report higher levels of collegiate concerted cultivation. The final hypothesis specified *higher parental employment statuses are significantly associated with an increase in the C₃ index*. The analysis indicated that this was true for both mothers and fathers. When both mothers and fathers are employed full-time in the labor force, students report higher levels of collegiate concerted cultivation.

Attendance at Rollins, the small private, liberal arts college in the study, did emerge as a having an effect on collegiate concerted cultivation. When students attended Rollins, they experienced a higher level of collegiate concerted cultivation. This could be attributable to institution type, in that the institution may in some ways contribute to the promotion of higher levels of parental involvement, or given the cost differential the variable could be largely confounded by social class.

The third research question aimed to define the archetype characteristics of collegiate concerted cultivation. The qualitative portion of this study allowed for the analysis of this question. Consistent with the theoretical framework and hypothesis of the study, the students

interviewed spoke to experiences of concerted cultivation and collegiate concerted cultivation consistent with the literature to date. The analysis of collegiate concerted cultivation resulted in the development of four main characteristics: parental financial support, collaborative decision-making, encouragement, and safety nets. The characteristics that emerged around not experiencing collegiate concerted cultivation included lack of parental encouragement and financial support. The archetype characteristics that emerged for collegiate concerted cultivation and, by default, continued natural growth were consistent with the theoretical framework of the C₃ index.

Limitations

There were a few limitations of this study that are important to future research and development of this concept. The first major limitation was specific to the interest in researching a new theoretical concept. This is the first study to analyze the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation. In this way, the researcher began with a thorough review of related research, but could not replicate an already established study with reliable and valid variables and data. The mixed methods approach to the study allowed for the research and development of the concept to be guided by theory and still allow for the emergence of new information. However, while the study rigorously followed appropriate means for testing a concept and variables, future studies should focus on both a wider and deeper exploration and demonstration of the concept of collegiate concerted cultivation.

In that light, a second limitation of the study was the sample size and composition. The sample size was appropriate for the initial testing, but it is not large enough for large-scale

generalizability. The sample size and composition anticipated for the study was identified as a limitation in the original proposal. Future research would need to focus on gathering a large sample size in order to better demonstrate the concept. Future researchers should focus on a sample composition that is inclusive of community college students. Part of the sample size issue was the inability to deeply compare institution types given the size of the UCF sample, particularly the small number of interviews. A broader and more comparable UCF sample or even the addition of a community college sample in the future would be important to address this limitation.

A third limitation of the study could be the defining of social class status. Defining class versus socioeconomic status can be difficult, and the selection of one set of criteria to the exclusion of another is a potential limitation, albeit a necessary one. Determining ways in the future to collect both familial income levels and the socioeconomic indicators used in this study may allow for a more thorough correlation to social class and more specifically, socioeconomic status of families.

Future Research

One of the strengths of this study is that the results, as well as the potential policy implications, could provide the foundation for an expanded research agenda. The future research agenda could be expanded to include a larger national survey and a more expansive mixed methods approach, allowing for a more thorough understanding of the influence of families and social class on higher education achievement.

A greater strength of this study is the development of a new construct, collegiate concerted cultivation, in the area of the sociology of education. While retention and educational policy have been thoroughly scrutinized, there has not been an applied sociological focus that could profoundly affect how students and institutions make choices. The study could provide insight on a more comprehensive pedagogical style that effectively increases graduation rates.

An understanding and recognition of the influence that parents and families have on educational achievement through college could change the way institutions have traditionally provided retention support and services. For example, institutions could make a case to increase family support services in an attempt to scaffold collegiate concerted cultivation. The implications could include increased family programs and orientations and the addition of staff members focused on supporting students and their families. In recognition of the influence of social class on collegiate concerted cultivation, institutions and administrators could re-think support of families when students receive financial aid or students enroll from low socioeconomic status schools. Any and all of these changes would be a marked change from the current higher education mindset of supporting students as individuals operating outside of the influence of families, a mindset that has been supported by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Given these implications, the strength of this study could have a significant impact on the area of education public policy and the way institutions think about and serve families.

Potential Policy Implications

This study has the potential to impact understanding around the differential educational outcome and achievement. The literature review in Chapter 2 identifies a positive relationship between social class and educational achievement across education. Class-related factors influence educational achievement throughout the educational experience. This study could impact the literature, theory, and practice utilized to close the gap in educational achievement.

Theoretically, this study continues to corroborate the Coleman Report and reaffirms family factors, specifically familial socioeconomic status, as an influential factor in educational and social achievement. The discovery and exploration of collegiate concerted cultivation further develops the work of social reproduction theory, specifically, as it relates to the contributions of both Pierre Bourdieu and Annette Lareau (Bourdieu, 1990; Lareau, 2003).

Perhaps the most interesting future research question and potential policy implication center on whether collegiate concerted cultivation can further explain the relationship between social class background and collegiate success. A deeper and clearer understanding of that research question could result in a significant educational policy question: Could the children of poor and working class families achieve at the same level in college as their middle and upper class peers *IF* their parents engaged in collegiate concerted cultivation? It begs the question- to what extent are the effects of social class on education due to parental behavior, as opposed to differential resources. This is an important question given that equalizing differential resources has been the research and policy response to date across education.

These interventions include early education programs, school lunch programs, subsidized health and childcare, increased minimum wage on the primary and secondary school front, financial aid packages, federal subsidized loans and, access to community and state institutions. These are well-intentioned programs and services designed to support low income and marginally resourced students, but the reality of differential resources among students seems to be a difficult problem to fix. The research seems to show that no amount of free lunch or school loans make up the effects of social class on education, at least not for low socioeconomic status students. This study further prompts the research and policy notion that it may be because of parent behavior, and not just resources.

It seems plausible that changing parent behavior, essentially, constructing policy to encourage collegiate concerted cultivation, may be easier and more effective. A further understanding of this research question could change the way educational policy focuses on support of low social class families. Currently, educational support and reform within higher education has focused on increasing student support and financial aid packages. While these programs and interventions may be interesting and find strong support in the public policy realm, the concern is that they treat financial symptoms and not the effect of class on parenting and family life, which this study identifies as a factor at the collegiate level. The next step is linking collegiate concerted cultivation to collegiate success.

The existence of concerted cultivation in a way that is ultimately correlated to higher rates of graduation would necessitate a different set of public policy interventions in order to support families of students beyond a way that just increases financial aid and support. The

discovery and exploration of collegiate concerted cultivation, as it has been chronicled by this study, provides an interesting preface of the pragmatic and circadian ways social reproduction and cultural capital quietly preserve the status quo amidst the giant educational structure touted as the champion of social change.

APPENDIX A: UCF IRB APPROVAL



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1
FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

To: **Meghan Harte Weyant**

Date: **January 17, 2014**

Dear Researcher:

On 1/17/2014, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination
Project Title: Collegiate Concerted Cultivation: The Influence of Class and Family on Higher Education
Investigator: Meghan Harte Weyant
IRB Number: SBE-13-09902
Funding Agency:
Grant Title:
Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Patria Davis on 01/17/2014 12:54:47 PM EST

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX B: ROLLINS COLLEGE IRB APPROVAL



**Institutional Review Board
Rollins College**

To: Meghan Harte Weyant
From: John Houston, Ph.D.
Chair, IRB
Date: 12/15/2013
Re: Permission to Proceed with Research

The Rollins Institutional Review Board has reviewed and approved the addendum to your on-line submission and request to proceed with research titled:

Collegiate Concerted Cultivation: The Influence of Class and Family on Higher Ed

If there are any changes to this research, as proposed, please resubmit your request for review. On behalf of the board, I would like to express our best wishes for the successful completion of your research project.

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