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Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF UPWARD BOUND ON POSTSECONDARY
SUCCESS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Marilyn E. Ingram

April, 2018

Reyna Garcia-Ramos, Ph.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my work to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for it is in him that I live, move, and have my being. This dissertation process has indeed been a journey, but just as in times past, The Lord saw me through. For this, I am grateful.

I would also like to dedicate my work to my loved ones who went home to be with The Lord before I was able to complete my journey. To my Grandma Lee, Grandma Gladys, Aunt Grace, Aunt Phyllis, Jamey Cunningkin, and my precious Angelo Mack, I did it! I finally finished! To God Be the Glory!

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“Now thanks be unto God who always causes us to triumph in Christ...” (2 Corinthians 2:14).

This dissertation process has indeed been a journey; one filled with many peaks and even more valleys. One thing I can say is that my God has never failed me. He saw me through this journey, just as he has done in times past. For this Lord, I say thank you.

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Finally, to my friends: You all have stuck by me through thick and thin. Thank you for being you.

VITA

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ABSTRACT

As the achievement gap between African American and Latino students and their White counterparts continues to grow, lawmakers are searching for ways to decrease the disparity. College access programs with a focus on improving basic skills and strengthening academic achievement have become essential to fostering student success. Upward Bound is one of the longest running federally funded college access programs, and its success and effectiveness have been the focus of several studies, although very little qualitative phenomenological research exists solely devoted to student perceptions. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand the impact of Upward Bound, and its relation to postsecondary success, from the perspective of former program participants. Eight former Upward Bound participants completed the data collection process, which included completing a demographic survey and participating in a 60-minute interview that consisted of 16 open-ended questions. The study took place on the campus of a public community college in a large urban city in Southern California. Key findings of this study indicated that tutoring, summer college classes, workshops, field trips to college campuses, motivation, and attention beyond high school from program staff were significant in helping students achieve postsecondary success. The conclusion of the study indicated that the participants believed that Upward Bound had a positive influence on their decision to go to college and ultimately helped them achieve postsecondary success.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of Study

Lawmakers have sought to implement measures that would level the playing field between African American and Latino students and their White counterparts for decades, thereby closing the achievement gap. Reform attempts began in the 1960s, during the time of the civil rights struggle, and have continued through the present. The civil rights struggle and the War on Poverty led President Lyndon B. Johnson and his administration to enact the Economic Opportunity Act (Davies, 1992). The Economic Opportunity Act paved the way for a series of outreach programs designed to maximize educational opportunities for low-income and potential first-generation college students by providing support services to help them matriculate through the education pipeline and to pursue and complete postsecondary education programs.

With the help of outreach programs and other measures, the gaps in student achievement seemed to “narrow rapidly from the 1960s until the 1980s” (Taylor, 2006, p. 76); however, the crux of the problem still appeared to exist. In 1981, President Ronald Reagan commissioned U.S. Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell to write up a report highlighting the quality of education in America. As a result, Secretary Bell created the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Following an 18-month study, the National Commission on Excellence in Education published its findings in an open letter to the American people entitled, *A Nation at Risk*. The report declared, “The educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people” (U.S. Department of Education, 1983, p. 9). Also included in the report was statistical evidence that lent support to the claim that the American education system was rapidly declining. According to the findings, “some 23 million American adults are functionally illiterate by the simplest test of

everyday reading, writing, and comprehension” (p. 11). The report also indicated that about “13 percent of all 17-year-olds in the United States can be considered functionally illiterate” (U.S. Department of Education, 1983, p. 11). As a result of the findings, the commission recommended adding five new basics to the curriculum in American schools. The basics included 4 years of English, 3 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social studies, and one half year of computer science. Two years in a foreign language were also recommended for students planning to attend college (U.S. Department of Education, 1983).

Despite the initial fervor surrounding *A Nation at Risk*, the report did not lead to many far-reaching changes (Graham, 2013). Though some changes were made, progress stalled and began to reverse in the 1990s (Jencks & Phillips, 1998, as cited in Taylor, 2006). Researchers at the U.S. Department of Education found, “Of 20 children born in 1983, six did not graduate from high school on time in 2001. Of the remaining 14 who did, 10 started college that fall, but only five had earned a bachelor’s degree after 5 years” (Graham, 2013, p. 2). As a result, new laws concerning education were written and enacted, and Goals 2000 was one of these laws.

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act was enacted by the Clinton administration on March 31, 1994. The law sought to improve learning and teaching by providing a national framework for educational reform (U.S. Department of Education, 1994). Unlike other legislation, this act did not target or highlight any one group of students or subject area; rather, it provided resources to states and communities to ensure all students reached their full potential (Paris, 1994). Policy makers believed federal dollars needed to be tied to measurable gains in student performance (Rudalevige, 2003). The federal authorization for Goals 2000 was officially withdrawn in December 2001, which paved the way for the Bush administration’s No Child Left Behind Act.

No Child Left Behind was the result of a standards-and-testing movement that began following the release of the *A Nation at Risk* report. Signed into law on January 8, 2002, the No Child Left Behind initiative was actually a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which was another education initiative enacted as a result of President Johnson's War on Poverty (Rudalevige, 2003). The goal of No Child Left Behind was to achieve student proficiency in reading and mathematics across all states and to close academic achievement gaps between identifiable subgroups of U.S. students (Lee & Reeves, 2012). The goal of No Child Left Behind was to "address the issue of the achievement gap—and to a lesser degree, gaps caused by poverty, disability, and language)—by expanding federal control of schools and holding public schools responsible for eliminating achievement disparities" (Taylor, 2006, p. 78). Under No Child Left Behind, each state was required to make continuous and substantial progress toward the goal of academic proficiency for all students. Congress believed that forcing all U.S. public schools to conform to high-stakes accountability measures would cause students' academic achievement to improve based on the pressure caused by the newly enacted policies.

Despite the efforts made, large portions of No Child Left Behind were problematic (Klein, 2015). Although later amended, one major flaw in the original plan was states were not given deadlines on when proficiency should be reached. Other noted weaknesses were individual states had the liberty to decide what proficiency should look like, and federal funds were not withheld from states that did not meet their proficiency benchmark (Klein, 2015). An assessment of the program in 2015 showed that none of the states succeeded in having all its students reach proficiency (Klein, 2015). As a result of the multiple flaws identified in No Child Left Behind, the Obama administration began giving states waivers that would allow them to be released from

the mandates connected to the No Child Left Behind law, and on December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act replaced the defunct No Child Left Behind initiative.

The Every Student Succeeds Act is the newest version of the Elementary and Secondary Act. Signed into law by President Obama, the Every Student Succeeds Act removed the federal government's influence in education policy and placed the responsibility on the individual states (Klein, 2015). The Every Student Succeeds Act took effect in the 2017–2018 school year. President Obama and his administration believed that every student deserves a world-class education that will help them compete in the global economy (Executive Office of the President, 2015). Main points of the Every Student Succeeds Act are as follows:

- ensure states set high standards,
- maintain accountability,
- empower state and local decision makers,
- preserve annual assessments and reduce unnecessary and ineffective testing,
- provide more children access to high-quality preschool, and
- establish new resources to test promising practices.

Even with the various reform attempts and laws passed, gaps in educational achievement continue to persist from elementary school through higher education. According to the Education Trust, college completion rates for African Americans are 20% lower than for their White peers (as cited in Taylor, 2006). Ethnic minority students entering institutions of higher education are often underprepared and, as a result, do not persist in or complete their programs of study.

Purpose of Study

Upward Bound is one of the longest running federally funded college access programs, and its success and effectiveness are important. A mechanism exists to ensure programs meet

annual objectives and benchmarks. Researchers have conducted countless small-scale studies on Upward Bound program success as well as two large-scale longitudinal studies. The focus of the majority of these studies was current Upward Bound participants or staff.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand the impact of Upward Bound, as it relates to postsecondary success, from the perspective of former program participants. Consequently, the researcher hopes this study will help Upward Bound program leaders to strengthen program services by taking into consideration some of the takeaways and experiences shared by former students who completed the program and a postsecondary education program, thereby achieving academic success. The findings can potentially be considered during future Upward Bound grant competitions.

Importance of Study

Upward Bound, a federally funded TRiO program, provides academic support opportunities for participants to succeed in their precollege performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). The goal of Upward Bound is to bridge the widening gap between secondary and postsecondary institutions among low-income, potential first-generation college students by continuing to develop the whole student. Since its inception, Upward Bound has been consistent in its goal to improve the lives of its participants by providing access to resources and services that would otherwise be unavailable due to socioeconomic status and other barriers (Thomas, 2014).

Unlike several existing research studies on the various aspects and attributes of Upward Bound, the focus of this research study was on the perspectives and experiences of former students who completed the program and achieved postsecondary success. Postsecondary success, as defined in this study, occurs when students culminate high school, enroll in college

the first semester following high school completion, persist in their postsecondary program of study, and attain a bachelor's degree within 5 years of their first enrollment date. A goal of this study was to expand the body of literature on the impact of Upward Bound on student success, as well as provide valuable information that may be used to strengthen the practices of existing programs and enable program improvements and student outcomes.

Definition of Terms

Definitions of terms used throughout the study include the following:

Academic enrichment programs. Programs that mentor, tutor, and provide support for traditionally underprepared students (Davis & Davidson, 1982).

Achievement gap. The racial disparity in school performance that is most often evident in standardized test scores, grades, graduation rates, college completion, and career tracking (Taylor, 2006).

At risk. A term used within universities to identify students not perceived as likely to succeed academically because of factors associated with socioeconomic status, family variables, and academic deficiencies.

College access programs. Precollege interventions that identify increasing college readiness or college enrollment as a primary goal of the program (Harvill et al., 2012).

Compensatory education. Educational programs intended to make up for experiences lacked by disadvantaged children ("Compensatory Education," 2016).

Early intervention program. An outreach program designed to affect student persistence toward high school graduation and enrollment in postsecondary education (Fenske, Geranios, Keller, & Moore, 1997).

Economically disadvantaged. A family or individual eligible (a) for Aid to Families with Dependent Children under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act, (b) for benefits under the Food Stamp Act of 1977, (c) to be counted for purposes of Section 1005 of Chapter 1 of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and (d) for the free or reduced-price meals program under the National School Lunch Act.

Evaluation. To determine the significance, worth, or condition of usually by careful appraisal and study (“Evaluation,” 2016).

Federally funded program. Any federal program, project, service, and activity provided by the federal government that directly assist domestic governments, organizations, or individuals in the areas of education, health, public safety, public welfare, and public works (U.S. Office of Management and Budget, 2016).

First generation. A student whose parents’ highest level of education is a high school diploma or less (Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998).

Low income. An individual whose family income for the preceding year did not exceed 150% of the poverty level amount (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Parental involvement. Parent participation in the educational processes and experiences of their children with the purpose of promoting academic and social success (Fishel & Ramirez, 2005; Jeynes, 2007).

Persistence. The quality that allows someone to continue doing something or trying to do something, even though it is difficult or opposed by other people (“Persistence,” 2016).

Postsecondary education. An instructional program with a curriculum designed for students who complete the requirement for a high school diploma or its equivalent (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005).

Rigorous curriculum. The rigorous curriculum design model includes the following aligned components organized into a series of sequenced units of study: clear learning outcomes, aligned formative assessments, engaging learning experiences, and differentiated instructional strategies (“Hidden Curriculum,” 2014).

Socioeconomic status. An individual’s relative standing regarding income, level of education, employment, health, and access to resources (U.S. Social Security Office of Policy Research and Analysis, n.d.).

TRiO Programs. The TRiO Programs are federal outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRiO includes eight programs targeted to serve and assist low-income individuals, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to postbaccalaureate programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Underrepresented. Racial and ethnic populations disproportionately lower in number relative to their number in the general population (Roan, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

Programs that have a consistent focus on academic enrichment and preparation for higher education are essential for a large sector of urban youth. Davis and Davidson (1982) defined academic enrichment programs as programs that mentor, tutor, and provide support for traditionally underprepared students. These programs, which typically serve minority youth living in low-income neighborhoods, help develop the skills, knowledge, confidence, and aspirations needed to pursue and enroll in higher education (Oesterreich, 2000). Although there are many elements of academic enrichment programs, the most important element is their ability

to provide students with the information and experiences necessary for postsecondary attainment (Oesterreich, 2000). An effective program will include a variety of strategies to offer students different types of experiences. These strategies include direct teaching in a variety of content areas, summer enrichment programs, individual and group counseling, tutoring, college visits and courses, and peer and adult mentoring (Oesterreich, 2000). Upward Bound leaders have consistently employed these strategies in the curriculum.

Many programs are geared toward helping students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds become stronger academically. Commonly referred to as academic enrichment programs or outreach programs, these programs were referred to as college access programs in this study. According to Fenske et al. (1997), the most effective college access programs geared toward college preparation focus on readiness rather than remediation. Programs that encourage students to take college classes and advanced high school classes are essential for many high school students attending urban schools where advanced placement courses in English, history, and science, as well as higher level math courses such as trigonometry, calculus, and precalculus, are not typically available (Howard, 2010).

Upward Bound is a program that has been consistent in its goal to improve the lives of its participants by providing access to resources and services that would otherwise be unavailable due to socioeconomic status and other barriers (Thomas, 2014). Originally considered a compensatory education program aimed at solving social, economic, and psychological problems (Butler & Gipson, 1975), Upward Bound provides resources, such as tutoring, mentoring, educational advisement, and access to technology, to eligible students in an effort to help them persist and achieve at a higher level than they would otherwise (Jager-Hyman, 2004). Upward Bound aspires to bridge the widening gap between secondary and postsecondary institutions

among low-income, potential first-generation college students by continuing to develop the whole student. Personal counseling, social development, cultural awareness, and exposure to college life are critical to the development of successful students (Thorngren, Downey, & Nelson, 2006). By laying a foundation for academic success, Upward Bound empowers its participants to be successful beyond high school and in postsecondary careers.

Research Questions

Four research questions served as guides for data collection and analysis. The following research questions were designed to gather individual responses from participants regarding the impact of Upward Bound on their postsecondary success:

Research Question 1: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants?

Research Question 2: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants' academic achievement?

Research Question 3: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants' postsecondary completion?

Research Question 4: What aspects of the Upward Bound program did participants perceive as most effective in preparing for postsecondary success?

Limitations

This phenomenological study on the impact of Upward Bound was based on the following limitations:

1. The study was limited to students who participated in Upward Bound during the 2010 and 2011 graduation cohorts.

2. The study was limited to students who participated in Upward Bound and obtained a high school diploma.
3. The study was limited to students who participated in Upward Bound and enrolled in a 4-year university the fall semester immediately following high school completion.
4. The study was limited to students who participated in Upward Bound and completed their bachelor's degree.

Delimitations

This phenomenological study on the impact of Upward Bound was based on the following delimitations:

1. This study did not include students who did not complete the Upward Bound program during the 2010 or 2011 graduation cohorts.
2. This study did not include students who completed the Upward Bound program during the graduation 2010 or 2011 cohorts who enrolled in 2-year institutions.
3. This study did not include students who did not enroll in a 4-year university the fall semester immediately following high school completion.

Assumptions

The phenomenological study on the impact of Upward Bound was based on the following assumptions:

1. Students are better prepared for college upon completion of Upward Bound.
2. Each individual invited to participate in the study will accept the invitation and complete the process.
3. Study participants will be honest when answering interview questions.

Organization of Study

This paper consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 included the background of the study; the purpose and importance of the study; and the limitations, delimitations, and assumptions of the study. Also included in this chapter were the theoretical framework, definitions, and research questions. Chapter 2 includes a review of the literature used in this study. Focus areas include an examination of existing college access programs and a thorough overview of Upward Bound, including the program's history. The chapter concludes with an examination of some of the factors that low-income first-generation students typically face. Chapter 3 includes discussions on the research design, research questions, and data collection techniques and procedures. Attention is also given to how the data were managed and analyzed. Chapter 4 provides a presentation of the study's findings, and Chapter 5 includes a summary of the study and recommendations for future Upward Bound studies.

Summary

Chapter 1 began with a brief history of outreach programs created as a means to address the achievement gap. Closing the achievement gap has been on the agendas of many policy makers and stakeholders for decades. As a result, many measures, laws, and programs have been introduced to address the growing problem in schools. President Lyndon B. Johnson and his administration enacted the Economic Opportunity Act to address the learning disparities faced by low-income and potential first-generation college students. From this act, outreach programs such as Upward Bound emerged. No Child Left Behind emerged as a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 2002 and was enacted as a result of the War on Poverty. However, even with the implementation of outreach programs and other measures, the achievement gap continues to widen. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness

of one outreach program, Upward Bound, on postsecondary success from the perspective of former students.

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature

This chapter includes a review of research related to student success and college access programs, particularly the attributes of the federally funded Upward Bound program. The aim of this study was to understand what participants who experienced this college access program perceived to have helped them achieve success in their postsecondary educational experience. This literature review includes three sections. The chapter begins with an examination of existing college access programs and their unique approaches. The focus of the second section is a historical account of Upward Bound and the criteria for participation, including eligibility requirements, student needs assessments, services provided, program funding, outcomes, and the current state of the program. The third section includes an examination of the types of barriers typically faced by low-income first-generation students during their educational journey. In particular, the common barriers faced by underrepresented students in their quest toward achieving academic success during the high school years and beyond receive special attention. Figure 1 shows the subtopics as they relate to student success.

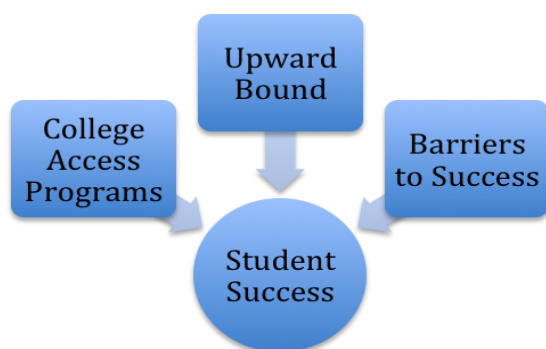


Figure 1. Student success.

Theoretical Framework

The mounting gap in educational achievement between White and non-White students has been well documented, with many researchers attributing this disparity to low socioeconomic

status. According to Jager-Hyman (2004), gaps in academic achievement by race and income are most likely the result of an uneven distribution of resources to children from various backgrounds. The socioeconomic status of the general population of the high school a student attends also has an impact on a student's achievement (Rumberger, 2011). In many cases, students who come from low socioeconomic households lack the family support, educational resources, and motivation needed to achieve on a level comparable to their counterparts from higher socioeconomic households. Despite a plethora of policy and school reform initiatives created to reduce the achievement gap between White and non-White students, underachievement persists and shows little signs of dissipating (Howard, 2010). For this reason, programs created to address the uneven playing field are an essential resource for underrepresented students (Vargas, 2004). Participation in these programs can help balance the lack of resources and experiences afforded to underrepresented students, as well as provide an opportunity to attain greater educational success.

Programs that consistently focus on academic enrichment and preparation for higher education are essential for many urban youth. Davis and Davidson (1982) defined academic enrichment programs as programs used to mentor, tutor, and provide support for traditionally underprepared students. These programs, which typically serve minority youth living in low-income neighborhoods, help develop the skills, knowledge, confidence, and aspirations needed to pursue and enroll in higher education (Oesterreich, 2000). Although there are many elements of academic enrichment programs, the most important element is the ability to provide students with the information and experiences necessary for postsecondary attainment (Oesterreich, 2000). An effective program will include a variety of strategies to offer students different types of experiences. These strategies include direct teaching in a variety of content areas, summer

enrichment programs, individual and group counseling, tutoring, college visits and courses, and peer and adult mentoring (Oesterreich, 2000). Upward Bound leaders have consistently employed these strategies in the curriculum.

Many programs have a goal of helping students from low socioeconomic backgrounds become stronger academically. Although commonly referred to as academic enrichment programs or outreach programs, the term used for these programs in this study is college access programs. According to Fenske et al. (1997), the most effective college access programs geared toward college preparation have a focus on readiness rather than remediation. Programs that encourage students to take college classes and advanced high school classes are essential for many high school students attending urban schools where advanced placement courses in English, history, and science, as well as higher level math courses such as trigonometry, calculus, and precalculus, are not typically available (Howard, 2010).

Upward Bound is a program that has been consistent in its goal to improve the lives of its participants by providing access to resources and services that would otherwise be unavailable due to socioeconomic status and other barriers. Once considered a compensatory education program aimed at solving social, economic, and psychological problems (Butler & Gipson, 1975), Upward Bound is now identified as a program that promotes educational access and opportunity to underrepresented students (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). To eligible participants, the program offers resources such as tutoring, mentoring, educational advisement, and access to technology to help them persist and achieve at a higher level than they would otherwise (Jager-Hyman, 2004). In addition, the program offers personal counseling, social development, cultural awareness, and exposure to college life, which are critical to the development of successful students (Thomas, 2014).

College Access Programs

A key measurement of student success is the completion of one's educational goals, which is usually marked by graduation (Voigt & Hundrieser, 2008). Graduation from secondary or postsecondary institutions is the goal of all students; however, gaps in educational attainment by race and income still exist and are a growing concern in many schools and districts across the United States. Nationally, only 68% of all students entering high school will graduate with a high school diploma (Orfield, Losen, Wald, & Swanson, 2004). This percentage decreases for students from historically underserved groups. Across the nation, Black and Latino students have a 50% chance of graduating from high school (Orfield et al., 2004). Jager-Hyman (2004) attributed these educational attainment gaps to a lack of access to academic information and academic resources, such as books, materials, and technology, for students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. This lack of resources results in students having limited exposure to educational experiences outside of the classroom and having low achievement rates, which creates additional hurdles for underprepared students to overcome during their pursuit of academic success.

According to McCants (2004), college access programs play a special role in working with schools to transform the success of underrepresented students. College access programs serve as supplemental opportunities for underrepresented students at the elementary and secondary levels to increase their academic skills and become more aware of postsecondary opportunities (Swail, 2000). The services provided by these programs aim to counter unfavorable school and community experiences and influences by providing the missing elements that help students aspire to, prepare for, and enroll in college (Gullatt & Jan, 2003).

Perna (2000) indicated four critical components should be part of any college access program that targets underrepresented students:

- the goal of college attendance for all participants;
- college tours, visits, or fairs to help students better plan for college;
- promoting rigorous course taking and academic excellence; and
- parental involvement.

A significant number of college access programs exist as a result of the inability of the public education system to meet the needs of all students effectively (Jager-Hyman, 2004). Research shows that low-income first-generation students benefit from the array of support services offered by enrichment programs. Support services such as academic advisement, personal and career counseling, and mentoring provide additional or supplementary educational support that helps fill gaps where the system often fails (Swail, 2000). Outreach programs compensate for the shortcomings of the public education system (Swail, 2000) and exist because the U.S. public education system continues to fail to meet the needs of all students (Jager-Hyman, 2004).

Recognized College Access Programs

College access programs provide invaluable support and enrichment to underrepresented students. Participation in these types of programs has a positive link with college enrollment and persistence for low-income first-generation students (Gandara, Rumberger, Larson, & Mehan, 1998; Vargas, 2004). These activities, usually extracurricular, help students become integrated into the life of the school, which helps develop a more positive perception of schooling, makes them more likely to persist and succeed, and decreases the likelihood of academic failure (Somers & Piliawsky, 2004; Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1998). Involvement

in extracurricular activities also means that the students are less likely to have the time and opportunity to engage in activities that conflict with educational goals (Wehlage et al., 1988).

A myriad of programs provide enrichment services to underrepresented students across the United States. Some programs have a heavy focus on sports, whereas others have a specific skill as their focus, such as leadership development. The focus of college access programs tends to be promoting and fostering academic success by providing the missing elements that would help students aspire to, prepare for, and obtain college enrollment (Gullatt & Jan, 2004). Some of the more successful college access programs combine a wide range of pedagogies to offer students academic experiences that they can relate to their own personal lives (Gullatt & Jan, 2003). The following seven principles of practice identify a successful college access program:

- *Provide personalized attention for students:* Effective programs adopt strategies that allow the staff to get to know the students individually. The students are then looked at as individuals with unique needs, strengths, and weaknesses (James, Jurich, & Estes, 2001).
- *Adult role models:* Effective programs foster close relationships between a student and a knowledgeable adult who monitors the student's progress (Freedman, 1993).
- *Facilitate peer support:* Effective programs have supportive peer groups that encourage inclusion among all participants, regardless of race or socioeconomic status (Gandara, 1998).
- *Integrate the program within a K–12 school:* Effective enrichment programs possess a strong intersegmental collaboration between the program and a K–12 school (Policy Analysis for California Education, 1997).

- *Provide strategically timed interventions:* Effective programs take into consideration the curriculum frameworks and standards, adolescent development, and increasingly rigorous academic interventions (Policy Analysis for California Education, 1997).
- *Make long-term investment in students:* Effective programs have support services sustained over a period of years, so that the longer a student participates in a program, the more the student benefits from it (Gandara, 1998).
- *Provide scholarship assistance:* Effective programs support students by facilitating the financial aid process as a means of ensuring program participants will enroll at a postsecondary institution (Gullatt, 2003).

Each of the aforementioned principles of practice plays a significant role in the academic development of students from underrepresented backgrounds. Although a program can operate without employing the stated principles, most of the successful, long-standing programs have these principles incorporated into the structure of the program.

The researcher identified four recognized college access programs that embody several of the principles examined in this study. To be considered for the study, the program must have been established and continuously funded for 15 or more years, must operate in more than one state, must serve underrepresented students, and must have an overarching goal of preparing underrepresented students for postsecondary education. The following programs met the selection criteria:

1. I Have a Dream (IHAD).
2. Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID).
3. Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP).
4. Upward Bound.

Each program is examined across various characteristics that include funding source, target population, selection process, and key program components.

I Have a Dream

IHAD is a privately funded sponsorship program. Like other college access programs, it is designed to ensure low-income, at-risk youth stay in school, graduate, and go to college or gain meaningful employment (Perna, Fenske, & Swail, 2000; Shoemaker & Sims, 1997). The IHAD program provides participants with support services that begin in elementary school and continue through high school. These services include postsecondary resources to students and parents, as well as scholarships and fee waivers.

Following a return visit to his old elementary school in East Harlem, Eugene M. Lang established the IHAD program in 1981. Lang, a local businessman, realized community members needed more support to achieve their educational and career goals (Strusinski, 1997). A marked difference between IHAD and many other college access programs is the way its participants are recruited. IHAD establishes cohorts of students from housing developments and schools where at least 75% of enrolled students qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program (Allgaier, 2010). The student cohorts, referred to as dreamers, are invited to participate in the IHAD program beginning in kindergarten. Once accepted, the students must commit to participating in the program from kindergarten through the completion of secondary school.

IHAD concentrates efforts in three key areas: academic support, social enrichment activities, and social services (Jones, 2003). The academic component includes providing academic support, such as tutoring and summer programs; the social enrichment component incorporates activities such as physical education and sports programs; and the social services component incorporates a mentor who interacts with the students from the time of acceptance

through high school (Jones, 2003). Students who successfully complete the program receive free college tuition (Jones, 2003; Perna et al., 2000).

IHAD attributes program success to focusing consistently on the following six core strategies (IHAD, 2016; Rhodes, Truitt, Martinez, 2006):

- fostering an expectation of college,
- ensuring academic readiness,
- cultivating dreamers' ongoing leadership,
- empowering dreamers and their families,
- ensuring financial access, and
- creating a context conducive to success.

The IHAD program is one of the oldest private college access programs in the United States (Martin, 1999). The program receives funding from sponsors, who include individuals, families, corporations, and foundations (Rhodes et al. 2006). Although sponsor commitments vary between IHAD programs, a typical budget is \$450,000. The sponsor is expected to make an initial donation of \$300,000, followed by an additional \$150,000 paid over time (Rhodes et al., 2006). Since its establishment, the IHAD program has expanded across 28 states, plus Washington, DC, and New Zealand. Over 200 programs serve more than 16,000 students.

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

GEAR UP is a discretionary grant program from the federal government aimed at increasing the number of low-income students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education (GEAR UP, 2016). The competitive grants are awarded to local high school, college, and community-based organizations that work collaboratively to increase college access and success for low-income students in the form of both state and partnership grants (Jager-Hyman,

2004). The program was created to provide communities with a comprehensive, holistic, and research-driven initiative to prepare low-income and minority students for higher education (National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, 2013). Six- to 11-year grants are provided to offer support services to high-poverty middle and high schools (National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, 2013).

Established in 1998 following the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, GEAR UP is the newest of the four college access programs. The program is designed to accelerate the academic achievement of underrepresented and disadvantaged groups of middle and secondary school students so that increasing numbers will graduate from high school, enroll in postsecondary education, and complete a postsecondary program of study (Carter, 2003). GEAR UP participants are selected in cohorts, rather than individuals, and the program targets schools where at least one half of the student body is eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches under the National School Lunch Act or they must reside in public housing (Burd, 2003; Perna et al., 2000).

The GEAR UP program differs slightly from other college access programs, as it falls under the classification of an early intervention program; however, GEAR UP provides many of the same services to a similar student population as other college access programs. The intent of the GEAR UP program is to provide services that address the needs of students from the target population who are at risk of educational failure and who have limited opportunities to obtain a higher education (Flores, 2005). Program services include academic enrichment, mentoring, and academic counseling to the participants in each cohort (Jones, 2003). In addition, the program provides technical assistance workshops and after-school sessions that include tutoring, mentoring, counseling, and college tours (Jones, 2003). The GEAR UP program also provides

services to parents and school staff, such as informing parents about college options, required courses, and financial aid; promoting access to rigorous coursework; and providing ongoing staff training and professional development opportunities (Flores, 2005).

GEAR UP programs typically rely on the support of partnerships between schools, colleges and universities, and some faith-based organizations. Silver (2000) noted,

Through the strength of the GEAR UP partnerships, which are critical to the success of GEAR UP, the schools and postsecondary institutions can leverage resources and increase the instructional capacity of the schools in response to ramping-up the academic curriculum. (p. 247)

To be effective and maximize student success, it is important for GEAR UP partnerships to start in the seventh grade. Research has shown that students who take challenging coursework in middle school, including algebra, are more likely to graduate high school and successfully complete postsecondary education (Wirt et al., 2003). GEAR UP provides long-term mentoring to ensure all students in the cohort stay on track for postsecondary education.

The focus within GEAR UP is on systematic change. According to Silver (2000), GEAR UP requirements include the following:

1. Implementation of K-16 curriculum alignment.
2. Rigorous academic curriculum for all students.
3. A continuous staff development plan that ensures quality teachers with a deep content knowledge of their subject area in the classroom.
4. An accountability system to make sure teachers and administrators take responsibility for student learning.

5. A comprehensive parent involvement plan that addresses parents' role in the higher education aspiration of students.
6. Interventions that include a focus on raising students' educational standards.
7. Comprehensive plans for ensuring students have the information and knowledge about entering and succeeding in a postsecondary institution.

GEAR UP programs receive federal funding for state and partnership grants. In a recent grant competition, the U.S. Department of Education allocated \$82 million to fund new and continuing GEAR UP programs. Individual program awards can range anywhere between \$450,000 and \$5.5 million. The actual amount received by each program varies due to the number of participants, schools, and years in the grant cycle. GEAR UP programs exist in 48 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Palau, and Puerto Rico. There are 213 programs serving over 748,000 students.

Advancement Via Individual Determination Program

The AVID program is a nationally recognized in-school academic support program with a primary goal of increasing the enrollment of historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students in 4-year colleges and universities through increased access to and support in advanced courses at the middle school and high school levels (Bernhardt, 2013; Swanson, Mehan, & Hubbard, 1993). The primary focus of AVID programs is low-income, ethnic minority students with average grades who have the potential for higher achievement but are often overlooked by teachers and counselors because of their socioeconomic status (Jones, 2003). The primary goal of the program is to motivate underachieving students to do well in high school and to pursue a college education (Bernhardt, 2013).

The AVID program began in 1980 at Clairemont High School in San Diego, California, following a court-ordered desegregation mandate (Swanson et al., 1993). As a result, 500 students from outside of the school district, mainly Latino and African American from low-income households, were enrolled. Although they were not academically ready and lacked the prerequisite work, 30 students were placed in advanced courses, were enrolled in an AVID elective course that provided tutoring to improve writing skills, and were taught study and note-taking skills (Black, Little, McCoach, Purcell, & Siegle, 2008). AVID programs have since expanded across the United States.

AVID targets B, C, and even D students in Grades 4 through 12 who would like to attend college but are not achieving at the level needed to achieve that goal (AVID, 2016). The primary goal of AVID is to provide consistent academic support to students while enrolled in a rigorous course of study; it also serves important social purposes that embed the program within the broader school community (Bernhardt, 2013). One of the key differences between the AVID program and other college access programs is that the program is implemented to be part of the regular school day and creates a classroom environment where kids are encouraged to take learning seriously and see themselves as scholars (Gira, 2004). The students receive weekly tutoring, along with workshops, field trips, and assistance with college and financial aid applications (Jones, 2003). Other components of the program include Cornell note-taking and time-management workshops, group collaborations, and oral presentation skills (Mendiola, Watt, & Huerta, 2010).

AVID is a nonprofit program funded by educational institutions throughout the United States. Programs typically receive funding from federal and state education funds, foundations and corporations, community support, and grant opportunities (AVID, 2016). AVID has

expanded into over 4,800 schools in 48 states and serves more than 425,000 students (Bernhardt, 2013).

College access programs provide the support and reinforcement of classroom learning that is critical to the educational success of underrepresented students. Table 1 provides a summary of the college access programs examined in this study.

Table 1

College Access Programs

Program	Funding source	Target population	Selection process	Key components	Positive attributes	Negative attributes
IHAD	Lilly Foundation; state funding	At-risk students: elementary through high school	Classroom cohort	Provides postsecondary resources to students and parents; scholarships and fee waivers	Academic support, social enrichment, summer program, free college tuition	Participation in project limited to cohort
GEAR UP	U.S. Department of Education	At-risk students: middle and high school	Classroom cohort	After-school programs, college visits, mentoring, counseling, and tutoring	Academic support, workshops, college visits	Participation in project limited to cohort
AVID	Foundation grants; state and local education contracts	At-risk students: middle and high school	Classroom cohort	Part of school day, students placed in college preparatory classes, tutoring, field trips	Academic support; motivation; workshops	Participation in project limited to cohort
Upward Bound	U.S. Department of Education	At-risk students: high school	Individual applicants	Academic enrichment, summer program, cultural/social activities, mentoring/ counseling, stipends	Academic support; open to anyone who meets eligibility requirements; summer program; workshops; field trips	Students can participate throughout high school; however, students must sign up in ninth or 10th grade

The college access programs selected for this study have the same overarching goal, which is to increase the enrollment of underrepresented, at-risk students in 4-year colleges and universities. Although each program is independent of the others, they include some of the same methods to attain their goal. For example, IHAD, GEAR UP, and AVID all work with a cohort of students identified early and kept together throughout elementary, middle, and high school. Other similarities include the array of academic services provided to program participants geared specifically toward increasing college access and success. The services include tutoring, mentoring, counseling, workshops, and technical assistance completing applications for both college enrollment and financial aid consideration.

Upward Bound

Upward Bound was the first college access program established. The program serves high school students by providing fundamental support in their preparation for college entrance. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from postsecondary education institutions (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Program history and attributes are discussed in detail in the following section.

Program history and attributes. The Economic Opportunity Act, signed in 1964 by President Lyndon B. Johnson, was established in response to his administration's War on Poverty (McElroy & Arnesto, 1998). From this act, the Office of Economic Opportunity and its Special Programs for Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds were developed (McElroy & Arnesto, 1998; U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Out of the Special Programs division came three outreach programs (Educational Talent Search, Student Support Services, and Upward Bound) designed to serve a broad range of students and to provide services to eligible

participants ranging from middle school through college (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). These programs, commonly referred to as the TRiO programs, share the same overall mission:

To maximize educational opportunities for low-income and potential first-generation college students through direct services that provide access to education and encourage retention through the education pipeline. Ultimately, the goal of the TRiO programs is to help students succeed in attaining postsecondary education and graduating from degree programs. (Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998, p. 198)

TRiO programs serve a broad range of students. The Educational Talent Search program identifies and assists underrepresented middle and high school students who have the potential to enroll in and succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to complete high school and to complete their postsecondary education (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Of the original TRiO programs, Educational Talent Search is the only program that serves and encourages individuals who did not complete secondary or postsecondary programs to reenter and persevere through the completion of their postsecondary program (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Program services include tutoring, career exploration, counseling, and mentoring.

The Student Support Services program serves institutions of higher education to provide opportunities for academic development, to assist students with basic college requirements, and to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Program services include academic tutoring, financial literacy, and advice and assistance in postsecondary course selection.

Upward Bound features. Upward Bound was the first of three programs established to address the growing poverty rate and the academic achievement gap among disadvantaged and

advantaged high school students (Benders, 2009). The Upward Bound program is designed to generate the skills and motivation necessary for success in education beyond high school among young people from low-income backgrounds and who received inadequate secondary school preparation (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). As a federally funded college access program, Upward Bound provides academic support to its participants in their preparation for college entrance (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from postsecondary education institutions. Upward Bound works with small groups of students, usually between 50 and 75, using performance-based, measurable objectives and focuses on eliminating one of the most common barriers to postsecondary education, which is financial aid, and the perception that it is unavailable or inaccessible (Gullatt & Jan, 2003). The program provides opportunities for participants to succeed in their precollege performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.).

For over 50 years, Upward Bound programs have been operating at institutions of higher education and within other qualified community or private organizations (TrioProfile, 2008). More than 800 Upward Bound programs serve 70,000 students at colleges, universities, and community organizations throughout the United States (Cahalan & Curtin, 2004). The goal since its inception has been to improve the likelihood that these marginalized youths will graduate from high school, enter a postsecondary institution, and complete their degrees (McElroy & Armesto, 1998). Upward Bound aims to achieve this goal by transforming the lives of the underachieving low-income high school students they serve by uplifting and developing their academic and sociocultural strengths while minimizing their academic and sociocultural weaknesses (McElroy & Armesto, 1998).

Participant eligibility. The Upward Bound program serves high school students from low-income families and from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor’s degree. The U.S. Department of Education enforces a strict eligibility ratio: two thirds of the program participants must be from low-income families and be first-generation college students, while the remaining one third of the program participants can either be from low income households or be potential first-generation college students (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.).

Low-income and first-generation are two terms frequently used when referencing Upward Bound. According to the federal government, an individual has a low-income status if the family’s taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150% of the federal poverty level (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Poverty guidelines are established and published annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the Federal Register. The poverty thresholds for 2016 for the 48 contiguous states and Washington, DC, Alaska, and Hawaii are in Table 2.

Table 2

Poverty Guidelines for 2016

Size of family unit	48 states and Washington, DC	Alaska	Hawaii
1	\$11,770	\$14,720	\$13,550
2	\$15,930	\$19,920	\$18,330
3	\$20,090	\$25,120	\$23,110
4	\$24,250	\$30,320	\$27,890
5	\$28,410	\$35,520	\$32,670
6	\$32,570	\$40,720	\$37,450
7	\$36,730	\$45,920	\$42,230
8	\$40,890	\$51,120	\$47,010

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2016).

Note: For family units with more than eight members, add the following amount for each additional member: \$4,160 for the 48 contiguous states, the District of Columbia, and outlying jurisdictions; \$5,200 for Alaska; and \$4,780 for Hawaii.

First-generation college students are those students whose parents' highest level of education is a high school diploma or less (Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998). All TRiO programs define first-generation as students whose parents have never earned a bachelor's degree but may have some college experience (Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998).

Upward Bound targets students between the ages of 13 and 19 who have completed the eighth grade. Services typically begin in the ninth or 10th grade and continue through the summer after high school graduation (Gullatt & Jan, 2003). Successful participants remain active in the program from the ninth grade through the 12th grade (McElroy & Armesto, 1998). The more years a student participates in the program, the more he or she benefits and the more successful the outcome and reward (McElroy & Armesto, 1998).

In addition to the aforementioned eligibility requirements, students must also demonstrate an academic need or be at risk for academic failure. Being at risk for failure typically refers to an aspect or aspects of a student's background and environment that may lead to a higher risk of educational demise (Jones & Watson, 1990; Suh, Suh, & Houston, 2007). These students typically come from economically disadvantaged, high-crime-rate areas perceived to contribute to students' predisposition to failure (Grimmard & Maddus, 2004), in which case, if there is no intervention, the students will likely fail the current grade level and increase their potential of becoming a high school dropout. In most cases, the students are selected based on recommendations from teachers and social workers (TrioProfile, 2008).

Although wording has changed over the years, many practitioners, as well as the U.S. Department of Education, still use the terms low income and first generation when describing the population served by federally funded programs such as Upward Bound. For the purpose of this

study, individuals typically referred to as being low income or first generation are referenced as underrepresented.

Determining academic need. Each student is unique in his or her personal and educational needs. An assessment of these characteristics and needs helps determine how and where a student can benefit from additional help and resources. Upon entering an Upward Bound program, a thorough assessment of a student's academic needs is taken. The needs assessment can include a variety of methods, including the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator; Learning and Study Strategies Inventory; and EUREKA, an online career-counseling program. In addition to these online assessments, a student's need may further be explored through a student interview, questionnaire, or recommendation from a teacher or counselor. The final step in the needs assessment process is a thorough evaluation of a student's most recent transcript. Table 3 includes the 14 classifications for determining student academic need among Upward Bound students.

Table 3

Upward Bound Determination of Academic Need

No.	Classification
1	Low grade point average
2	Low achievement test scores
3	Low educational aspirations
4	Low grade point average and educational aspirations
5	Low grade point average and low achievement test scores
6	Low achievement test scores and low educational aspirations
7	Lack of opportunity, support, or guidance to take challenging college preparation courses
8	Lack of career goals or need for accurate information on careers
9	Limited English proficiency
10	Lack of confidence, self-esteem and/or social skills
11	Predominately low-income community
12	Rural isolation
13	Interest in careers in math and science
14	Other

Low grade point averages or test scores are easily identifiable as a primary need. Most often, this information is included in transcripts. It is also relatively easy to confirm whether a student has a need due to living in a predominantly low-income community using school records and public demographic data. Other areas of need, such as a student's educational aspirations, require more investigative work. An educational aspiration can be described as having a state of mind that motivates a person to strive for academic success (Kao & Tienda, 1998). Conversely, students with low educational aspirations do not have the desire or presence of mind to seek to improve educationally. This need is usually identified through a personal interview with a student. The same is also true when a student's need is classified as lack of opportunity, support, or guidance to take challenging college preparation courses, lack of career goals, or a need for accurate information on careers.

Rural isolation is a need that is specific to students living in rural communities in the United States. These students often live far away from their schools and resources that can help them be successful in high school and continue on to college. Most often, rural adolescents are more likely to live in families whose incomes fall below the poverty line and to have parents who did not complete high school (Grimmard & Maddus, 2004). Students may have several needs, but at least one need must be listed as the student's primary need for services.

Program services. As stated by King (1996), several factors must be considered as students prepare for college entrance. These factors include precollege curriculum, evidence of measurable achievement, sociocultural awareness, and preplanning with school counselors and parents. Upward Bound seeks to address these factors by providing services throughout the year to its participants (King, 1996).

As part of the regular curriculum, the U.S. Department of Education requires all Upward Bound programs to provide supplemental academic instruction in the following core curriculum subjects:

1. Mathematics through precalculus.
2. Laboratory science.
3. Composition.
4. Literature.
5. Foreign language.

Supplemental instruction is an important mechanism for introducing students to the learning process, engaging them in collaborative learning activities, and providing a collegial environment that increases motivation to engage in learning (McGuire, 2006). Although these services may take place within a school setting, or during the school day, their function is not to affect a school's existing curriculum or teaching practices, but rather to supplement and extend a student's weekday curricular and extracurricular experiences (Gullatt & Jan, 2003).

In addition to the mandatory instruction, all Upward Bound programs offer a variation of the following support services:

- Tutorial services.
- Academic, personal, and financial counseling.
- Workshops designed to improve reading, writing, study skills, and other areas.
- Financial literacy seminars.
- Mentoring.
- Exposure to academic programs and cultural enrichment events.
- Work-study positions to expose participants to careers.

- Assistance in preparing for college entrance exams.
- Information on postsecondary education.
- Assistance in completing college and financial aid applications (TrioProfile, 2008).

Though it is not required, many Upward Bound programs incorporate a parental involvement component in which parents must volunteer their time as chaperones, mentors, speakers, and team leads, as well attend workshops and seminars sponsored by the program that will be beneficial to both the parents and the Upward Bound participants (Zulli, Frierson, & Clayton, 1999).

Upward Bound operates on a year-round basis. Most programs are set up to offer program services weekly and monthly. Tutoring, counseling, and mentoring are typically offered throughout the week at specific times and locations. Other services, such as supplemental instruction, workshops, application assistance, field trips to various colleges and universities, and cultural enrichment, are offered monthly during Saturday Academy sessions. All services offered throughout the academic year stress the importance of goal setting and improving academic achievement (Hughes, 2007).

As part of the annual curriculum, the U.S. Department of Education requires all Upward Bound programs to provide a summer enrichment program for their participants. The summer component, which usually lasts 6 weeks, takes place on the campus of a college or university, which provides Upward Bound participants a vision of a future in higher education (Myers & Schrim, 1999). For 6 weeks, Upward Bound students have the opportunity to experience college life. Students are able to take courses, for both enrichment and credit, in college classrooms taught by college faculty.

Some Upward Bound programs offer a bridge program for seniors between high school and college. The summer bridge program targets graduated seniors who might not be ready, academically or socially, for college entrance. The purpose of a bridge program is to provide interventions that help participants aspire to, prepare for, and achieve college enrollment (Kallison & Stader, 2012). Successful bridge programs often include academic instruction, tutoring, study skills instruction, mentoring and advising, and information about the college application and financial aid processes (Gullatt & Jan, 2003).

Program outcomes. Upward Bound is one of the longest running college access programs for underrepresented students. Research has shown that Upward Bound participants are four times more likely to earn an undergraduate degree than are students from similar backgrounds who did not participate in the program (Neeley & Smeltzer, 2001). Nunez and Cuccaro-Alamin (1998) conducted a longitudinal study comparing the college experience and outcomes of students with similar backgrounds with those served by Upward Bound and found the following:

1. First-generation low-income students were less likely than their peers were to matriculate to 4-year colleges or universities.
2. First-generation low-income students were more likely to take developmental courses.
3. First-generation low-income students were not persistent in attaining a college education.

As with other college access programs, students who remain actively engaged in the program have an advantage over those who do not. As McElroy and Armesto (1998) stated, the more years a student participates in the program, the more they benefit and the more successful the outcome and reward will be.

Although Upward Bound has its successes, the program has some challenges as well. A national evaluation conducted by the Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. revealed several shortfalls. The report addressed two major research questions:

Q1: To what extent does Upward Bound further the academic and personal development of students during high school?

Q2: Does Upward Bound have an impact on college access and retention?

The findings included the following:

- Upward Bound has limited impacts on students during high school. Although Upward Bound students earned slightly more credits in math and social studies, Upward Bound generally had no impact on students' in-school behavior, participation in extracurricular activities, grade point average, or credits earned in subjects such as English or science. Furthermore, Upward Bound had no impact on high school graduation (Myers & Schrim, 1999).
- Upward Bound may have some impact on participants' postsecondary education experiences (Myers & Schrim, 1999).
- Upward Bound has no impact on the chances that students attended college (Myers & Schrim, 1999).
- Upward Bound has substantial impacts on some groups of students and not others:
 1. Students with lower initial educational expectations benefitted substantially more than those with higher expectations.
 2. Boys showed substantially larger impacts than girls.
 3. Latino and White students benefitted more than African American students did.

4. Students who were low-income only or low-income and potential first-generation college students showed larger impacts than those who qualified for the program only as potential first-generation students.
5. Poorer performing students benefitted substantially more than their better performing peers (Myers & Schrim, 1999).

The 2016 budget report showed the U.S. Department of Education allocated \$263,412,436 for Upward Bound grants. In 2016, there were 813 Upward Bound programs serving over 61,000 students. Table 4 below provides a summary of program features offered by each of the college access programs included in this study.

Table 4

Summary of Program Features

Program	Tutoring	Counseling	Academic enrichment	Parental involvement	Personal and social enrichment	Mentoring
IHAD	X	X	X		X	X
GEAR UP	X	X	X		X	X
AVID	X	X	X		X	
Upward Bound	X	X	X	X	X	X

Barriers to Success

Researchers have long examined factors that contribute to low academic achievement in underrepresented students. Some have found the particular school a student attends to have significant influence on the student's academic achievement. Urban schools tend to reflect the characteristics of their surrounding environment (Lee, 2004). As a result, these schools usually have larger enrollments, higher concentrations of low-income students, higher rates of ethnic diversity, and large immigrant populations (Kincheloe, 2010). Students who attend schools where the student population is largely minority and poor, which is the case in most urban schools, are more likely to perform below the basic proficiency levels and are more likely to

drop out than students who attend schools populated by mostly White students, where few students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (Kaufmen & Bradbury, 1992). Underrepresented youth face a different set of obstacles than their counterparts. Some perceived obstacles include stressful circumstances in the home, fewer educational opportunities, limited access to educational resources outside of school, and a lack of information about college and the college experience (Cornell, Gregory, Huang, & Fan, 2013; Grimard & Maddus, 2004).

Whereas various factors are perceived to be barriers to academic success, the researcher identified several key determining factors that, if left unaddressed, increase the risk of academic failure for underrepresented students. In addition, the focus of this section is eliminating other barriers to success, which include socioeconomic status, cultural competence, academic preparedness, parental involvement, and the quality of personnel.

Socioeconomic status. To a certain extent, educational opportunity is determined by family income or socioeconomic status (Flores, 2005). Socioeconomic status generally refers to one's standing with regard to income, level of education, employment, health, and access to resources (U.S. Social Security Office of Policy Research and Analysis, n.d.). Socioeconomic status is typically classified as being low or high, depending on level of income; however, level of income does not adequately capture all the differences between those who have access to resources and those who do not (Rothstein, 2004).

Low socioeconomic status is one of the most frequently cited barriers to success for first-generation students (Suh et al., 2007). Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to have access to medical care and attention, which can allow vision, dental, hearing, and other ailments to go undertreated and can negatively influence school performance (Howard, 2010). A family's socioeconomic status can also affect the overall cognitive development and

academic achievement of a student (Milne & Plourde, 2006), which can be attributed to the student's access, or lack thereof, to educational resources and community organizations.

According to Bradley and Corwyn (2002), children from poor families have less access to educational resources than children from high socioeconomic families have. This is partially due to the fact that low socioeconomic parents are less likely to purchase educational materials such as reading books or workbooks (Milne & Plourde, 2006) because they have low-wage jobs or are unemployed (Howard, 2010).

When considering the impact of a family's socioeconomic status on a student's academic achievement and development, it is also important to acknowledge the socioeconomic status of the surrounding community in which the family lives. As determined by Burney and Beilke (2008), students from low socioeconomic status families often have limited access to programs outside of school that provide lessons and enrichment opportunities that add to student competence in a learning environment, increase confidence in ability to learn new things, improve social interaction skills, and provide background information that may transfer to an academic setting. This is partially due to there being fewer chances to visit local libraries, museums, educational centers, and theatrical events within the community in which they reside (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). These circumstances often correlate with low academic achievement and poor development among students with a low socioeconomic status (Roff, 2005).

Cultural competence. Along with low socioeconomic status, researchers have associated an individual's status as a racial or cultural minority with academic risk (Yowell & Gordon, 1996). According to Deschamps (1992), an individual's racial or cultural minority status is the most commonly associated factor of low academic achievement. Although closely related to race, Howard (2010) ascertained that culture is a different concept that shapes learning, and all aspects

of daily living and activities, in unique and meaningful ways. The breakdown of cultural mores from home to school often contributes to low academic achievement among culturally diverse groups.

Culture is not bound by one's race, ethnicity, or place of origin (Howard, 2010). As defined by Parham (2002), culture is a complex constellation of values, norms, customs, and traditions that provide a general design for living passed down through generations. Many factors apply when looking at the development of culture, and geography, immigration status, generation, social class, gender, family history, migration patterns, language, and religious affiliations all have an effect on cultural development (Howard, 2010).

A critical aspect of understanding culture is an acknowledgment that cultural dispositions and practices held and displayed by one individual are not universal for all people (Howard, 2010). A cultural gap between students and teachers can affect academic performance and contribute to wider achievement gaps among different student groups (Van Roekel, 2008). For this reason, it is important for teachers to foster a learning environment that includes cultural competence. Cultural competence centers on the knowledge and skills needed to serve students from diverse cultures effectively and entails developing certain personal and interpersonal awareness and sensitivities, developing certain bodies of cultural knowledge, and mastering a set of skills that, taken together, underlie effective cross-cultural teaching (Diller & Moule, 2005).

Academic preparedness. Academic preparedness refers to the reading and mathematics knowledge and skills needed to qualify for placement into entry-level, credit-bearing college courses without a need for remediation in math or reading (National Assessment Governing Board, 2015) and is essential for students who wish to pursue a postsecondary education. Some students are not receiving the information they need about what it takes to be successful in

college (Kirst, 2004). According to Martin, Karabel, and Vazquez (2005), schools with higher minority and low-income student populations are less likely to offer rigorous curricula and advanced placement courses.

Although a correlation exists between low academic achievements and decreased postsecondary enrollment rates, a rigorous high school curriculum helps lessen the disadvantage of many at-risk students (Flores, 2005). The types of courses that students take in high school are critical to their gaining access to postsecondary education (Howard, 2010). The more rigorous the curriculum, the more likely a student will enroll in postsecondary education and persist toward degree attainment. Various institutions and states define the concept of rigorous curriculum differently. The curriculum for the state of California is commonly referred to as the A-G requirements, where A-G refers to the rigorous sequence of courses in seven subject areas required to be eligible for acceptance into the University of California (San Francisco Unified School District, 2016). Students must complete seven general subject areas, labeled A through G, to be eligible for California universities (Silicon Valley Education Foundation, 2016). The A-G requirements slightly differ from general high school graduation requirements in that students following the A-G trajectory are required to take a second year of foreign language and a third year of college preparatory mathematics. Table 5 illustrates California's A-G requirements. Students from low-income, Black, Latino, or Native American groups are underidentified and underrepresented in rigorous coursework of any kind (Burney & Beilke, 2008).

Table 5

A-G Requirements

Area	Subject	Years
A	History and social science (including 1 year of U.S. history or 1 semester of U.S. history and 1 semester of civics or American government AND 1 year of social science)	2
B	English (4 years of college preparatory English composition and literature)	4
C	Math (4 years recommended) including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or higher mathematics (take one each year)	3
D	Laboratory science (including one biological science and one physical science)	2
E	Language other than English (2 years of the same language; American Sign Language is applicable)	2
F	Visual and performing arts (dance, drama or theater, music, or visual art)	1
G	College preparatory elective	1

Parental involvement. Parental involvement in school activities and in a student's schoolwork is an integral component of successful academic performance (Griffith, 1996); it is a potent predictor of school success, regardless of ethnicity, parent education, family structure, or gender (Bogenschneider, 1996). Parental involvement is generally referred to as parental participation in the educational processes and experiences of their children with the purpose of promoting academic and social success (Fishel & Ramirez, 2005; Jeynes, 2007). Hill and Craft (2003) classified parental involvement in two dimensions: at home and at school. Parental involvement at home includes help with and monitoring of homework, as well as establishing rules and routines conducive to school success. Parental involvement at school includes interacting with teachers and attending events (Hill & Craft, 2003).

Teachers and psychologists place great value on the role of parental involvement in raising the academic achievement and educational outcomes among students with other disadvantages (Jeynes, 2007); however, researchers have shown that low socioeconomic parents, immigrant parents, and parents of minority groups are less likely to be involved in school (Shumow, Lyutykh, & Schmidt, 2011). Although poverty is not a rationalization for low levels

of family involvement, poverty is a powerful barrier to family involvement and student achievement (Burney & Beilke, 2008).

Students benefit from parental involvement both at home and at school, although parents generally become less involved as their children grow older (Cotton & Wikelund, 1989). Parents of potential first-generation college students take a step back from school involvement when they feel they have limited ability to support their children in making critical college decisions (Roderick, Coca, & Nagaoka, 2011).

Family involvement can also be affected by the disappearing-parent phenomenon, which occurs as a result of parent participation being increasingly discouraged as a student progresses through school (McDonough, 2001). This decrease in parental involvement for low-socioeconomic-status parents can also be attributed to various obstacles, such as nonflexible work schedules, a lack of resources, transportation issues, and the added stress of residing in disadvantaged neighborhoods (Hill & Taylor, 2004). An EdSource survey of 1,000 parents provided more insight into how parents rank their perceived obstacles. Parents overwhelmingly listed lack of time followed by work schedules as the major barriers to being involved in their schools. Almost half cited a lack of child care as an obstacle (EdSource, 2013). Additional reasons included schools being bigger and farther from home, curriculum being more sophisticated, students having several teachers, and students establishing a sense of separation from their parents (Cotton & Wikelund, 1989).

Quality of personnel. Research has shown that teachers have a significant impact on student achievement (Goldhaber, 2007), particularly in school districts where students have less support at home (Jacob, 2003). Students attending urban schools are more likely to have inexperienced or unqualified teachers and high teacher attrition (Lee, 2004). According to Silver

(2000), students attending urban schools are frequently assigned the least qualified teachers. In schools with 90–100% non-White students, only 54% of math and science teachers are certified; however, in schools that have 90–100% White students, the percentage of certified math and science teachers increased to 86% (Silver, 2000). These trends have a direct negative effect on college access for underrepresented students.

Schools with high percentages of minority student enrollment, such as urban schools, receive fewer funds compared to schools with high levels of nonminority students (Jager-Hymann, 2004). In many states, the funding gap between minority and nonminority schools is more than \$1,000 per pupil (Jost, 2004). In addition to inexperienced and unqualified teachers, urban schools lack resources and many essential educational tools needed by the teachers. These teachers often have to work with, among other things, outdated textbooks, not enough textbooks, and outdated computers and other technology (Hudley, 2013). Teachers often do not have the proper equipment and materials needed to teach the science courses and labs (Hudley, 2013) that are critical to the contemporary learning process (Lee, 2004).

Summary

Chapter 2 provided readers with a portion of the background literature related to this study. It began with the theoretical framework, which explained the importance of programs that focus on providing academic enrichment and preparing students for higher education. The chapter also highlighted four established college access programs that have been an invaluable resource to underrepresented students: (a) IHAD, (b) AVID, (c) GEAR UP, and (d) Upward Bound. The chapter concluded with a discussion on some of the most common barriers to success faced by underrepresented students. These barriers included family socioeconomic status, cultural competence, academic preparedness, parental involvement, and quality of school

personnel. The following chapter includes a detailed explanation of the methodology used in this research study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to understand the impact of Upward Bound, as it relates to postsecondary success, from the perspective of former program participants who had graduated from an institution of higher education. Thus, for this research, postsecondary success referred to the enrollment, persistence, and attainment of a bachelor's degree from an institution of higher education within 5 years of the first enrollment date as an undergraduate. This chapter includes an overview of the methodology. The researcher employed a methodology based in the qualitative tradition of research and used phenomenology as the approach to gather and analyze data. The research design; sources of data; details about the data-gathering process; ways data were managed, analyzed, and reported; and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval process are detailed in this chapter. The chapter closes with a summary of the methodology.

Research Questions

The research questions were designed to gather individual responses from participants regarding their experience with Upward Bound and its potential connection to postsecondary success. The following research questions served to guide this research through data collection and analysis:

Research Question 1: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants?

Research Question 2: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants' academic achievement?

Research Question 3: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants' postsecondary completion?

Research Question 4: What aspects of the Upward Bound program did participants perceive as most effective in preparing for postsecondary success?

Methodology

Qualitative-driven research is centered on understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences (Merriam, 2009). In this study, the researcher sought to understand how former participants perceive the Upward Bound enrichment program; whether it helped prepare them for postsecondary education; whether Upward Bound helped students achieve academic success; and, if so, what aspects of the program actually helped them become more successful students.

Qualitative researchers typically seek to understand, explain, explore, discover, and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people (Kumar, 2011).

This research study involved an attempt to understand how, or in what way, participation in Upward Bound affected former students who became college graduates, because there is very little qualitative phenomenological research devoted to student perceptions. Phenomenology describes the meaning of the lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon for several individuals (Creswell, 2013). Moustakas (1994) noted a phenomenological study consists of what the participants experienced and how they experienced it. Using a phenomenological approach, the researcher spoke directly to individuals who were former Upward Bound participants and who experienced the phenomenon of having achieved postsecondary success.

Research Design

A research design is a procedural plan adopted by a researcher to answer questions, validly, objectively, accurately, and economically (Kumar, 2011). Upward Bound is an established outreach program that dates back to the mid-1960s. Many articles and research projects have been published about the program, and attention is usually placed on the staff, parental support, objectives, strategies, and program evaluation. What interested the researcher was the fact that very few data had been published on Upward Bound from the perspective of the students. Thus, the researcher explored the impact of Upward Bound based on the lived experiences of former program participants.

Schmid (1981) described qualitative research as “the study of the empirical world from the viewpoint of the person under study” (p. 214). According to Marshall and Rossman (2010),

We conduct qualitative research when we want to empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study. . . . We conduct qualitative research because we want to understand the contexts or settings in which participants in a study address a problem or issue. (p. 48)

The researcher believed that using the qualitative method provided a more in-depth glimpse into the phenomenon the study participants experienced, as well as provided a realistic understanding of the meanings of these experiences (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Although a quantitative approach might have yielded similar data and results, the researcher believed using the qualitative method to gather data gave the study participants a voice that brought more life to their experience, which is apparent in the results.

This qualitative phenomenological study was designed to gather information from former Upward Bound students who have achieved academic success, as previously defined in this study. The researcher followed the basic steps outlined by Moustakas (1994), which were (a) identify a phenomenon to study, (b) remove the researcher's experiences, (c) collect data from several people who have experienced the phenomenon, (d) analyze the study data, and (e) write up a description of the experience.

The researcher enlisted an independent third person, a graduate research assistant who had no connection with this research, to assist in the data collection of the data. The purpose of using a graduate research assistant was to eliminate the potential of any bias the researcher may have had related to the body of research or in connection to participants in this study. The research assistant was in charge of conducting a semistructured, open-ended interview with each study participant. The interviews were 60 minutes and took place both face-to-face and on the telephone. The researcher selected interviews as the method of data collection because they provided the flexibility to determine the format and content of the interview questions as well as how and in what order to ask the questions (Kumar, 2011). The interview protocol is explained in detail in the section on instrumentation.

Research Site

The face-to-face interviews took place on the campus of a public community college in a large urban city in Southern California. The study participants attended one of two large urban underperforming high schools located in South Los Angeles. For the purpose of this study, the two schools were referred to as UBS1 and UBS2. These two schools, like many other urban schools, were characterized by a high number of underrepresented students, low academic achievement, and low graduation rates. According to the most recent School Accountability

Report Card data, 66% of the students enrolled at UBS1 were classified as underrepresented, and 72% of the students enrolled at UBS2 received the same classification (California Department of Education, 2016). In addition, less than 30% of all students at both UBS1 and UBS2 were identified as being on track to pass A-G courses with a letter grade of C or better. The participants in this study were college graduates who previously participated in the Upward Bound program located on the campus of the public community college. Table 6 details a comparison of the enrollment and demographic data for UBS1 and UBS2.

Table 6

School Enrollment and Demographic Data

	USB1	USB2
Public unified school district	Yes	Yes
Enrollment	1,134	981
Free and reduced-price lunch	706	648
Foster youth	42	43
English language learners	158	73
African American	580	603
Latino	506	261
Asian	2	1

Population, Sample, and Sampling Procedures

The researcher elected to identify a targeted participant group for this study. The study participants were adults once enrolled in Upward Bound who had since graduated from an institution of higher education and obtained a bachelor's degree. For the purpose of this research study, participants were required to meet the following criteria:

1. Participated in the Upward Bound selected for this study.
2. Culminated high school in 2010 or 2011.
3. Enrolled in a 4-year institution of higher education in the fall immediately following high school culmination.

4. Remained continuously enrolled at the institution of higher education.
5. Completed all coursework required for degree completion within 5 years.

Based on the above selection criteria, 10 students from the combined 2010 and 2011 Upward Bound graduation cohorts qualified to be study participants. Table 7 provides a detailed breakdown of the two Upward Bound graduation cohorts and how study participants were identified.

Table 7

Study Participant Eligibility

Cohort year	Cohort size	Community college	4-year university	Earned BA/BS
2010	24	10	9	7
2011	28	15	7	3

Note. Total students eligible to be included in the study = 10.

Between the two cohort years considered for this study, 16 students entered a 4-year university the fall semester immediately following high school culmination. Of these 16 students, 10 received their bachelor's degree within 5 years of enrollment. These 10 students from both UBS1 and USB2 were invited to participate in the study.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

Prior to collecting the study data, each participant received a biographical questionnaire that allowed the researcher to collect demographic information for each study participant, such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and family size. The data collected for the qualitative phenomenological study was gathered through a combination of telephone and face-to-face interviews, which are the best ways to gather data related to the lived experience of study participants (Van Manen, 1990). Phenomenological interviews involve an informal, interactive process and use open-ended comments and questions (Moustakas, 1994). By interviewing the study participants, the researcher was able to capture their raw, in-depth feelings and attitudes

related to the topic under study. Approval of the dean was sought to give all institutional participants the opportunity to examine the topic of the study. Upon receiving verbal consent, written permission was acquired from the vice president assigned to the discipline area that houses Upward Bound. After written approval was received, the researcher was able to access the archived student files and the student records database to obtain student contact information, including address and phone number.

The researcher initially contacted prospective participants via private Facebook message and invited them to take part in the study. The private Facebook message was later followed up with a hard copy of the invitation sent via U.S. mail. To expedite the process, study consent forms were sent via e-mail, followed by a hard copy sent via U.S. mail. After explaining the purpose of the study, the researcher emphasized to all study participants that their involvement was voluntary and any data collected would be kept confidential. Upon receiving consent from the participants, the researcher asked the participants to verify their home mailing address so that the official invitation letter and consent forms could be sent. The researcher invited each participant to one 60-minute interview at a mutually agreed upon location to initiate data collection. The participants were instructed to bring the informed consent form with them to the scheduled interview. Additional forms were available for individuals who may have forgotten or misplaced their original consent form. After the researcher had the completed forms, the interview began.

To ensure the accuracy of the data collected, the researcher obtained consent from each study participant to audio record the interview session. During the interview, the graduate assistant made notes of details that stood out during the interview.

Upon completion of the interview, the researcher continued to work with the graduate assistant to complete the data analysis process. The graduate assistant began by listening to each recorded interview in its entirety. The graduate assistant then carefully and thoroughly transcribed the participants' responses to the study questions. After the interview had been transcribed, the researcher reviewed the transcript and replayed the recording while reading along with the transcription to ensure there were no errors. The researcher repeated this process for each recorded interview. After the researcher had verified the accuracy of the transcripts, she e-mailed the document to each study participant for approval to proceed. Upon approval of the study participants, the researcher returned to the transcripts to identify themes within the data and assign codes. After the themes had been developed, the researcher again returned to the transcripts, compiled the data, and reported on the findings of the study. To maintain confidentiality, each participant was assigned an alias. The alias was used on all notes and data reports, as well as in the results section. The data collection overview appears in Figure 2.

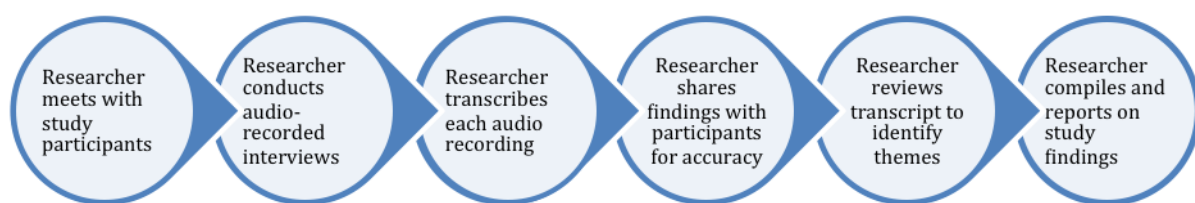


Figure 2. Data collection overview.

Instrumentation

The researcher used semistructured, open-ended questions to obtain study data. The questions were prefaced by a group of demographic questions to determine age, gender, ethnicity, high school, and family structure. Following the demographic questions, participants were asked to verify the number of years they each participated in the program, as well as the undergraduate

institutions they attended and their major. The actual interview questions for the study were developed by combining a series of questions from two published dissertations related to Upward Bound and the attempts to prepare underrepresented students for success in postsecondary institutions by Udombon (2006) and Walker (2011). Prior to using the instrument, the researcher contacted the authors and received permission.

Udombon (2006) used a qualitative research design to determine the impact of the Upward Bound program on the college retention and graduation rates of African American students at five postsecondary institutions. Udombon's results revealed that students who participated in Upward Bound performed better than non-Upward-Bound students and that participation in Upward Bound may have had a direct correlation to college retention and degree attainment. The following questions were adapted from Udombon's interview questions:

1. What was your motivation while enrolled in the Upward Bound program?
2. How did the Upward Bound program help you in developing new relationships with peers and teachers?
3. What type of influence did the Upward Bound teachers and staff have on you?
4. How did the academic activities impact your learning while enrolled in the Upward Bound program?
5. How did participating in this program impact your college performance and help you to persist through graduation?
6. How did this program impact or help you to graduate from your postsecondary institution within 5 years?

Walker (2011) used a mixed-method approach to research students' perceptions of Upward Bound on academic and social preparation for postsecondary institutions. Results

indicated that Upward Bound provided slightly less academic preparation than social preparation, which may have contributed to unsuccessful college integration (Walker, 2011). Upon consent, six questions were adapted from Walker's (2011) interview questions:

7. How did participating in this program impact your decision to go to college?
8. Describe your experiences with the Upward Bound program related to personal/social preparation for college.
9. Describe how your experiences with the Upward Bound related to academic preparation for college.
10. What aspect of Upward Bound most appealed to you?
11. Which Upward Bound activities do you feel contributed to your academic preparation for college?
12. What would you suggest to improve the Upward Bound program related to academic preparation for college?

The researcher added four additional questions:

13. Which Upward Bound activities do you feel contributed the most to your academic success?
14. What recommendations do you have for the Upward Bound program?
15. Do you have any final thoughts about how Upward Bound helped you succeed and graduate in college?
16. Is there anything that I have not asked that you would like to add to this interview?

Validity and Reliability

Creswell (2009) indicated validity does not carry the same connotations in qualitative research as it does in quantitative research, nor is it a companion of reliability. In qualitative

research, validity is based on whether the study findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account (Creswell, 2009). Terms such as reliability and validity relate to quantitative research, and qualitative researchers should use terms such as credibility and trustworthiness. Four aspects generally determine trustworthiness in a qualitative study: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility. According to Sandelowski (1986), a qualitative study is credible when it presents such accurate descriptions of the human experience that people who shared in the experience would immediately recognize the descriptions. To ensure credibility, after the interviews had been transcribed, the researcher took the manuscripts back to the study participants to read and check for accuracy. Upon mutual consent, the final report of findings was written up and recorded in Chapter 4.

Transferability. Krefting (1991) described transferability as the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings or with other groups. The researcher previously detailed the data collection process that will be used in this study. A diagram of the process was also provided in Figure 2. Sufficient information is provided should another researcher desire to replicate the study with a different population.

Dependability. Dependability, which is synonymous to reliability, aligns with the consistency of data, which indicates whether the findings are consistent if the inquiry were replicated with the same or similar subjects (Krefting, 1991). To determine dependability, the interview protocol was sent to the director of another Upward Bound program to review the questions and provide feedback on whether the questions would provide the same data from each study participant.

Confirmability. Also referred to as neutrality, confirmability is the degree to which findings are solely the expressions of the study participants and are without bias, motives, or personal perspectives (Guba, 1985). The researcher enlisted the support of a graduate research assistant in the data collection process and during the interviews. To ensure neutrality, the researcher instructed the graduate assistant to ask each study participant the same question, in the same order, and in the same manner.

Data Management

The researcher understood the importance of maintaining confidentiality. The researcher was the only person with access to the study data. During the data analysis process, each participant was assigned a code. The key to the codes is locked in a secure file cabinet, along with the interview transcripts. A copy of the transcripts and codes is also on a flash drive that is kept in a separate secure locked cabinet. The researcher will keep all files for 3 years following the completion of the study, after which all data sets will be destroyed.

Human Subject Considerations

When collecting data for a research study, it is important to make certain the participants are not harmed in any way. Harm includes not only the potential risk of medical experiments, but also emotional discomfort, anxiety, harassment, invasion of privacy, or demeaning or dehumanizing procedures (Kumar, 2011). Prior to the initiation of any research project at Pepperdine University, written approval must be sought and received from one of the two IRBs. The primary goal of the Pepperdine University IRBs is to protect the rights, welfare, and dignity of human subjects and to assist investigators in conducting ethical research that complies with the applicable regulations (“Human,” n.d., para. 2). The researcher received written approval from the Graduate and Professional School’s IRB (see Appendix A).

IRB Approval

This study evaluated young adults who were once participants in the Upward Bound program and was deemed to involve minimal risk to study participants. Following successful completion of the preliminary oral exam, the proposal was sent to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools IRB for expedited review. Upon approval and prior to beginning the research study, an informed consent form was collected from each study participant and remains in the researcher's possession. All informed consent forms will remain locked in a secure cabinet for 3 years and will be destroyed with the rest of the study data. The researcher took care to comply with all necessary stipulations before reaching out to potential study participants.

Positionality

The researcher had a personal interest in conducting this study. The researcher had worked for an Upward Bound program for over 16 years and had been in a supervisory role since 2009; therefore, the researcher had insight on program details and processes that might not be public knowledge. Differing political agendas and changes in government administration have sparked increased interest on Upward Bound program performance and effectiveness. Official Upward Bound evaluations, as conducted by the U.S. Department of Education and Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., have primarily been quantitative and from the perspective of the program personnel. With the program beginning a new grant cycle, the researcher deduced that it would be helpful to gain insight into the effect of Upward Bound on participants who have achieved academic success from the perspective of the participants. The researcher hopes to be able to use a portion of the findings to strengthen upcoming grant proposals. The researcher understands that bias on the part of a researcher is unethical (Kumar, 2011). Although no researchers are truly free

of bias in connection to their research, the researcher made a conscious effort to eliminate all bias and personal opinion, beyond subjectivity, that may affect the program and its role in the lives of its participants. Figure 2 shows the researcher's timeline for study completion.

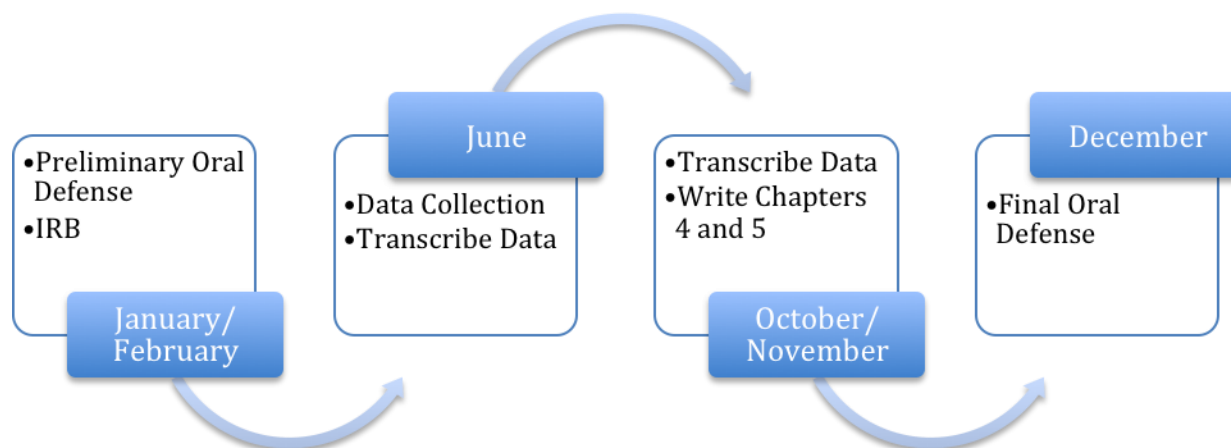


Figure 3. The researcher's timeline.

Summary

This chapter provided a detailed explanation of the methodology used in this study. This qualitative phenomenological research study involved an attempt to understand the impact of Upward Bound on the postsecondary success of its former participants. The researcher selected the qualitative phenomenological method because it would provide an in-depth glimpse into how the participants perceived their experiences while in the Upward Bound program. Study participants met certain criteria: participated in Upward Bound, graduated with the 2010 or 2011 cohort, enrolled in an institution of higher education the fall immediately following graduation, remained continuously enrolled, completed all coursework within 5 years, and obtained a bachelor's degree. Under the direction of the researcher, a graduate assistant conducted a semistructured interview with each participant that consisted of a series of open-ended questions. Each interview was recorded for accuracy and transcribed by the researcher and graduate

assistant. The researcher returned to the study participants to confirm the accuracy of the transcripts and data. The chapter also detailed how the researcher maintained the validity and reliability of the study, how the data were managed, and human subject considerations. The following chapter includes a discussion on the main themes that emerged from the data and other important details related to the results of the study.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to understand the impact of Upward Bound, as it relates to postsecondary success, from the perspective of former program participants who had graduated from postsecondary education institutions. The goal was to understand a phenomenon, which was Upward Bound, and gain a better understanding of how former participants perceive how it did or did not positively affect their educational pursuits following high school completion.

The researcher employed a methodology based in the qualitative tradition of research and used phenomenology as the approach to gather and analyze data. Using a phenomenological approach allowed the researcher to speak directly to individuals who were former Upward Bound participants who had achieved postsecondary success. The researcher followed the basic steps outlined by Moustakas (1994), which were (a) identify a phenomenon to study, (b) remove the researcher's experiences, (c) collect data from several people who have experienced the phenomenon, (d) analyze the study data, and (e) write up a description of the experience. This chapter includes the findings from the data collected in this study. It also includes a brief background of the Upward Bound program and its goals, as well as demographic information related to the surrounding community of the schools mentioned in this study. The data collection and data analysis procedures used are detailed. Finally, the chapter includes a thorough review of the research and findings of the interviews.

Background Information

Upward Bound, one of the longest running federally funded college access programs, provides academic support opportunities for its participants to succeed in their precollege

performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). The program is designed to generate the skills and motivation necessary for success in education beyond high school among young people from low-income backgrounds and who have received inadequate secondary school preparation (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). The participants in this study came from two large, urban, underperforming high schools identified as UBS1 and UBS2. These schools, located 2.6 miles from one another, both sit in the heart of South Los Angeles. The geographic location that encompasses this community can be described as Leimert Park-adjacent. This community, once an affluent neighborhood, is now home to predominantly low-income residents, with more than half of target area families (51.8%) identified as low income (U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2015). In comparison, the state average of low-income families is 30.0% and the national average is 28.9% (U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2015). The per capita income for the target area is also significantly lower than that of the county, the state, and the nation. As illustrated in Table 8, per capita income in the target area is over \$10,000 per year less than the average for South Los Angeles and almost half (55.6%) that of the State of California.

Table 8

Community Demographics

Area	No. low-income families	% low-income families	Per capita income (\$)
Target area	9224	51.8	16,622
Los Angeles		34.8	27,987
California		30.0	29,906
United States		28.9	28,555

Note. Source of data was U.S. Census American Community Survey (2015).

In some communities, the education attainment level often coincides with the income level of residents living the target area, and this was the case for many of the adults living in the target area surrounding UBS1 and UBS2. Only one in seven (14.6%) of target area adults ages

25 years and older have bachelor's degrees or higher (U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2015). This percentage lags in comparison to 31.0% for the state and 29.3% for the national average (U.S. Census American Community Survey, 2015). Table 9 depicts the education attainment level data.

Table 9

Community Education Attainment

Area	High school diploma (%)	Bachelor's degree (%)
Total target area	69.8	14.6
California	81.5	31.0
United States	86.3	29.3

Note. Source of data was U.S. Census ACS (2015).

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to beginning the data collection, approval was sought and received from the vice president of Workforce Development at the host institution (see Appendix B). This approval allowed the researcher to be able to access archived student files and the student records database to obtain student contact information. The researcher identified a targeted participant group for this study. Participants consisted of adults once enrolled in Upward Bound who had since graduated from an institution of higher education and obtained a bachelor's degree. Each participant met the following criteria:

1. Participated in the Upward Bound selected for this study.
2. Culminated high school in 2010 or 2011.
3. Enrolled in a 4-year institution of higher education in the fall immediately following high school culmination.
4. Remained continuously enrolled at the institution of higher education.
5. Completed all coursework required for degree completion within 5 years.

The study participants were contacted via phone and through a Facebook direct message to set up an interview at a date and time that was convenient for the participant. Of the 10 students identified as having met study criteria, eight completed the interview. Of the eight interviews, five were conducted via telephone. The remaining three interviews were conducted in a secure room on the college campus. The 60-minute, open-ended interview consisted of 16 questions adapted from Udombon (2006) and Walker (2011).

Informed consent was obtained from each participant via electronic correspondence (see Appendix C). Prior to the scheduled interview, the researcher e-mailed the informed consent, the demographic survey (see Appendix D), and the recruitment script (see Appendix E) to each participant. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher asked the participants if they understood the nature of the study and the minimal risks associated with participation. All participants stated they understood the study and the risks and agreed to continue participating in the study. The research assistant approved for this study then conducted the interviews. Each interview was recorded on two separate digital devices to safeguard against technology or equipment failure. The data obtained from the interviews were later transcribed verbatim.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected for this study were obtained through interviews that included semistructured, open-ended questions (see Appendix F). Each participant was interviewed individually and the interview was recorded. The researcher enlisted a graduate research assistant who had no connection with this research to assist in the collection and analysis of the study data. The purpose of using the graduate research assistant was to eliminate the potential for any bias the researcher of this study may have had related to the body of research or any connection to

participants. In addition to conducting the interviews, the research assistant initiated the transcription process.

The research assistant transcribed the eight interviews conducted in this study verbatim. The research assistant received instructions to listen to each recorded interview in its entirety and then begin the transcription process. After the research assistant had completed the transcription process, the transcripts were turned over to the researcher for the first analysis. To ensure accuracy, the researcher listened to the recorded interview while reading through the transcript of the interview. Upon the second analysis, the researcher discovered a few words on two of the transcripts that were initially recorded as inaudible that had been left out during the initial transcription. After the small errors were corrected, the researcher e-mailed the transcript to each study participant for member checking and transcript review. Conducting member checking and transcript review gives participants the opportunity to make corrections and verify findings (Kiyama, 2010). Once approval was received from the study participants, the transcripts were analyzed to identify codes within the data and assign themes.

Using the descriptive coding method, the researcher initially identified 16 themes within the data. Descriptive coding “summarizes in a word or short phrase the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data” (Saldana, 2009, p. 70). After the themes were identified, the researcher went back and color-coded the transcripts according to each individual theme, which allowed the researcher to differentiate quickly between the various themes and aided in the analysis process. Following the color-coding process, a color copy of the transcripts was given to an external reviewer to determine if the codes identified correctly represented what was displayed in the transcripts. The external review revealed that the researcher had combined some of the codes that appeared to be similar at first glance. The external reviewer suggested that the researcher

separate the codes that had been combined and look at them individually first and then combine them later if they were, in fact, describing the same experience. The external researcher explained the reason for this was because the codes might have been referring to topics that appeared similar but were not actually similar. Upon further analysis of the data, the researcher found the previously combined codes were indeed describing experiences that were the same or very closely related. The codes were recombined and the original 16 themes were observed and analyzed. Employing a phenomenological approach allows researchers to understand what the participants experienced and how they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994).

Study Participants

Of the 10 individuals identified as having met all study criteria, eight completed the entire interview process. All the participants were between the ages of 23 and 24 years old. Five participants were female, and five participants attended UBS1. Seven study participants were of Hispanic descent, with six identifying Spanish as the primary language spoken at home. One study participant identified as African American. Two study participants' parents owned their family home, while the remaining six rented their house or apartment. All study participants indicated high school was the highest level of education attained by their parents. Table 10 provides the demographic data collected for this study.

Table 10

Study Participants Demographics

	No.	%
Number of participants		
UBS1	5	63
UBS2	3	37
Gender		
Male	3	37
Female	5	63
Ethnicity		
Hispanic	7	88
African American	1	12
White	0	0
Asian	0	0
American Indian	0	0
Primary language spoken at home		
English	1	13
Spanish	6	75
Bilingual	1	13
Parents' level of education		
High school diploma	8	100
Bachelor's degree	0	0
Master's degree	0	0
Residential composition		
Own home	2	24
Rent home	3	38
Apartment rental	3	38

Review of the Research and Interview Questions

The research questions for this study were designed to collect data through an interview questionnaire from former Upward Bound participants regarding their experience with Upward Bound and its connection, if any, with postsecondary success. Semistructured, open-ended interview questions were employed. The following four research questions guided this research study:

Research Question 1: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants?

Research Question 2: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants' academic achievement?

Research Question 3: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants' postsecondary completion?

Research Question 4: What aspects of the Upward Bound program do participants perceive as most effective in preparing for postsecondary success?

To obtain adequate study data, 16 interview questions were identified. The questions were selected because they would elicit detailed feedback from each participant. Prior to each interview, the study participant was encouraged to answer the questions as detailed, honestly, and freely as possible.

The following section presents the responses of the study participants. Each research question will be followed by the questionnaire questions that related to that research question. The questionnaire was established to capture participants' raw, in-depth feelings and attitudes as they related to the focus of this study. The researcher selected participant responses that best conveyed the feelings and experiences evoked by each question in the questionnaire.

Research Question 1. The study began by asking each participant to answer the first research question, which was as follows: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants? The researcher used five subquestions to retrieve study data. The questions were as follows:

1. What was your motivation or drive while enrolled in the Upward Bound program?
2. How did the Upward Bound program help you in developing new relationships with peers and teachers?
3. What type of influence did the Upward Bound teachers and staff have on you?

4. How did participating in this program impact your decision to go to college?
5. Describe your experiences with the Upward Bound program related to personal and or social preparation for college.

Several themes emerged from the participant responses to the five subquestions. Seven recurrent themes emerged from the first subquestions: college, friends, exposure, field trips, stipend, support, and workshops/resources. Figure 4 shows the themes and number of responses recorded.

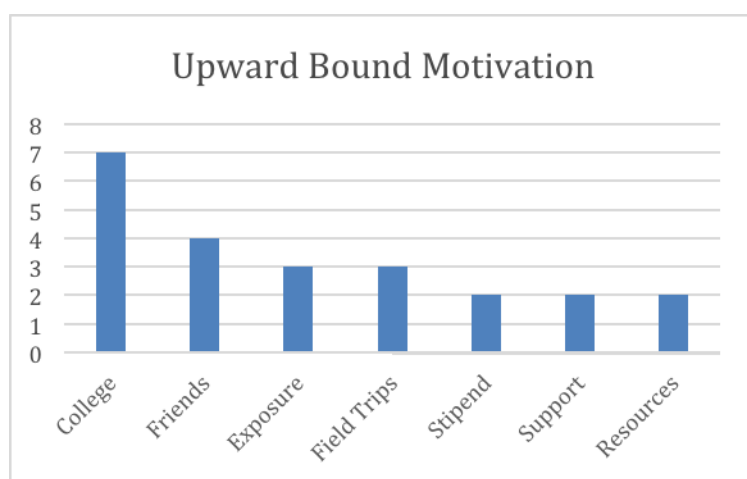


Figure 4. Upward Bound motivation.

The following responses were chosen to illustrate participants' answers to Interview Question 1. Participant 1 stated, "My motivation was the help to be able to get into college, because college was always going to be my next step, but as far as getting there, I needed help since I was coming from a first-generation family." Participant 2 responded, "I felt like the program was really going to be there for me to reach my goals. I saw it as an extra support, from my parents, to actually get to college." Participant 4 replied,

I learned about the program through a friend, and I learned that there were field trips and stipends. I liked the aspect that it was a program my friends were involved in and it also

had a financial benefit and then the activities and field trips made me even more interested.

Interview Question 2 was as follows: How did the Upward Bound program help you in developing new relationships with peers and teachers? Six themes emerged: college, tutoring, friends, goals, support, resources. The responses appear in Figure 5.

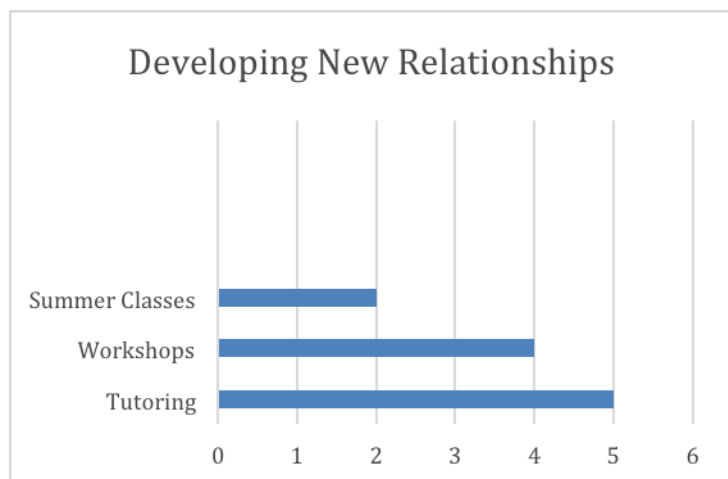


Figure 5. Developing new relationships.

The following responses were chosen to illustrate participants' answers to Interview Question 2. Participant 3 stated, "Participating in tutoring and Saturday Academies makes you meet people that you wouldn't normally talk to because in high school you form cliques. So it helped more with peers because you meet people you wouldn't really talk to otherwise."

Participant 4 replied,

What helped me was being able to take a summer course. I was taking a college course while in high school, which I really liked, and I was able to approach the professor there and I didn't feel afraid that it wasn't one of my high school teachers.

Participant 8 responded, "There were always like-minded people around that wanted to go to college, like in tutoring and in the summer classes. This helped me make more friends who were motivated just like I was."

The focus of Interview Question 3 was on the influence of the program staff; participants were asked the type of influence the Upward Bound teachers and staff had on them. Several participants stated that the teachers and staff had a positive influence during their time in Upward Bound. Figure 6 shows all themes identified by this question. The following responses illustrate participants' answers to Interview Question 3.

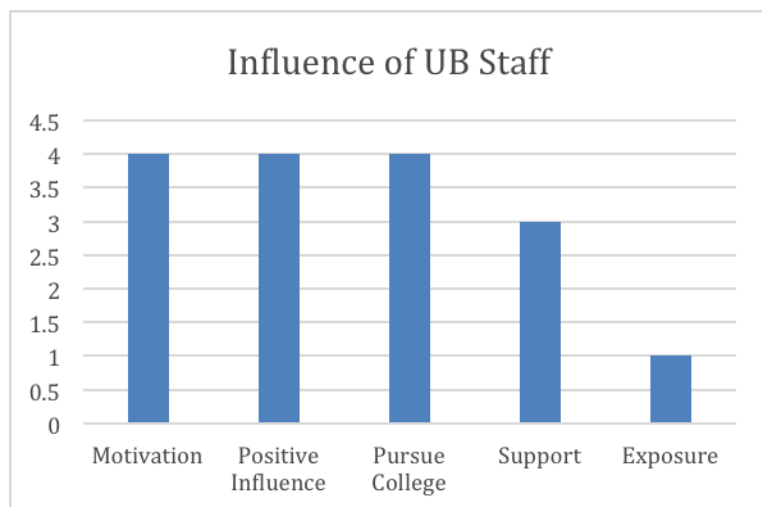


Figure 6. Influence of Upward Bound teachers and staff.

Participant 1 responded, “They had a great influence on me. They always seemed to have my best interest in mind and they were always approachable, so that helped a lot.” Participant 5 replied,

They motivated me to want to go to college. I remember one of the tutors saying she wanted to be a nurse. And I remember her telling me the things or the steps she was currently taking to reach her goal.

Participant 8 stated, “I would definitely say they had a positive influence on me. They were all passionate about learning and passionate about the subject they were teaching so that kept me motivated to learn and move forward in my life.”

The fourth interview question was as follows: How did participating in this program impact your decision to go to college? Although many participants saw their experience in Upward Bound as having a positive impact on their decision to attend college, some expressed they did not believe their experience impacted their decision to attend college. Figure 7 depicts the themes within participants' responses. The following responses illustrate participants' answers to Interview Question 4.

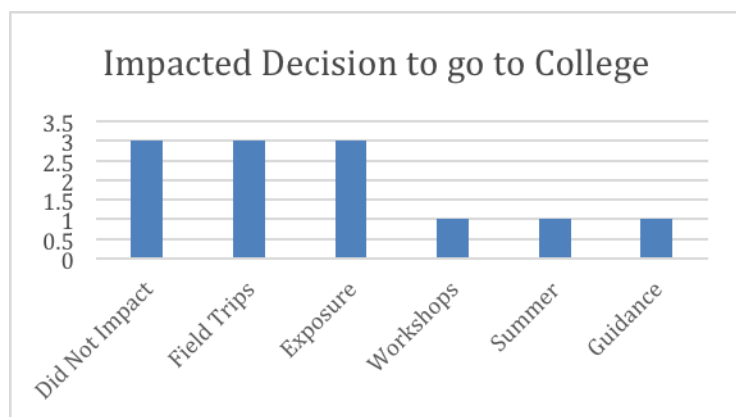


Figure 7. Impacted decision to go to college.

Participant 1 stated,

I always knew I wanted to go to school in San Diego as a kid. Upward Bound exposed me to all the college campuses and when I got to UCSD [University of California, San Diego], that was my motivation to apply to UCSD because I knew that was where I wanted to apply and then the program gave me all the resources I needed like financial aid and scholarship workshops and stuff like that.

Participant 4 responded,

There was no choice whether or not I was going to go to college. . . . I was going to college, so it didn't affect me in that way. But it did help me in deciding where I wanted to go to college.

Participant 8 replied,

So initially I didn't know much about college and I wasn't sure if I wanted to go or not just because it was something new to me and I didn't know much about it. But through the field trips, like the tours of college that we did, I got to learn what college life was all about and what opportunities that college makes possible for you, so then I wanted to go to college and do it for myself.

The fifth interview question asked the participants to describe their experiences with Upward Bound as it relates to personal or social preparation for college. The responses are recorded in Figure 8. The following responses illustrate participants' answers to Interview Question 5.

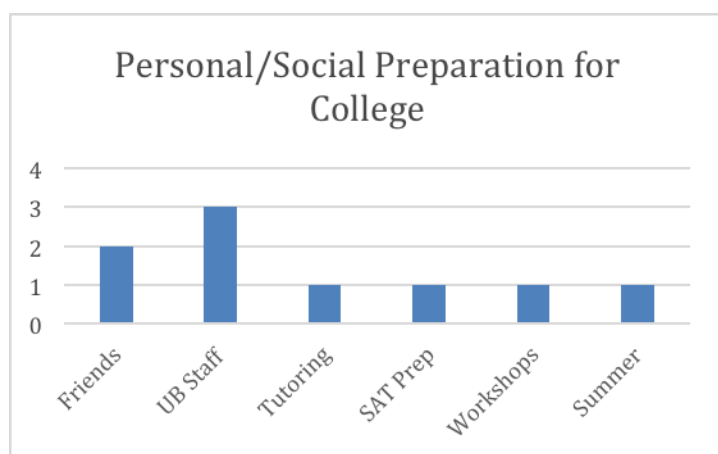


Figure 8. Personal or social preparation for college.

Participant 3 replied,

Personally, it helped me create a time schedule because in college no one was really there to help you. They don't tell you to go to class or do your homework or anything...you're out there on your own so you really have to learn how to time manage. We had a workshop on time management before. It helped.

Participant 6 stated, "I think hearing about some of the experiences of the UB staff kind of helped me think about college and some things I should be involved in when I get there."

Participant 8 noted,

My experiences with the Upward Bound program just created more of a personal preparation for college. I made the decision myself to go to college based on what I learned through the program, what I learned from my teachers, and college mentors at school.

In response to Research Question 1, the data indicated the students were affected most by the exposure to information about the different colleges that were available. Participant responses also indicated that several of the services offered by the program impacted their decision to go to college. These services included tutoring, workshops, and field trips to college campuses.

Research Question 2. The second research question was as follows: What impact did participation in the Upward Bound program have on the participants' academic involvement? This question was answered by two interview questions:

6. How did the academic activities impact your learning while enrolled in the Upward Bound program?
7. Describe how your experiences with Upward Bound related to academic preparation for college.

With regard to Interview Question 6, almost all the participants indicated the most beneficial component of Upward Bound was the classes they were able to take during the summer. Other impactful components of the program, as identified by the study participants, were workshops, Saturday Academy, tutoring, and exposure. The responses are recorded in Figure 9. The following responses illustrate participant's answers to Interview Question 6.

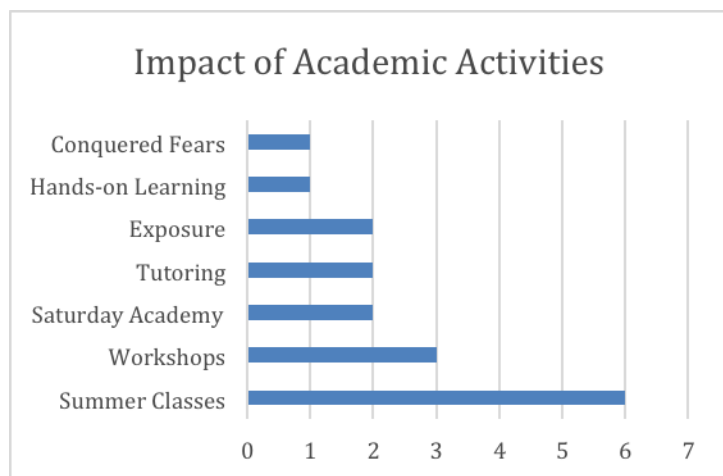


Figure 9. Impact of academic activities.

Participant 1 replied, “Some of the activities were taking college-level classes in the summer and the program would give us workshops on stuff like how to study and prepare for college. I think that had an impact in high school and afterward.” Participant 4 said,

Tutoring helped block out time where I would do my homework and ask any questions I had versus being at home and trying to figure out a time to do my work and then figure out solutions to questions I had.

Participant 8 responded, “I think I learned better in the Upward Bound program because we had a lot of hands-on learning and hands-on activities where it wasn’t just in the classroom. . . . We got to go outside the classroom and do things.”

Interview Question 7 asked the participants the following: Describe how your experiences with Upward Bound related to academic preparation for college. Figure 10 depicts participants’ responses. The following responses illustrate participants’ answers to Research Question 2.

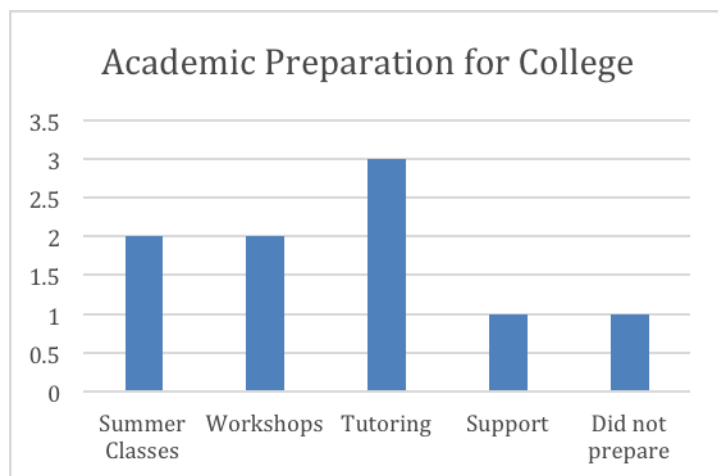


Figure 10. Academic preparation for college.

Participant 2 responded, “Having certain workshops like the note-taking workshops really helped. Everything we did was geared towards finding out who you were or who you want to be when you got to college.” Participant 7 replied, “The program really prepped us when it came to the application process. The program was incredibly supportive and I remember them helping us one-on-one . . . so that was incredibly, incredibly helpful.” Participant 3 did not believe the experience provided any preparation for college:

I don’t think I had any experience that prepared me for college at all, actually. I don’t think the summer classes prepared me for college because they were tailored for high school students; they weren’t really on a college level.

In response to Research Question 2, participation in certain program activities had a significant impact on the participants. Of the items noted, the summer college classes, tutoring, and workshops were the most impactful overall.

Research Question 3. The third research question was as follows: What impact did Upward Bound have on postsecondary completion? Two interview questions were asked to gather data for this question. The interview questions were as follows:

8. How did participating in this program impact your college performance and help you persist through graduation?
9. How did this program impact or help you graduate from your postsecondary institution within 5 years?

In the responses to Interview Question 8, two themes stood out among the participant responses: motivation and workshops. The responses are recorded in Figure 11. The following responses illustrate participants' answers to Interview Question 8.

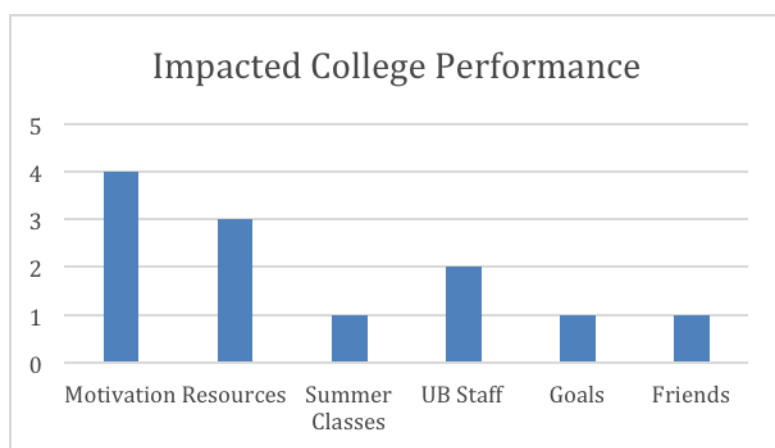


Figure 11. Impact on college performance and persistence.

Participant 2 stated,

I say, I'd go back to the summer classes because they were so intense and they were classes that I would eventually take but they were taken in a shorter period than the regular semester. That was the most important for me to stay motivated in a short period of time.

Participant 5 responded,

I appreciate the honesty of the Upward Bound staff. I remember one of my tutors telling me about all the reading she had to do and learn about the body and all this stuff in regards to nursing . . . and I remember her telling me it wasn't going to be easy and that

sometimes you're going to get a lot of work. Something you work on while you're in college is really time management and your organizational skills, which were workshops we had in the program.

Participant 8 replied, "Well, participation in the program just gave me kind of insight on college life and what it will be like. So when I got to college, my expectations were met and that's how I enjoyed college and completed it."

With regard to Interview Question 9, appreciation for the Upward Bound staff appeared quite frequently in the participants' response. Figure 12 depicts participants' responses. The following responses illustrate participants' answers to Interview Question 9.

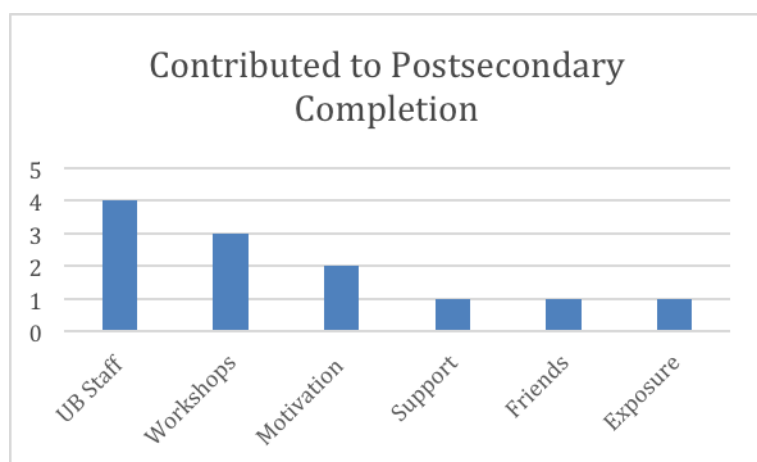


Figure 12. Postsecondary completion.

Participant 3 noted,

Well, I guess the UB staff of the program impacted me because I would occasionally be contacted by them and they would ask how I was doing and how things were going in college. It just made me like, okay, I have to finish because people are depending on me to finish college.

Participant 6 replied,

I would think that just because of the exposure that I had prior to getting to college did help me get out within 5 years because of all the information that the program provided for me. Otherwise, I think I would have had to take a little bit longer or maybe taken longer to apply for college.

Participant 8 stated, “It all goes back to that initial motivation that was created to succeed in school and in college, through the mentorship the UB staff provided.

The responses gathered answered Research Question 3. Participant responses indicated that the motivation and attention beyond high school from the Upward Bound staff had the most impact on their postsecondary completion.

Research Question 4. The fourth research question asked the following: Which Upward Bound activities do participants perceive as most effective in preparing for postsecondary success? To explore this area, the following three Interview Questions were asked:

10. What aspect of Upward Bound most appealed to you?
11. Which Upward Bound activities do you feel contributed to your academic preparation for college?
12. Which Upward Bound activities do you feel contributed the most to your academic success?

For Interview Question 10, two themes stood out in the data: college and field trips. Participant responses are recorded in Figure 13. The following responses illustrate participants’ answers to Interview Question 10.

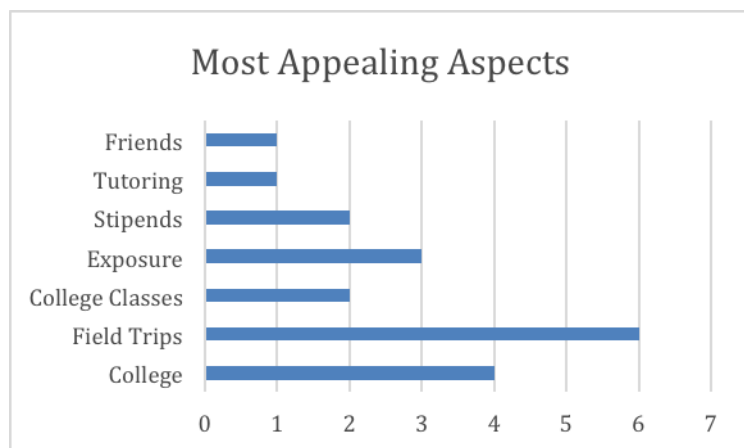


Figure 13. Most appealing aspects.

Participant 1 said,

The resources they gave me appealed to me. When it came to going on college field trips, when it came to getting college recommendations, when it came to classes . . . they taught us about financial aid and other workshops that at the moment I would have never been exposed to the information if it had not been for this program.

Participant 4 responded,

The field trips to different colleges, that appealed to me. And the tutoring that went along with the stipends, so basically I was getting paid to attend tutoring. I was gaining intellectual help but also financial help as well. That was the most appealing.

Participant 8 replied, “Definitely the college tours and the field trips.”

With regard to Interview Question 11, college classes and field trips were mentioned most frequently. Figure 14 depicts participants’ responses. The following responses illustrate participants’ answers to Interview Question 11.

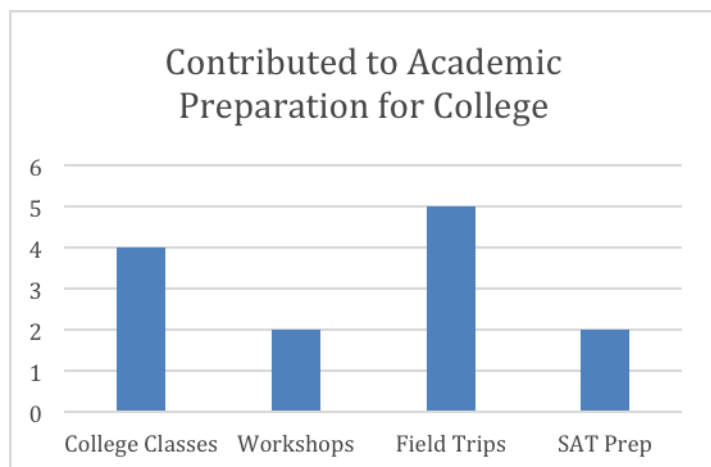


Figure 14. Contributed to academic preparation for college.

Participant 4 stated,

The college field trips and taking courses over the summer. Whether it was a college course or something else; that really helped. I got used to having my summers busy and working through the summer rather than taking a break. That, of course, helped me in college when I wanted to take a summer course to get ahead.

Participant 5 responded,

SAT Prep. It helped me because I actually got a decent score and that's what helped my admission to the university. I felt like if I had not taken that SAT course, I would not have gotten that good of a score to look competitive.

Participant 7 said,

I would say the college field trips was one of the best memories I have as being one of the most influential parts of the program because those were for sure experiences I would have never had experienced had I not been in the program. So just getting to see these college campuses beforehand was incredible exposure and experience that for sure was very impactful.

The next question asked participants which activities they felt contributed the most to their academic success. Three themes stood out among the responses: tutoring, workshops and summer classes. Figure 15 shows the participant responses Interview Question 12. The following responses illustrate participants' answers to Interview Question 12.

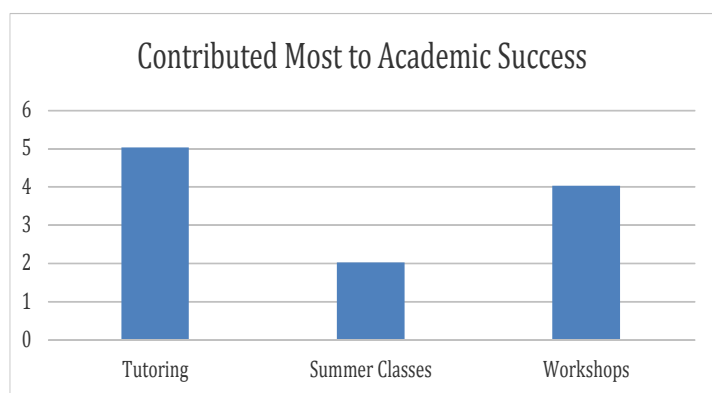


Figure 15. Activities that contributed the most to academic success.

Participant 2 replied,

I go back to the note-taking workshops. I think that was major and one of the best activities towards my academic success in college. Especially when everything is so fast, like the lectures. The professors don't really think about how fast they're going. SO just learning how to do shorthand notation and things like that was very helpful.

Participant 4 noted, "The tutoring. I just got in a habit of blocking out time to work and I was taught specific ways to study. Being given those tools helped me and it was the result of having been in the program." Participant 7 responded,

To my academic success, I would say the opportunity to take summer classes. Because I know that helped me get ahead and that set me up so when I applied to college, I was already at the level of college math because I was able to get ahead with those extra classes.

With regard to Research Question 4, the students found the summer classes, the tutoring, and the workshops to be most effective in preparing them for academic success.

Summary

Chapter 4 included a summary of the findings. The chapter began with a brief introduction of the study and background information on the two urban high schools attended by participants in the study. Also included with the background information was demographic data pertaining to the community immediately surrounding the two target high schools. The data collection and data analysis procedures undertaken by the study were explained in detail, and a detailed description of the study participants, including demographic data, was given. The chapter concluded with a detailed analysis of the responses to each of the four research questions. The key findings of the study, implications for practice, participant recommendations, and recommendations for future research will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Summary, Key Findings, Implications, and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter summarizes what was learned in this study about the effectiveness of Upward Bound on postsecondary success. The chapter starts with a summary of the study, followed by a discussion of the study's findings. Also included in this chapter are the key findings, participant recommendations, and a brief discussion of the limitations and validity. The chapter concludes with the implications for practice and recommendations for future research.

Summary of the Study

Despite the efforts of lawmakers to close the widening achievement gap, the disparity still persists. The gaps in academic achievement regarding race and income can most likely be explained by the uneven distribution of resources to children from various backgrounds (Jager-Hyman, 2004). Although a plethora of policy and school reform initiatives have been created to reduce the achievement gap between White and non-White students, underachievement persists and shows little signs of dissipating (Howard, 2010). Therefore, programs created to address the uneven playing field are an essential resource for underrepresented students (Vargas, 2004). Participation in college access programs can help balance the lack of resources and experiences afforded to underrepresented students, as well as provide an opportunity to attain greater educational success.

College access programs play an important role in working with schools to transform the experiences of underrepresented students (McCants, 2004). The aim of the services provided by these programs is to counter unfavorable school and community experiences and influences by providing the missing elements that help students aspire to, prepare for, and enroll in college (Gullat & Jan, 2003). In this study, the researcher highlighted four college access programs:

IHAD, AVID, GEAR-UP, and Upward Bound. Although each program was examined individually, the Upward Bound program and its effectiveness with regard to student success was the focus of this study.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand the impact of Upward Bound, as it relates to postsecondary success, from the perspective of former program participants. This study defined postsecondary success as enrollment, persistence, and the attainment of a bachelor's degree from an institution of higher education within 5 years of the first enrollment date as an undergraduate.

The researcher identified a targeted participant group for this study. Study participants consisted of adults once enrolled in Upward Bound who had since graduated from an institution of higher education and obtained a bachelor's degree. To be included in this study, participants were required to meet the following criteria:

1. Participated in the Upward Bound selected for this study.
2. Culminated high school in 2010 or 2011.
3. Enrolled in a 4-year institution of higher education in the fall immediately following high school culmination.
4. Remained continuously enrolled at the institution of higher education.
5. Completed all coursework required for degree completion within 5 years.

Based on the selection criteria, 10 students from the combined 2010 and 2011 Upward Bound graduation cohorts qualified to be study participants. Of the 10 potential participants, eight completed a 60-minute, open-ended interview. A summary of the study's findings follows.

Summary of Findings

Four research questions guided this study through data collection and analysis. Each question was designed to gather individual responses from participants regarding their experience with Upward Bound and its potential connection to postsecondary success. The research questions were as follows:

Research Question 1: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants?

Research Question 2: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants' academic achievement?

Research Question 3: What impact, if any, did participation in Upward Bound have on the participants' postsecondary completion?

Research Question 4: What aspects of the Upward Bound program did participants perceive as most effective in preparing for postsecondary success?

Research Question 1. Participant responses to Research Question 1 were gathered from five interview questions:

1. What was your motivation while enrolled in the Upward Bound program?
2. How did the Upward Bound program help you in developing new relationships with peers and teachers?
3. What type of influence did the Upward Bound teachers and staff have on you?
4. How did the academic activities impact your learning while enrolled in the Upward Bound program?
5. Describe your experiences with the Upward Bound program related to personal or social preparation for college.

Based on the responses to the subquestions, the participants were most impacted by the exposure to information about the different colleges that were available and by the services offered, such as tutoring, workshops, and field trips to college campuses.

Research Question 2. Two subquestions were used to capture participant responses for Research Question 2:

6. How did the academic activities impact your learning while enrolled in the Upward Bound program?
7. Describe how your experiences with Upward Bound related to academic preparation for college.

Based on the responses to the subquestions, the participants felt the summer college classes, tutoring, and workshops had the most significant impact on their academic achievement.

Research Question 3. Participant responses for Research Question 3 were gathered using two subquestions:

8. How did participating in this program impact your college performance and help you persist through graduation?
9. How did this program impact or help you graduate from your postsecondary institution within 5 years?

Based on the responses to the subquestions, the participants indicated that the motivation and attention beyond high school from the Upward Bound staff had the most significant impact on their postsecondary completion.

Research Question 4. Three subquestions were used to capture participant responses for Research Question 4:

10. What aspect of Upward Bound most appealed to you?

11. Which Upward Bound activities do you feel contributed to your academic preparation for college?
12. Which Upward Bound activities do you feel contributed the most to your academic success?

Based on the responses to the subquestions, the participants found the summer classes, the tutoring, and the workshops to be the most effective in preparing them for academic success.

Key Findings

Several key findings emerged from the data regarding the aspects of Upward Bound that participants felt contributed to postsecondary success. The following themes reoccurred throughout the findings and were identified as highly beneficial components of the Upward Bound program: (a) tutoring, (b) summer college classes, (c) workshops, (d) field trips to college campuses, (e) motivation and (f) attention beyond high school from Upward Bound staff.

Tutoring. For many students, tutoring provides additional educational support that often helps to fill gaps where the traditional education system has failed (Swail, 2000). All eight participants identified tutoring as having been one of the best aspects of the program. Participant 4 stated tutoring helped block out time where she could do homework and ask questions in areas in which she was struggling. She went on to say that, in the tutoring sessions, she was taught different ways to study, which was a tool that helped her succeed in college.

Summer college courses. Programs that encourage students to take college classes are essential for many high school students attending urban schools (Howard, 2010). All eight participants found the summer college courses to be beneficial in helping prepare them for college success. Participant 4 stated taking courses over the summer contributed the most to her academic preparation for college. She stated that it did not matter whether the course was a

college course or something else, but it really helped because she got in the practice of having her summers occupied, which helped in college when she wanted to take a summer course to get ahead. Similarly, Participant 7 attributed the summer classes to her academic success because they helped her to get ahead, which she found helpful when she applied to college.

Trips to college campuses. An effective college access program entails a variety of strategies to provide students with different experiences that might otherwise be unavailable. Among these strategies and experiences are college visits (Oesterreich, 2000). All eight study participants felt the trips to college campuses motivated them to want to go to college.

Participant 8 stated that he did not know much about college initially or whether he wanted to go, but that his knowledge and perception of college changed after having visited college campuses on the program field trips, and attending college became something he wanted to do and experience for himself. In contrast, Participant 1 said she always knew she wanted to attend college in San Diego, but she was not sure what school to attend until she visited the campus of UCSD with Upward Bound. She stated that at that time she knew where she wanted to apply and that the program provided the resources she needed to get there.

Motivation. Motivation is a key component to fostering student success. It is important for program staff to adopt strategies so they can get to know students individually (James et al., 2001). When this occurs, program staff are better able to encourage the individual because they are able to address the unique needs, strengths, and weaknesses of the individual student (James et al., 2001). Seven of the eight participants found Upward Bound motivating. Participant 1 indicated the staff had a positive and motivating influence on her and that they always seemed to have her best interest at heart. Participant 5 stated the Upward Bound staff motivated her to want to go to college, and Participant 8 stated that it was the passion of the staff that kept him

motivated to learn and moving forward in life. For Participant 8, the impetus came from the motivation created by the program to succeed in school and college through the mentorship of the staff.

Workshops. Workshops and other resources are critical to the academic success of underrepresented students. In most cases, gaps in academic achievement can be explained by the uneven distribution of resources (Jager-Hyman, 2004). Six of the eight study participants stated they found the workshops offered by the program to be particularly beneficial. Participant 1 stated that the resources that the program provided appealed to her the most. She also stated that the program taught her about financial aid and other workshops and that she would have never been exposed to the information if it had not been for the Upward Bound program. Participant 2 had a similar view. She stated that she believes the note-taking workshops contributed the most to her academic success in college because the lectures were so fast-paced. The workshop taught her how to do shorthand notation, which was helpful in college. The workshops participants found to be most beneficial were the following:

- Study Tips and Study Skills
- Financial Aid/Financial Literacy
- Note-Taking
- Time Management
- SAT Prep

Attention beyond high school. As noted by Gandara (1998), effective programs have support services sustained over a period of years. Five participants stated they benefited from the staff keeping in touch with them following high school culmination. Participant 3 was impacted beyond high school culmination by the Upward Bound staff keeping in contact and following up

on their educational progress. He stated he was occasionally contacted by the Upward Bound staff and they would ask how he was doing and how things were going in college. He noted that knowing someone was depending on him to finish motivated him to keep moving forward and finish college.

Implications for Practice

Administrators in both secondary and postsecondary institutions focus on improving student success, which has led to fostering various programs and initiatives aimed at increasing student success rates across the board. The results of this research study support the claim that Upward Bound has been consistent in meeting its goal, which is to improve the lives of its participants by providing access to resources and services that would otherwise be unavailable due to their socioeconomic status and other perceived barriers (Thomas, 2014). The results solidified the need for the program's resources and services among underrepresented students.

First, the researcher recommends that staff members in individual Upward Bound programs communicate program goals, services, and benefits to high school teachers, guidance and college counselors, administrators, and parents. As previously noted, Upward Bound was once considered a compensatory program that aimed to solve social, economic, and psychological problems (Butler & Gipson, 1975). Some school personnel still see the program as such, and not as a program that provides a pathway for college access. Students who enroll in Upward Bound receive opportunities to experience learning both inside and outside of the classroom, which helps develop confidence and skill sets that will help them in high school, in college, and in their future career pursuits.

Second, college and university administrators should consider creating a support group for incoming freshman who are recent Upward Bound high school graduates. These students

spent the last 3 to 4 years with a close-knit group of like-minded students, receiving individualized support and resources. For some of these students, transitioning alone into a large university can be unsettling and intimidating, as they must navigate the demands and learn the processes of a new educational system, and some also experience a form of culture shock. The creation of an Upward Bound support group would give these students the opportunity to work together, provide peer support, and encourage one another. The support group would also serve as a reminder to use the tools and resources taught in their Upward Bound programs, which would keep the students engaged and on the path to achieving postsecondary success.

Lastly, the researcher recommends that Upward Bound program staff incorporate more distance learning opportunities into the programs for their students. Colleges and universities worldwide have incorporated some form of learning technology into their curriculum. For many students in urban high schools, this type of learning is either not encouraged or unavailable at their schools, which puts them at a disadvantage when entering a postsecondary institution where most of the business transactions are done through portals or in classrooms where the teacher makes virtual learning an integral part of the course requirements. Upward Bound programs could incorporate a learning management system similar to Blackboard or Canvas to familiarize the students with virtual learning, which would help to ensure they are better prepared and might lead to academic success.

Recommendations for Future Research

Prior to embarking on this study, the researcher believed that participation in Upward Bound benefited each student who took advantage of the resources and support the program had to offer. This belief came from years of having worked in various Upward Bound programs and seeing the success that many students had achieved, both in their educational pursuits and in their

careers. Although the findings of this study supported the researcher's initial belief, more research is needed in this field. Future research could be expanded to include all students from a particular cohort or period, regardless of the type of higher education institution they attend.

Future research could include a focus on comparing the experiences of students from multiple Upward Bound programs. Researchers could randomly choose 20 Upward Bound programs in a particular state or region and compare the program services, resources, courses, and field trips offered to see which program activities students found most helpful in preparing them for postsecondary education. This research could have a larger sample and would allow the researcher to analyze the lived experiences of students from different backgrounds and schools.

Future researchers could compare student academic success between federal programs that provide similar program services and serve the same student populations. An example would be an Upward Bound program and an Educational Talent Search program that serve students from the same target school. The data would be helpful to analysts at the U.S. Department of Education who decide which grants to fund during grant competitions. The results might help the analysts to see areas where more funding is needed and areas where less funding is needed because multiple programs are providing the same services to essentially the same students.

Lastly, future research could be conducted between different demographic groups to see what services and activities other cultures find to be a significant contributing factor to educational success. This research might result in recommendations that are more culturally relevant, which could potentially help programs serving similar populations.

Participant Recommendations

The study participants provided suggestions on what they believe would increase academic preparedness for college. The recommendations are as follows:

- More Saturday Academy sessions: Currently, the program only meets with participants once per month. Participants indicated this is not enough and the program should have at least 2 Saturday sessions per month.
- More college classes: At present, the program offers college classes during the summer enrichment academy. Participants feel they should be able to take more college classes, perhaps even during the regular academic school year so they can earn more credits.
- One mandatory college class: In addition to offering more college classes, participants felt the program should require every student to take at least one college-level course during their time in the program. This would give them experience interacting with college faculty and with other college students, and it would help ease some of the fear experienced when they become full-time college students.
- Stronger connections with students: Participants suggested the program staff make an effort to have a stronger relationship with all students, not just the ones who frequently need extra assistance.
- An increased presence at school sites: A program representative is on campus once a week for academic advisement and twice a week for tutoring. Participants noted it would be beneficial to have someone from the program every day and to increase tutoring to 4-5 days per week to ensure students receive the help they need.
- More workshops: The participants suggested a few new workshops be developed and added to the program curriculum. Three specific workshop suggestions were made: (a) public speaking, to help with college presentations; (b) uncommonly discussed college topics, to help with the transition of being a college freshman; and (c) acquiring scholarships, to show students how and where to search for scholarships.

- Visit out-of-state colleges: The participants found the college visit field trips to be one of the best program activities because it offered them a tangible experience. The participants suggested the program expand the college visits to schools outside of California, such as Nevada, Arizona, and Oregon, so students can see and experience other schools that are not as close but still available to them.
- More outreach: Some of the participants stated they did not know about the program until a friend told them about it. It was recommended that the program expand its outreach efforts, possibly through more classroom visits, so that more students can have an opportunity to participate in the program.

Based on the recommendations, the participants felt the most strongly about the college classes and outreach. Several participants stated Upward Bound programs should offer more college classes to the students and make it mandatory for each participant to take at least one college course per summer. Participants also indicated the program staff should offer more outreach so more students can learn about and benefit from the program.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to students from a specific Upward Bound program, who culminated high school in 2010 or 2011. The study did not include students who enrolled in 2-year institutions after high school nor did it include students who enrolled in 4-year institutions but did not finish within 5 years of the first enrollment date. These limitations resulted in a small sample size. As a result, the participants' experience in the Upward Bound phenomenon and its relationship to postsecondary success cannot be generalized for the entire population of former Upward Bound participants.

Study Validity

This study included four aspects generally used to determine trustworthiness in qualitative studies, as explained by Lincoln and Guba (1985):

Credibility: After the interviews were transcribed, the researcher took them back to the study participants to be read and checked for accuracy. Participant feedback was welcome but none was received.

Transferability: The researcher provided a detailed account of the data collection process in this study. If desired, a future researcher can follow the procedures and duplicate the study.

Dependability: Prior to conducting the research, the interview protocol was sent to the director of another program to ensure the questions would yield the same data from each study participant. The result was that the data from each participant would be the same.

Confirmability: To ensure the findings were without bias, the researcher worked with a graduate assistant who had no connection to the Upward Bound program or its participants. In addition, each participant was asked the same question, in the same order, and in the same manner.

Final Thoughts

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand the impact of Upward Bound, as it relates to postsecondary success, from the perspective of former program participants. Through both face-to-face and telephone interviews, the researcher found that Upward Bound did have an impact on the academic success of its participants. The Upward Bound participants indicated the program had a positive influence on their decision to go to college. Some activities they found to be most effective were the college classes, workshops, field trips to college campuses and tutoring.

Upward Bound has been and continues to be a tremendous resource for students who come from underrepresented families. As explained by Jager-Hyman (2004), the program offers tutoring, mentoring, academic advisement, and access to technology to students to help them persist and achieve at a higher level than they would otherwise. As a result of this research study, coupled with years of experience, the researcher is confident that any student who enters into Upward Bound and makes a concerted effort to take advantage of the resources and services offered will have the necessary tools to pursue postsecondary education and ultimately achieve academic success.

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APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Letter



Pepperdine University
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90263
TEL: 310-506-4000

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: April 03, 2017

Protocol Investigator Name: Marilyn Ingram

Protocol #: 17-01-507

Project Title: Examining the Effectiveness of Upward Bound on Postsecondary Success: A Phenomenological Study

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Marilyn Ingram:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

APPENDIX B

Site Permission for Doctoral Research Study

2/6/2017

Pepperdine University Mail - Site Permission for Doctoral Research Study



Marilyn Ingram 'student' <[REDACTED]>

Site Permission for Doctoral Research Study

2 messages

Marilyn Ingram 'student' <[REDACTED]>

Wed, Feb 8, 2017 at 12:40 PM

To:

To: [REDACTED]
Vice President of Workforce Education
West Los Angeles College

Good Afternoon [REDACTED]

As you are aware, I am a Doctoral Candidate at Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology. I've come to the point in my journey where I am preparing to begin my research. I am requesting your approval to use the West Los Angeles College Upward Bound program as my research site.

For my study, entitled *Examining the Effectiveness of Upward Bound on Post-secondary Success: A Phenomenological Study*, I would like to reach out to 10 former Upward Bound students who meet the criteria for the study. The study criteria are listed below:

1. Participated in the Upward Bound selected for this study.
2. Culminated high school in 2010 or 2011.
3. Enrolled in a 4-year institution of higher education in the fall immediately following high school culmination.
4. Remained continuously enrolled at the institution of higher education.
5. Completed all coursework required for degree completion within 5 years.

If approved, I will be sure conduct the study with integrity and uphold the college's ethical standards.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marilyn E. Ingram
Doctoral Candidate
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Pepperdine University

[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Thu, Feb 8, 2017 at 10:25 AM

To: Marilyn Ingram 'student' <[REDACTED]>

Hi Marilyn,

I whole heartedly approve your doing this work. This is a unique opportunity to take an in-depth look at the value that Upward Bound brings to the individual student participant. I look forward to hearing about the research and analysis both while the study is going on and at its conclusion.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ui=2&ik=175120388&ui=ik&as=Research%20with%20the%2015%20WAC%20Upward%20Bound%20Program>

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

**Examining the Effectiveness of Upward Bound on Postsecondary Success:
A Phenomenological Study**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Marilyn Ingram, a student in pursuit of a Doctoral Degree in Organizational Leadership, under the direction of Dr. Reyna Garcia Ramos at Pepperdine University, because you are a former Upward Bound participant who obtained a high school diploma in either the 2010 or 2011 cohort, enrolled in a four-year university the fall semester immediately following high school completion and subsequently completed a Bachelor's Degree. Your participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will also be given a copy of this form for your records.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to understand the impact of Upward Bound, as it relates to the postsecondary success of former program participants. Throughout the years, articles and studies have been published on the Upward Bound program. The focus, however, was usually placed on specific program aspects, such as parental support/participation, program objectives and program evaluation. Realizing the lack of published data from the student perspective, the researcher plans to explore the impact of Upward Bound from the lived experiences of former program participants.

STUDY PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this study, you will first be asked to complete a demographic survey that asks questions pertaining to ethnicity, gender, age, family background and education related data. Upon completion of the demographic survey, the researcher will conduct a semi-structured, open-ended interview with each study participant. Each individual study participant will complete a 60-minute, face-to-face interview with the researcher. During the interview, participants will be asked questions that will allow them to recall their experiences in the Upward Bound program and explain in their own words whether or not they believe the program contributed to their academic success.

To ensure accuracy, the researcher desires to audio record each interview. Prior to recording, the researcher will obtain consent from each participant to audio record his or her interview. Should you prefer to not be audio recorded, you will still be allowed to participate in this research study.

Once the interview has been completed, the researcher will begin to analyze the data. First, the audio recording (if obtained) will be transcribed. Next the researcher will look for and identify reoccurring themes within the data, assign codes and compile the data. Once the compilation of data has been completed, the researcher will ask you to verify the accuracy of the transcripts and data. After each participant has verified their transcript, the researcher will report on the findings of the study.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The researcher anticipates there will be no potential or foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

While there are no direct benefits to the study participants, the researcher anticipates the findings of this study will help Upward Bound programs nationwide strengthen their program services by taking into consideration some of the takeaways and experiences that have been shared by former students who completed the program, completed their programs of postsecondary education, thus achieving academic success, as defined by this study.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

If you agree to participate in this study, and you complete the entire process (consent form, demographic survey, interview and transcription verification), you will receive a \$20 Target gift card for your time. If you do not complete the entire process, you will forfeit your gift card.

CONFIDENTIALITY

I will keep your records for this study confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if I am required to do so by law, I may be required to disclose information collected about you. Examples of the types of issues that would require me to break confidentiality are if you tell me about instances of child abuse and elder abuse. Pepperdine's University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the data collected. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

The data will be stored on a password-protected computer in the principal investigators place of residence and will only be accessible to the researcher. The researcher will personally transcribe and code all study. Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will

remain confidential. Your responses will be coded with a pseudonym and transcript data will be maintained separately. The data will be stored for a minimum of three years. Audio recordings will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating.

EMERGENCY CARE AND COMPENSATION FOR INJURY

If you are injured as a direct result of research procedures you will receive medical treatment; however, you or your insurance will be responsible for the cost. Pepperdine University does not provide any monetary compensation for injury

INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact the researcher, Marilyn Ingram via email at [REDACTED] or the faculty chair, Dr. Garcia Ramos via email at [REDACTED] if I have any other questions or concerns about this research study.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or gpsirb@pepperdine.edu.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT
--

I have read the information provided above. I have been given a chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

AUDIO/VIDEO/PHOTOGRAPHS *(If this is not applicable to your study and/or if participants do not have a choice of being audio/video-recorded or photographed, delete this section.)*

- I agree to be audio/video-recorded /photographed (remove the media not being used)*
- I do not want to be audio/video-recorded /photographed (remove the media not being used)*

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I have explained the research to the participants and answered all of his/her questions. In my judgment the participants are knowingly, willingly and intelligently agreeing to participate in this study. They have the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study and all of the various components. They also have been informed participation is voluntarily and that they may discontinue their participation in the study at any time, for any reason.

Name of Person Obtaining Consent

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date

APPENDIX D

Participant Demographic Survey

1. What is your gender? (Please Circle)

Male Female

2. What is your current age?

3. What is your ethnicity? (Please Circle)

Hispanic African American White Asian American Indian

4. Primary language spoken at home:

5. Home Life (Please circle the best description of your household):

Single Parent Two Parent Foster Care Kinship Care (relative)

6. Head of Household (Check all that apply):

FEMALE

MALE

Birth Mother _____

Birth Father _____

Stepmother _____

Stepfather _____

Grandmother _____

Grandfather _____

Foster Mother _____

Foster Father _____

Aunt _____

Uncle _____

7. Does either of your biological parents have a college degree? Yes _____ No _____

Which Parent(s)? Mother _____ Father _____

8. Residential Composition (Please circle the best description for your household):

Own Home Rent Home Apartment Rental Other: _____

9. What High School did you attend?

10. High School Graduation Date (mo/year):

11. What College did you attend?

12. College Graduation Date (mo/year):

APPENDIX E

Recruitment Script

Dear _____,

My name is Marilyn Ingram, and I am a doctoral student in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am conducting a research study entitled, *Examining the Effectiveness of Upward Bound on Postsecondary Success*, and you are invited to participate in the study. If you agree, you will be part of the study interview process. The interview is anticipated to take no more than 60-minutes and it will be audio-recorded to ensure the accuracy of the data collected.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your identity as a participant will remain confidential both during and after the study. The researcher will be the only person with access to the study data. During the data analysis process, each participant will be assigned a code. The key to the codes will be locked in a secure file cabinet, along with the interview transcripts.

If you have questions or would like to participate, please contact me at [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED].

Thank you for your participation,

Marilyn E. Ingram
Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Doctoral Student

APPENDIX F

Interview Protocol

From The impact of the Upward Bound program on college retention and graduation rates among African-American students in postsecondary institutions, 2006, by Hope E. Udombon, Ph.D. dissertation, Capella University, United States – Minnesota. Copyright 2006 by Hope E. Udombom. Adapted with permission.

From At-Risk students' perceptions of the Upward Bound program on academic and social preparation for postsecondary institutions, 2010, by Sounya S. Walker, Ph.D. dissertation, Capella University, United States – Minnesota. Copyright 2011 by Sounya S. Walker. Adapted with permission.

Interview Questions adapted from Udombon (2006) and Walker (2011):

1. What was your motivation or drive while enrolled in the Upward Bound program?
2. How did the Upward Bound program help you in developing new relationships with peers and teachers?
3. What type of influence did the Upward Bound teachers and staff have on you?
4. How did participating in this program impact your decision to go to college?
5. Describe your experiences with the Upward Bound program related to personal/social preparation for college.
6. How did the academic activities impact your learning while enrolled in the Upward Bound program?
7. Describe how your experiences with the Upward Bound related to academic preparation for college.
8. How did participating in this program impact your college performance and help you persist through graduation?
9. How did this program impact or help you to graduate from your postsecondary institution within five years?
10. What part/aspect of Upward Bound most appealed to you?
11. Which Upward Bound activities do you feel contributed to your academic preparation for college?
12. Which Upward Bound activities do you feel contributed the most to your academic success?
13. What would you suggest to improve the Upward Bound program related to academic preparation for college?
14. What recommendations do you have for the Upward Bound program?
15. Do you have any final thoughts about how Upward Bound helped you succeed and graduate in college?
16. Is there anything that I have not asked that you would like to add to this interview?