Influences on Academic Talent Development of Black Girls in K-12: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Black girls experience numerous challenges to their academic development. This study examines the literature from the last 30 years related to the influences on the academic talent development of school-aged Black girls. Environmental and intrapersonal influences to Black girls' academic talent development are explored. Using a systematic approach, 43 articles are reviewed and summarized. Thematic analysis conducted on the results and findings sections from each article reveal four major themes related to personal attributes, racial identity, relationships, and institutions. The themes expand the understanding of the complexity of talent development of Black girls and identify several intrapersonal and environmental influences that can promote or hinder academic achievement. Implications for future research are discussed.

Keywords

Black girls, achievement, systematic review, qualitative, talent development

Black girls have been identified as "one of the most vulnerable student populations in public schools" due to discriminatory policies and practices (Evans-Winters & Esposito, 2010, p. 14) such as discriminatory identification practices leading to underrepresentation in gifted programs (Andersen & Ward, 2014; Evans-Winters, 2014; Ford & King, 2014; Ford & Whiting, 2011). Black high school and middle

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school girls confront other challenges including negative stereotyping (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Mayes & Hines, 2014; Spencer et al., 2016), negative racial identity development (Cokley et al., 2012), and limited access to educational opportunities due to poverty (Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2018). Racial discrimination is prevalent in the school life of Black girls (Fisher et al., 2000; Seaton & Tyson, 2019) and can have negative outcomes on academic adjustment (Clark et al., 1999) and motivation (Eccles et al., 2006; Sellers et al., 1998). These negative experiences may hinder Black girls from reaching their full academic potential (Mayes & Hines, 2014).

Black girls often experience pressure for being Black and smart, and they often have to choose between developing a positive racial identity and academic achievement (Ford, 1995). Some research suggests that Black girls are able to survive academically by becoming "raceless," or by denying their racial identities to fit into the dominant culture (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ricks, 2014). Other research challenges this theory of "racelessness" to suggest that successful Black girls are not raceless and are able to assimilate to more than one culture (Marsh, 2013). The difference may be due to how one defines "Blackness" (Marsh, 2013) or how one acknowledges the great variability of how African Americans academically succeed (O'Connor, 1999).

Despite the multiple barriers Black girls encounter, little attention has been dedicated to how Black girls experience academic talent development (Frazier-Kouassi, 2002; Gholson, 2016; Grantham & Ford, 1998; Neal-Jackson, 2018; O'Connor, 1999; Reis & Díaz, 1999; Smith, 1982; Thomas & Jackson, 2007). Until recently, the limited discussions about Black girl talent development have focused on deficit-based perspectives (Joseph et al., 2017). A deficit perspective undermines Black girls and may disregard influences beyond the individual.

Purpose

The purpose of the study is to critically examine the literature related to the influences on the academic success of Black girls. By examining the existing research from the past 20 years, this review will offer a summary of what is known about the influences involved in the academic success of Black girls. The following research question directed this review: What influences the academic development and success of Black girls during their K-12 school experience?

Method

This review is structured by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) protocol for systematic reviews. Protocols can assist researchers in the planning of literature reviews and protect against unsupported selections of literature (Shamseer et al., 2015). PRISMA is a process that includes a 27-item checklist and a four-phase flowchart that advances the reporting of systematic reviews (Moher et al., 2009).

Eligibility Criteria

Before the literature search process began, the following inclusion criteria were created. Eligible studies must have included aspects related to environmental or intrapersonal catalysts of Black girls that contribute to academic success or achievement. Studies were limited to scholarly, peer-reviewed manuscripts that included empirical studies (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods), secondary data analyses, and systematic reviews published in English between the years 1990 and 2019. These years were selected to include articles from the third wave of feminism which begun in the early 1990s. The third wave aimed to include intersectional aspects of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, and nationality to account for criticism of the second wave of feminism from the 60s through the 80s (Mann & Huffman, 2005). Dissertations, monographs, nonsystematic reviews, and editorials were excluded from this review. Articles must have included Black girls of elementary age through high school. Since many articles tend to report results of Black girls and males collectively, only the articles that delineated results specifically for Black girls were included. A total of 43 articles were obtained from the search process. The articles were reviewed for possible inclusion by applying the selection criteria stated above to the titles, abstracts, and keywords. If an abstract did not have enough information to decide on inclusion, the full article was read to determine whether it met the criteria. Articles that did not meet the criteria were excluded and duplicate articles from different databases were excluded.

Data Sources

Ten electronic databases were utilized for this review including Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete, Educational Administration Abstracts, ERIC, Family Studies, Gender Studies Collection, PsycArticles, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, PsycINFO, and Race Relations Abstracts.

Search

In each database, an initial search was performed against article abstracts using the search terms *"Black girls" OR "African American girls" AND "success or achievement."* Search limiters were used in the initial search to meet the eligibility criteria. For example, many databases limit searches to specific date ranges or only peer-reviewed journals. The search culminated in February 2019. The primary search results appear in Table 1.

Selection

A diagram of the screening process can be seen in Figure 1. The initial search resulted in 189 total studies after duplicates were removed. By referencing the titles and abstract, the initial screening resulted in 55 possible articles for review. Using these

Table 1. Search Parameters and Initial Results.

Search terms	Search limiters	Database	Hits
(Black girls) or (African American girls) and (success or achievement)	Scholarly (peer reviewed) journals Published date: 1990–2019	Academic Search Complete	93
		Educational Administration Abstracts	20
		Education Research Complete	91
		ERIC via Ebscohost	84
		Family Studies	10
		Gender Studies Collection	19
		PsycArticles	11
		Psychology and Behavioral Sciences	27
		PsycINFO via Ebscohost	112
		Race Relations Abstracts	13
		Total with duplicates removed	189

criteria—publication year, K-12 settings in the United States, empirical study, scholarly and peer-reviewed journal, published in English, and alignment with research questions—each of these articles were fully read to determine applicability. Nine articles did not delineate Black girls in the sample, two were nonempirical, and one did not meet the quality evaluation rubric standards—A total of 146 articles were removed, leaving 43 articles.

Quality Evaluation

In addition to using only peer-reviewed journal articles to establish the quality of the articles used in the study, a rubric was utilized to evaluate the quality of the individual articles. Each article was assessed using seven quality assessment indicators including objectives/purposes, review of the literature, theoretical frameworks, participants, methods, results/conclusions, and significance (Mullet et al., 2017; see Table 2).

The indicators are rated on a 4-point scale. A score of 4 designates the element exceeds standards and a score of 1 indicates it does not meet standards. For an article to be included in the review, it must have scored 14 points or more out of a possible 28 points. Those articles that scored below 14 points were excluded from the review. Only one article out of the 44 potential studies for review did not meet the quality evaluation. The evidence table shown in Table 3 details the extracted data from the retained studies. The evidence table includes the author, year, purpose, participants, study design, a framework used (if applicable), and the findings. The evidence table gives a structured overview of the articles, summarizes the details and results from each article, and supports the research questions (Hempel et al., 2016).

Analysis

To synthesize meaning from the data, a six-phase thematic analysis was used. Thematic analysis is a qualitative approach defined as "a method for identifying, analyzing and
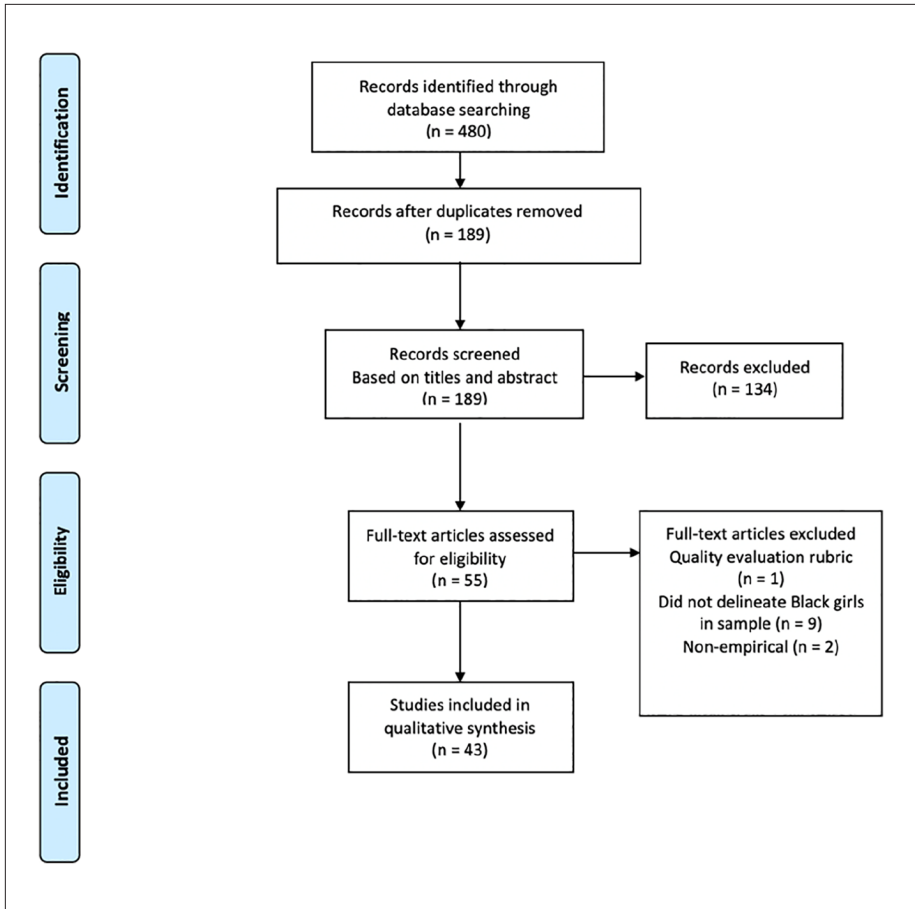
Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram for screening process.
Note. PRISMA flow diagram (Moher et al., 2009) of the article inclusion process.

reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Although the process is often presented as a linear approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006), it can also be described as a repetitive and reflective process in which the researcher moves back and forth through the phases (Nowell et al., 2017). A theoretical thematic analysis is driven by the researcher's theoretical interest in a particular area and gives a more detailed analysis of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis can follow a six-step process. For the first step, familiarization of the data took place through the screening process, creating the evidence table, and reading each article. In the second step, initial codes were generated from the summary findings from the extraction table. Codes were grouped based upon environmental or intrapersonal influence. Those categories that appeared in at least three or more articles were retained (see Table 4).

Table 2. Quality Assessment Rubric Mullet et al. (2017).

Criterion	4—Exceeds standard	3—Meets standard	2—Nearly meets standard	1—Does not meet standard
Objectives and purposes	Clearly articulated problem, objective, rationale, research questions.	Adequately articulated.	Poorly articulated.	Incomplete.
Review of literature	Critically examines state of the field. Clearly situates the topic within the broader field. Makes compelling connections to past work. Discusses and resolves ambiguities in definitions. Synthesizes and evaluates ideas; offers new perspectives.	Discusses what has and has not been done. Situates topic within the broader field. Makes connections to past work. Defines key vocabulary. Synthesizes and evaluates ideas.	Minimally discusses what has and has not been done. Vaguely discusses broader field. Makes few connections to past work. Lacks synthesis across literature. Minimal evaluation of ideas.	Fails to discuss what has and has not been done. Topic not situated within broader literature. No connections to past work.
Theoretical or conceptual frameworks	Clearly articulated and described in detail. Frameworks align with study purposes.	Articulated; aligns with study purposes.	Implied or described in vague terms or fails to align with purposes.	Absent.
Participants	Detailed, contextual description of population, sample and sampling procedures.	Detailed description of population, sample and procedures.	Basic description of sample and procedures.	Incomplete.
Methods	Instruments and their administration described in detail. Evidence for validity and reliability. Documented best research practices. Potential bias considered.	Instruments and their administration described. Evidence for validity or reliability. Some evidence of best research practices. Potential bias considered.	Instruments described. Incomplete evidence of validity or reliability. Questionable research practices.	Incomplete.
Results and conclusions	Detailed results. Exceptional use of data displays. Discussion clearly connects findings to past work. Proposes future directions for research. Conclusions clearly address the problem or questions.	Complete results. Sufficient use of data displays. Discussion connects findings to past work. Conclusions address the problems or questions.	Basic results. Insufficient use of data displays. Discussion fails to connect findings to past work. Conclusions summarize findings.	Incomplete.
Significance	Clearly and convincingly articulates scholarly and practical significance of the study.	Articulates scholarly and practical significance of the study.	Articulates scholarly or practical significance but is neither clear nor convincing.	Not articulated.

Table 3. Extracted Summary Data.

Author (year)	Purpose	Framework	Design	Participants	Findings
Archer-Banks and Behar-Horenstein (2012)	Explores how participants' academic success relates to their academic and racial identity.	Ogbu's cultural-ecological theory	Qualitative (case study)	Black high school females in honors classes (n = 8); low-income magnet school; southeastern United States	Participants were unhappy with inequalities within their school. With a strong sense of self, each persevered despite barriers to attain academic success.
Battle and Coates (2004)	Examines the effects of family composition on academic outcomes in 12th grade and 2 years after high school.	None	Quantitative (regression)	African American high school girls (n = 40,907)	Results suggest the larger the family size, the worse the girls perform in school. Black single-mother led families outperformed single-father families, but after high school graduation, the advantage dissipates.
Bécares and Priest (2015)	Examines the intersection of gender, race, and socioeconomic status across academic and nonacademic outcomes.	None	Quantitative (mixture modeling with auxiliary variables)	8th-grade Black girls (n = 560)	Black girls and boys found to perform better than White boys in socioemotional outcomes (self-concept, internalizing behaviors, and locus of control).
Booker and Lim (2018)	Explores school belongingness among middle school Black females within a math classroom.	None	Qualitative (phenomenological)	Black middle school girls (n = 8); White teachers (n = 3)	Positive interpersonal relationships with teachers were important for students' sense of belonging. Perceived support increased students' performance and helping behaviors.
Brown et al. (2009)	Examines racial and ethnic socialization and gender of the caregiver influence on academic success among Black participants.	None	Quantitative (regression)	African American adolescents (n = 218; 9th–12th grade; 52% girls); racially and economically diverse public high school in a northeastern city with a population of 150,000	African American cultural values and heritage were connected to participants' grades. The relationship between grades and ethnic socialization was dependent upon gender. High levels of ethnic socialization for Black girls appeared to negatively affect grades.
Butler-Barnes et al. (2013)	Examines how African American adolescents persist academically despite discrimination.	Integrative Model of the Study of Developmental Competencies in Minority Children and Resilience framework	Quantitative (latent class analysis)	220 African American 7th, 8th, and 9th-grade adolescents (58% female) from three socioeconomically diverse school districts.	Latent cluster analysis revealed that adolescents who rated low on self-acceptance, self-efficacy, and racial pride also had lower academic persistence. Likewise, those students who reported higher in personal and cultural aspects rated higher in academic persistence. These personal and cultural aspects appeared to promote academic persistence.
Butler-Barnes et al. (2015)	Examines how social influences and beliefs about school affect academic outcomes of a group of African American adolescents.	Resilience framework	Quantitative (descriptive and correlational)	612 African American adolescents (n = 305 girls); wide range of income/family educational levels	Through latent cluster analysis, school attachment, and achievement beliefs were important, but the only significant predictor of academic success was family income.
Butler-Barnes et al. (2017)	Examines how academic curiosity, academic self-esteem, and cultural assets influence African American adolescents' academic persistence.	Erikson's Psychosocial Development "identity vs. identity confusion"	Quantitative (correlational)	262 Black adolescents (7th–10th grade; n = 153 girls) in Midwestern school district	For Black girls, racial identity attitudes and academic self-esteem were not related to opposition identity or academic persistence. Academic curiosity was related to academic persistence for females.

(continued)

Table 3. (continued)

Author (year)	Purpose	Framework	Design	Participants	Findings
Butler-Barnes et al. (2018)	Examines the relationship between racial identity beliefs and school climate on achievement motivation.	Multidimensional model of racial identity, Integrative Model for the Study of Developmental Competencies in Minority Children, risk and resilience framework	Quantitative (linear mixed models)	733 African American adolescent girls from socioeconomically diverse school districts located in the Midwest; 43% of parents were married; 43.4% of the families reported an average of two children living in the household data taken on youngest child in the family	Racial identity and ideology beliefs were associated with higher achievement over time. Private regard, racial centrality, and sense of belonging were found to be protective factors. A positive school climate-related to higher academic curiosity and persistence. Black girls benefit from racial harmony, support, and a sense of belonging at school.
Chambers and Schreiber (2004)	Examines the connection between academic success and extracurricular activities.	None	Quantitative (multiple regression)	8th- and 10th-grade females ($n =$ 4,382); 7% African American	Participation in extracurricular academic organizations such as clubs, band, and yearbook had positive outcomes for African American females. Likewise, out of school, academic activities such as homework in math increased achievement in that subject.
Chesmore et al. (2016)	Examines resources for resilience and its association with academic outcomes of African American children.	social support and coping framework	Quantitative (correlational)	46 African American adolescents ($n =$ 21 females) low-income, ethnic minority from urban School in Midwestern United States	For girls in this study, the relationship between support from caregivers, reading achievement, and the association between behavioral coping and school misbehavior were significant.
Clayton (2017)	Examines the relationships between different social supports (parents, teachers, peers) and achievement outcomes.	Ecological interactional-developmental model; Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model	Mixed methods (thematic analysis and multiple regression)	533 African American high school seniors in an urban school system in southeastern Virginia; (45% free/ reduced-price lunch and 46.3% resided in a two-parent household	Students' perceptions of their parents' expectations of academic performance were correlated with higher academic achievement levels of the participants. Support from teachers and peers was identified as factors that influenced school success.
Cokley et al. (2012)	Examines how academic disidentification affects the academic outcomes of African American high school students.	None	Quantitative (hierarchical multiple regression)	96 African American high school students ($n =$ 55 females) from an urban public high school in Houston, TX.	Academic disidentification occurred more with boys than girls in this study. For females, the correlation between GPA and academic self-concept increased between younger and older students; for boys, it was the opposite.
Cooper (2009)	Examines the connection between the father–daughter relationship and academic achievement.	Relational and cultural socialization orientation	Quantitative (correlational and regression)	122 African American girls in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade from a medium-sized Midwestern city; 60% receiving free/reduced-price lunch and 44% from two-parent families.	The quality of the father–daughter relationship related significantly to academic engagement. Likewise, girls who had high self-esteem had a higher quality father–daughter relationship and thus had a positive effect on academic achievement.
Davis-Maye (2004)	Examines the effect of paternal support on African American girls' hope for future success.	Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model	Quantitative (correlational)	866 African American adolescent girls from two low-income and public housing communities in South Alabama	Less than half of the participants identified their fathers as their paternal figures. Eighty percent of the girls identified a father figure that provided moderate to high levels of support. Any level of paternal support was beneficial.

Table 3. (continued)

Author (year)	Purpose	Framework	Design	Participants	Findings
Davis-Maye and Perry (2007)	Examines the effect of maternal support on African American girls' hope for future success	Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model	Quantitative (a priori probability tests, including chi-square and correlation analysis.)	866 African American adolescent girls from two low-income and public housing communities in South Alabama	The majority of participants reported high levels of support from their maternal figures but only 25% reported high levels of hope. Findings other factor's of resilience, "other mothers", and group membership may be important for levels of hope for the future.
Fordham (1993)	Explores how African American students succeed in school.	None	Qualitative (Ethnographic)	12 females ($n = 6$ high-achieving females and $n = 6$ underachieving females from a predominantly Black magnet high school in Washington D.C.	The author finds that African American females use strategies such as being invisible and silent to be successful within the school and "pass" as someone they are not.
Gillette and Gudmunson (2014)	Examines the long-term educational outcomes of father absence.	Family economic stress model & psychosocial acceleration theory	Quantitative (structural equation modeling)	532 Black adolescent females from a random cluster of public, private, and parochial high schools	The findings suggest that Black girls who experience a longer absence of a father lived in lower income families and experienced more stress resulted in lower educational expectations and lower educational attainment in early adulthood.
Grier and Boutakidis (2018)	Examines perceived social support from various contexts related to self-perception of African American children.	Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory	Quantitative (hierarchical cluster analysis, correlational)	185 African American 4th and 5th graders; ($n = 111$ girls) from low-income (Title I) schools in southern California	Results supported that continuous positive social support perceived across various contexts is optimal to mixed and low continuous support. Girls experience an ecology of perceived support with more progression across parents and teachers in relation to scholastic and behavioral self-perceptions.
Hardie (2015)	Explores social class and race in the social capital of high school females and how these factors influence the development of future educational plans.	Theory of inequality in social capital	Qualitative (effect matrices)	59 middle and working-class Black and White high school females ($n = 11$ Black middle class, $n = 26$ Black working poor) from socioeconomically diverse Midwestern high schools	Black females experienced isolated social capital compared with White middle-class females who had wider networks on which to draw for support. For working-class females, they experienced restricted social capital—fewer high-status social ties and fewer resources available to them.
Hofferth (2010)	Examines how media use (TV, video games, computers) at home influences the achievement and behavior of children.	Social learning theory, motivational theory, cultivation theory	Quantitative (multivariate analysis)	3,563 African American children; 6- to 12-year-olds ($n = 1,252$ girls) data collected in 1997 and 2003	For Black girls, increased video game hours and TV viewing related to reduced scores on the passage comprehension test but had a positive increase in the applied problems test.
Honora (2002)	Explores the connection between future expectations and academic achievement.	None	Qualitative (thematic content analysis)	16 African American adolescents ($n = 8$ females) from an urban high school in the northeast; socioeconomically homogeneous group of low-income students	Results indicated that higher-achieving girls possess more future goals and expectations and have more long-term goals than higher-achieving boys. For females, goals/future expectations were influenced by family and other role models that showed expectations of the future.

443

Table 3. (continued)

Author (year)	Purpose	Framework	Design	Participants	Findings
Jones et al. (2018)	Examines how ethnic identity development relates to school engagement through culturally responsive intervention.	Multidimensional model of racial identity	Quantitative (experimental crossover repeated measures design)	12 middle school African American girls from an urban middle school on the West coast.	Participants in the culturally responsive intervention group displayed higher ratings of ethnic identity, de-emphasized race in their worldviews, and increased school engagement.
Joseph et al. (2017)	Explores the factors related to Black females' persistence in mathematics.	Critical race theory and Black feminism	Qualitative (systematic review)	62 peer-reviewed research studies from 1996 to 2016	Findings suggest that Black girls' persistence in math results from strategies of resilience (stereotype management, gender-role expectations, and belonging), community influence, and structural disruptions (access to books, etc.).
Kao and Tienda (1998)	Examines participants' progression of aspirations by gender and race.	Blocked-opportunity framework	Mixed method (logistic regression; focus groups)	A national sample of 24,599 students in 8th–12th grade	In the 8th and 10th grade, 31% of Black females reported aspirations of graduate school. By graduation, aspirations increased to 41%. More likely than their White counterparts, Black females held aspirations of graduate school education throughout high school.
Koch et al. (2019)	Examines the support and persistence of Black and Latina girls participating in an after-school intervention.	Support and persistence framework	Qualitative (case study)	6 African American and Latina girls in 10th grade; 3rd-year participants of intervention curricular initiative within an urban after-school organization in California	Findings show parents play a positive role in persistence support and encouragement. Expectations of school success and mindset play a pivotal role in persistence in STEM careers.
Mandara et al. (2010)	Examines the hypothesis that African American girls and boys are socialized differently resulting in differences in academic success.	Mandara et al. (2005) model of socialization	Quantitative (latent variable structural equation modeling)	Data from the 1992 to 2006 survey included economically diverse African American mothers and their children; 1,500 African American girls and boys (50% female)	Results indicate that firstborn girls had the highest achievement scores. Mothers were found to raise their daughters and love their boys, but loving was found to indicate a lack of demandingness and not an indication of warmth or caring.
McMillian et al. (2011)	Examines whether a gender gap exists in academic competence and global self-esteem measures among African American boys and girls.	None	Quantitative (multiple regression)	113 Adolescent Black girls and boys (n = 43 females); high risk for academic problems because of family socioeconomic circumstances	Multiple regression analyses showed no gender differences among achievement tests of boys or girls; no indication of disidentification for boys or girls were found.
McMillian et al. (2016)	Examines academic disidentification patterns among a group of African American boys and girls.	None	Quantitative (multiple regression)	94 African American adolescents (n = 47 females) from low-income families; longitudinal data collected at mid-adolescent age and 10 years later	Findings revealed no gender differences existed among the sample. Girls were found to value academics more than the boys
Morris (2007)	Explores the educational perceptions and experiences of Black girls.	None	Qualitative (ethnographic study)	Black 7th- and 8th-grade females from a predominantly minority public middle school	Results indicated that Blackness and class affected perceptions of femininity among Black girls which in turn affected their school experiences. The girls' assertive behaviors were often interpreted as aggressive.

Table 3. (continued)

Author (year)	Purpose	Framework	Design	Participants	Findings
Neal-Jackson (2018)	Explores the advantages and barriers Black women face in public schools through a systematic review of the literature.	Critical race theory	Qualitative (systematic meta-ethnographic review)	37 research articles that included experiences of Black girls in the United States	Participants reported being motivated learners who believed institutions failed to meet their needs due to stereotypical views of school officials. School officials appeared to misinterpret Black female identity as undisciplined and out of sync with school norms.
O'Connor et al. (2011)	Explores Black identity and achievement among 3 high-ability Black females.	Racially stratified academic hierarchy (RSAH).	Qualitative (ethnographic study)	8 high-achieving high school Black students (n = 6 females); 3 of the 6 girls are the focus of this study; small affluent, Midwestern city, 75% of the students were White, 13% low-income; 15% Black	Findings show how a racially stratified hierarchy tracks a disproportionate number of minorities into lower level classes and fewer in the advanced courses. The experiences of these females illustrate how they constructed their Black identities within the hierarchy.
Osborne (1997)	Examines longitudinal data to determine the disidentification with academics among African Americans.	Steele's (1992) disidentification assertion	Quantitative (correlational)	24,599 8th graders including 1,070 African American girls	African American girls were found to disidentify with academics less than African American boys.
Oyserman et al. (2001)	Examines the gender effects of racial identity on academic efficacy.	None	Quantitative (hierarchical, moderated regression)	91 high-poverty inner-city Detroit middle school students (47 African American females); 92% of school population receiving free and/or reduced-cost lunch	Results indicated that awareness of racism negatively affected academic efficacy. The largest decline was among girls who were high in connectedness and awareness of racism and low in the achievement aspect of racial identity.
Pearson (2008)	Examines how self-efficacy affects African American female academic success.	Self-efficacy theory	Mixed method (exploratory case study)	37 African American middle school students from an academy within-a-school in Oklahoma; 10 students participated in interviews.	Positive support and modeling were important influences on academic success. Peer pressure, death, and teasing were often barriers; the girls found ways to cope and succeed.
Pittman and Chase-Lansdale (2001)	Explores parenting style related to outcomes of a group of Black girls.	Baumrind Theory of Parenting Styles	Quantitative (correlational)	302 African American adolescents from the south side of Chicago	Results showed parenting style was related to grades and work orientation. Girls with authoritative mothers had higher work orientation scores than those with authoritarian mothers. Girls from poor neighborhoods and disengaged mothers had the greatest risk for poor behavioral and psychological outcomes.
Ridolfo et al. (2013)	Examines self-esteem and sense of control of Black girls in relation to academic encouragement from their mothers.	Black feminist thought	Quantitative (correlational)	1,330 Black and 3,797 White adolescent girls (N = 5,127) and their mothers	Compared with White girls, Black girls have higher self-esteem and a sense of themselves as problem solvers. Black mothers were found to give extra encouragement which accounted for the differences.

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445

Table 3. (continued)

Author (year)	Purpose	Framework	Design	Participants	Findings
Shen (2017)	Examines how physical education affects the academic performance of Black girls.	None	Quantitative (correlational)	184 Black adolescent girls from a large urban inner-city school district in the Midwestern United States; over 70% district receiving free/reduced-price lunch	Results showed a positive relationship between the academic performance of Black females and their participation in physical education. Moderate physical activity increased attention span and reduced boredom.
Skinner et al. (2018)	Examines connections between adolescent perceptions of their gendered personality traits and their school experiences.	None	Quantitative (multilevel modeling)	352 African American adolescent girls; longitudinal study on gender development and gender socialization in African American families.	Students with high expressive qualities reported closer relationships with teachers and peers. Youth with higher instrumentality showed declines in academic achievement compared with youth with lower instrumentality.
Varner and Mandara (2014)	Examines differential parenting effects based on gender and birth order to the academic achievement of African American girls and boys.	Parental investment theory	Quantitative (latent variable) structural equation modeling (SEM)	796 African American adolescents ($n = 394$ female); economically diverse families	Differences in the parenting of adolescents may be linked to gender and academic achievement. Mothers exhibited more control behaviors over their daughters than compared with their sons. Mothers of girls had high expectations for their daughter's success.
West-Olatunji et al. (2007)	Explores how African American girls participating in non-magnet schools position themselves as learners of math and science.	Positionality theory	Qualitative (ethnography)	5 African American 6th-grade girls from a non-magnet program within a school that has an advanced program, 1 parent, 2 teachers, counselor, and principal	Girls who participated in math and science courses in a non-magnet school setting were aware of their positions as learners and the differences in school support compared with students in magnet schools.
Wood et al. (2007)	Examines how gender relates to the educational attainment expectations of African American youth, teachers, and parents.	None	Quantitative (regression)	301 Black caregivers reporting on children 6–16 years ($M = 10.8$ years); 307 African American child self-reports ($M = 12.3$ years); low-income neighborhoods of Milwaukee, WI	As in other research, parents' and teachers' expectations for African American boys were lower than for girls. Furthermore, girls were more certain than boys that they would attend and complete college.
Wood et al. (2010)	Examines the role of maternal academic expectations on her children.	Reality principle of stereotype formation	Quantitative (correlational)	334 African American mothers (72% urban and 28% rural; 37% married and living with a partner) reporting on the same number of African American youth (56.3% girls; mean age = 13.4 years)	Results indicate that parents' stereotypical gender beliefs may influence the academic success of African American girls indirectly. The majority of mothers in this study held that girls are more competent than boys in academic areas.

Note. GPA = grade point average; STEM = science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Table 4. Categories.

Category	Description
1	Relationships with family, teachers, and peers
2	Personal characteristics and attributes
3	Racial identity/socialization
4	Discrimination and inequalities
5	Academic persistence
6	Aspirations, beliefs, and expectations
7	Educational institutions and systems
8	Academic identity
9	Educational opportunities and access
10	Socioeconomic contexts
11	School belongingness
12	Pressures and barriers

In the third phase, the findings, conclusions, and discussion sections from each article were uploaded into NVivo software and coded inductively. The researcher read each article and marked test segments with a unique code and category label. Beginning themes were collected among the codes. For the final three steps in the coding process, the initial categories were revised, broader themes were defined, and a description of each theme was delineated. The other codes were merged with other categories or deleted if they had no applicability. The remaining steps in the thematic analysis include the revision of the initial categories, explaining the general themes, and finally, the explanation of those themes found within the data. The theme must explain something about the data relevant to the actual research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The categories were identified as containing aspects related to intrapersonal or environmental catalysts and then combined to illustrate themes within those two catalysts (see Table 5). To aid in trustworthiness, all areas of data analysis and the results were examined by an expert reviewer in the field of gifted education.

Results

Although the majority of the studies focused on early and middle adolescent Black girls (11–17 years), eight of the studies included elementary-aged Black girls. Of the collected articles, 11 of them employed qualitative methodologies (including two systematic reviews), 29 used quantitative methods, and three used mixed methods.

Theme 1. Academically Successful Black Girls Have Common Personal Attributes, Values, and Aspirations

Academically successful Black girls tend to exhibit several common characteristics related to their behaviors toward education. These characteristics help them maintain focus to reach high goals.

Table 5. Summarized Themes and Description.

Categories	Theme	Description
2, 5, 6, 8, 11	Academically successful Black girls have common personal attributes, values, and aspirations.	Black girls with strong academic identities excel academically and persist in school. They share common characteristics, beliefs, and values and have high expectations for school success.
3	Black girls' racial identity can have positive effects on academic outcomes.	Black girls' racial identity that creates a buffer against school-based racial experiences while encouraging racial harmony boosts academic achievement
1, 10	Supportive relationships with family, friends, and other mentors influence the academic success of Black girls.	Black girls' academic success is influenced by social capital and supportive relationships with family members, friends, and mentors.
4, 7, 9, 12	Institutions that support the academic development of Black girls influence academic success.	To counter institutional racism, supportive academic institutions provide culturally appropriate pedagogy and access to programs that encourage Black girls' academic success.

Attributes. Black girls are observed in classrooms dominating discussions, being loud, outspoken, and competitive with boys and other girls to gain the teacher's attention (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Morris, 2007 Neal-Jackson, 2018). Black girls with these characteristics, referred to as having high instrumentality (independence and competitiveness), may experience a greater decline in academic achievement than those with lower instrumentality (Skinner et al., 2018). As adolescents physically develop, the high instrumentality they exhibit can intimidate teachers resulting in negative stereotyping and negative outcomes to school performance (Skinner et al., 2018). Unexpectedly, teachers from the same racial background characterize Black girls' interaction style similarly (Morris, 2007). These perceived problematic behaviors such as competing and standing up to others often are the same behaviors that some Black girls used to propel their learning (Morris, 2007). Although teachers complain that Black girls can be "loud," the outspoken behavior does not hinder enrollment numbers in advanced courses; for instance, in one study, more Black girls were enrolled in pre-Advanced Placement classes than Black males or Latina groups (Morris, 2007).

Some teachers attempt to instill traditional feminine behavior to Black girls which includes speaking softer, having body control, and being more conciliatory to authority (Neal-Jackson, 2018) while others encourage Black girls to be more assertive which leads to more acceptance to the teachers' requests by the girls (Morris, 2007). Although Black girls may describe their behavior in similar ways to their teachers, girls understand these characteristics as strengths rather than impediments to their learning (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Neal-Jackson, 2018).

When young Black girls refuse to conform to a quiet demeanor that teachers often insist upon, school becomes a place where Black girls are limited in the way they can express themselves and inconsistent with the way they act at home and the community (Neal-Jackson, 2018). Likewise, some Black girls have to alter their preferred identity in exchange for a more ladylike and quieter persona (Fordham, 1993) or purposefully disconnect themselves from any behavior that may be perceived as stereotypical Black women's behavior to access educational resources that are provided to others (Neal-Jackson, 2018). Specifically, academically successful Black girls learn how to increase self-regulation by evaluating their circumstances to control and adjust their behavior (Pearson, 2008). For example, in a magnet school known for its advanced placement and humanities programs located in a predominantly African American part of Washington, D.C., Fordham (1993) observes how high-achieving Black girls are taught directly and indirectly to be "silent" in school. Girls at the school do not speak in class unless they are called upon. Even in the face of physical or verbal confrontations, the highly successful girls do not draw attention to themselves. Being invisible and restrained are tactics these girls learn to use to become academically successful. Fordham (1993) surmises that silence "conceals their female voice and the resulting gender expectations" (p. 23) and by using this strategy shields Black girls from the envy and resentment that comes from others who are academically less successful.

Academic identity. Academic identity is important to the academic success of Black girls. When one is academically identified, they are engaged and motivated to learn and their self-esteem is linked to doing well in school (McMillian et al., 2011). Black girls confident about their academic abilities are likely to have future-oriented goals leading to successful careers and productive lives (Pearson, 2008). For instance, Black girls who persist in school establish priorities and dedicate time to develop study schedules for schoolwork (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012). Black girls believe that education is important for their future and maintain they have to work harder than the average White girl to be successful; consequently, successful Black girls often take after-school jobs for economic reasons, thus leaving less time and energy toward other endeavors (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012).

Adolescent Black girls with a strong sense of self are determined to stay focused in school and maintain their grades even through adversity (Morris, 2007; Pearson, 2008). Black girls who academically persist in school often report having high grades and are academically curious (Butler-Barnes et al., 2017). Interestingly, participation in physical activity has been shown to increase persistence, alleviate boredom, and increase concentration leading to higher academic performance for Black girls (Shen, 2017).

Conversely, academic disidentification refers to how one's self-esteem is detached from one's academic performance. Disidentification is a strategy by which students separate their self-esteem from academics out of fear that scholastic interest will reinforce negative stereotypes about their ability (McMillian et al.,

2011). Negative experiences such as disciplinary actions for behavior in school can contribute to academic disidentification (Cokley et al., 2012). In studies related to Black student disidentification, Black girls experience less academic disidentification than do Black boys (Cokley et al., 2012; McMillian et al., 2011, 2016; Morris, 2007; Osborne, 1997). From their outspokenness and a strong interest in success, Black girls seem to take their education more seriously than Black boys (Fordham, 1993; Morris, 2007).

Aspirations. Black girls' aspirations may help develop future academic outcomes (Honora, 2002). High academic aspirations enable Black girls to persist academically and overcome difficulties (Butler-Barnes et al., 2017; Neal-Jackson, 2018). Black girls maintain that hard work leads to academic success and a way to reverse negative socioeconomic status (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Evans-Winters, 2005; Neal-Jackson, 2018).

Generally, self-expectations of future academic attainment decrease as Black youth become older and may be attributed to a more realistic view of their academic competence (Kao & Tienda, 1998). Although a disproportionate number of Black girls drop out of high school, the girls who remain are often highly optimistic toward academic success (Kao & Tienda, 1998).

Parents report higher expectations of the academic achievement of their daughters in comparison to their sons (Wood et al., 2007, 2010). For instance, in one study, 67% of the mothers of Black youth maintain that girls are more competent than boys in academic disciplines, which indicates a positive bias for daughters (Wood et al., 2010). Parents expect more girls than boys will finish college (Wood et al., 2007). Interestingly, compared with White mothers, Black mothers maintain higher aspirations for academic success for their daughters and influence their daughters' self-identity and independence (Ridolfo et al., 2013).

Compared with Black boys, Black girls set more goals in education, future employment, marriage, and family (Honora, 2002). Black girls have higher aspirations for more schooling than White girls (Kao &Tienda, 1998; Mau & Bikos, 2000; Neal-Jackson, 2018) and are more optimistic about future educational opportunities if they persevere in school through their senior year (Kao & Tienda, 1998). For instance, among 8th and 10th-grade Black girls, 31% have aspirations to attend graduate school. By 12th grade, the percentage rises to 41% as compared with 37% of White girls (Kao & Tienda, 1998).

In summary, Black girls value education and have high academic aspirations to succeed. The personal characteristics of Black girls may vary. The outward appearance that some Black girls portray as confidence and assertiveness may intimidate others; however, they maintain that this assertiveness or competitiveness helps them achieve their academic goals. Other Black girls outwardly appear to control and regulate their behavior to fit a more traditional feminine model. Black girls with positive academic identities maintain behaviors such as being organized and attentive to schoolwork to reach their goals. In addition, those who have confidence in their academic abilities persist in future academic aspirations and overcome difficulties.

Theme 2. Black Girls' Racial Identity Can Have Positive Effects on Academic Outcomes

How Black girls view their racial identity may have positive influences on their academic achievements. Having high personal and cultural assets may encourage a positive sense of racial identity that leads to academic achievement. Positive attitudes about one's racial identity may lessen the academic decline some Black girls experience.

Racial identity. Race is considered a social construct used to make sense about self, abilities, and aspirations (Oyserman et al., 2001). Research on racial identity formation focuses on the concepts of racial centrality, private regard, public regard, and minority ideology. Centrality is defined as how central a particular racial group membership is to one's sense of self; private regard can be defined as how one feels about being part of a particular racial group, and public regard is defined as one's perceptions about how others view the racial group (Sellers et al., 1997). Private regard and racial centrality act as buffers against negative racial experiences for Black girls in school (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018). Cultural assets (private regard and racial centrality) and academic assets (academic curiosity and academic self-esteem) influence Black girls' persistence in school (Butler-Barnes et al., 2017). Adolescent Black girls with high personal and cultural assets have a high sense of self which includes high private regard, high self-acceptance, and high self-efficacy, and they report higher persistence than Black girls with a lower sense of self (Butler-Barnes et al., 2017). Similar to racial centrality and private regard, researchers posit that minority ideology may also encourage Black girls to have positive future aspirations of education success; for example, Black girls who have a minority ideology understand the history of inequitable systems and are motivated to change the system by attaining academic success (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018).

Perceiving achievement as part of race may help to protect against declining academic efficacy and boost efficacy for both girls and boys (Oyserman et al., 2001). Recent research suggests that a strength-based approach to racial identity development for Black girls is more plausible than a deficit view that proposes that Black students do not achieve because they fear "acting White" if they perform well in school (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018). A deficit view of Black girls results from the notion that Black girls are ultimately in control of their fate regarding academic success without regard to the influences outside of their control (Neal-Jackson, 2018). With the strength-based approach, having a secure attachment to one's ethnic group alleviates negative racially based experiences in school and provides support for academic success (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018). Black girls' academic efficacy increases when achievement ideology is viewed as part of one's in-group identity (Oyserman et al., 2001). That is, when Black girls are proud to be Black and belong to a group that values achievement, then they perceive they can achieve academic success.

Overall, research indicates that having positive feelings about being Black (Harris & Marsh, 2010) and being supported in the classroom increase classroom engagement

and curiosity to learn which can increase positive educational outcomes (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018). Black girls who have positive attitudes toward their racial community may be able to disregard the perceived negative stereotypes that Blacks are less intelligent than Whites while encouraging them to believe that it is effort not innate ability that leads to academic success (Butler-Barnes et al., 2017).

Conversely, when Black girls are aware of racism, academic efficacy declines (Oyserman et al., 2001). Personal assets such as religiosity and peer and parent support can help buffer against discrimination (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013). High levels of ethnic socialization described as African American values and heritage are related to lower grades for Black girls (Brown et al., 2009). Black students who have a strong racial identity might be more susceptible to attributing unfavorable racial stereotypes to themselves leading to reduced academic achievement (Cokley et al., 2012). It is likely that too much ethnic socialization originating from parents may cause uncertainty and anxiety for Black girls and contribute to lower performance levels (Brown et al., 2009).

High-achieving Black girls ignore negative stereotypes that discount their ability to academically achieve and recognize the way they view their race can have positive academic outcomes. With high personal assets, Black girls believe in themselves and persist in school despite obstacles.

Theme 3. Supportive Relationships With Family, Friends, Teachers, and Mentors Influence the Academic Success of Black Girls

The academic achievement of Black girls is highly influenced by the relationships that develop from interactions with others within home, school, and community. Students are positively influenced by having supportive families, including the specific support from their mothers and fathers. Black girls with high social capital may experience more opportunities to connect and gain academic support. Teachers can encourage feelings of belonging among Black girls leading to engagement in learning. Having peers who value academics supports academic achievement.

Social capital. Social capital refers to the social networks and advantages available that can influence future academic opportunities (Kim & Schneider, 2005). Depending upon class membership, Black girls have different amounts of social capital, which can be used to gather other social and financial resources for future educational plans (Battle & Coates, 2004; Hardie, 2015). Black girls from working-class families experience *restricted* social capital—fewer high-status social ties and fewer resources available to them (Hardie, 2015)—and heavily rely on support from teachers and counselors in their schools (Butler-Barnes et al., 2015; Hardie, 2015).

Black girls from middle-class families experience isolated social capital compared with their White peers who have larger networks on which to draw for support. Whereas, on average, middle-class Black girls report seven social connections to adults who have attended college, but less than half of the girls report that these individuals are in career fields that they wish to pursue (Hardie, 2015). The differences in

access to social capital can create a domino effect on how Black girls' families can connect and receive the help that may influence future opportunities for their daughters (Hardie, 2015).

Supportive families. Black girls who lack family and parent support often struggle and have difficulties maintaining academic success (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012). In working-class families, daughters note their parents take a passive role in future college plans or lack knowledge of the college enrollment process (Hardie, 2015; Kao & Tienda, 1998). Having high expectations of attending college for some families may be unrealistic due to the low socioeconomic status of the family (Wood et al., 2007). Financial and material support provided by families is linked to positive reading achievement for Black girls (Chesmore et al., 2016). Economic insecurity may lower academic expectations for Black girls and may signal to the girls that the future will also be economically stressful (Gillette & Gudmunson, 2014). Instead of attaining post-secondary education, working after high school to receive a paycheck may seem more appealing to Black girls who have limited financial resources (Gillette & Gudmunson, 2014).

Nonetheless, Black girls often credit their academic accomplishments to the amount of support given to them by their families (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Butler-Barnes et al., 2015). Emotional support such as recognition and encouragement from parents is critical for Black girls' academic success (Clayton, 2017). Parental influence is greater than other adults' influence in the lives of Black girls (Koch et al., 2019). When Black girls try hard and persist academically, parents are more likely to support their daughters' persistence (Koch et al., 2019).

Higher grade point averages for Black girls are related to parental expectations of their daughter's academic and behavioral achievements (Clayton, 2017). Likewise, parental expectations about their child's academic achievement aspirations play a role in the gender differences seen between Black girls and boys (Wood et al., 2007) and are communicated to the child through parent behaviors (Wood et al., 2010). Depending upon the gender of the child, parents may socialize their children differently (Brown et al., 2009). Girls experience different socialization from their parents compared with their brothers or later-born sisters; for example, girls have more chores, more responsibilities, and are monitored more closely (Mandara et al., 2010). Firstborn girls are perceived as more responsible and dependable than later-born siblings, and parents invest more time and resources toward their future success (Mandara et al., 2010).

High-achieving Black girls validate the importance of communication such as talking and listening to parents and teachers especially during the transitioning years in high school (Clayton, 2017). High-achieving Black girls who receive support from parents in the form of monitoring, rewarding, and punishing behaviors noted more school engagement than that of low-achievers (Clayton, 2017). Parents of high-achieving Black girls influence the courses they will take by persuading them to take harder classes like Advanced Placement or honors classes while in school (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012).

Parenting style. Effective parenting that includes equal amounts of demanding and caring may assist Black girls to develop a sense of control and competence that may increase attention in the classroom and more time spent studying (Varner & Mandara, 2014). Authoritative parents provide firm control with equal amounts of warmth and caring (Pittman & Chase-Lansdale, 2001). Similar to their White peers, Black girls whose parents use more of an authoritative parenting style have better outcomes than those with disengaged parents (Pittman & Chase-Lansdale, 2001). In high-poverty areas, Black girls may be at an even higher risk of stress and underdeveloped self-efficacy when disengaged mothers do not display connectedness, warmth, or firm control with their daughters (Pittman & Chase-Lansdale, 2001). In high-poverty neighborhoods, authoritarian parenting methods may be more commonly used to provide safety and to train girls in ways of survival (Davis-Maye, 2004).

Maternal support. Black girls indicate their mothers are the most influential supporters in their lives, monitor their activities in school, and question them about future college goals (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012). In addition to their mothers, Black girls identify grandmothers and aunts as providers of support for their development (Battle & Coates, 2004; Davis-Maye & Perry, 2007; Neal-Jackson, 2018; Pearson, 2008). Black women tend to have and use more family support systems than men and provide more resources to their daughters (Battle & Coates, 2004). As socioeconomic status increases, Black girls in single-mother households perform better than girls from father-only homes; however, the advantage diminishes 2 years after high school graduation (Battle & Coates, 2004).

Black girls identify with their mothers and develop warm, supportive relationships (Battle & Coates, 2004). Mothers impart their wisdom and experiences by teaching them strategies for protection and emotional strength (Davis-Maye & Perry, 2007) and guiding them vicariously (Pearson, 2008). Through daily behaviors, Black mothers model for their daughters how to situate themselves between two cultures—their own and the dominant White culture (Pearson, 2008).

Black girls have higher self-esteem ratings than White girls due in part to the quality of the mother–daughter relationship and the way Black mothers foster self-esteem and problem-solving ability in their daughters (Ridolfo et al., 2013). Mothers convey particular cultural information and constructive behaviors for self-evaluation that create positive self-concepts which in turn helps buffer oppression (Ridolfo et al., 2013). To combat the discrimination in school, Black girls report their mothers show them how to counteract the injustices they experience by standing up to others when harmed or by informing school personnel about unfair acts committed against them (Neal-Jackson, 2018).

Paternal support. A positive relationship with fathers leads to higher self-esteem and academic engagement among Black girls (Cooper, 2009). Over half of the Black girls in one study recognized their fathers or stepfathers as their father figure while others identified another person such as an uncle as one who provides paternal support (Davis-Maye, 2004). During the adolescent years when mother–daughter conflict

increases, positive father–daughter relationships aid positive self-identity among Black girls (Cooper, 2009).

Girls who are supported and communicate more with their fathers describe being more academically engaged in school (Cooper, 2009). When Black girls perceive that their fathers are supportive, a high level of hope for future achievement occurs (Davis-Maye, 2004). As Black girls from single-father homes become older, closer relationships that develop between fathers and daughters can positively influence the development of the girls (Battle & Coates, 2004).

Despite the positive influences, single fathers may not support girls in the same ways as single mothers, such as by not seeking help or having the networks of support like single mothers, which may inadvertently result in fewer resources for their daughters (Battle & Coates, 2004). Research suggests that single fathers tend to distance themselves from their daughters during adolescence resulting in a misunderstanding of how much the father values education (Battle & Coates, 2004). Black girls who experience long periods of father absence during childhood usually live in poor households and have suffered family economic anxiety that results in low academic expectations and low educational success (Gillette & Gudmunson, 2014).

Peer support. During middle school, high-achieving Black girls face many pressures that range from teasing, fighting, psychological changes, and peer pressure (Pearson, 2008). Black girls note difficulties with peers due to different outlooks toward schooling, fighting over romantic interests, and arguments among peer groups, and noted these difficulties restrict the number of close peer relationships with other Black girls (Evans-Winters, 2005; Pearson, 2008). In one study from a school-within-a-school, the Black girls in the academy were called names like "*nerd*" and experienced other negative pressures from the students in regular classes. Instead of retaliating, these high achievers used negative pressure as a motivator to succeed and defy the negative comments (Pearson, 2008).

Black girls report that they have friends who support academic achievement (Butler-Barnes et al., 2015; Pearson, 2008). Higher achieving Black girls indicate behavioral support from peers is less of a factor for academic success than do middle- and low-achieving girls (Clayton, 2017). To reduce distractions during study sessions, high-achieving girls purposely specify friends to study with who were not close friends (Marsh, 2013).

Peers reinforce the idea that some Black girls believe to become self-reliant, they must be independent; for example, having close peer relationships encourages Black girls during high school to persist and concentrate on academics rather than dating (Hubbard, 1999).

Teacher support. Teachers have a strong influence on the academic success of Black girls (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Trusty, 2002). Teacher behaviors such as providing high expectations for quality work (Booker & Lim, 2018), homework help, tutoring, and supporting students' talents (Clayton, 2017) are important

components to Black girls' academic outcomes. High teacher expectations combined with warmth and caring for Black girls lead to more academic engagement and quality performance from the students (Booker & Lim, 2018; Pearson, 2008). Supportive teachers are willing to meet the developmental needs of the students (Grier & Boutaki-dis, 2018; Pearson, 2008), make learning culturally relevant (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Pearson, 2008), and respect students on an individual level (Booker & Lim, 2018). In particular, when teachers hold positive expectations of Black girls, they recommend a higher number of girls for enrollment into pre-Advanced Placement courses that results in increased numbers of Black girls who participate in these courses (Morris, 2007).

Developing strong relationships between teachers and Black girls can lead to higher motivation and perseverance in academics (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018); for instance, feelings of belongingness evolve from close connections with teachers that motivate the students toward the achievement (Booker & Lim, 2018). Expressive qualities such as kindness and sensitivity positively relate to feelings of school ability and school belongingness. Likewise, perceptions of Black youth with expressive qualities tend to be more positive encouraging favorable relationships (Skinner et al., 2018). Black girls who feel more connected to their teachers and supported in the classroom report that they engage more with the lesson, help in the classroom, and tutor peers (Booker & Lim, 2018).

In summary, nurturing relationships form a foundation of support for Black girls to academically achieve. In addition to tangible support from family members and others, individuals provide Black girls encouragement, a sense of belonging, and information that influences academic success.

Theme 4. Institutions That Support the Academic Development of Black Girls Influence Academic Success

Institutions can play a major role in influencing the academic achievement of Black girls. Schools can alleviate the barriers to Black girl achievement by providing a positive environment, access to programs, and other resources needed to encourage success.

Environment. Black girls experience many forms of school-based discrimination such as underrepresentation in advanced placement classes (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horen-stein, 2012), unfair dress-code violations (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Morris, 2007), race and gender discrimination (Bécares & Priest, 2015), a disproportionate number of discipline referrals (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Morris, 2007), lack of information on post-secondary education (Hardie, 2015; Kao & Tienda, 1998), and low teacher expectations (Neal-Jackson, 2018). Schools reflect the views the larger society holds toward African Americans (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). Discriminatory practices in schools have led to the low-achievement of Black students and a resulting culture that mistrusts the school's structure and policies in dealing with Black students (Ogbu & Simons, 1998).

Moreover, the educational environment where students spend most of their schooling is crucial to their development; discriminatory experiences in these environments can have negative influences on Black girls' academic persistence and success (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013). School-based racial discrimination can lead to lower academic persistence for Black girls; for example, girls may exhibit insufficient effort because of past experiences that lead to unrewarded efforts (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013). Some teachers focus on Black girls' perceived misbehavior (West-Olatunji et al., 2010) or lack of academic temperament instead of their academic accomplishments or class performance (Brickhouse et al., 2000). When Black girls believe that their school system does not support them, they begin to distrust the school and the school representatives (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012). Black girls reveal discriminatory experiences that occurred to them or their friends in school but do not report the occurrences to appropriate school personnel because of a general lack of trust in this group (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012).

Academically advanced Black girls who participate in White-dominated advanced classes may feel isolated from other Black students who do not take advanced classes. This second-generation segregation creates a division between being academically superior and being Black (O'Connor et al., 2011). Since many high-achieving Black girls may be the only Black girl in predominantly White classrooms, high-achieving Black girls often experience pressure from teachers to be a positive role model for other Black girls in their classes or to be a positive archetype for the whole Black community (Neal-Jackson, 2018).

Some Black girls are more adept at participating in the various ethnic cultures in their schools and depending upon how high-achieving Black girls interpret being Black may determine how they negotiate social boundaries with their peer groups (O'Connor et al., 2011). In particular, Black girls cross these social boundaries by working with other Black students or White students, alone, or with other people of color (O'Connor et al., 2011).

Institutional racism. Black girls experience negative outcomes from race and gender discrimination (Bécares & Priest, 2015). For example, in the highest economically advantaged groups, Black girls score lower on math assessments than White boys even when both groups demonstrate no difference of interest or capability; the difference in math scores may be described as the outcome of the racial and gender discrimination Black girls have experienced throughout their schooling careers (Bécares & Priest, 2015). These differences in scores may also be due to stereotype threat, or when negative racial stereotypes of a group affect the performance of a representative of that group (Bécares & Priest, 2015). Black girls have an awareness of negative racial and gender stereotypes by adolescence and may experience a decrease in performance during testing (Hudley & Graham, 2001).

In contemporary research, the term positionality illustrates one's perceived social position and power within social networks (Merriam et al., 2001). In classroom settings, power differences are created from the interaction of the positionalities of both the teacher and the student and both positions must be considered (Lee &

Johnson-Bailey, 2004). Traditionally, school personnel positions Black girls below their White peers (Neal-Jackson, 2018). Marginalized students, often mindful of their positions in school, can use this information concerning the positionality of school personnel to question teacher support (West-Olatunji et al., 2007).

Black girls position themselves as confident (Pearson, 2008), determined learners (Neal-Jackson, 2018) with a strong sense of self (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012). School personnel who view these characteristics as negative stereotypical traits often discount these girls, and it is this negative positioning that can lead to limited educational opportunities and a lower position for Black girls in school (Neal-Jackson, 2018; West-Olatunji et al., 2007). Moreover, despite having cultural assets, Black girls' lived experiences are not included in class lessons resulting in a lack of engagement (West-Olatunji et al., 2007).

Pedagogy, access to programs, and resources. Research suggests that Black girls may need a nontraditional teaching style that promotes their sense of curiosity in math and science by making lessons connected to the real world (Booker & Lim, 2018). Classroom activities that are interesting to Black girls have been shown to increase their persistence in the lesson (Shen, 2017). In addition to authentic pedagogy, relationships that support Black girls' needs for belonging and reassurance encourage Black girls to engage in learning (Booker & Lim, 2018). For example, in large part to the close connections felt toward their teachers, Black girls note how they took positive actions in class like helping others more, raising their hands to participate, and tutoring classmates (Booker & Lim, 2018).

The use of culturally responsive intervention programs offered in schools may help to increase positive racial identities without isolating or comparing Black girls with other racial groups; for example, one intervention program focuses on "humanizing blackness rather than dehumanizing" and supports a positive racial identity rather than minimizing race (Jones et al., 2018, p. 32). Culturally responsive intervention programs have been shown to increase racial centrality and levels of private regard in Black girls as well as increase academic engagement compared with control groups (Jones et al., 2018).

Identifying barriers that inhibit Black girls in poverty from accessing higher education such as mitigating financial burdens may encourage Black girls' future academic aspirations; for instance, girls from families in an intervention program that receive a monthly earnings subsidy, sponsored health care, child care, and employment search benefits demonstrate higher academic success and greater aspirations for post-secondary education success (Wood et al., 2007).

Historical circumstances and structural barriers such as a lack of resources and educational preparation limit Black girls' opportunities to access advanced math classes (Booker & Lim, 2018; Wood et al., 2007). Structural disruptions to established schooling practices, support for Black women intellectuals, and resilience help Black girls persist in mathematical fields (Joseph et al., 2017). Structural disruptions can be access to suitable classrooms, books, teachers, and programs that support underrepresented populations (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Noddings, 2005).

Discussion

The four themes from the reviewed articles propose that the talent development process for Black girls can be elucidated as an interrelationship between environmental and intrapersonal influences and their effects on the individual's talent development. Reasons for Black girls' academic success are complex and influenced by various intrapersonal and environmental influences.

According to the reviewed literature, intrapersonal influences have strong relationships to positive academic outcomes. Themes 1 and 2 relate to intrapersonal influences on Black girls' academic achievement. Black girls share common characteristics, values, and beliefs that encourage academic success (Theme 1). Intrapersonal influences highlighted in the reviewed articles that shape Black girls' academic achievement include attributes such as being determined and competitive in school (Morris, 2007). Motivation and volition play an important role in helping individuals sustain their interests through life obstacles, boredom, and possible failure (Gagné, 2000). Black girls who value education and possess academic curiosity are motivated to learn (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012). Black girls who are academically identified are academically curious and may be motivated to work harder to improve their performance (Butler-Barnes et al., 2017). It may be this drive to succeed that motivates Black girls to achieve. In addition, having high levels of hope for the future (Honora, 2002) and high expectations of future success (Butler-Barnes et al., 2017; Neal-Jackson, 2018) propel Black girls to thrive and persist (Neal-Jackson, 2018) in school. An individual's behavior and goal management can play a crucial role in her talent trajectory. Black girls believe that working hard leads to academic achievements and a better financial future (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Evans-Winters, 2005; Neal-Jackson, 2018).

Positive racial identity (Theme 2) is a critical influence and can affect academic achievement (Cokley et al., 2012). Students whose racial identity is formed with a school-oriented outlook, an openness to other cultures, and denial of racial stereotypes are more academically successful (Cokley et al., 2012). A positive racial attachment tends to protect Black girls in discriminatory environments (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018).

The beliefs that Black girls hold toward their own racial identity can have a strong influence on their academic development. Researchers have suggested a "raceless" identity influences academic achievement (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). Other research has rejected the notion of denying one's Blackness (Marsh, 2013; O'Connor, 1999). Contrary to Fordham's theory, some have found that a positive racial identity empowers individuals and encourages educational outcomes leading to academic success (Edwards & Polite, 1992; Oyserman et al., 2001).

Since Black girls face discrimination due to race and gender, intrapersonal influences such as having an outspoken, competitive personality may help Black girls to position themselves as serious learners in the school environment (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Neal-Jackson, 2018; Pearson, 2008). From the reviewed articles, academically identified Black girls value education, have high

aspirations of future success (Honora, 2002), and are determined to do well in school despite barriers.

Environmental Influences

Themes 3 and 4 relate to the environmental influences on Black girls' success. Environmental influences that shape academic success for Black girls include supportive relationships with parents, teachers, peers, mentors, and academic institutions (Theme 3). Positive relationships with parents are a critical aspect of Black girls' success. Most often a mother or maternal figure provides the support. High-achieving Black girls often have parents pushing them to take harder classes in school (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012).

Teachers and mentors can form positive relationships that can help Black girls be successful. Teachers recommend students for advanced courses and other programs, so teachers must have positive relationships with Black girls to encourage their potential for success. Black girls thrive in environments and develop a sense of belonging where respect is shared between teacher and student (Booker & Lim, 2018). When teacher expectations or student expectations are high, parental expectations are not connected to student expectations, which suggests that school environments can have the potential to positively influence students despite family expectations (Wood et al., 2007). Teacher and student relationships are important for Black girls' academic perseverance in secondary school and during college (Grier & Boutakidis, 2018). As Black girls continue their schooling, they profit from Black women professors and other mentors who can provide them with emotional support (Williams et al., 2005) and a sense of community (Perlstein, 2004).

In addition, academic institutions are strong environmental forces that can play a critical role in the academic achievement of Black girls (Theme 4). Institutions that can reduce discriminatory experiences and provide Black girls with the needed resources and access to programs can positively influence Black girls' achievement by using appropriate pedagogy (Booker & Lim, 2018) and providing access to programs and resources (Cokley et al., 2012).

According to the reviewed studies, it appears that having strong relationships within all realms of a Black girl's life alleviates the discriminatory effects of gender and race by providing emotional support (Williams et al., 2005), encouragement (Clayton, 2017), and financial assistance (Chesmore et al., 2016). For example, environmental influences such as Black girls' relationships provide critical support in discriminatory school environments. Without these supportive relationships and encouragement from individuals, the success of Black girls may be uncertain.

Moreover, educational institutions play a key role in providing resources, educational programs, and culturally responsive pedagogy that can influence the academic success of students. Unfortunately, many institutions have a history of discrimination against Black girls because of their race and gender (Bécares & Priest, 2015) leading to underrepresentation in advanced programs (Evans-Winters, 2014; Ford et al., 2018;

Ford & King, 2014) and other negative academic outcomes (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2012; Hardie, 2015; Kao & Tienda, 1998; Morris, 2007).

Institutions and individuals provide Black girls the opportunity to participate in selective programs like Advanced Placement and honors courses, enrichment programs, summer programs, and other activities (Cokley et al., 2012). Extracurricular academic activities such as band, math club, and yearbook provide positive outcomes for Black girls (Chambers & Schreiber, 2004). Providing a combination of these activities is imperative to the developmental process for Black girls. For example, students participating in Advanced Placement courses are more likely to attend college than students who participate in less intensive courses (Attewell & Domina, 2008). Moreover, participation in gifted programs can stimulate or suppress the processes of talent development depending upon the fit of the program to the child (Ford, 2011; Gagné, 2000).

Financial difficulties and other obstacles may limit participation. Black girls, especially from lower-income families, have fewer resources and social capital (Hardie, 2015) that aid their educational advancement and must depend upon their schools to provide resources. For example, economically disadvantaged Black girls are often unaware of the college enrollment process and rely on school counselors and other educators for the information (Hardie, 2015; Kao & Tienda, 1998). Counselors often have overloaded caseloads that may hinder adequate college information and planning for every student. Other disadvantages include the lack of access to computers. For example, Black girls who use computers, video games, and other sources show increases in problem-solving ability (Hofferth, 2010). Without access to the necessary resources, Black girls can struggle in comparison to others who have these resources. Attention to the environmental influences related to institutional involvement of providing academic opportunities for Black girls is critically important.

Limitations and Future Directions

There may be some possible limitations in this study. First, the search terms that were used in the study may have not encompassed all possible studies. Using the term "girls" and not "females" may have limited the search. Second, the selected studies are limited to those in English journals, so empirical studies of influences of academic achievement for high-ability Black girls in non-English speaking countries were not examined. Third, deciding to eliminate articles that grouped Black girls and Black boys together without specifying the number of Black girls in the study may have limited the number of articles reviewed that referenced influences of Black girl academic achievement. In addition, excluding doctoral dissertations may have affected the number of empirical studies found; however, using a quality assessment rubric on potential articles improved the rigor of the selected articles.

Many questions remain regarding how some Black girls achieve academic success while others do not. Despite a plethora of intrapersonal and environmental barriers, some Black girls learn to positively navigate their academic experiences. Overall, the findings of this review specify several intrapersonal and environmental influences that

affect academic achievement. Future research questions may investigate other possible influences on Black girls' academic development that include qualitative research methods with focus groups or semi-structured interviews to investigate in greater depth the lived experiences of Black girls. Relevant comparisons could enhance understanding of Black girls' talent development. For example, exploring in depth the intrapersonal and environmental influences of Black girls who have reached academic achievement may inform how they became successful. Further work might focus on the interrelatedness of gender, ethnicity, and the effects of stereotype threat that influences teacher perceptions that Black girls are louder and more undisciplined (Morris, 2007) than others thus reducing teachers' perceptions of Black girls.

Conclusion

The current review sought to explain the intrapersonal and environmental influences and developmental processes that are important to the academic talent development of Black girls. By focusing on the literature from the past 30 years, the results suggest that reasons for Black girls' academic success are complex and involve multiple influences. Specifically, having common personal attributes, values, aspirations, supportive families, a positive racial identity, and institutional support encouraged talent development among Black girls.

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