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Jamell S. Brady

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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of

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at

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY
New York
by
Jamell S. Brady

Date Submitted 4/9/2024 Date Approved 5/17/2024

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Jamell S. Brady Dr. Stephen Kotok

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ABSTRACT

DUAL ENROLLMENT RE-IMAGINED: A NARRATIVE STUDY EXAMINING HOW BLACK STUDENTS PERCEIVE THE EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPATING IN A DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM AT A PREDOMINATELY BLACK INSTITUTION IN A CENTRAL BROOKLYN COMMUNITY

Jamell S. Brady

The application of educational equity has increasingly become a topic of discussion in the American higher education systems; thus, affecting so many of our key stakeholders and institutions. Educational research has addressed the need for educational equity in a plethora of ways. An in-depth analysis of strategies, and methodologies may prove more effective than others. College access programming is a successful tool, proven to assist students to successfully navigate the transition from high school to college. Dual enrollment programming is a positive predictor for college access and post-secondary credentials. The purpose of this qualitative narrative study examines how Black students perceive the experience of participating in a dual enrollment program at a predominately black institution. Findings suggest the role of a dual enrollment student is impacted by school and program choice. Dual enrollment participants described the experiences of accessing and navigating dual enrollment, understanding a sense of belonging on a college campus, in addition to making meaning of the experiences related to college retention and success, because of being a dual enrollment student. The findings support Tinto's (1993) Retention Theory which focuses on student departure, self-

efficacy, and sense of belonging. Similarly, this supports Strayhorn's (2012) Sense of Belonging Theory. Under the Sense of Belonging theory, emphasis is placed on an individual's sense of identification or positioning in relation to a group or to the college community, which may yield an effective response. Additional findings reveal dual enrollment students described their experiences of being Black and continually persisting through the partnering predominantly Black institution. Student participants credit the experience of the dual enrollment program as a successful framework for enrolling into college. Participants enrolled into the college of their choice and continued their journey of achieving successful outcomes of a post-secondary credential. Students want to learn, do well and feel accepted amongst their peers, and within academic settings. The study underscores the importance of amplifying the voices of Black dual enrollment students, and restorying their experiences, from a lens of post-secondary success.

DEDICATION

"It is easier to build strong children, than to repair broken men." –Frederick Douglass

This Dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Marqueta and my children:

UNCOMMON FAVOR

Earthly: Dylan Michelle and Travis

Heavenly: Until we are reunited

Your love for me cannot be measured with quantifiable words. It is your actions that continue to inspire and propel me to be great for you.

In an imperfect world, you were gifted to me from God- as innocent perfections, eager to question, and excited to explore and learn.

Keep talking until you acquire the answers that satisfies your very own inquiry. Turn that inquiry into research, and that research into action.

My kids are my talented geniuses (gifted beyond their time). Believe in yourselves, like you believe in me, and I believe in you. Dream Big. Work Hard.

Your ordained road will be challenging, but stay the course, because as you have preached to me over this Labor of Love- You Got This!

Remember that I love you and am so very proud of you! Never give up!

I love Myself- I love being Me (Dr. Daddy, 2024)!

To my wife Marqueta: You are the bedrock, the framework, the architect, of this family. This Labor of Love would not be possible without you by my side. I share these accomplishments with my life's co-pilot. Thank you for standing with me. I love you immensely.

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In 2018, the St. John's University/Medgar Evers College cohort was formed. Unfortunately, I was initially denied admission, however, that decision was appealed and overturned by the, at time, chairperson of the department, Dr. Renee Parmar. As a result of her reassessment of my application, and one-to-one interview, that I am an SJU Johnnie alumnus. Your collective decision remains life-altering. The cohort's first doctoral advising mentor- Dr. Elizabeth Gil, who also served as the first faculty member to teach me in a doctoral program. They both believed in me- thank you!

To the Medgar Evers College cohort- it feels good to be in the company of greatness. We are forever connected and are on course to effectively change lives, affect

policy and restore faith in our educational institutions via our educational research. I have connected with each of you during this shared phenomenon, and I thank you for your partnership and camaraderie. To my colleagues at Medgar Evers College- thank you for your support and love. WE know WE are a hidden hamlet; a gem, and pressure creates diamonds.

During my tenure in the DAIL program, we had many faculty members that traveled to Brooklyn to teach at the MEC campus on Wednesday evenings. That experience will forever stay with me. Extremely long Wednesdays, indeed, nevertheless, the teaching methods and styles of the faculty members were world-class- thank you to all the SJU/DAIL faculty and staff members.

To my amazing dissertation committee, Dr. Birringer-Haig and Dr. Annunziato. You continue to inspire me to further my research, publish articles and pay it forward- a tremendous thank you.

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To my amazing participants, who were unapologetically bold and confident to stand in the space that was built for you. This body of work would not be possible

without these 5 willing participants. I look forward to one-day a full circle moment. Truly grateful-thank you.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Dual Enrollment

Higher education participation and persistence were once mutually exclusive for the elites and upper echelon of society. With the inception of Dual Enrollment, national gaps, and local trends have been studied as it relates to who participates in dual enrollment. Dual enrollment is universally defined as a program in which high school students enroll in college-level courses at a partnering community college, and receive: (a) college credits, (b) high school credits, (c) both a high school diploma and an associate degree, or (d) a combination of the aforementioned. According to the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLS:09), a nationally representative study of more than 23,000 ninth graders in 2009, dual enrollment had increased significantly since the early 2000s (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2015a). However, a deeper dive into the study really denotes who benefited the most from dual enrollment. 38% of all participants identified as white for race/ethnicity, compared to 30% who identified as Hispanic, and just 27% who identified as black were the least represented in dual enrollment participation (The National Center for Education Statistics [NCES, 2015a]. This data underscores the alarming systemic structures that are in place within the American school system at large.

When systemic structures are removed, students begin to expand on opportunities that were otherwise reserved for students perceived with greater social capital, or socio-economic status. Dual enrollment arguably has been attributed to underrepresented students creating a pathway to college access and supporting structures to assist in

college completion (Taylor, 2015). The purpose of this study is to amplify the voices of historically underrepresented students participating in high rigor programs such as dual enrollment at predominately black institutions (PBI) within the New York City public school system and the City University of New York. This study seeks to comprehend data from student narratives to describe perceptions and lived experiences of dual enrollment participation.

Background

New York City has the largest school system in America, educating roughly 1.1 million students annually. Nationally, 27% of Black students identified as participating in dual enrollment, however, locally, how is this national statistic represented? Further unpacking of this statistic may reveal an uncomfortable truth. For this study, I will concentrate all efforts towards a Brooklyn, New York neighborhood, servicing underrepresented Black students participating in dual enrollment at an open access predominately black community college. According to (Taylor, 2015), inequities in educational access and success, community colleges, have historically been the gateway to higher education for underrepresented Black students.

The significance of selecting a PBI is representation matters. Black student identities, by positively affirming by participating stakeholders at all levels to ensure the absence of implicit biased systemic structures as it relates to race/ethnicity and power. According to Morgan, Zakhem & Cooper (2018), 58% of schools, nationally, participate in dual enrollment; with just about 27% of those schools enrolling black student participants. To frame this study, student narratives are inclusive of participants attending a local community college. A current perceived gap in dual enrollment is low Black

student participation from local partnering high schools at a PBI community college. Lukes (2014) posits that dual enrollment programs serve to build bridges between high school and college communities. Black students at a partnering high school taking dual enrollment courses, would be inclusive of the purposive sample. This dual enrollment modality affords students to become traditional college students by taking college level classes "on-campus" at a PBI community college.

Community Colleges

Historically, community colleges have been the gateway for so many underrepresented students to access higher education, particularly Black students. This pathway to educational success must also be underscored at the high school level. Dual enrollment provides such a college transition program for students that have been statistically underrepresented in this area of education specialty. Taylor (2015), draws from an earlier study by Dowd (2013), who asserted that higher education institutions should result in the equitable outcome for varying socioeconomic groups, in addition to accountability systems being properly designed to provide equity inclusivity. Higher education systems must pivot to meet the increasing shift in demographics and complex workforce realities. Students overall that participate in dual enrollment, statistically, have increased levels of college readiness, higher college grade point averages, and higher persistence rates (Morgan, Zakhem & Cooper, 2018). Dual enrollment increasingly supports positive student outcomes, with much room for growth, particularly as it relates to the application of equitable measures. According to (Lukes, 2014), research has indicated that students who participate in DE courses, on average, take less time to earn a college degree and have better college academic performance. Arguably, a DE student

has undergone the role of college student rehearsal, as they have become acclimated with the ongoing policies and practices to be a DE and comprehension of a high rigor curriculum.

Community college bridges the gap for Black students between successful pre-college transition, educational persistence, and retainment. Taylor (2014) posits participating in dual credit may increase underserved students' likelihood of college enrollment and success. Arguably, community colleges have provided the structural foundation to assist students pursuing higher education smoothly transition into a new academic setting. This transition will allow the student to comprehend the complexities of this new system, that the student will now become a part. As it relates to DE, this dynamic partnership, if properly designed and strategically executed, will result in more equitable outcomes for various student groups. According to Taylor (2014) the discourse on equity within community colleges is shifting from equitable access to concepts of outcome equity. Dual enrollment synthesizes both, by which students are given the opportunity to participate in this unique program with an outcome of pre-college transition and college readiness adaptability.

Research suggests that Black and Brown students are less likely to participate in DE due to access, motivation, and/or persistence. An (2013), suggests that many Black students are not participating in dual enrollment, which can be inferred as a student population not receiving educational services that are afforded to them. However, statistical data shows that DE participation, at a predominately black institution, amongst Black students are higher at 68.5% (CUNY, College Now, 2018) on average, compared to the national statistical average of 27% [NCES, 2015a]. In academic year 2018- 2019, a

total of (n=259) students participated in DE at a partnering PBI community college institution, 68.5% of Black students (n=150) participated in dual enrollment at a partnering PBI community college institution. A deeper dive underscored, of those participants, 68.7% were Black females (n=103), and 31.3% were Black males (n=47); respectively. In academic year 2019-2020, a total of (n=461) students participated in DE at a partnering PBI community college institution, 61.2% of Black students (n=237) participated in DE at a PBI partnering community college institution. Further unpacking these statistics revealed 73.4% were Black females (n=174), while 26.6% identified as Black males (n=63). In academic year 2020-2021 a total of (n=598) students participated in DE at a partnering PBI community college institution, 41.9% of Black students (n=204) participated in DE. Further statistical evidence revealed 74.5% were females (n=152), while 25.5% identified as Black male students (n=52). This significant decline in participation, overall, can be attributed to the COVID-19 global pandemic that directly impacted secondary and higher education data. See Table 1 for graphical analysis.

Table 1

Black and White Dual Enrollment (DE) Participation Rates in CUNY-College Now

School Year	Total # DE Participants	Black	White	Black Female	Black Male
2018-2019	259	150	4	103	47
2019-2020	461	237	8	174	63
2020-2021	598	204	24	152	52

Dual enrollment student participation is increasingly on the rise, and arguably Black, compared to White student counterparts are benefiting from participation at PBI community colleges. Grubb, Scott & Good (2016) posits DE participation has shown to benefit students in being college ready and completing college. As evidenced by Table 1, an analysis may reveal the foundational structures that are in place to produce a high participation show rate. The purpose of this narrative study is to amplify the voices of Black students who have participated in dual enrollment at a partnering PBI community college, and what, if any, supporting foundations may be attributed to pillars of successful outcomes, such as, but not limited to college readiness, GPAs, persistence, and retention.

Statement of the Problem

Student participation in dual enrollment is positively trending, National statistics (NCES 2015a) underscore the increased participation from student groups. However, White student participation in DE has increased at higher levels than Black and Brown student counterparts, thus further impacting the socio-economic status gap of inequities. According to (An, 2015), SES gaps are likely to continue and perhaps increase in the future as college costs increase, need base aid decreases and high-SES students remain better prepared academically that their low-SES counterparts. Why is this significant? As evidence from empirical studies, the gap of inequities can extend far beyond the classroom, from self-confidence, self-efficacy, academic transition/departure, cultural wealth and capital, and overall career earnings and happiness. There appears to be little to no research conducted on dual enrollment participation at a PBI community college, and the experiences of Black student participants and stakeholders.

There has been much discussion regarding DE and definitive research regarding program evaluation, administrative perceptions and the appearance of gatekeeper cherry picking for student participation (Lukes, 2014). Nonetheless, there has been little to no voices heard from the actual stakeholders that participate, directly and indirectly, by effecting the students' experience during this academic journey (Hexton, Song, Zeiser, Berger, Turk-Bicakci, Garet, Knudson, Hoshen, 2016). The absence of this research underscores the gap in literature regarding foundational support structures, hence PBI's in community college access. What does a PBI supporting foundation look like? Who is affected? What are the needs of the PBI to support DE students? Students are recruited from the administrative lens, a form of filtration, if you will, to gauge the interest of a specialty program such as dual enrollment. Taylor (2014) posited that this DE experience takes on a four-fold process for students, and subsequently the stakeholder. During this process, students are confronted with the internal context of comprehension of one's attitudes towards specialized academics, which in turn builds upon the student's motivation and positive behaviors of high rigor academic participation. The second layer of this process involves the family context and surrounding factors. Taylor (2014) suggests that family factors influence student experience and ultimately the success of the student. Layer four views the education institution as providing significant support for the student. What are the educational resources, academic preparation, and education orientations that relate to student success (Taylor, 2014)? The final layer is the social, economic, and policy context. This fourth layer is said to encompass the external factors that influence student success. Grub et al. (2017) posit these dual enrollment layered factors positively affect college readiness for community college participants. Further,

DE is a well-established practice to prepare secondary students for post-secondary pedagogy.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study, utilizing narrative research design, is to explore the dual enrollment relationship, and experience of Black students, with supporting PBI structures between partnering schools. Equal Rights High School and the partnering community college, Equal Rights Community College, are both pseudonyms for the purpose of this study. The high school is a part of New York City's Department of Education (DOE). The community college is part of a larger body of institutions within the City University of New York (CUNY). The narrative design approach is the study of the ways humans experience the world; more specifically a general concept more refined into the view that education and educational research is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). What, if any is known about PBI supporting structures that may aid the student in successfully participating in a DE? What specifically does PBI institutions provide to Black students that other institutions may not provide? How important is representation, and why does it matter; should it matter? Rivera, Kotok, & Ashby (2019) suggest DE has the potential to balance equity, excellence and efficiency for students and education leaders. However, who are the participants aside from traditional white students. Aside from racial inequalities, it appears that gender deficits are also prevalent in DE participation, with females participating at a higher rate than male counterparts. The challenge to policy makers is finding innovative ways to recruit and retain DE participants, specifically Black students. This study seeks to investigate what lived experiences Black students

may have regarding DE participation and the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories while understanding the role and relationship of PBI resources.

Significance of the Study

Higher education participation and persistence were once mutually exclusive for the elites and upper echelon of society. With the inception of Dual Enrollment, national gaps, and local trends have been studied as it relates to who participates in dual enrollment. Lukes (2014) posits that DE programs offer numerous benefits to varying stakeholders; from students, teachers and partnering institutions. These DE programs attempt to build transitional bridges between high schools and PBI college communities. Increased communication of access between high school and college levels can truly support varying student cohorts to successfully transition into college with the assistance of the DE program, thus providing resources and programmatic support, academically and socially. According to Rivera, Kotok & Ashby (2019), the benefits of DE continue to underscore the inclusiveness and access for underrepresented students is fundamental to the design and implementation.

Findings and results from this study may be significant in discerning the outcomes of the varying stakeholders, including high school students, high school guidance counselors, program coordinators, college professors, parents/families, and college administrators. Highly motivated high school students must receive access to apply for DE. These students must be supported by their parents and families to undertake high rigor academics such as DE. Parents, particularly, that have not attended college, or may not have finished themselves, may not be aware of this opportunity to participate in DE. Parents must understand that students can earn high school and college credits

simultaneously, and secure achievements that will benefit them in the future, academically and socially. The high school counselors will act as gatekeeping agents to select students that fit the criteria to participate in DE programming. Administrators look for the best possible outcomes by program metrics, such as enrollment, pass/fail rate, attendance show rate et al. This research may also underscore the importance of the role of PBI as it relates to DE participation.

Research Design

The research methods for this qualitative study involve a narrative approach. According to Creswell & Poth (2018) narrative research beginning with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals. The narrative design approach is the study of the ways humans experience the world; more specifically a general concept more refined into the view that education and educational research is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). My research seeks to discern what is the phenomena of the human educational experience of DE participating students at a partnering PBI. To effectively comprehend the diverse complexities of lived experiences, particularly, that of a cohort group, it is best to hear it directly from those that have experienced such processes. To begin the narrative inquiry research design, the researcher must negotiate with the participants ethical responsibilities and established principles from the outset. These experiences may range from educational perceptions to the social experiments that come along with undertaking this form of lived experience. Connelly & Clandinin (1990) suggests that the main claims for the use of narrative in educational research is that humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives.

Arguably, the research design can be interchangeable for most educational research, however, narrative design unduly stresses the individual over the social context (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). DE participation is the social construct of what participants will be engaging in; however, the individual alone will present varying lived experiences, and contextual framing of particular stimuli and affections. Creswell and Poth (2018) posit that narrative research collects stories from individuals, by documenting and grouping the individuals' lived and told experience, which is a collaborative approach between the researcher and participant(s). What are the group's attitudes and behaviors towards this lived experience? How best can this occurrence be documented, studied and disseminated for the comprehension of this experience and for this study? For this research, narrative study, as opined by Creswell and Poth (2018), is best for capturing the detailed stories of life experiences of a single individual or the lives of a small number of individuals.

Research Foci

The central question for this research is how does different groups make meaning of Black students participating in dual enrollment at a partnering predominately black institution?

1. How do Black Students Perceive the Experience of Participating in a Dual Enrollment Program at a Predominately Black Institution in a Central Brooklyn Community?
2. How do Black student participants in a dual enrollment program understand a sense of belonging on a college campus?

a) Sub-question: How, if at all, do students make meaning of the experiences related to their college retention and success?

b) Sub-question: Why do Black students participate and persist in dual enrollment through a predominately Black institution?

Qualitative data will be collected through individual interviews, observation protocols of classroom instruction, program orientations, and archival documentation. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed with Zoom.

Connection to Social Justice and Vincentian Mission

The purpose of this research is to bring awareness and access to historically underrepresented students, as well as communities. The goal is to challenge institutional systematic structures that have served as barriers for gatekeeping Black students from participating in dual enrollment programming. This research addresses the application of educational disproportionality by road mapping a pathway to college access for underrepresented students, specifically, Black students and communities. Successful participation and completion of the DE program is a predictor for postsecondary completion, career readiness and a pathway to upward mobility.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used throughout the study.

City University of New York - The City University of New York is the nation's leading urban public university. The University comprises 25 institutions: 11 senior colleges, seven community colleges, William E. Macaulay Honors College, CUNY Graduate Center, Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism, CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies, CUNY School of Law, CUNY School of Professional Studies and CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy. The University serves more than 225,000 degree-seeking students each year.

College Access - programs help high school students prepare academically for higher education and complete the college entry process.

College Now - is a free college transition/dual enrollment program for New York City Department of Education high school students.

Department of Education - is the largest school system in the United States (and among the largest in the world), with over 1.1 million students taught in more than 1,800 separate schools. The department covers all five boroughs of New York City and has an annual budget of around $38 billion.

Dual Enrollment – Students can take college-level courses in high school through a program called dual enrollment. An educational partnership with the City University of New York (CUNY) campuses to offer reduced or waived tuition for public high school students.

Early College High School - provide accelerated academic programs, including four years of rigorous math and science coursework. Students receive a substantial head start when applying to college by spending their last years of high school on the partner college campus.

High rigor – students are performing at an exceptionally high point of academics.

Predominately Black Institutions - to establish or strengthen programs for low-income or first-generation college undergraduate students.

Smart Scholars - Empowering High School Students with College Credits. This program is targeted to students who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

This chapter underscores the findings from the existing research as it relates to dual enrollment. The research that has been reviewed in this chapter consists of scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles, empirical research articles, state and local educational policies, and a research design book. This section begins with the theoretical framework for this study and continues with the review of the literature.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of Tinto's (1993) Retention Theory connects to my study that this model aligns best with student departure, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. High schools can change their environment by supporting student departure, creating an environment that students can see themselves thriving and exceling, by investing in their academics with high rigor curriculums, thus transitioning eligible students to participate in dual enrollment. As a result, students will feel a sense of belonging to the institution, students "see themselves" as scholars and current and future college students. The connection to my study is this model solidifies the varying ways dual enrollment can retain students in college, but also assimilate students into a culture of higher education, while developing soft skills and socialization that accompanies every student pursuing a highly rigorous dual curriculum. Tinto (1993) asserts "no support is more important to student retention than academic support. This is especially true during the critical first year of college when student retention is still so much in question and still malleable to institutional intervention" (p. 61). Moreover, dual enrollment connects committed students to the institution in varying ways. When students are connected, they

feel a sense of belonging and the willingness to "come out of their shell", to allow themselves to become vulnerable. Tinto (1993) Retention theory underscores the tenants of effective retention: (a) Institutional Commitment to Students; (b) Educational Commitment; (c) Social and Intellectual Community.

Students participating in DE, academic counseling and advising (Tinto, 1993) will create a dynamic partnership between the learner and the institution. Academic advisors are pivotal at this stage, as guidance becomes the catalyst for success. Academic advisors will guide and interpret curriculum mapping to ensure that students are taking the appropriate academic path to successfully complete the course(s) and ultimately the program and/or degree attainment. Tinto (1993) posits effective student retention programs commit to the students that they serve. These very institutions put the student welfare ahead of other institutional goals. According to the research the institution's goals should always have a direct or indirect relationship to student success and achievement.

For this study, the PBI at the community college level should make institutional resources readily available so that the student feels a sense of belonging to this newly minted culture. Academic advisors, academic coaches, but also peer-to-peer students, upper-classmen, that may have started the experience of dual enrollment, one year prior. These are a few things the institution can assist with to help the students transition into this new academic and social culture so that students feel supported and accepted.

Drawing from earlier research from Tovar & Simon, (2010), Strayhorn's (2012) Sense of Belonging Theory suggests that students perform better with their peers, in the classroom, or on campus at a college. Strayhorn (2012) posits sense of belonging

generally refers to “an individual’s sense of identification or positioning in relation to a group or to the college community, which may yield an affective response” (p. 200). Dual enrollment affords students the ability to navigate their educational aspirations as such. According to the research to fully support students to develop and persist, foundational structures should be prioritized for students to feel a sense of being accepted, and comfortable enough to successfully complete coursework in this newly transplanted environment.

The application of Tinto’s (1993) Retention Theory, in addition to Strayhorn’s (2012) Sense of Belonging Theory reaffirms the students’ academic identity, position and role of the student. Students want to learn, do well and feel accepted amongst their peers, and within academic settings. This sense of role identity of the student affects degree or academic adjustments, achievement, aspirations, or even whether a student stays in school (Tinto, 1993; Strayhorn, 2012). Research shows that academic institutions should provide tangible resources (i.e., academic advising, counseling, financial literacy, and faculty mentorship, et al.) to ensure that student needs are prioritized. Strayhorn (2012) posits sense of belonging is relational, and thus there’s a reciprocal quality to relationships that provide a sense of belonging (p. 4). Every member of the group, and the group itself, benefits from the contributions of each of its members. This arguably is a cohort model, thus DE participants also perform under the guise of a cohort model.

These theories will be synthesized and applied to this paradigm of dual enrollment. Marginalized students of color in central Brooklyn, New York, are increasingly taking advantage of a program that accelerates college access, that may have been historically reserved for white students. As a result, there should be a system in

place to ensure support and assistance is provided for students who remain motivated and committed to a high rigor curriculum, as reviewed by the literature. In part, a reasonable outcome of dual enrollment is to retain students annually and propel their trajectory as it relates to coursework completion. Institutions are compelled to respond to this increase in demand for high rigor curriculums, by ensuring that resources are effectively put into place to ensure a successful outcome. Tinto's (1993) Retention Theory and Strahorn's (2012) Sense of Belonging Theory are synthesized theories which provide foundational beginnings for this literature review and research.

Literature Review

This chapter presents findings from existing research on themes related to the research topic. The research reviewed in this chapter consists of scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles, empirical research articles, state and local educational policies, and a research design book. Findings from the literature are organized into the following themes: (a) access to dual enrollment, including who, demographically, is participating in program initiatives; (b) pre-college transition/college readiness, what does dual enrollment look like at a predominately black institution, discerning academic community engagement and involvement for collegiate success; (c) postsecondary achievement of participants; (d) disproportionality. The chapter concludes with the gaps in the existing literature and how this study will address those gaps.

In 2011, approximately 68% of high school students enrolled in college immediately following graduation (NCES, 2013a), 59% of them attained a bachelor's degree within six years of entry at a four-year institution (NCES, 2013a). In 2012, almost 88% of individuals 25 years and over had received a high school degree (NCES, 2013b).

According to The Pell Institute (2019) historical trend report "there was a 30-percentage point gap in college enrollment between dependent 18-to-24-year-olds in the highest and lowest income quartiles in 2017, compared with a 43 percentage-point gap in 1990 and a 46-percentage point gap in 1970" (p. 39). This National report underscores the unequal application of educational equity and affirms the growing achievement gap within our communities and society as a whole.

Dual enrollment programs are becoming increasingly popular in providing measurable outcomes of success for students, by bridging the educational gap of achievement (Luke, 2014), thus providing increased access to higher education (Pretlow & Washington, 2013; Rivera, Kotok & Ashby, 2019). Successful outcomes may consist of a host of metrics which includes GPA, retention, early college access and improved completion (Mechur & Hughes, 2008; Allen & Dadgar, 2012). To date, there are fewer Black student participants than white student participants. Most dual enrollment programs that are offered are in partnership with the local community college, that provides open access to all students that want to apply. However, is the community college infrastructure supportive in undertaking dual enrollment at a predominately black institution? What does that infrastructure encompass, and who are the stakeholders or policy makers that are the decision-makers? What are the state and local polices governing DE and how do you make meaning of DE?

This review synthesizes the existing research as it relates to dual enrollment and the impact on student participation from programmatic effect and outcomes. Unfortunately, underrepresented student demographic descriptions, of marginalized students, are seen as not widely engaging in an accelerated program, such as dual

enrollment, that has been proven to increase a student's overall academics in high school and post-secondary outcomes. In general, students who perform at or above an established threshold in college preparatory coursework are more likely to be prepared for their college and career pursuits (Morgan, Zakhem & Cooper, 2018). This problem, if properly mitigated, can assist students from marginalized backgrounds transition into college, with the proper readiness that national statistics have underscored as statistically significant. Morgan et al., (2018) posits "high school coursework that includes increased academic intensity and quality has been found to be positively related to postsecondary outcomes for students" (p. 3). Further, this review will expound on the relevance of dual enrollment as it relates to marginalized communities of color, seeking to accelerate student's access to college and successful post-secondary outcomes. Dual enrollment is a positive indicator that assists students to seamlessly transition to college, hence it should be viewed as such through a refined educational lens.

I conducted the literature review on dual enrollment with a special care and a focus on the following sub-headings driven by the research and data points. The review of the literature explores themes associated with dual enrollment; (a) access to dual enrollment, including who, demographically, is participating in program initiatives; (b) pre-college transition/college readiness, what does dual enrollment look like at a predominately black institution, discerning academic community engagement and involvement for collegiate success; (c) postsecondary achievement of participants; (d) disproportionality.

Access to Dual Enrollment

In New York City, DE at the City University of New York (CUNY) and the Department of Education (DOE) is a partnership between the local community college and a partnering high school to afford high rigor students the ability to participate in the program by taking college level coursework, if they meet the eligibility criteria (Kleiman, 2001). One of the first DE programs at CUNY was housed at Kingsborough Community College (KCC), known as College Now (CN) in the early 1980s. Within five years of its inception, the KCC program would be the premiere DE program in New York City. At the time, it was the largest CUNY/public school partnership ever, which enrolled approximately 7,000 high school students from 21 area schools in college courses annually (Kleiman, 2001).

The conceptual framework for DE has not changed much, but perhaps altered to best suit the increasing demand of the program, and eligible participants. Kleiman (2001), posits the structure of the KCC program is relatively simple—College Now recruiters go into local high schools and offer to assess every junior to determine whether they are in fact on track to enter college by the end of the following year. Moreover, post assessment, the students in good academic standing were allowed to take college credit courses during their senior year. Those students that failed to meet the eligibility criteria were then recommended for a series of remedial courses to bring them up to speed in good academic standing.

Evidence based data and reports suggest that CUNY's College Now program became the focal point for school partnerships under the direction of CUNY leadership. Both CUNY Chair and Chancellors were sold on the outcomes of the program.

According to Kleiman (2001), one early study found the comparison of CN graduates with a group of CUNY freshman who did not participate in the program, and the CN participants earned over 40 percent more college credits, graduated college on time, at twice the rate, and far less likely to need any form of remedial coursework. By 1986, unfortunately only two CUNY campuses were participants; Kingsborough and LaGuardia Community College; respectively.

In 2009, then NYS Governor Paterson and the NYS Board of Regents announced grant funding for another form of DE programs, Early College High School (ECHS). According to O'Hare (2009), this DE program will serve in conjunction with other DE programs to increase high school graduation and college completion rates among those that are historically marginalized and left in the gap, thus reducing student tuition costs because of the reduced time needed to complete a college degree. A deeper dive reveals that black students who began ninth grade in 2004 graduated at a rate of 28 points lower (54%) that white students (82%). Similarly, the gap between Hispanic (52%) and white students for the 2004 cohort was 30 points (O'Hare, 2009). In NYS, DE programs are beginning to gain increasing popularity, and further examination of the DE program(s) affords students and their families the chance to select the most appropriate program that will best suit their needs.

In the state of New York in 2009, State and local leaders earmarked nearly $12 million over a four-year period for DE participating programs (O'Hare, 2009). Through individual "Request for Proposals" (RFP), a typical grant award will most likely range from $300K to $500K, depending on the number of successful applicants. Arguably, this is significant funding for programs dedicated to the advancement of high rigor high

school students at partnering community colleges. According to Kleiman (2001), these programs become increasingly more significant, over time, as the program offers the opportunity for students to escape low expectations. These programs change the question from “Are you going to college? —to Which college are you going to?” Students’ confidence is reaffirmed, and also the notion that higher education is not only an option, but a reality.

In New York State, these early models are exemplars of the origins of dual enrollment and the maturity, growth, and evolution of the program to being mirrored nationwide, on a local scale in similar demographic and geographical makeups. New York state, like many other states, seeks to comprehend the complex nature of dual enrollment policies from a local and state level standpoint. However, there is no “one size fits all” model, but rather what works best for all stakeholders as it relates to dual enrollment.

Research by Giani, Alexander and Reyes (2014) investigated the impacts of dual credit courses on postsecondary access, first-to-second year persistence, and eventual college attainment. The researchers utilized a statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS) in Texas. The researchers sample size consisted of 382,236 Texas ninth grade high school students that were enrolled in 2000-2001, however the researchers restricted the sample to only students who attended the same district during high school. As a result, 38,002 students were placed in the control group, using propensity matching score analysis. In this quasi-experimental study, the researchers use logistic regression to examine the relationship between dual credit programs and postsecondary outcomes.

The researchers have concluded that dual credit may influence postsecondary outcomes as it relates to sociocultural impact of taking college courses in high school, including how to navigate postsecondary institutions, becoming familiar with the academic demands of college courses, and interacting with students that are currently enrolled in postsecondary. The researchers indicated the additional effect is the cumulative impact of completing college level courses. The results of the analysis suggest that the benefits students receive from each dual-credit course are greater, on average than advanced placement courses.

This study by Giani et al., (2014) reaffirms that dual enrollment programs can assist with student motivation and increase postsecondary positive outcomes. This study connects to my dissertation as it relates to students navigating postsecondary opportunities in and outside the classroom. Student influential factors are key at this pivotal point for student transition to college life. As the research has indicated, transition periods are highly tracked by data points. DE has supported students through the transition period by preparing students to undertake high rigor curriculum, develop socially and holistically, and become college ready when students fully transition to a full-time college campus. Arguably, students are highly influenced by peer-to-peer interactions, academically and socially. Students are encouraged and highly motivated when participating in dual enrollment from a sociocultural and pedagogical lens.

Giani et al., (2014) suggests that DE is an attribute that aids in motivation which leads to positive outcomes. The research shows that highly motivated students that participate in DE programming, on average, has positive outcomes ranging from academic metrics such as increased GPAs, early college access, increased social capital,

college readiness leading to career exploration. This motivational instrument may also be a catalyst for Black students in central Brooklyn, New York, in becoming successful at a partnering PBI community college. The takeaway is that DE can be implemented in and around the Black academic community to assist students persist in accessing higher education and degree attainment.

Ensuring all groups of students have access to resources that can be applied to every student, notwithstanding demographics, or geographical locations, DE, according to the research can be the driving force behind such initiatives. Cherney, Douglas, Fischer & Olwell (2020) posits that states have drawn on the models of Texas and North Carolina- thus attempting to correct the selection bias of cherry-picking dual enrollment participants, by building equity in the early college system from the outset. In the state of Massachusetts model, there is a coalition of institutional participants ranging from: local foundations, the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Jobs for the Future have compelled its participating partners to develop a model of equity and access. It was determined that colleges or schools seeking to participate in early college, or labeled as an early college designee must demonstrate a willingness and commitment to student access to early college programming (Cherney, Douglas, Fischer & Olwell , 2020).

The outcome resulted in programs in Massachusetts have been developed explicitly to serve low socio-economic status families, with a particular focus on students of color and students that are from immigrant backgrounds. These programs will also show a commitment to addressing the needs of students with learning challenges and English language learners (Massachusetts Early College Initiative, 2019). This model

solidifies that in the state of Massachusetts access to dual enrollment has reached state and local policy levels to ensure access inclusivity to all students that want to participate in high rigor curriculums, regardless of demographic and geographical identities.

Further expounding on the Massachusetts state and local policies, access to dual enrollment is becoming increasingly supportive through policy intervention. Cherney et al., (2020) further opines that the Massachusetts Departments of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Education collaborated to create principles for officially designated early colleges in the Commonwealth. The goal in doing so was to guide the many efforts by the state's public and private institutions to assist in creating early college opportunities for learners. Such principles are: (a) Equitable Access: targeting underrepresented students in higher education; (b) Academic Pathways that are well integrated and aligned with college and career; (c) Robust Student Support in both academics and advising; (d) Connections to Career through workplace experiential learning experiences; and (e) High-Quality and Deep partnerships between high schools and colleges (Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, 2020, p. 21). This research suggests that state and local governments have begun to target and identify areas where academic intervention may be the most prevalent, and necessary.

The authors, (Cherney et al., 2020), have also identified the Michigan model as an effective intervention for early college academics. The Early College High School (ECHS) initiative, created by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2002, is designed to facilitate postsecondary access and completion by combining high school with the first two years of college (Berger et al., 2014). In this case, the early college practitioners can apply for recognition through the state Department of Education and are held to the

design standards of the National Middle College Consortium. A deeper dive of the design underscores the sustained collaboration with college partners, aligned academic programs from the ninth grade, all the way through 60 credits, the appropriate level of student support- including the needs of the students in addition to the demands of the institution, and continuous organizational improvement (National Middle College Consortium, 2020).

Early college models vary by state, and the conceptual framework for each state varies. Nevertheless, the program model remains effectively the same whereas students are targeted and recruited into an early college model. Selection and recruitment, depending on the state model, can begin as early as students enter their freshman year in high school all the way through the students' senior year. The amount of college credits taken and received also had a variance depending on the state model. Upon high school graduation, and the model applied, students have the opportunity to graduate with up to 30 college credits, and in some cases, an associate degree, in conjunction with completing their high school requirements. For the purposes of this study, the New York model will be an exemplar. **See Figure 1.**

Figure 1

Early College Models- Dual Enrollment

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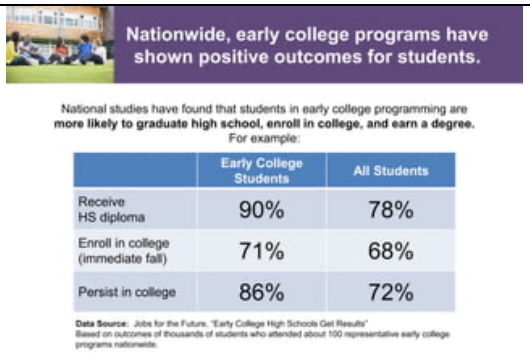
<tr><td>Nationwide</td><td> 
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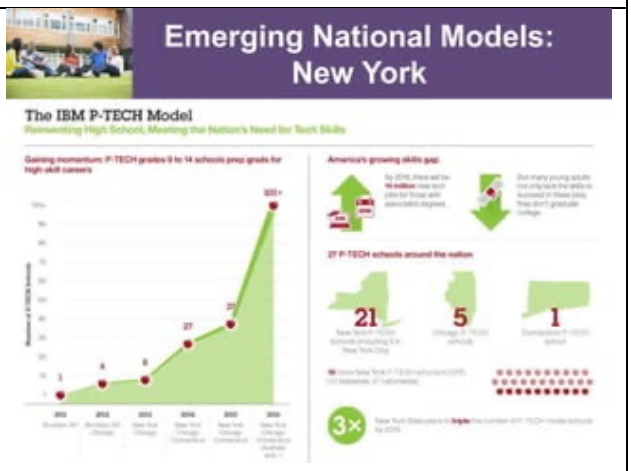
<tr><td>New York</td><td> 
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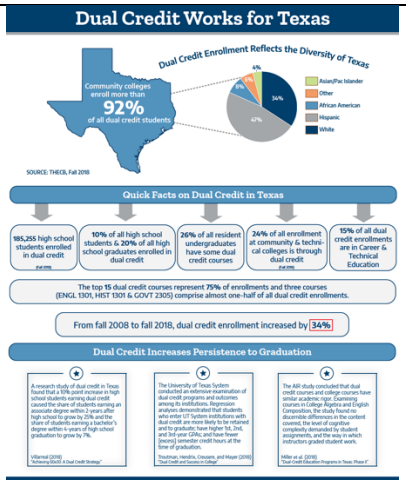
<tr><td>Texas</td><td> 
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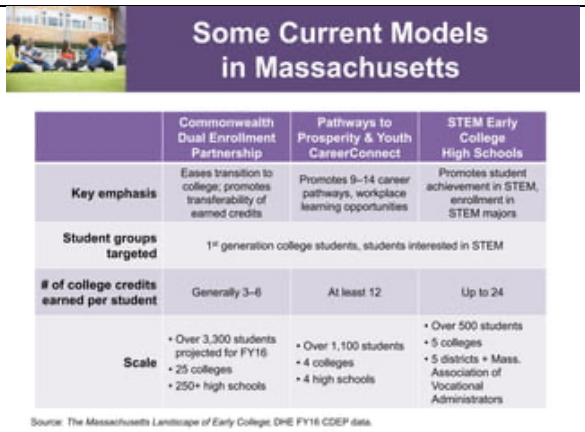
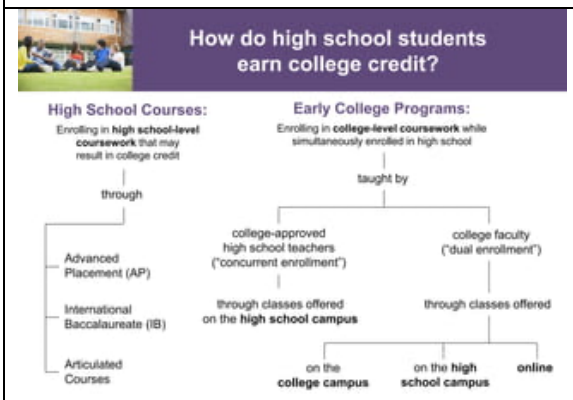
Massachusetts





Source: (The Massachusetts Landscape of Early College, DHE FY16 CDEP Data; Jobs for the Future, "Early College High Schools Get Results")

Evidence based research suggests that states have begun to effectively support early college/dual enrollment policies. Some states have crafted DE policies around equity and access, thus encouraging historically underrepresented students to participate in DE, while other states follow some traditional excellence model- reserving spots only for (a) students who maintained high GPAs; (b) pass a college readiness exam, or (c) receive recommendation from their teachers (Rivera, Kotok & Ashby, 2019). According to the Education Commission of the States (2016) states typically require a high GPA of 3.0, however, other states, such as Louisiana, utilize a 2.0 requirement. It may be inferred that the dissemination of education in this mode, solidifies the perception of intervention to ensure equity and access to all students and institutions that have decided to become willing partners towards successful educational outcomes. In the state of Texas, early college models have provided evidenced based data which suggests these working models deeply impact the academic trajectory of marginalized students seeking to access higher education in non-traditional modes. Dual enrollment further underscores the need for early college access so that students can make informed decisions as it relates to school choice. This study, by Duncheon (2020) assessed the recruitment and selection process at five different ECHS at a border region in Texas. The researcher explored how recruitment and selection process impacts access to early college programs at a participating local community college. Moreover, Duncheon (2020) demonstrated which students will be targeted, how they will be targeted and the outcome of such student choice.

The purpose of this study was to examine the recruitment and selection practices at five ECHS in a border region of Texas. The findings were quite extensive, although the

researcher stopped short of underscoring the studies transferability. There are significant benefits found in the literature for students who can take advantage of opportunities such as this. Research from Duncheon (2020) posited the recruitment and selection practices revealed that the ECHS target population was constructed in two main ways. The first was a broad construction of the target population, based upon the general socio-demographic and academic categories outlined in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Blueprint. The second social construction of the target population was narrower, based on participants' beliefs about which students were likely to perform well in ECHS setting.

Additional findings from the literature review underscored that dual enrollment can be used as a predictor for college access. Duncheon (2020) asserts that principals use program metrics of dual enrollment to get low-income, at-risk kids to attend so they will go to college. This model can afford the student the opportunity to experience what taking a college class is like, what socializing with peers on a college campus feels like, to name a few. Further findings from Duncheon (2020) suggest that dual enrollment models are ideal for kids who traditionally might not have an opportunity to go to college. For example, culturally, some kids may need to work, after-school in the family business, or providing sibling child-care, or perhaps not even considering college altogether, because of college costs. Having access to DE may begin to address some of these student barriers to access.

Further unpacking the research, Duncheon (2020) posits that targeting first generation and economically disadvantaged students is one of the hallmarks of dual enrollment. First generation students can be given an academic and financial head start. According to the literature, dual enrollment affords students the opportunity to graduate

with a high school diploma and college-level credits, and in some cases, perhaps an associate degree from the partnering community college. The literature also underscores students taking more college-level courses resulting in the family dollar contributions potentially lessened. Arguably, this is very significant, particularly if the household has multiple children in one household that can access DE, thus effectively reducing the cost to the family in financially supporting their students/children. This process can uplift first generation degree seeking students, economically disadvantaged students, and marginalized communities as a whole, by targeting the desired population for access to DE.

Additional findings from the research suggest that teachers believe students must be highly motivated and mature to complete up to two years of college coursework on top of high school requirements (Duncheon, 2020). The student needs to be ready and certainly willing to undertake the idea of early college. Teachers further assert that there should be a particular level of initiative and drive to succeed at the partnering community college also expects a certain level of student that is committed to taking college level classes alone on the college campus. It can be inferred that teachers have seen it all. Teachers have posited, according to Duncheon (2020), that participating DE students take college classes resulting in positive academic metrics, such as, increased GPA's, transitional college access/college readiness, which the literature shows increase post-secondary success and degree attainment.

Additional findings from the research assert Duncheon (2020) solidifies student voices that have participated in dual enrollment. Students have articulated that they feel more comfortable participating from the middle ground. This means, they are not

considered gifted students, but also students who know they are going to college, in most cases. Additionally, students have expressed increased social capital, because of taking college-level courses at the college campus and working with college level faculty over a period of time, while participating in DE programming. Lastly, students have gained this shared experience with a cohort of peers. While participating in DE, students often take the same college-level courses, and as a result may commute to the college campus together, form study groups, or perhaps even congregate in similar social circles as a result of being in a cohort model discerning for a sense of belonging.

According to the Duncheon (2020) program stakeholder participants' perception of the target population as constructed in the policy design: students traditionally excluded from higher education socio-demographically and academically. Here is another example that DE can provide access to higher education for marginalized students across varying demographics. For purposes of this study, the demographic that will be examined are marginalized students in a central Brooklyn, New York Community.

Duncheon (2020) posits the broader construction of the target population was referenced most often in relation to recruitment and marketing. Whereas the narrower construction of the target population came to the fore when applicants were actually admitted. The school choice policy context, ECHS admission practices intersected with self-selection patterns to privilege higher achieving students from enrollment. Simply put, for recruitment and marketing purposes, program admins should cast a wide net to ensure the absence of disproportionality when recruiting for DE programming, as stated by the literature. Strategic marketing to a specific group of students may also assist in recruiting students from varying backgrounds, this may also ensure inclusion and equity are being

applied to the marketing and recruitment process, which is key to student participation. These similar hallmark attributes may also apply to teacher recruitment of DE instructors. The inclusion of a diverse body of instructors, at the community college level, can also reaffirm the identity and role of the student that is seeking DE access at the partnering community college. For purposes of this study, the partnering institution is the PBI community college located in central Brooklyn, New York.

School choice because of DE may impact retention efforts. If the student has a positive experience with DE and wants to continue pursuing their higher education degree, the student can enroll into the institution of choice and complete the requirements for degree completion. The student will have less time towards degree completion as a result of taking early college in high school. This also impacts the financial responsibility of the student, resulting in less out-of-pocket expenses for college expenditures. Here is an example of DE positively affecting high school graduation rates, post-secondary access and enrollment, and on-time degree completion. Conversely, if the student did not have a positive experience, school choice, access and enrollment may also be significantly impacted. The findings from this study will also contribute to the growing literature of DE.

The study assessed the recruitment and selection process at five different ECHS at a border region in Texas. Duncheon (2020) explored how recruitment and selection process impacts access to early college programs at a participating local community college. Which students will be targeted, how they will be targeted and the outcome of student choice. Access to DE programming, depending on the state, location and articulation agreement will look different in varying models. Access to early college

depends solely on demographic and geographic location. While states and policy makers look to improve access by direct marketing and recruitment, to ensure greater choice for all students, it remains a reality that recruitment and selection are the very gatekeepers that may prevent a scale up model that has positively affected marginalized and underrepresented students, according to the literature.

Once the student has gained key access to DE programming, they will be highly supported so that the student is retained and can further persist. According to the research, DE programming assist students to persist in college, academically and holistically. High school to college transition may be challenging, however, research shows that DE can successfully support such a transition.

Pre-College Transition/College Readiness

Seamless access to dual enrollment exemplifies the role of a useful tool in developing and cultivating students to succeed in their academics, but also be socially accepted in a higher education setting. The students, in this case, marginalized students can self-actualize by experience with their fellow students. This sense of shared responsibility creates a dynamic opportunity to bond and support one-another during this transitional period. DE assists to transition the student from the traditional high school student to a with enhanced responsibilities, and new social norms. To thrive in college, you will be "ready", not just academically, but holistically, and arguably, socially. Additional studies suggest that researchers demonstrate that academically prepared students who enter college are more likely to persist and attain their degree than less-prepared students. This study by Howley, Howley, Howley & Duncan (2013) conducted a qualitative study and interviewed 20 consortium professionals, 6 of which were from

the higher ed level. Howley et al., (2013) examines the relationship of early college attendance, structured through dual enrollment or early entry to college, as a possible strategy for supporting the academic engagement and higher levels of academic performance of a wider range of students (p. 78).

These studies interchange keywords, however, the paradigm of dual enrollment remains prevalent and used as an indicator for early college enrollment. This study, additionally, seeks to add to the small literature on the feasibility of expanding early college and dual enrollment programs to a relatively broad range of students (Howley, Howley, Howley & Duncan, 2013). As such, I want to underscore that the authors are calling attention to the expansion of the program to more students. This accelerated educational opportunity, as highlighted by earlier statistics, was reserved for elite classes only.

Academic engagement of students are formidable factors to ensure that highly motivated students can undertake such curriculum mapping. Pre-college students are often searching to "fit-in" with their peers, and be accepted by peers, community, and family. Support structures can have a profound impact on relationships as students begin to navigate these circles, often over-lapping with one another. The research shows that institutions will meet ever-changing demands with planning and action.

Studies have suggested that DE has become increasingly popular in transitioning pre-college students into full-time college students, over-time. Some studies identify specific strategies that may better align with state and local policy, or institutional practices. It is most notable that older studies have larger sample sizes, as the phenomenon of dual enrollment was very new, and exciting to study. The research

interest remains pertinent; however, the attributes and variables have steadily evolved over time. Using data from a 2008 Wasbash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (WNSLAE: 08) An (2015) employed a sample size of 3,779 respondents to discern whether academic motivation and engagement account for the relationship between dual enrollment and academic performance. The results align with similar studies synthesized for this review, in which there was a positive direct effect of dual enrollment on first-year GPA. This suggests that dual enrollment can have a positive impact on student persistence during their first year of college, thus bolstering retention. We can also infer those positive direct effects on academic persistence for first year student GPAs, can dispel the notion surrounding remediation, as other studies have suggested. An (2015), posits "traditionally, researchers and educators infer the mechanisms through which dual enrollment influences academic performance instead of modeling these mechanisms" (p. 120). There is a working model, that perhaps can be widely applied to marginalized students for similar results and statistical significance.

Critics may argue that dual enrollment does not go far enough, this is short of widespread, and the answer is yes. However, these findings align with advocates' contention that a key function of dual enrollment is to raise a student's academic motivation (An, 2015). However, studies have suggested that dual enrollment provides students the opportunity to begin their college careers early and complete their degrees, by retaining until completion, with the adequate support and assistance as suggested by Tinto's (1993) retention theory and Strayhorn's (2012) sense of belonging theory.

Postsecondary Achievement

Researchers and scholars alike look to discern strategies whereas students, and institutions can both be successful and impactful. Through research and continuous measurement and improvement, discernable instruments, arguably will be used to determine the level of success for stakeholders. Early college/dual enrollment programs are becoming increasingly strategic instruments, and if properly utilized, and monitored, this targeted application of academics will prove successful if strategically applied. Evidence based research and empirical studies will underscore that dual enrollment greatly impacts postsecondary achievement. Dual enrollment provides an accelerated path towards associate degree attainment, research suggests that these initiatives have an explicit equity agenda (Barnett et al., 2013).

Early college programs, specifically DE, are committed to serving students that are underrepresented in higher education, which may also include attributes inclusive of low-income students, students of color, English language learners, first generation students, and/or students that are struggling academically (Berger et al., 2009, p. 4; Webb & Gervin, 2014). The theory behind early college programs is to admit high school students who may struggle to access and/or persist in higher education and give them a jumpstart with college coursework (Duncheon, 2020).

In the study by Cherney, Douglas, Fischer & Olwell (2020) was to determine if early college programs, particularly those with a focus on equity and student support, can provide high school students with exemplary preparation for college, as well as college credits that can be used to reduce time to degree and college costs. The study also aimed to underscore the key metrics: (a) early college programs; and (b) eventual college

enrollment. A specific area of interest was placed on the importance of leadership and policy support for these programs, in addition to designing the program to address equity issues from early on (Cherney, Douglas, Fischer & Olwell, 2020).

This study presents perspectives from a range of institutions (high school, two-year institutions, four-year institutions, and philanthropic investors) that are rethinking these early college models to maximize community impact and affordability to students and families (American Institute for Research, 2009). Early college programs arguably go a step further to underscore the dynamic model of dual enrollment, specifically school partnerships. Early college strategies assist in educational access and educational achievement at the surrounding community level. These early college programs: (a) typically take courses on the college campus; (b) are part of a state designation process and are committed to K-16 alignment; (c) provide comprehensive wrap-around services to students, and (d) possess a purposeful process for developing college readiness in academics and social emotional learning (Cherney, Douglas, Fischer & Olwell, 2020). Successful program outcomes are measured by increased retention, student success and a cohort culture of inclusive positive attitudes and inclusivity.

The evidence of early college success in Texas and North Carolina—these two states have the highest student participation population in early college programs, has arguably been the most promising and transformative in the area of high school reform and higher education transformation (Hall 2013; Nodine, 2011). The programs in Nodine's (2011) study drew from a diverse set of students in Texas, 66% Hispanic, 63% economically disadvantaged, and 74% first generation college students. Positive evidence from this study suggests improved graduation rates, college enrollment and successful

college level coursework completion, were all positive results of students taking more college-level classes. According to the study, more than a third of the early college students had already received enough college credits to receive an Associate degree while still in high school (Nodine, 2011).

Moreover, the evidence from the quantitative study of dual enrollment, or early college access in the Texas study had a positive effect. Dual credit students are more likely to: (a) be retained and to graduate from the University of Texas system institution; (b) have higher 1st, 2nd, and 3rd -year GPAs; (c) have fewer semester hours at the time of graduation. In this study, students participating in high rigor curriculums like dual enrollment highlight the positive impact of students arriving on campus having successfully completed college level coursework (Troutman, et al., 2018, p. 4).

As evidenced by two state exemplars, dual enrollment is increasingly growing and the perception of student outcomes, based upon evidence, benefits a cadre of stakeholders. It appears that over the past decade, these early college/dual enrollment strategies have proven to be useful in elevating low-income and underrepresented students to gain access to higher education, thus becoming more successful students, once they are truly full-time college students (An, 2013; Troutman, 2018). There were two important studies that demonstrate the power of such an early college model, as underscored by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC).

Researchers in North Carolina recruited students into the early college model using random assignments. This simply meant that students were randomly selected for the program solely based upon chance, underscoring that early college outcomes are not just due to selection effects. The research found that the college enrollment rates of

students in racial/ethnic minorities enrolled in these programs at an 8% higher rate than their comparison peers. The research also underscored that the rate of college enrollment for economically-disadvantaged students in such programs was 11% higher than their non-program peers (Edminds et al., 2017). The second study, also endorsed by WWC, drew on data from five states to highlight that 63% of students that were randomly assigned to early college enrolled in post-secondary education, juxtaposed to traditional peers who enrolled only 23% of the time (Song and Zeiser, 2019).

The authors, (Cherney et al., 2020) of the study also denoted the financial impact that dual enrollment has on the student, student families/support structures and the institution. The financial analyses show that early college programs are a solid financial investment, generating a return of 15:1 on dollars spent (AIR, 2019). Indeed, financial implications play a pivotal role in college access, but also college completion. These highly motivated learners can ensure that pitfalls and roadblocks such as financial burdens, or bumps be alleviated at all levels, removing any threat to validity of a successful strategic program as dual enrollment. Evidenced based research and empirical data suggests dual enrollment not only reduces the financial burden to students and their families, but also positively impacts student's academic metrics, at many measurable levels.

The research indicates that dual enrollment predicts post-secondary success. This is an essential tool used by families and communities seamlessly. The research suggests that DE can assist in attaining post-secondary credentials, making the student marketable for career readiness. In the study by Morgan, Zakhem & Cooper (2018) research has demonstrated that marginalized students have benefited from participation in dual

enrollment. Students generally have increased levels of college readiness, higher college grade point averages, and higher persistence rates after dual enrollment (p. 4). In this study, 1464 students who graduated from high school between 2009 and 2014 were sampled. This was a positive outcome for students who decided they want to pursue a dually enrolled curriculum. A United States General Accounting Office study found that students with rigorous high school curriculum were more likely to complete college (Morgan, Zakhem & Cooper, 2018). This study supports the notion that dual enrollment leads to positive outcomes as it relates to college enrollment. Students are attaining better grades, arguably improved study habits, and the ability to prioritize may be attributed to undertaking a high rigor curriculum. In this study, Morgan et al., (2018) suggests their findings are significant, as such a positive relationship between college preparatory coursework and postsecondary outcomes after controlling for relevant student characteristics known to be associated with postsecondary outcomes. These findings suggest that dual enrollment participation matters.

The research suggests that DE can positively impact marginalized students on accessing higher education, persisting to increased GPA's and degree attainment. This study aligns with the demographics of many schools that are in central Brooklyn, NY are made of. Predominately black students, in marginalized schools struggling to gain access to higher education. DE provides a proven strategy, according to the research that will positively affect Black students' academic persistence, resulting in increased GPAs, increased levels of college preparation and readiness.

Dual enrollment participation is influenced by several factors, including people (e.g. parents, teachers, peers), academic achievement, perceptions of financial aid and

college costs, and the students' information-gathering activities. States have concluded that dual enrollment does contribute overall to postsecondary achievements, and empirical studies have exemplified to what measurable extend dual enrollment has proven effective.

Disproportionality

The research continues to underscore via empirical evidence, peer-reviewed journals, and studies to solidify that dual enrollment participation, overall, benefits highly motivated students by partnering with institutions (PBI) for advancement, persistence, and retention. In this quantitative study by Rivera, Kotok, and Ashby (2019), the authors examined dual enrollment participation in the United States in the current policy context to understand the distribution of dual enrollment access. The authors utilized data from the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLS:09). The authors have underscored that of the HSLS:09, which consists of data from more than 24,000 9th graders from 944 high schools.

Moreover, the authors have employed logistic regression as the testing instrument to measure the probability of a student enrolling in dual enrollment during high school. The major findings resulted in participants differing in demographics such as gender, race, and SES as well as achievement levels. Overwhelmingly white, higher SES students participated at a higher percentage rate than any other demographic group. On average, black students were 37% less likely and Hispanics were 25% less likely to take dual enrollment courses than whites. In addition, dual enrollment participants scored a half point higher in GPA, compared to non-participants.

This study by Rivera, Kotok, and Ashby (2019) suggests that dual enrollment participation is not evenly distributed as it relates to access. The impact of access creates a disparity among varying groups. Black students have been historically underrepresented in DE access. The literature demonstrates underrepresented students, i.e., Black and Brown students are highly absent from dual enrollment access and distribution. School partnerships are significant relationships that if properly fostered and cultivated can provide benefits for many stakeholders, particularly marginalized students. For the purposes of this study, school partnerships are PBIs at the community college level. Highly motivated students, and their families, if given the opportunity may excel at these advanced educational opportunities, thus resulting in evenly distributed access and participation.

A tremendous takeaway from this study is that DE participants significantly vary by demographic. Why is this alarming? This unfortunate statistic may further widen the achievement gap. If white, higher SES students are overwhelmingly represented in DE participation, and the benefits are proven to jumpstart a student's college experience, perhaps more needs to be done to ensure that all demographics are evenly represented, particularly marginalized students. To some researchers, this form of capital will be identified and properly addressed to ensure equity and equitable distribution of academic resources. For DE there is a community of students (cohort) that will experience a phenomenon as a group within a predominately Black institution (college) with varying experiences and effects. Drawing on the individual experiences of each other, the social capital, although a shared experience, becomes personal to the participants. Participants should consider what resources are best for one's success, as suggested by the literature.

On the other hand, the institution should also recognize and secure social capital, by way of resources and seamless structural transitions. What, if any, are the resources that the institution will make readily available for the successful outcomes of the participants. How are these students supported, and how can the institution discern measurable outcomes, if students have not readily identified what works best for them?

Predominately Black Institutions (PBI) have built a formidable infrastructure to support and cultivate these young learners at this transitional point. Students can connect with students that look like them, administrators that look like them, and perhaps even faculty/teachers that look like them. According to Yosso (2005), Navigational capital refers to skills of maneuvering through social institutions. Historically, this implies the ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind. The research shows that DE program participation amongst Black students, although has increasingly shown a positive trend up, is still significantly lower, than the white student counterparts.

A cynical argument may be attributed to skepticism regarding successful outcomes of DE, particularly as it relates it marginalized students. Nevertheless, as research begins to further unpack the many moving parts of this research, studies have continued to underscore the beneficial outcomes. Grubb, Scott and Good (2016) conducted a quantitative research study to discern the contributions of dual enrollment participation to community college completion. The study had 1,232 student participants who exhibited positive indicators of committing to attending college (ex: taking the ACT prior to college, completing the FAFSA, enrolling full-time by the first fall semester after public high school at community college, and finishing the first semester without

withdrawing or dropping to part-time status), that enrolled between 2008 and 2012 at a community college in northeast Tennessee the fall semester after finishing high school (Grubb, et al., 2016). This study used 11 variables (gender- male/female, minority status- White or Non-white, academic performance in high school reflected by GPA, college readiness as indicated by ACT composite score and all subscores, financial dependence on parents for financial aid purposes (true, false), socioeconomic status as indicated by the level of PELL award (full, partial, or none), and whether or not at least one parent had a college degree). Propensity score matching was employed to create a quasi-experimental comparison of treatment (dual enrollment) vs. Control (non-dual enrollment) as an analytic strategy. In addition, Descriptive statistics and logics regressions were also included in this study. Dependent variables were defined as participation in remediation and completion at 2 years, 100%-degree time, and 3 years, 150%-degree time.

An analysis by the researchers indicated that students who were enrolled in a dual curriculum were less likely to need remediation once enrolled in college. An analysis of the study indicated that less than 4% of dual enrollment participants were placed in remediation, while over 30% of participants completed college in 2 years, and over 45% finished college in just 3 years. Juxtaposition, over 11% of non-participants needed remediation while only 15% completed in 2 years. Lastly, at the 3-year mark, the non-participants lagged with 9% of participation. The research shows dual enrollments have positive effects on remediation.

This study by Grub et al., (2016) exemplifies that dual enrollment has a positive effect on reducing, if not eliminating altogether, remediation. Dual enrollment also

provides college readiness by assisting high school students to participate in college level coursework, peer-to-peer socialization, and self-efficacy. Thus, providing the transition to college students, academically and holistically a little less challenging. It can perhaps be inferred that dual enrollment creates pathways to community college access, enrollment, retention, and overall positive outcomes.

DE participants, specifically, Black student participants bring a cadre of capital to this unique form of education. According to the research, institutional structures will be in support of the initiative for a successful outcome. PBI's provides such context as students can apply varying modes of capital to the paradigms of DE structure. PBI's can assist students to transition to the complexities of being a college student. The PBI will ensure that students are supported from the first year all the way through the student's graduating year. Financial counseling is essential in assisting the student navigate through the pitfalls of student debt and underscore the importance of budgeting and financial planning. Academic advising is readily available to provide curriculum mapping for all DE students. Advising counselors will act as advocates, academic coaches for students. Lastly, advisors will also act as liaisons as it relates to student-faculty relationships, as evidenced by the literature. Marginalized students can now work in tandem with a community of self towards their goals of higher education access and attainment with the traditional systematic structures slowly receding.

Gaps in Research

There are strategies that institutions can utilize that can mitigate Black students accessing higher education. Dual enrollment is a strategy becoming increasingly popular which is utilized to assist Black students access higher education, transition into college,

thus becoming college ready, and ultimately completing a post-secondary degree with the needed credentials to enter the workforce. Additional research is needed to ensure an understanding of the best resources needed for all students. The research then informs institutional leaders to make decisions on DE partnerships or recognize the impact that DE can benefit Black and marginalized students, but also the partnering PBI. This study will tell the story of the participants to discern the impact of PBI's and the application of DE programming.

Further research may underscore how high schools in central Brooklyn partner with PBIs to ensure the absence of disproportionality. In addition, further research is needed on how and where, outside of the traditional school setting, is DE programming being marketed. What, if any, are the roles of community-based organizations, non-profits, or religious institutions, in marketing and possibly recruiting Black or marginalized students? What, if any, is the relationship between the aforementioned institutions and predominately black institutions? This study would seek to fill this gap in research and begin to investigate the potential impact of DE in central Brooklyn, NY at a participating PBI.

Summary

This evidence suggest that schools and teachers are discovering innovative ways to encourage highly motivated Black students to undertake dual enrollment curriculums. Additional steps will be taken to incentivize those students that are less motivated and engaged to change their trajectories, as suggested by the research. Education cannot be applied to those who have scored higher on an aptitude test, but more so a combination of eligible criteria and caveats to ensure every student can be exposed to at least one early

college course. Taylor (2015) posits "If education is a basic liberty and access to higher education is not equal (St. John, 2003), then higher education policy and practice should at least benefit equally those students who do not have equal access to higher education" (p. 359). Research has suggested that participation in dual enrollment can at minimum reduce college remediation, and at best accelerate college degree attainment.

While this review provides conclusive evidence about dual enrollment as a paradigm for college enrollment, it is still an open question of whether dual enrollment should be mandated, as policy, in high school curriculums as early as the tenth grade. Exposure to pre-college should be as early as possible, so that students can imagine the endless possibilities that are available with a college education. Marginalized students continue to face systematic racism in their school settings. Teachers are encouraged to undergo implicit biases training; however, the school system is inherently biased towards communities of color, hence the reduction in students of color participation, juxtaposed to their white counterparts. Indeed, this may be a policy argument reserved for the proper forum.

PBI presents a demographic composition that may resonate with the student and the student's family- which is the primary support structure. This partnering institution seeks to address the academic and social constructs that may have been absent while the student has been engaged in learning throughout the traditional institutions. Teachers with the cultural comprehension of students of color may connect differently with students, compared to teachers from differing cultures. The customs and norms may or may not be addressed, however, the notion of an institution that encompasses akin to demographics may provide for a more comfortable and engaging atmosphere for the

learner. This social and cultural capital cannot be learned, but rather it is inherited, and should be recognized for continuity, cultivation, and sustainability, as suggested by the research. There remains much work to do as it relates to marginalized students participating in dual enrollment and the effects on participation from a predominately black institution.

Two key takeaways are (1) research has demonstrated that students have benefited from participation in dual enrollment. Students generally have increased levels of college readiness, higher college grade point averages, and higher persistence rates after dual enrollment. (2) researchers demonstrate that academically prepared students who enter college are more likely to persist and attain their degree than less-prepared students. Pretlow and Wathington (2103) posited with the increased emphasis on college degree attainment at the national and state level, targeting the "low hanging fruit" could provide economical ways to increase the percentage of the population who has a postsecondary credential (p. 51). These studies have underscored the positive outcomes that are directly related to high rigor, dually enrolled curriculums. According to the research, students should be given the opportunity to enroll in early college programs, which may have a direct impact on college access experience, post-secondary outcomes, pre-college transition/college readiness and the social, human, economic and cultural capital of higher ed institutions in this non-traditional form.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This chapter underscored the focus of the methods and procedures used for data collection and the analysis for this study. Creswell and Poth (2018) described terms such as constructivist, interpretivist, feminist, postmodernist. What is qualitative research? Qualitative research draws from interpretivist and constructivist paradigms, seeking to deeply understand a research subject rather than predict outcomes, as in the positivist paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Interpretivism seeks to build knowledge from understanding individuals' unique viewpoints and the meaning attached to those viewpoints (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Constructivism views knowledge as constructed as people work to make sense of their experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative research, conducted thoughtfully, is internally consistent, rigorous, and helps us answer important questions about people and their lives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The use of qualitative design solidified me, the researcher as the primary instrument to conduct this study.

The research design of choice was Narrative. The narrative design approach is the study of the ways humans experience the world; more specifically a general concept more refined into the view that education and educational research is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). The purpose of this qualitative study, utilizing narrative research design, was to explore the dual enrollment relationship, and experience of Black students, with supporting PBI structures between partnering schools. Narrative inquiry methodology was utilized in this study due to its focus on the experiences of people (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 1990).

Arguably, the topic of dual enrollment may very well be studied utilizing other methodologies, however, narrative utilized the methods that are data rich and advantageous to my study. Further, it used the concept of the three-dimensional narrative inquiry space to target thinking in multiple areas within time, relationships, and situations (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). This study examined a program of DE centered within a college in central Brooklyn, New York between a high school and partnering PBI community college.

The use of narrative design positioned me as the researcher to understand the nature of the design and the best possible way to discern the data that was received. Creswell and Poth (2018) posit research question provides an "opportunity to encode and foreshadow an approach to inquiry" (p. 137). For this reason, the use of research questions elicited responses from the 5 participants for this study. These experiences ranged from educational perceptions to the social experiments that came along with undertaking this form of lived experience. Connelly & Clandinin (1990) suggested that the main claims for the use of narrative in educational research is that humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives. How best can we hear of this lived phenomenon- but by amplifying student voices. Students were best to provide data points via interviews. However, when undertaking narrative research design, multi-pronged archival documents may also serve as prudent in discerning the data from a narrative study. "What is being said, and who is saying it?"

Narrative inquiry required the researcher to let the voices of the lived experience lead the research. The data that was received from interviews were simply data points until they are made for transcription.

Methods and Procedures

Research Questions

Creswell and Poth (2018) posited research question provide an "opportunity to encode and foreshadow an approach to inquiry" (p. 137). For this reason, the use of research questions did elicit responses from the participants of this study. These experiences ranged from educational perceptions to the social experiments that came along with undertaking this form of lived experience. This study investigated the following questions:

1. How do Black Students Perceive the Experience of Participating in a Dual Enrollment Program at a Predominately Black Institution in a Central Brooklyn Community?
2. How do Black student participants in a dual enrollment program understand a sense of belonging on a college campus?

a) Sub-question: How, if at all, do students make meaning of the experiences related to their college retention and success?

b) Sub-question: Why do Black students participate and persist in dual enrollment through a predominately Black institution?

Setting

This study conducted research within a City University of New York (CUNY) predominately black institution (PBI), community college, located in central Brooklyn, New York. For purposes of anonymity, a pseudonym was used while referencing the institution. Social Justice DNA Community College was founded in 1971 as a response to the community cries of academic disproportionality and an increased demand of access to higher education in the central Brooklyn, NY community. To date, the school enrolls

about 6,000 students, 73% females, and 27% males, which are predominately Black and underrepresented students from marginalized communities in central Brooklyn, NY. The faculty to student ratio, on average, is 16:1. It can be inferred that small class sizes can lead to a more robust relationship between the teacher and student.

Creswell and Poth (2018) posited purposeful sampling will intentionally sample a group of people that can best inform the researcher about the research problem under examination (p. 148). This respective group of students were preparing for the high school to college pipeline, thus experiencing similar experiences related to this phenomenon. As such I included criterion sampling that was included in my study. Creswell and Poth (2018) asserted criterion sampling worked well when all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the phenomenon (p. 157). The criterion being students who accessed dual enrollment at Social Justice DNA Community College from any of the cohort academic years 2018- 2021.

Participants

The researcher obtained IRB approval from St. John's University and conducted the study; the 5 participants were recruited through the Social Justice DNA Community College student email system. This study examined data from amplified narratives to describe perceptions and lived experiences of dual enrollment participation. This point solidified the use of narrative as a research design for this study, as student and program participants, and there was a pool of participants with this shared experience available.

There were 5 student participants for this study. Post IRB approval the program director supported all efforts with marketing and recruitment, which allowed for a robust pool of participants, thus yielding 5 participants who agreed to willingly participate. The

5 participants had at least more than one year of continuous program participation. Creswell and Poth (2018) posit the participants "must be individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon being explored and can articulate their lived experiences" (p. 153). Additional use of criterion sampling (Creswell & Poth, 2018) was utilized, as a result, the researcher selected and finalized participants for this study. The 5 participants were interviewed virtually in alignment with IRB guidelines.

Table 2

Data Collected by Research Participants

	# Pages of Raw Data from Interview Transcripts
Participant 1	10
Participant 2	22
Participant 3	42
Participant 4	14
Participant 5	12

Data Collection Procedures

Interviews

To collect data, individual interviews with the 5 participants were conducted. The interviews were all semi-structured and anonymous and were recorded virtually with transcript capability. The interviews focused on the lived experiences of people shared through storytelling and "restorying" within a proper framework. (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 1990). According to Creswell & Poth (2018) interviewing is a

robust method to collect data utilizing varying methods, however narrative research involves interviewing individuals who have experienced the phenomenon and can retell their story of the lived experience.

Conducting an interview is a tremendous activity and you must be properly prepared for the outcome. Kvale (1996) asserted advance preparation is essential to the interaction and outcome of an interview (p. 126). According to Maxwell (2013) "interviewing can also be a valuable way of gaining description of actions and events—often the only way, for events that took place in the past or for situations to which you can't gain observational access" (p. 103). When conducting interviews utilizing narrative design Kvale (1996) posited a good interview question should contribute thematically to knowledge production and dynamically to promoting a good interview interaction (p. 129). As the primary instrument conducting the research, interviews were the primary source of data collection for this study. The researcher amplified the voices of the participants to effectively answer the research questions that were posed in this study. For narrative research, observations and focus groups did not contribute to the rich data points needed to answer the research questions.

To answer both the research questions and the interview questions, individual interviews were conducted virtually via Zoom and were audio-recorded to maintain internal validity. Maxwell (2013) posited "in interview studies, such data generally require verbatim transcripts of the interviews, not just notes on what you felt was significant" (p. 126). A copy of the interview with transcript analysis was sent to all participants for review before being published.

Document Analysis

A document analysis was performed on materials related to participants in DE. Participation materials included program materials, program flyers, program info sessions and orientation materials and related documents. This analysis was used for triangulation of data and assisted with analysis and interpretation.

Trustworthiness of the Design

Trustworthiness can be described as comprehension of naturalistic inquiry utilizing specific parameters, such as truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality (Guba, 1981). How does my research transcend into any of the categories? In academic and educational research, peer reviewed journals are the gold standard for publications and literature reviews. This provides a system of checks and balance to ensure the content is accurate and timely. How can that level of trustworthiness be transferred to the research process? Triangulation is one method employed to validate trustworthiness. Guba (1981) suggests triangulation utilizes strategies that require "different perspectives (theories), and different methods are pitted against one another in order to cross-check data and interpretations" (Denzin, 1978, p. 85). As the researcher, the use of triangulation of methods and data sources, including interviews and content analysis were used for this study. Mathison (1988) defines triangulation as "using several data sources" (p. 14).

Mathison (1988) further suggested that "triangulation as a strategy provides a rich and complex picture of some social phenomenon being studied" (p. 15). In addition, Creswell and Poth (2018) posited that the researcher "makes use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence (p. 349). Member checking is another noteworthy method to further solidify the trustworthiness of

this study. Guba (1981) described as “interpretations that are continuously tested as they are derived with members of the various audiences and groups from which data are solicited” (p. 85). While discussing credibility criterion (Guba, 1981) member checks afforded the researcher the opportunity to speak with the respondents and presented to them the preliminary findings of the research. This is a chance to reflect upon your research and share it with your participants to determine trustworthiness which, in this case leads to credibility and transferability. As discussed in the data collection procedures, triangulation was used to ensure internal validity and credibility as suggested by Maxwell (2013).

It is at this critical moment that themes began to emerge, and then the researcher utilized educational research strategies to ensure effective triangulation. Anafara (2002) posited “retreating from the language of experimental inquiry; Lincoln and Guba restated the rigor criteria as trustworthiness criteria” (p. 29). These were effective strategies to ensure the study was credible, valid and transferrable.

Research Ethics

Creswell and Poth (2018) posited ethical issues in qualitative research were described as occurring prior to conducting the study, at the beginning of the study, during data collection, in conducting data analysis, in reporting the data, and in publishing a study. In keeping with the protocol ethics of the National Institute of Health, the protection of human subjects is the upmost primary ethical consideration. Prior to data collection, the researcher received permission to conduct research from the St. John’s University Institutional Review Board, which indicated that this study conforms to ethical guidelines for research with human subjects. Participation was voluntary and all

participants were informed of the nature of the interview protocols and signed consent. Participants had the right to refuse to answer any question or withdraw from the study at any time. Interview transcripts and researcher notes were shared with all participants, who had the right to edit/remove any/all parts of the interview from the record. All information, including the names and identifiable markers of the participants will remain confidential. At the end of the study, findings were shared with all participants in the event it can benefit them in their daily roles and responsibilities as college students.

Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that when studying one's own organization, specifically, "questions about whether good data can be collected when the act of data collection may introduce a power imbalance between the researcher and the individual being studied" (p. 153-154). As a member of the higher education community, I did not interview any colleagues in my department, or colleagues that may have experienced DE when they were students themselves. According to Maxwell (2013) "a primary ethical obligation is to try to understand how the participants will perceive your actions and respond to these. A first step is to put yourself in their position and ask how you would feel if someone did to you what you are thinking of doing" (p. 92). My role as an academic officer in higher education and interviewing participants requires me as a researcher to give deep thought surrounding ethics. There is always ethical considerations when utilizing settings and participants, particularly if you are employed with the organization. Maxwell (2013) further suggests "what the informant says is always influenced by the interviewer and the interview situation" (p. 125). The researcher retold the 5 participants' story through a theoretical lens and framed the story as retold by the participants.

Data Analysis

Narratives were generated from the individual interviews with five dual enrollment participants. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. The data was analyzed in two ways, first through a process of restorying and then utilized the constant comparative method. Restorying was a process that involved analyzing transcript data to identify key elements, specifically through the use of quotes. The data was then organized by theme and/or sequence and then retold in a narrative story structure that described the participant's experiences. This process allowed readers to understand the thoughts, actions, and purposes of the participant, so as to gain a deeper insight into their lives. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; & Creswell & Poth, 2018).

For the purpose of this study, readers gained insight into the lived experiences of a dual enrollment student participant at a predominately black institution, specifically in relation to their identity roles and newly acquired social capital, and academic persistence leading to successful post-secondary outcomes. They also developed an understanding of how students gained access and the varying programmatic outcomes by the participants. After the interview transcripts were restoryed, they were further analyzed using the constant comparison method. This method, made famous by Glaser in 1965, combined two approaches to qualitative analysis: coding and thematic analysis. According to Glaser (1965), there are four steps to the constant comparison analytic process: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory.

The first step in this process involved open coding, in which a code was applied to specific incidents in the data. As the coding process continued, the codes were compared

with other codes in the same category and larger themes began to become established. According to Glaser (1965), as additional categories are formed and compared, the relationship between those categories and their properties becomes more integrated, beginning the formulation of a theoretical framework. After this, the theory continued to be refined as categories continued to be refined based on commonalities in the data. Once a small set of high-level concepts remained, the theories emerged and was used to explain the phenomenon found because of a particular series of research questions.

The researcher transcribed the audio recordings from the interviews using Otter software for audio recordings, in addition to Zoom transcripts for audio-recordings; respectively. The transcripts from the interviews were carefully reviewed for accuracy and manually analyzed using Glaser (1965) constant comparison method. The original transcripts and any edited transcripts were maintained for member-checking and accuracy.

Qualitative data collected through varying methods and procedures such as interviews and content analysis were coded manually. Gibbs (2007) posited "coding is how you define what the data you are analyzing are about" (p. 38). This is the part of the study where the researcher found commonalities with the data collection and began to analyze the raw data into categories and themes. Gibbs (2007) suggested that coding involved identifying and recording one or more passages of text or other data items such as the parts of the picture that in some sense, exemplified the same theoretical or descriptive idea. Gibbs (2007) further suggested coding is easiest using a transcript.

The hallmark of narrative research was to capture and amplify the voices of participants by retelling their story utilizing a framework. Gibbs (2007) posited several

passages were identified and they were then linked with a name for that idea-the code. This established a framework for categories and thematic ideas. According to Gibbs (2007) coding in this way enabled two types of analysis: (1) the ability to retrieve the text coded with the same label to combine passages that are all examples of the same phenomenon, idea, explanation, or activity. This was a very useful way of managing or organizing the data- thus enabling the researcher to examine the data in a structured way; (2) the researcher used the list of codes, to examine further kinds of analytic questions, such as relationships between the codes (and the text they code), and case-by-case comparisons.

Narrative stories from participants were coded utilizing categories and emerging thematic ideas. According to Gibbs (2007), the story telling of the participants' lived experiences and salient quotations that represented the individual experiences were identified through the analysis for inclusion in the findings of this study to ensure that individual participants' experiences were accurately depicted and represented.

Researcher Positionality

Clandinin & Connelly (2000) posits that because research is infused with interpretations, the positionality of the researcher is a key factor within qualitative research and narrative inquiry. My personal and social identities may have influenced my perspectives on this topic. I am a Black male employed by a predominantly Black institution. I attended public schools in marginalized communities in New York City and was not afforded access to participate in early college programming, particularly dual enrollment. Pillow (2003) highlights the earlier work of Dewey (1938) suggesting that

"to reflect is to look back over what has been done so as to extract the net meanings which are the capital stock of intelligent dealing with further experiences" (p. 177).

Dual enrollment can be utilized as a strategy to predict a pathway in accessing higher education and successful post-secondary outcomes. Accordingly, I can identify my positionality as an indigenous insider. Banks (1998) posits the indigenous insider has the perspective and the knowledge that will promote the well-being of the community, enhance its power, and enable it to maintain cultural integrity and survive. My positionality can be utilized to enhance my standing in the community as an insider, someone that can be trusted, and perhaps additional participants may be forthcoming to participate in this, or a future study.

Banks (1998) posits researchers can play a significant role in educating students for citizenship in a diverse society. Banks (1998) further states, "Their most important responsibility is to conduct research that empowers marginalized communities" (p. 15). As a researcher, I have studied such life-changing phenomena that many communities of color are unaware of such resources and opportunities, thus invoking necessary variables to be considered utilizing the lens of experience. Maxwell (2013) suggests that bias should not be fully removed but rather mitigated, and narrative research design is ideal given my status as the researcher (Banks, 1998) and the proximity to this topic in particular (Creswell & Poth, 2018) which allowed the participant to tell their story of their lived experience.

CHAPTER 4

Research Analysis

Chapter 1 provided an introduction and overview of the study. Chapter 2 expanded on the theoretical framework of Tinto's (1993) Re tention Theory and Strayhorn's (2012) S ense of Belonging Theory and explored literature regarding dual enrollment, separated by thematic categories to underscore the varying components of dual enrollment and the application to theory and practice. In chapter 3, a step-by-step analytical description of the narrative research design, applicable methods, all ethical considerations, as well as implemented procedures for the study was framed and discussed.

Throughout this chapter, participant stories will be retold. An analysis of the interview transcripts, utilizing the constant comparison method (Glaser, 1965) l ed to universal emerging themes extracted from the individual participant stories (Creswell and Poth, 2018). T he main themes examined in this chapter include (a) a ccess; (b) motivation; (c) fri ends; and (d) s ocial capital. A comprehensive breakdown of the data by participant is displayed below in the Table below.

Table 3

Data Collected by Research Participants A

	# Pages of Raw Data from Interview Transcripts
Participant 1	10
Participant 2	22
Participant 3	42

Participant 4	14
Participant 5	12

Dual enrollment student participants make meaning of their experience in varying ways. The restorying of participant narrative descriptions will underscore and delineate the research questions:

RQ1: How do Black Students Perceive the Experience of Participating in a Dual Enrollment Program at a Predominately Black Institution in a Central Brooklyn Community?

RQ2: How do Black student participants in a dual enrollment program understand a sense of belonging on a college campus?

Sub-question 3: How, if at all, do students make meaning of the experiences related to their college retention and success?

Sub-question 4: Why do Black students participate and persist in dual enrollment through a predominantly Black institution?

Dakota's Story

Dakota Access

Dakota, an 18-year-old Black female student, was a sophomore at Scholarship Academy, located in south Brooklyn, New York when she participated in dual enrollment at Social Justice DNA Community College. Dakota gained access to dual enrollment programming in her sophomore year of high school at the direction of her principal. "My principal had told all the sophomores and juniors that there's a program that we're doing with the Social Justice DNA Community College called College Now and we're able to

take college classes for free and get college credit." Upon further research and inquiry, Dakota decided to participate in the opportunity that was being heavily supported by the principal.

Dakota reflected on the process of applying to be a dual enrollment participant. She had to submit a program application, which according to Dakota explained that "it was a quick application that we have to fill out with our name, our social security number, email and all the information like that." Upon further discussion, Dakota also opined that she felt like she had some choice selection with her classes. Arguably, prior collaborations between the two institutions were also significant when discussing school partnerships, articulation agreements and access between institutions. According to Dakota, the pre-planned course listing resulted in her questioning herself, "what classes am I interested in? My school had given us a list; they allowed us to take what we wanted and told us how many credits it was, and we picked from the classes." A thorough examination of the transcript reveals an emerging theme of access to school partnerships and the application of educational pathways. Dual enrollment participants are afforded course choice and autonomy, unlike the current high school curriculum that they are undertaking. Moreover, dual enrollment participants are presented with varying educational pathways to access higher education curriculums.

Dakota described how she navigated the experience of accessing a dual enrollment opportunity, "navigating was not difficult; it was pretty easy." Dakota described accessing this opportunity as a personal choice, however, undertaking the opportunity "with friends of course", as stated by Dakota, underscores that friends are motivating factors in the decision-making process. In Dakota's case, dual enrolment

access was not a difficult process with the assistance of her principal, but also Dakota became increasingly motivated to participate in dual enrollment with her friends, which provided a feeling of community and belonging. Dakota believes that participating with her peers created this new community of shared experiences. Dakota stated that she was loyal to the program; the program motivated her to finish, and that she and her friends pushed each other. Peer motivation is a real phenomenon that can help balance this new student identity within this newly formed community.

The exposure to higher education underscores Dakota's reflection on balancing her time between her high school requirements and her newly minted dual enrollment opportunity, while making sense of it all. According to Dakota, she wants college exposure, but has not really decided what career or field of study she wanted to pursue at the time. Dakota describes her desire to participate in dual enrollment "my school is proactive, and they already have done it for so many years with Social Justice DNA Community College, so it just made sense to me to try it out." Dakota further stated: I don't want to do too much right now; I want to enjoy being in high school but don't want the stress of college right now. I like that I can take some classes and not be too stressed." Dakota seemingly decided to select College Now, a program that provides high school students the opportunity to take one college course every fifteen weeks at the partnering college. This pathway, according to Dakota, was the right selection for her.

In Dakota's case, dual enrollment has afforded her to satisfy her high school curriculum, as well as fulfilling a college core requirement, simultaneously. Arguably, the application of dual enrollment and Dakota's experience has exposed her, if not to a college environment, at least to college level instruction. Dakota selected College Now

dual enrollment curriculum, she successfully completed 4 college-level classes, earning her 12 college credits, and a 3.96 GPA. She is currently enrolled full-time at a college of her choice.

Motivating Dakota

Students without the assistance of a high school counselor, or equivalent, or perhaps even a parent who is knowledgeable about college, are more likely to be unaware of Dual enrollment as an option or be unprepared for the rigors of the program. Dual enrollment participation requires highly dedicated students to be motivated while exploring and expanding their academic opportunities in higher education. Dakota credits her friends and the partnering college for motivating her to participate in dual enrollment. According to Dakota, her community of friends and the partnering institution provided "so many resources" while in the program. Dakota further explains, "the college had an office that would help you with your books for the class, a MetroCard to travel to school and back home." Dakota suggested that dual enrollment was "really good that me or my family didn't have to pay for anything. Social Justice DNA Community College paid for the class, my books and everything. The first time it happened I thought I had to pay something back, but then the college office really explained everything to me. That's why I wanted to come back the next semester because it was a good fit for me." Students can persist in high rigor academics when properly supported by a community of their peers, and the partnering institution that provides the needed infrastructure so that students feel highly supported for a successful outcome.

Students who participate in dual enrollment increasingly rely on motivation to assist with academic persistence and social norms. According to Dakota, "I did feel

supported. The school had so many resources that helped me." Dakota and her peers experienced camaraderie amongst one another to not only motivate each other to persist, but also to excel in this new shared academic and social culture. Dakota shared that the experience of taking college classes on an actual college campus made her feel a sense of belonging as a college student or navigating the college campus, and she stated, "I honestly do because by pushing myself to finish as a black student I want to prove that the stereotype is wrong. It just kept motivating me to do good. Dakota further stated, "I feel like doing dual enrollment helps me stay focused on finishing what I started. That means that I'm going to school (college). Me and my friends are not going to like dropout of high school; and we are going right to college to finish." Dakota seemingly began to articulate that dual enrollment has provided a pathway for college retention and success. Student motivation is a phenomenon that can be measured in varying ways.

In Dakota's case, her community of friends and the notion of a partnering college motivated Dakota to participate in the dual enrollment program. In addition, the resources provided by the partnering college allowed Dakota to remain engaged in the program and to successfully finish. Finally, because of motivational factors, Dakota ultimately graduated from high school, successfully completed her dual enrollment College Now curriculum, and enrolled in a college of her choice. Dakota stated, "I did it with friends because we do everything together." Dakota credits the success of her academics and social development to her participation and experience in a dual enrollment program, thus solidifying her decision to continue to pursue a higher education post program completion.

Friends of Dakota

Access and motivation are cornerstones for the foundation needed to successfully undergo dual enrollment programming. Arguably, participation with a friend, or a cohort, of like-minded peers will propel you to stay motivated and to finish strong. While participating in dual enrollment, Dakota suggested that she and her friends "did everything together, which makes things easier." Dakota stated, "I enrolled in College Now, I did good. When I finished the program, I had 12 credits and my GPA was high, like 3.96." Dakota suggests that her friends followed the same path to participate in dual enrollment to get college exposure. Dakota stated about her friends, "yes, we all did the same thing." In Dakota's case, her friends were strong catalysts in understanding a sense of belonging as a dual enrollment participant.

Dakota insists that her peers were instrumental and also motivated her to pursue this educational pathway, as she stated, "we do everything together", she further stated, "that we push each other to finish because sometimes it got hard, and we still had to do our other work from high school." Undertaking this dual enrollment pathway with her friends provided a sense of community and belonging to the college process for Dakota, and seemingly her friends.

Dakota's dual enrollment experience began to experience pitfalls and challenges as the level of college instruction began to take its shape. Dakota stated, "time management was tough, and finding a balance was a struggle." College experience can present varying challenges to the average college student, however, from the lens of a dual enrollment student, perhaps these challenges are magnified to a higher degree. Dakota suggests that at one point there was a struggle to complete the work on time, and

that time management was really her weak spot, while finding the right adjustment to balance it all. Dakota stated, “the teachers treated us like we were college students. They made sure we understood that. There was no special treatment.” Dakota further suggests that she and her friends stuck together to continuously motivate each other to complete the assignments on-time, carve out study time, and create study groups to prepare for exams. Dakota stated, “I felt like I was a regular college student. I had to do the work that they gave me. It made me focus more and I pushed my friends, and they pushed me- we pushed each other.” Dakota further suggests that it was important to her and her friends to “stick together and not leaving anyone back.” Dakota continued, “we started together, so we gonna end together.” Dual enrollment connects students to a higher education curriculum with a partnering institution. Arguably, dual enrollment may also be attributed to connecting a cohort of peers together while experiencing the same phenomenon, which creates a sense of collegiality and bonding amongst friends.

Dakota’s Social Capital

While participating in dual enrollment, students increasingly develop many skills and acquire new skill sets that can be applied in various environments. Dual enrollment students newly acquired social capital can and should empower the student to complete the high rigor curriculum. Dakota suggested that the partnering institution assisted her with college enrollment “firsts”, such as, filing for FAFSA, student financial aid, researching for college scholarships, assisting with resume preparation, and applying for on-campus jobs. Dual enrollment students’ social capital is recognized on the partnering college campus, within the halls of the campus, and also directly in the college classroom.

Black students can gauge a glimpse of future black professional on the campus of a predominately black institution. In the classroom, black teachers are a significant component, as well as other black students experiencing the phenomenon. Dakota stated, my teachers were black, one had an accent like my dad, and I felt comfortable around them, it was like being home, but I was still in school." Dakota suggested that participating in dual enrollment with a partnering black institution made a significant difference, as she felt like it was identity and culture affirming for her. Often times, race and racial diversity are added values and cultural norms which shape one's outlook in life. It is significant to support and cultivate a student's social capital, specifically Dakota's social capital, on the application of her dual enrollment experience.

Montana's Story

Montana's Access

Montana, a 19-year-old Black female student was a sophomore at New Beginnings High school, located in north Brooklyn, New York when she participated in dual enrollment at Social Justice DNA Community College. Montana described the process of accessing dual enrollment. "My school always broadcasts the partnership with Social Justice DNA Community College. So, I remember back in the tenth grade we had the choice between Smart Scholars, STEAM program or College Now." Montana explained the difference between them; "the principal wants students with the high average to participate in smart scholars, so that's what I did." Dakota indicated that a family member had previously participated in the program, so she wanted to follow suit. Montana stated, "yes, my brother did the smart scholar's program and I wanted to do it too."

Montana described the process where "you had to initially complete an application, then you had to go on Zoom for a meeting with the principal and answer a couple of questions, and then you had to complete an essay." Montana felt prepared for the process. She underscores the notion of her school emphasizing that students should participate in one of the dual enrollment programs. Montana suggested that the principal had former students come back to talk to the current students about the process and benefits of participating in a dual enrollment program. Montana stated, "so it was nice that they cared." Montana was not bothered by the sales pitch for dual enrollment, "I'm used to my school being pushy, so it was like regular for me." Montana alluded to her desire to participate in dual enrollment, while contributing factors included her brother previously successfully completed the smart scholar's program, but also, she wants to become a OB/GYN. Montana stated, "yes, because I want to go into medicine, so this helps me a lot." Montana successfully completed the smart scholar's program, earning her associate degree in science, with honors, and graduated with her high school diploma. She enrolled full-time into college later in the fall to pursue a biology degree, moving her closer towards her academic and career goal of becoming a doctor.

Motivating Montana

Upon reflecting on accessing dual enrollment, Montana continued, "I want to be an OB-GYN so taking my biology classes and science classes now helps me start attaining my college credits early." Early access to higher education curriculum is a hallmark of dual enrollment programming, and Montana began to immerse herself in the curriculum. In Montana's case, she has recognized the trajectory path for a medical career is extremely rigorous and can become quite the out-of-pocket expense, so

capitalizing on any opportunity afforded to her to reduce the time to her medical degree, while reducing the family dollar contribution, exemplifies her increased motivation for a successful outcome. Montana further suggested that her "family isn't stressed about paying for my college tuition, at least not now. And later, it would be less money. I am hoping to even get scholarships, so we don't have to pay anything."

Dual enrollment participation, for Montana, underscores her sustained motivation to become a doctor. In Montana's family, there was an exemplar, in her brother, that displayed how dual enrollment benefited his outcome. Arguably, with family input and guidance, Montana became motivated to participate in dual enrollment so assist her with her academic and professional goals. In addition to friends, family are extreme motivating factors for dual enrollment participants, as evidenced by Montana's case. Degree attainment is also a motivational factor for Montana, I know I wasn't doing College Now because it was just like random classes for college, it wasn't going to help me become a doctor. Then the AP classes sound good, but my parents didn't want me to just take advanced classes. Then the STEAM program just wasn't for me. That's for the students who want to get certificates for work and stuff like that."

Dual enrollment students may attribute varying factors that motivate them towards a successful outcome. Although friends are contributing factors, it wasn't a significant factor in motivating Montana to participate in the smart scholar's program. "My friends didn't get picked, but they did the other programs, so they are doing something. It's like at my school they want you to do something. In Montana's case, family, career mapping and being in a proactive school (school choice) were the motivational factors for her dual enrollment participation. As a result, Montana

successfully completed the dual enrollment program (attained her associate degree in science), which sustained her motivation and persistence to enroll in college full-time, post high school, to pursue her educational goals.

Friends of Montana

Undertaking dual enrollment is no simple task, specifically if you lack any supporting structures. Arguably, friends may be a tremendous factor while experiencing a phenomenon such as dual enrollment. However, friends may not always factor into the equation of one's experience. In Montana's case, she experienced dual enrollment, as a phenomenon with her friends, however, they were not major catalyst or played a significant impact into her decision-making or choice of programming.

Montana's Social Capital

Dual enrollment was intrinsic for Montana, as her brother was an earlier participant in the program, with successful outcomes. As a result, Montana had indirectly experienced this phenomenon, however, she was aware of the processes and the nuances that are associated with dual enrollment. Nevertheless, Montana continued to pursue her educational opportunity with her goals on the horizon. The comprehension of social capital can be complex, however, when applied to dual enrollment, social capital can help students make meaning of their experience.

In Montana's case, pursuing a degree to assist her early on in her academic career exemplifies her core family values of education and training. Montana's constant outlook in life was based on being career oriented, understating her career mapping, while reducing her college tuition costs, and time to degree completion. In addition, she wanted to follow in her family members footsteps to continue in her shared family values.

Montana stated, “I definitely feel like it was a community of my peers, because most of us were Black, many of us want to be doctors.” Montana shared a story of one of her first impression while in the dual enrollment program, “the majority of the students were Black and us being together definitely helped the process.” Montana further described that having Black professors and Black classmates all pursuing science was eye-opening for her. Montana stated, “I remember walking into the class and most of the students were Black like me, and I was used to that, but seeing a Black teacher doing science and preparing me was that much better.” Montana stated, “a lot of my professors were people of color and a lot of professors that were of Caribbean descent. This made me feel comfortable and motivated me even more.”

Navigating new spaces may take some time and energy to understand the nuances and complexities of the phenomenon being explored. Understanding social capital may also take some time and energy to digest. The feeling of belonging and sharing a value may not be immediately measurable, however, Montana’s story may provide a glimpse into how diverse a dual enrollment experience can be on all stakeholders, specifically the student lens.

London’s Story

London’s Access

London, a 20-year-old Black male student was a junior at Horizon’s High school, located in south Brooklyn, New York when he participated in dual enrollment at Social Justice DNA Community College. London gained access to dual enrollment at the suggestion of his guidance counselor, “I met with my guidance counselor and had a conversation about life after graduation.” According to London, “I saw a flyer on a

bulletin board about taking college classes while in high school and it sounded like something that I could do." London was recruited to enroll in dual enrollment through a recruitment flyer/advertising.

London suggests that he was recruited through print advertisement, and he followed up with his guidance counselor to gain access. London indicated that he had to do an application and also there was an interview that he had to participate in. London stated, "I did a quick interview with my guidance counselor after I submitted the application and that was pretty much it." London indicated that he participated in "College Now, at Social Justice DNA Community College."

According to London, he did not have the best experience with the program. London stated, "it wasn't what I thought it was, I am not sure I was ready to do college, but I tried." London described his experience as wanting to try to take some college classes, "I did a few classes, I got like 2 A's and a B, I think, but it just wasn't for me. But it's good that other students can do it, it just wasn't for me." London participated in College Now, he enrolled in 3 courses, and received 9 college-level credits. He finished with a 3.5GPA. He successfully graduated from high school and enrolled in college in the Fall. London is currently a part-time student and credits his college attendance to his experience with the dual enrollment program.

Motivating London

London described that he always envisioned going to college, however, it was rather hesitant because none of his family members ever attended college. London stated, "I always wanted to go to college. My moms and older brothers didn't go to college, so it was like they were looking at me to break that cycle.". Motivational factors are displayed

in varying forms, whereas family is an integral motivational factor for students, specifically while participating in dual enrollment. Indeed, motivation can also be framed from the lens of the student, or family member(s). London stated, “I felt pressure, but good pressure, you know. They want me to succeed and do better than them, so I thought this could help. So, I said, I’m going do it, I got nothing to lose.”

London’s dual enrollment path was far from traditional, as he (self) was his biggest motivational factor. London wanted to break the stigma of family members not attending college and utilized this opportunity of dual enrollment to participate in higher educational programming. In addition to self-motivation, London had the support of his family and his guidance counselor as additional factors to motivate him to participate in dual enrollment. London stated, “I mean, who wouldn’t like the idea. It can help you with going to college once you finish here (high school).” London continued, if it wasn’t for this program I wouldn’t be in college right now. London described after high school graduation he returned to Social Justice DNA Community College and looked for the coordinator of the dual enrollment program who assisted him to enroll into the school full-time. According to London, “she even helped me get a part-time job on campus and I am a mentor to other students.”

London’s story became one of resiliency, as he described his background as coming from a marginalized community, first-generation “everything”. London utilized the tools of dual enrollment for self-motivation and self-preservation.

Friends of London

London’s story began to present more as an outlier than a continuation of many of the anecdotical suggestions all too commonly heard about dual enrollment. As a first-

generation dual enrollment participant, London described navigating his experience alone with almost no immediate peers to lean on or help one another to cultivate the experience. However, London continued to persevere against all odds, as dual enrollment is ascribed to high rigor and high motivation. Notwithstanding, a marginalized student, who self-identifies as “an OK student.”

London described his first experience walking into the classroom as a bit overwhelming to other students he knew from his school, to recognizing other students from his neighborhood. According to London, he felt a sense of reassurance and comfort, I walked in the class and then I saw some kids that I knew from my neighborhood and school, and I was like wow.” London continued, "I just felt good, like I know some of these kids. It made me feel more comfortable, less nervous.”

Although London did not participate in dual enrollment directly with his friends, the notion of being in an environment with his peers from his school and also his neighborhood dispelled his anxieties and provided the reassurance he needed to continue his dual enrollment participation. Arguably, seeing his peers as his friends, albeit indirectly, solidified London’s position within the program.

London’s Social Capital

Every student may need some assistance with identifying their social capital and how to apply it most effectively to any given experience. For London, his social capital was his sense of belonging, reaffirming is identity and comprehending shared values. As a result of London’s social standing in life from a marginalized community, perhaps his outlook in life may not be as robust as other students participating in dual enrollment programming. However, London has maximized its social capital and application thereof.

London's account of his experience walking into the classroom and discovering kids from his neighborhood resonated with him, thus motivating him to further completing the program. London ultimately enrolled in college with the assistance of the staff of the partnering predominately black institution, post high school graduation. As a result of his experience, London is a mentor at Social Justice DNA Community College in the PBI office. London credits his dual enrollment experience with making him feel like he could be successful in college and providing a positive outlook in life, particular with students who identify with London's story.

Beamer's Story

Beamer's Access

Beamer is 19-year-old Black female student, who was a sophomore at New Beginnings High school, located in north Brooklyn, New York when she participated in dual enrollment at Social Justice DNA Community College. Beamer described gaining access to dual enrollment in her sophomore year of high school, "I had to submit an application, letters of recommendation, a professional video recording, and an essay." According to Beamer "New Beginnings always advertises the partnership with Social Justice DNA Community College." She continues, "I didn't want to do the program where you get the associate degree from the college." Beamer further describes a new dual enrollment program that she heard about called the STEAM program. Beamer described asking her guidance counselor about the program and her counselor explained the benefits and nuances of the program. Beamer asserts, "STEAM allowed students to gain certifications and credentials to prepare them for work-based opportunities and experiences." Beamer describes how STEAM offers culinary arts and hospitality, media

construction design and engineering and cyber security and networking, as highlights of the dual enrollment curriculum. Beamer suggested that she has an affinity for cyber security via the computer science curriculum track. Beamer, successfully graduated from her high school, received numerous cyber security certifications, attended conferences, poster presentations and applied for applicable scholarships. She was accepted to her school of choice, which will remain anonymous, and she is completing her sophomore year of college.

Motivating Beamer

The notion of motivation can be measured with the introduction of different instruments. Peer motivation, arguably, can be measured by student performance and achievement. Dual enrollment participation seeks to pair performance and achievement with successful post-secondary outcomes. Beamer's motivational factors are family, partnering institutions, friends, and career exploration/career mapping. According to Beamer, she and her friends have been attending the same school since the 6th grade, and the relationships have been sustained and cultivated over time. When presented with the dual enrollment opportunity, Beamer decided to strongly pursue it, even if she had to do so alone. Indeed, this was the case for Beamer, however, she found the motivation of her continued network of friends, in addition to her family and the institution that afforded the opportunity.

Friends of Beamer

Beamer described her relationship with her friend network as STEAM always says today build with and not for. I feel like I did that with my friends that I know from school, I built relationships with them, and I am doing STEAM with myself, not for my

friends." This dual enrollment opportunity has shaped the thought process for decision-making for the students, notwithstanding if the decision is a popular one with friends et al. Beamer described her experience as wanting to do something different than what everyone else was doing. She alludes to motivating herself to want to step outside of the box from what everyone else was doing. Beamer suggests that this experience has expanded her network of friends and created a network of new friends that have shared in the bonding experience of dual enrollment, Beamer stated, we all met each other in the 10th grade, so we grew together. Everybody was a bit shy, but we grew out of that quickly, because STEAM is hands on."

Family is an integral motivational factor for student success. Beamer suggested, "from the start my mom and family were the biggest supporters. They helped me get the application done the same day I found out; it was due." Beamer describes the family component of constant motivation to apply for the ideal dual enrollment opportunity based upon the needs of the student, and the outcomes of the program. Beamer was highly motivated to deviate from the traditional dual enrollment programs and take a leap of faith and participate in a non-traditional program to satisfy her desire for career exploration and career mapping, via post-secondary certification credentials.

Beamer's Social Capital

Cultural values and norms dovetail when presented by family to the student participating in any phenomenon. The comprehension of such values underscores the implementation of social capital. Social capital begins becoming increasingly prevalent in students while navigating through the learning process. Beamer understood from the outset, that she did not want to participate in the traditional dual enrollment program as

most of her friends, and peer counterparts felt as if she belonged to a group that was experiencing a similar phenomenon. As a result, she became highly motivated to pursue an opportunity that may not be as popular as other programs.

Career exploration and career mapping are bold initiatives that require a level of maturity and focus and must be supported with core values. Social capital afforded Beamer to create a network of friends that motivated her in the dual enrollment program to support the core values that students find of great significance. The importance of social capital can be underscored while students experience the benefits and nuances while participating in dual enrollment. Ironically, Beamer experienced a shared sense of belonging for choosing a specific dual enrollment program, but also, for not choosing a traditional dual enrollment program.

Denali's Story

Denali's Access

Denali, a 22-year-old Black female student was a junior at Redeemer Academy in central Brooklyn, New York when she participated in dual enrollment at Social Justice DNA Community College. Denali was born and raised in California and moved to New York 5 years ago due to academic reasons. Denali described how she gained access to dual enrollment and how it saved her academic career and social life, "my principal met with me and my family to review my options for graduation." She continued, "every option had me staying in school until I was 20 years old, which was another 3 years." Educational requirements vary by state, and due to Denali's transfer status; it was determined that she was not on-track for on-time graduation, according to Denali. The school principal suggested that Denali consider enrolling in the Smart Scholars program,

she would continue to take her high school classes at the high school in the daytime and would then take all of her college-level classes at the partnering college Social Justice DNA Community College in the afternoon, and on the weekends.

Denali described the meeting with her principal as informational and caring, rather than a sales pitch for the traditional recruitment processes. Denali stated, “my principal and counselor was like we have a partnership with Social Justice DNA Community College, and you can earn your AA degree in teacher education.” Denali, and her family were presented with the options of continuing down her current path, and completing high school at a non-traditional age, dropping out of high school- all-together and acquiring an equivalent high school diploma (GED/TASC). Her final option was, enrolling in a dual enrollment program, completing the required high school curriculum, while simultaneously completing college requirements towards her post-secondary credentials.

Denali’s high school did an assessment for the best path forward for her, and the school partnership with Social Justice DNA Community College was an ideal fit. Denali would be able to satisfy her high school curriculum and required credits, while simultaneously earning college-level credits and ultimately, for Denali an associate degree in Teacher education, this school partnership was extremely effective in Denali’s case. Denali graduated valedictorian from her high school, while simultaneously graduating from Social Justice DNA Community College with her associate degree in Teacher education. Denali is currently enrolled full-time at Social Justice DNA Community College pursuing her bachelor’s degree in early childhood special education.

Motivating Denali

The comprehension and application of pitfalls or negative academic performance can heavily impact student motivation. Arguably, when faced with significant academic challenges, one's fight or flight instincts, hopefully will be on full display. In Denali's case, she fought tremendously to stay motivated to choose the best educational path forward. Smart scholar's dual enrollment sustained the motivation for Denali to continue to move forward in her educational aspirations. Denali motivated herself to remain on her trajectory to complete high school. She not only completed high school, but also decided to enroll in a program that would afford her exposure to the college experience and graduated from that program as well. Through her constant motivation, as a dual enrollment student she achieved measurable successful outcomes.

Over the course of her experience, Denali credits her friends as keeping her highly motivated to stay focused and do well. Denali describes her friends as providing a positive atmosphere and reassurance for her. Denali further describes sharing what she learned in her college classes with her high school friends. According to Denali, I was feeling more prepared academically because I've been taking college classes." The comprehension of a high rigor curriculum can be transferred to a friend group for shared values of retention and success. In essence, Denali was satisfying both her high school and college curriculums; respectively, while also cross motivating her friends for academic success.

Denali's academic persistence was on full display. Her goal remained to graduate from high school, which kept her highly motivated. Indeed, she graduated from high school, as school valedictorian, and also graduated from the smart scholar's program

earning her an associate degree in teacher education. Motivational factors for Denali included herself, her family, the high school, the partnering college, and her friends.

Friends of Denali

Denali has been enrolled in the smart scholar's program at her high school in partnership with Social Justice DNA Community College. Although Denali did not participate in the program with any of her friends, they were major supporters in keeping her on track. According to Denali, "basically in my sophomore and junior and senior year of high school, I was taking full-time college classes and high school classes." Denali describes this pathway as "very difficult, challenging, and stressful because college work is more challenging and more difficult that high school work." Denali credits her friends as being instrumental in assisting her on her journey. She describes having talks with her friends and sharing what her experience entails. As a result of her academic missteps, she heavily relied on her friends for academic and emotional support. Denali describes the academic rigor that is her typical day, "in the nighttime, I would be up until like midnight on school nights and weekends to complete the work. It was hard until I got used to it." Denali underscores that high school may not fully prepare you for college, and that you may have to do classes that make you feel like you are still in high school.

Lastly, Denali described her dual enrollment experience as feeling like, high school doesn't prepare you for college at all because high school and college work is different, it's a pretty big jump from high school work to college." However, Denali stresses that she reminds her friends that dual enrollment is not for everyone, but it was for her. Denali described this experience as, "the work was hard, but it also prepares you for college, taking the exams and making sure you stay on top of the work."

Denali's Social Capital

Denali's journey is indeed unconventional, nevertheless it is not insurmountable. When presented with a seemingly complex view of her academic trajectory, Denali persisted to graduation and leaned on every aspect of her social capital. A network of friends, a sense of trust and security by entrusting her high school to align her with the best possible academic pathway to complete her academic goals. Denali began to feel reassured that she would graduate from high school and not have to drop out. Her participation in the dual enrollment program helped Denali formulate a sense of belonging and through her experience.

The partnering institution, a predominately black institution afforded Denali an infrastructure to be successful. The articulation agreement allowed Denali to be a dual enrollment participant, whereas she was able to join a diverse network of highly motivated students and persist and graduate, which is the hallmark of measurable successful outcomes for the program.

Summary of the Stories

The researcher was able to connect the unique stories of the former dual enrollment participants, whilst finding common threads. A commonality that was substantiated through the participant stories is how students access dual enrollment programming at the partnering predominately black institution, and how, if at all are friends motivational or contributory factors. Most of the participants discussed that access was significant in the high school to college experience. Arguably, some schools are more proactive than others, however, access to school partnerships remains a vital part of undertaking dual enrollment. Another commonality amongst the participants is motivation, which was

articulated as students participating in dual enrollment are academically motivated for successful outcomes. Accessing dual enrollment programs varies by school, and school partnership. Participants looking to earn a college degree while simultaneously completing their high school requirements should consider the Smart Scholars program offered by the partnering college. Participants looking to earn up to 16 college-level credits and gain valuable college experience should consider the College Now program offered by the partnering college. Participants looking to earn industry specific credentials via certification should consider the STEAM program offered by the partnering college.

As each participant attended school in varying geographical locations in Brooklyn, New York, with different priorities and processes, understandably there were some differences amongst the student participants. One such area of significant notable difference was friends and motivation while participating in dual enrollment. In some schools, dual enrollment is heavily advertised and supported to all students. In other schools, it appears that filtration and selection (gatekeeping) may still be a method of concern. Nevertheless, Black students that have experienced dual enrollment have described in detail their perceptions as being a dual enrollment participant at a predominately Black institution in a central Brooklyn community. Additionally, Black dual enrollment student participants provide a descriptive narrative of how they understand the impact of the program and comprehending a sense of belonging on a college campus. Dual enrollment participant stories have been retold utilizing a framework to describe how students make meaning of their experiences related to college retention and success. Finally, through the lens of student narratives, students articulate

why Black students participate and persist in dual enrollment through a predominately Black institution.

Chapter 5 will further explore the findings related to the research questions and provide for a robust discussion surrounding the emerging themes; (a) access; (b) motivation; (c) friends; and (d) social capital, as described in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5

Findings

The purpose of this qualitative narrative research study was to identify how Black students perceive the experience of participating in a dual enrollment program at a predominately Black institution in a largely urban Brooklyn community. This chapter includes a discussion of major findings as related to the literature on the experiences of Black students who participate in dual enrollment programming at a predominately black institution. I also discuss connections to this study and various retention and sense of belonging frameworks. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study, areas for future research, implications for future practice, and a brief conclusion.

This chapter contains discussion and future research possibilities to help answer the research questions:

1. How do Black Students Perceive the Experience of Participating in a Dual Enrollment Program at a Predominately Black Institution in a Central Brooklyn Community?
2. How do Black student participants in a dual enrollment program understand a sense of belonging on a college campus?

a) Sub-question: How, if at all, do students make meaning of the experiences related to their college retention and success?

b) Sub-question: Why do Black students participate and persist in dual enrollment through a predominantly Black institution?

As outlined in Chapter 3, the method of data collection for this study was comprised of semi-structured interviews with five former dual enrollment student participants The data was analyzed, restoried (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell and Poth, 2002) and

compared using the constant comparison method (Glaser, 1965). How Black students describe the experience of dual enrollment participation, specifically at a predominately Black institution in a largely urban Brooklyn community. A thorough examination of the interview transcripts revealed emerging themes and were comprised as the following: (a) access; (b) motivation; (c) friends; and (d) social capital. These themes will be explored further through the research questions, as well as in relation to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guided this study.

Interpretation of the Findings

Research Question 1

The first research question in this study examined the relationship between black students' perception of the experience of being a dual enrollment student. The analysis of interview transcripts found that various stakeholders (i.e., students, parents/families, teachers, school officials, partnering institutions) play a large part in how students access dual enrollment for participation. All the students interviewed identified the high school officials as the key stakeholder. This relationship with stakeholders impacted the students' decision to apply to become a dual enrollment participant. For example, when describing the "recruitment process", most students indicated gaining access to dual enrollment from the guidance counselor, or in some cases, directly from the principal. Therefore, a reciprocal relationship is ideal between the student, school official and ultimately the partnering institution to ensure a seamless process for recruitment and access.

Many students described working with the school official to complete the application process. The guidance counselor helped in gathering advice, understanding

course offerings for the program, and finally, thoroughly reviewing the curriculum/program metrics and expected outcomes. Overall, the students expressed a feeling of comfort, or ease while navigating the recruitment process, submission of the application and comprehension of the dual enrollment curriculum and expected outcomes.

This finding supports Tinto's (1993) Retention Theory which focuses on student departure, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. Similarly, this supports Strayhorn's (2012) Sense of Belonging Theory. Under the Sense of Belonging theory, emphasis is placed on an individual's sense of identification or positioning in relation to a group or to the college community, which may yield an effective response.

The application of both theories reaffirms the students' academic identity, position, and role of the student. Students want to learn, do well and feel accepted amongst their peers, and within academic settings. This sense of role identity of the student affects degree or academic adjustments, achievement, aspirations, or even whether a student stays in school. In this case, the mission and vision to create a collaborative community of stakeholders that promote equity to access and visualize how students experience dual enrollment programming at a predominately Black institution.

Research Question 2

The second research question in this study examined the role of Black student participants in a dual enrollment program to better understand their sense of belonging on a college campus. My analysis found that friends play a large part in how students understand a sense of belonging. All the students acknowledged that friends are always at the center of their decision-making processes. They also expressed a need to keep

themselves constantly motivated, in most cases with the assistance of a network of friends and familiar community, with whatever decisions they made.

Most of the students interviewed agreed that one way to do this is to participate in dual enrollment with friends, thus creating a cohort/network of student participants. The students felt that motivation from peers exemplified the desire to continue and complete the program. The students also expressed that the partnering institution was a tremendous motivation factor by ensuring adequate resources were available to the participating students. Additionally, the students felt they needed to remain highly motivated for sustainability and retention efforts, which every student successfully achieved.

Some of the students indicated that they often felt pressure in time-management, thus completing assignments on-time. These same students went on to share that they benefited from acquiring time-management strategies and techniques from the partnering institution, which was a high priority in course completion while participating in the program. The application of these strategies allowed the student to remain motivated and complete the program, in a timely manner. Most students indicated that the partnering institution required students to submit assignments on time, and in all cases, the partnering institution treated dual enrollment students no different than traditional college students. Several students shared that during that time they heavily relied on one another, or their friends outside of the dual enrollment paradigm to remain motivated.

All the students expressed some level of applying social capital, by which students have different needs/wants. All the students indicated bonding networks, values, outlook in life and belonging as major attributes of their social capital. The students expressed a desire to complete the program while understanding their positioning and

impact on a college campus. The findings support Tinto's (1993) Retention theory, dual enrollment can retain students in college, but also assimilate students into a culture of higher education, while developing soft skills and socialization that accompanies every student pursuing a highly rigorous dual curriculum. Moreover, no support is more important to student retention than academic support. Social capital creates an environment so that the student can feel supported, acquire the needed skill sets, while applying values ascribed by family and culture. Similarly, this is aligned to Strayhorn's (2012) Sense of Belonging theory. Belonging is relational, and thus there's a reciprocal quality to relationships that provide a sense of belonging. Every member of the group, and the group itself, benefits from the contributions of each of its members. In this case, dual enrollment participants understand the responsibilities and expectations of what it means, and looks like, to participate in dual enrollment at the partnering Black institution.

Research Question 3

The third research question in this study examined how students make meaning of the experiences related to their college retention and success. The analysis of interview transcripts found that dual enrollment participation at a predominately black institution impacted the decision-making process to complete the program, and ultimately enroll into college. The students unanimously agree that accessing dual enrollment programming at the partnering institution was the first step in accelerating their higher education career. By focusing on their college experience, the successful outcome of program completion underscored the transition from taking college classes while still in high school, to graduating high school, and ultimately enrolling in a college of their choice.

All the students were able to think of several examples of times when the partnering institution positively impacted their experiences. Some examples they shared included being a marginalized student with a dimmer outlook on higher education. As a result of the student participation, as well as the experience, the student changed the trajectory and enrolled into college and became a student mentor. Another example is accelerating the time to attaining professional industry credentials, thus earning an associate degree, or vocational certification/credentials while simultaneously fulfilling the high school requirements. The last example includes student persistence to graduation and credit make-up, while concurrently earning a high school diploma, with valedictorian honors, thus earning the associate in education degree.

This finding supports Tinto's (1993) Retention Theory by which high schools can change their environment by supporting student departure, creating an environment that students can see themselves thriving and exceling, by investing in their academics with high rigor curriculums, thus transitioning eligible students to participate in dual enrollment. Students will feel a sense of belonging to the institution, students "see themselves" as scholars and current and future college students. Similarly, Strayhorn's (2012) Sense of Belonging Theory underscores the role identity of the student, which may affect degree or academic adjustments, achievement, aspirations, or even whether a student stays in school.

Relationship to Prior Research

Chapter 2 included a breakdown of research regarding access to dual enrollment, precollege transition/college readiness, post-secondary achievement, and disproportionality. Research by Giani et al. (2014) investigated the impacts of dual credit

courses on postsecondary access, first-to-second year persistence, and eventual college attainment. The findings of this study suggest that dual credit may influence postsecondary outcomes as it relates to sociocultural impact of taking college courses in high school, including how to navigate postsecondary institutions, becoming familiar with the academic demands of college courses, and interacting with students that are currently enrolled in postsecondary. The researchers indicated the additional effect is the cumulative impact of completing college level courses. My research supports the findings presented by (Giani et al., 2014). Highly motivated students that are participating in dual enrollment transition into college after successfully completing the dual enrollment program. As suggested by the data analysis, students are gaining access to dual enrollment via a school official. In all cases, the students discussed being prepared for college, thus successfully transitioning into college post high school completion. In addition, students described high rigor academics as preparation for post-secondary achievement. Finally, the notion of disproportionality, as it relates to dual enrollment access, was not supported.

Additionally, Duncheon (2020) explored how recruitment and selection process impacts access to early college programs at a participating local community college. The theory behind early college programs is to admit high school students who may struggle to access and/or persist in higher education and give them a jumpstart with college coursework (Duncheon, 2020). My research supports the findings presented by (Duncheon, 2020). All participants gained access to dual enrollment from a school official. Navigating the recruitment process did not present any challenges as indicated

by the data analysis. All participants that gained access participated at the partnering college- a predominately Black institution.

In the study by Cherney et al. (2020) was to determine if early college programs, particularly those with a focus on equity and student support, can provide high school students with exemplary preparation for college, as well as college credits that can be used to reduce time to degree and college costs. The study also aimed to underscore the key metrics: (a) early college programs; and (b) eventual college enrollment. My research supports the findings presented by the researchers. All students that participated in dual enrollment indicated that they received college credits, acquired strategies for college readiness, and enrolled into college, full-time, after dual enrollment/high school completion. In addition, all students indicated that there was no cost to them, or their family while participating in the dual enrollment program. My research affirms prior research that there is a financial incentive as a dual enrollment student participant, as it relates to the cost of college tuition, transportation expenses, and supplemental material, such as course textbooks et al. The research has suggested that dual enrollment can provide access to higher education, while preparing high school students for departure, and successfully enrolling in college for post-secondary achievement. In some cases, the data analysis demonstrates that some dual enrollment participants, upon completion of the program, earned post-secondary credentials.

In this quantitative study by Rivera et al. (2019), the authors examined dual enrollment participation in the United States and the current policy context to understand the distribution of dual enrollment access. The major findings resulted in participants differing in demographics such as gender, race, and SES as well as achievement levels.

This study suggests that dual enrollment participation is not evenly distributed (disproportionality) as it relates to access. The impact of access creates a disparity among varying groups. Black students have been historically underrepresented in DE access. The literature demonstrates underrepresented students, i.e., Black and Brown students are highly absent from dual enrollment access and distribution. My research firmly supports this study. An analysis of the data revealed students who participated in dual enrollment in Central Brooklyn were all Black students from underrepresented backgrounds and neighborhoods. In some cases, students in selected geographical locations in Brooklyn received greater access to three varying dual enrollment programs, whereas in other locations in Brooklyn, students were given only one programmatic choice.

Overall, this study supports Tinto's (1993) Retention Theory and Strahorn's (2012) Sense of Belonging Theory in that it demonstrates the role of student retention, success, while providing a sense of belonging. These synthesized theories provided foundational beginnings for the literature review and connects to my research. These synthesized theories underscore this phenomenon of dual enrollment and Black students gaining access in central Brooklyn, New York, are increasingly taking advantage of a program that accelerates college access and post-secondary achievement.

Limitations

Due to the nature of the research questions, the researcher suggests that a qualitative approach was best suited to this study. Interviews were used as the sole research tool, which by design, is open to interpretation. This study might have had more credibility if an additional qualitative tool was used, such as document analysis, or with the addition of a quantitative component. For example, including a survey, which would

allow for statistical analysis, may offer more generalizable evidence to strengthen the data gathered juxtaposed to exclusive qualitative research methods.

Another limitation of this study is related to the small sample size. This study is not generalizable, and narratives from participants from different backgrounds may describe their experiences in alternative ways. Although each geographic location was unique and demographically diverse, the proximity of their geographic location and region provides similarities that might be different for participants across the country. Having a larger participant size, as well as the opportunity to interview participants from other boroughs, would have allowed for more generalization across and throughout the data.

Additionally, this study was limited in that it only interviewed the participants once, and in a short span of time. This study might have benefited from a case-study analysis approach, where each participant was analyzed in-depth over a longer period, such as throughout an entire academic semester. This also would have built more trust and candor between the researcher and participant. If the researcher was able to observe the participants in action, there would have been an added layer of depth to the study.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of this study, recommendations for future research indicate that more research is needed regarding dual enrollment programs, specifically partnering with predominantly Black institutions. Additionally, how these programs are preparing students to navigate the college experience for retention, post-secondary achievement, and success. This would develop a more ideal selection (choice) process, and ultimately

result in new, and new to dual enrollment programming, thus being more successful in program access and completion.

Student participants admit to having missteps in accessing and selecting a dual enrollment program early in the process. To this end, students should be afforded a formal mentor at the partnering institution. Prior to exiting the dual enrollment program, participants should undergo an outtake process where they can review what they learned and comprehend the practice and soft- skills that should have been newly acquired from the process. This assessment should be observed by a formal mentor, or faculty advisor- ideally a college graduate with extensive dual enrollment programming experience. In addition, new student participants are provided with a mentor. While the mentoring process might vary by district/school, it is a formal process with scheduled meetings and a targeted level of support that is ongoing throughout the students' time in the program.

Finally, I would suggest future research regarding whether a structure of support needs to be in place for any new/new to dual enrollment student participants (stakeholders) to be as effective with successful outcomes as possible.

Recommendations for Future Practice

The findings from this study contribute to the existing literature about the impact of dual enrollment on college access, pre-college transition/college readiness, post-secondary achievement, and disproportionality. Additionally, these findings can be used by school leaders, districts, and institutions of higher education as they prepare Black transitioning high school students to be fully equipped for the college experience, particularly at a predominately Black institution.

As a result of the data generated in this research, a new dual enrollment framework can be established. This differs from existing frameworks in that it is based on input from the students, who had the experience, and the unique stakeholders involved. This framework can provide dual enrollment students, new and experienced, with a process to ensure they are fully thinking each scenario, considering the wants and needs of all stakeholders, working towards a particular goal, and reaffirming their self-identities by understanding their roles, and comprehension of their social capital.

The first step in the process is to identify the appropriate dual enrollment program, that is the ideal fit for the student/stakeholders. The second step is examined from the perspective of multiple stakeholders (students, parents/families, teachers, school officials, partnering institutions). For each group of stakeholders, proper consideration should be given to what each specific group wants and/or needs. Numerous solutions should be identified and considered. For each solution, pros and cons should be identified from the perspective of each unique group of stakeholders, as well as a plan to address and mitigate any anticipated concerns. There should not be a one-size-fits-all model, but rather a cohesive conversation and assessment, resulting in the appropriate action plan. Solutions (programs) should then be ranked from most to least effective/ideal; given the background of the student participant. The final step is to collectively select the option (program) that aligns most with the student's academic and professional trajectory/path and provide a rationale for why the identified solution (program) will have the best outcome.

Recommendations for future practice indicate that students and their stakeholders must develop effective strategies to be successful in the dual enrollment programming.

Student participants must take their time and think through their decisions clearly and purposefully. Additional strategies to assist student participants in accessing the ideal program include receiving feedback from stakeholders, speaking to former student participants and consulting with the school officials (guidance counselor, principal, or partnering college personnel).

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative narrative research study was to identify how Black students perceive the experience of participating in a dual enrollment program at a predominately Black institution in a central Brooklyn community. Dual enrollment students have a difficult job. Their job is to be high school students during the day, and conversely, a college student in the afternoon/weekend, in most cases. Most significantly, the job of a dual enrollment student is impacted by school and program choice. The study sought to answer the following research questions: 1) How do Black Students Perceive the Experience of Participating in a Dual Enrollment Program at a Predominately Black Institution in a Central Brooklyn Community? 2) How do Black student participants in a dual enrollment program understand a sense of belonging on a college campus? 3) Sub-question: How, if at all, do students make meaning of the experiences related to their college retention and success? 4)Sub-question: Why do Black students participate and persist in dual enrollment through a predominantly Black institution?

The participants in this study provided personal and invaluable insight into their experiences while participating in the dual enrollment program. Dual enrollment participants described the experiences of accessing and navigating dual enrollment, understanding a sense of belonging on a college campus, in addition to making meaning

of the experiences related to college retention and success, because of being a dual enrollment student. Finally, dual enrollment students described their experiences of being Black and continually persisting through the partnering predominately Black institution.

All the participants interviewed credit the experience of the dual enrollment program as a successful framework for enrolling into college. All the participants interviewed enrolled into the college of their choice and continued their journey of achieving successful outcomes of a post-secondary credential.

EPILOGUE

This research has been personal, a Labor of Love, that has been guided by my research biases and my positionality. My reflexivity response has afforded me to pursue this research to provide the necessary checks and balances, while applying the best research design/methodology to amplify the theoretical frameworks, prior research, and the many student participant voices of my research. From the research lens, I am considered an Indigenous-Insider – which has the perspective and the knowledge that will promote the well-being of the community, enhance its power, and enable it to maintain cultural integrity and survive. My positionality can be utilized to enhance my standing in the community as an insider, someone that can be trusted. Simply put, I have grown up and navigated in the communities to which this body of work seeks to address. I have been denied opportunities for a better tomorrow, as a result this journey of educational research began. This is the new 2.0 epistemology of dual enrollment education. Arm yourself with education, and always remember to pay it forward!

APPENDIX A IRB APPROVAL MEMO

From: do-not-reply@cayuse.com <do-not-reply@cayuse.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 11, 2024 2:33:57 PM
To: Jamell Brady <jamell.brady18@my.stjohns.edu>; kotoks@stjohns.edu <kotoks@stjohns.edu>
Subject: IRB-FY2024-172 - Initial: Initial - Expedited - St. John's

* External Email *

Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

Feb 11, 2024 2:33:57 PM EST

PI: Jamell Brady
CO-PI: Stephen Kotok
The School of Education, Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Expedited Review - Initial - **IRB-FY2024-172** *Dual Enrollment Re-Imagined: A Narrative Study Examining How Black Students Perceive the Experience of Participating in a Dual Enrollment Program at a Predominately Black Institution in a Central Brooklyn Community*

Dear Jamell Brady:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for *Dual Enrollment Re-Imagined: A Narrative Study Examining How Black Students Perceive the Experience of Participating in a Dual Enrollment Program at a Predominately Black Institution in a Central Brooklyn Community*. The approval is effective from February 11, 2024 through February 9, 2025.

Decision: Approved

PLEASE NOTE: If you have collected any data prior to this approval date, the data must be discarded.

Selected Category: 7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior

(including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Sincerely,

Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Professor of Psychology
This email may contain proprietary, confidential and/or privileged material for the sole use of the intended recipient(s). Any review, use, distribution or disclosure by others is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient (or authorized to receive for the recipient), please contact the sender by reply email and delete all copies of this message.

APPENDIX B INFORMED CONSENT

St. John's University

School of Education

8000 Utopia Parkway

Queens, New York 11439

Title of Research Project: Dual Enrollment Re-Imagined: A Narrative Study Examining How Black Students Perceive the Experience of Participating in a Dual Enrollment Program at a Predominately Black Institution in a Central Brooklyn Community

Researcher: Jamell S. Brady

Dr. Steve Kotok- kotoks@stjohns.edu

Institution: St. John's University, Jamaica, NY

Introduction:
I am a doctoral student at St. John's University. The purpose of the research study is to understand how Black students perceive the experience of participating in a dual enrollment program at a predominately black institution (PBI) in a central Brooklyn community

Procedures:
In this study, data collection will consist of interviews. I will ask you questions about your experiences as a participant of a dual enrollment program. I will conduct a 30-45 minute interview. Before the interview, I will review your rights as a participant and ask to audiotape the interview. The dual enrollment program participant will be involved in the data collection process.

Possible risks or benefits:
There are no known risks associated with participation in this study. The duration of your time will be of great value for this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation are the experiences shared as a dual enrollment participant, future research

related to participant experience at a partnering PBI. This research may inform your peers and community regarding dual enrollment and the associated experiences.

Payment/Compensation for Participation
No monetary compensation will be provided to you for participation in the study.

Confidentiality:
As a participant in the research study, confidentiality is of true significant concern. In keeping with my ethical training, your name and identity will remain anonymous. At any time, the participant may voluntarily withdraw from the interview. If participants become overwhelmed, participants may take a break or continue at their own pace. Participants may decide which questions they choose to answer. Participants will be contacted with the dates and times for the interview. If participants have questions after reviewing this consent, please do not hesitate to ask. Participants may also direct further questions or clarification about the study to the Dissertation Chair, Dr. Stephen Kotok, via email at kotoks@stjohns.edu or by phone at 718-990-2654. All questions concerning participants' rights should be directed to Dr. Raymond DiGiuseppe, Chair of the University's Institutional Review Board, at St. John's University at digiuser@sthohns.edu or via phone at 718-990-1955.
If participants have questions about the study or require clarity or further information concerning participation, they may contact Jamell S. Brady at 347-392-1276 or via email at Jamell.Brady18@stjohns.edu or jmllsbrady@gmail.com

Please sign consent as acknowledgement of the nature and purpose as stated. A copy of this consent will be furnished for your record keeping.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant **Date**

_____ _____

Email address **Phone**

_____ _____

Signature of Researcher **Date**

APPENDIX C INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

St. John's University

School of Education

8000 Utopia Parkway

Queens, New York 11439

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer: Jamell S. Brady

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

The purpose of this interview is to understand how dual enrollment is re-imagined: This study is A narrative study examining how black students perceive the experience of participating in a dual enrollment program at a predominately black institution(PBI) in a Central Brooklyn Community. Your name and identity will remain anonymous. During the duration of this study, you may voluntarily stop your participation at any time. I would like to review with you the letter of consent

LETTER OF CONSENT FORM:

Share the form and secure the required signatures. Begin the recording. (Press

RECORD!)

Background Information- Please tell me about yourself.

Dual Enrollment Student Participant

1. Can you tell me what your college-level classification is (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior?
2. Can you tell me how you gained access to dual enrollment- what did the recruitment process look like?
3. What made the difference in choosing dual enrollment vs traditional courses at the high school level?
4. Can you describe in detail what was the experience of dual enrollment for you; from start to where you currently are?
5. Can you discuss how you balance this new identity of taking college classes while being a high school student?
6. After successfully navigating through dual enrollment programming, can you speak to how it prepared you for college, academically and socially?
7. Can you tell me a story of how dual enrollment may or may not benefit students financially?
8. Can you discuss how your peers motivated you, or how you motivated your peers while participating in dual enrollment?
9. Tell me a story about the challenges you encountered in the first year of participation?
10. Can you discuss how, if at all, participating in dual enrollment at a predominately black institution lead you to going to college full-time after high school graduation?

11. Can you tell me in detail whether or not you would recommend participating in dual enrollment to a peer or family member?
12. Can you describe why do you think more Black students are not participating in dual enrollment?
13. Can you describe the experience of taking classes on a college campus- how did that look and feel?
14. Can you describe how to improve dual enrollment?
15. Is there anything you may want to tell me about your experience of dual enrollment that I did not cover, or overlooked?

The interview questions will assist me in answering my Research Question(s) for this study:

RQ1: How do Black Students Perceive the Experience of Participating in a Dual Enrollment Program at a Predominately Black Institution in a Central Brooklyn Community?

RQ2: How do Black student participants in a dual enrollment program understand a sense of belonging on a college campus?

Sub-question: How, if at all, do students make meaning of the experiences related to their college retention and success?

Sub-question: Why do Black students participate and persist in dual enrollment through a predominately Black institution?

CONCLUSION:

Thank you so very much for sharing your thoughts with me today. I really do appreciate you taking the time out to answer my questions. Your answers will be very helpful with

my research study. How do you feel about the interview? Do you have any final thoughts or do you have any questions for me before we end? Whom should I talk to in order to learn more? Truly appreciate your time and efforts, thank you very much.

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