

**MOTIVATION AND SUCCESS STRATEGIES: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL
STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ENTREPRENEURIAL
BUSINESS OWNERS IN DAYTON, OHIO**

by

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Abstract

A review of the literature illuminated a gap in the scholarly work regarding successful African American entrepreneurs. This study was designed to examine the motivations and success strategies of successful African American entrepreneurs in Dayton, Ohio. Since the experiences of entrepreneurs vary according to age, race, geographic region, or socioeconomic status, the researcher asserted that the motivation and success strategies would also differ. The primary objective of this study was to identify the motivation and success strategies used by African Americans who have achieved success in Dayton, Ohio. The qualifications of the selected participants were their tenure in their businesses, their companies' financial position, and their willingness to participate. The results showed that the participants were motivated to become business owners primarily because of their desire to be independent, their altruistic goals of doing good things in their community, and their desire to be in control of their earning potential. In addition, the success strategies most noted by the participants were the utilization of mentors, creating value for customers, and their determination to succeed. This research is useful for African Americans who are business owners, those desiring to become business owners, and those who have attempted business ownership and failed. The research may also be of interest to the agencies tasked with developing programs to support African American entrepreneurship.

Dedication

For my late son, Steven Adrian Smith. I love you and miss you immensely.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Problem

Since the summer of 2008, economic growth in the United States has slowed significantly (Barrell, 2010). Home foreclosure rates have reached levels higher than the Great Depression, unemployment rates have skyrocketed, and poverty rates have risen. Economists concur that the United States went into a major recession (Mulligan, 2009), and it appears that this recession is deepening.

According to Keilbach and Sanders (2009), entrepreneurship plays a significant role in the dynamics of economic growth in the modern economy. Schumpeter (1961) stated that entrepreneurship has long been considered the vehicle that drives economic development. Theorists agree that entrepreneurship is the primary critical factor for economic growth. As such, the importance of entrepreneurs and their sustainable activity in the market is vital to the economy and its well-being.

Entrepreneurship is critical to transforming markets, increasing per capita income, and generating employment (Das, 2006). Entrepreneurial businesses have shaped the American economy by creating jobs and increasing local incomes (Henderson, 2002). These entrepreneurial businesses have also been the lifeblood of communities, stimulating the economy and tying them to global markets throughout the history of the

United States. Thus, in order to stimulate the economic movement necessary to begin rebuilding the economy, more emphasis should be placed on entrepreneurship.

Most of the entrepreneurial businesses in the United States are classified as small businesses (W. Chu, 2009). These businesses are defined as ones having fewer than 500 employees (Marta, Singhapakdi, & Kraft, 2008). According to the Small Business Administration (2011), small businesses represent more than 99.7% of employer firms, employ over half of all private sector employees, and have generated more than 60% of all new jobs over the past 15 years.

While the lack of economic growth has had a negative impact on the United States as a whole, hardships experienced during this slow economic period have had a disproportionate impact on minorities (Schmitt & Baker, 2008). Minority groups have suffered with higher unemployment rates, lower wages, and higher rates of underemployment. A study conducted by Slack and Jensen (2011) indicated that the labor experiences of minorities are vastly different than those of majority groups. The authors indicated that African Americans were 51% more likely than Whites to experience underemployment (Slack & Jensen, 2011). Entrepreneurship has been considered a means of creating opportunities and leveling the playing field for marginalized populations (Bogan & Darity, 2008).

The existence of African American entrepreneurship can be traced as far back as the 1600s (J. E. K. Walker, 2009). Even during slavery, African Americans often engaged in entrepreneurial businesses to earn money—often to purchase the freedom for their family members and themselves. For African Americans, entrepreneurship has generated opportunities that may otherwise have been nonexistent. However, although

African American participation in entrepreneurial businesses has increased over the past decade, the proportion does not reflect the population increase (Fairlie, 2004). According to Kollinger and Minniti (2006), African Americans are almost twice as likely to establish an entrepreneurial business. However, their ventures are often not successful beyond the initial startup (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006).

Parallel to the overall economic condition of the United States, the economic landscape in Dayton, Ohio, has changed drastically. This once-thriving manufacturing town has been decimated by the loss of more than 30,000 jobs over the past decade (Dugas, 2009). The need for aggressive local economic development initiatives exists as this area is suffering greatly and has no real hope of corporate rescue. Local entrepreneurship is critical to bringing positive change to the current economic climate.

According to Heilbrunn (2010), local entrepreneurs have a strong commitment to their communities, they generally employ individuals from the community, and they utilize other local resources to support their businesses. This type of activity stimulates the economy at the local level. Accordingly, there has been an increased governmental focus on ways to encourage entrepreneurial activity in Dayton, Ohio, as a means to generate economic growth. Understanding the critical characteristics of successful entrepreneurial business owners is very important to the Dayton area.

According to Nair and Pandey (2006), critical elements for successful entrepreneurial business owners are classified as either socioeconomic factors or personal characteristics. The socioeconomic factors include level of education, age, and membership within ethnic groups (Nair & Pandey, 2006). Innovative nature and internal locus of control were described to be essential personal characteristics of successful

entrepreneurial business owners (Nair & Pandey, 2006). Conversely, Jensen and Luthans (2006) considered psychological capital and authentic leadership as critical elements for successful entrepreneurial business owners. Although exhaustive research has been conducted to attempt to create a template describing the successful entrepreneurial business owner, the literature does not demonstrate a consensus among theorists regarding the full spectrum of these components.

Much of the existing research regarding African American entrepreneurs has focused on their limitations and factors that inhibit their success (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006; Lofstrom & Bates, 2011; Oyelere & Belton, 2008). Lack of capital, lack of formal training, racial discrimination, and the absence of entrepreneurial mentors have all been explored as some of the failure factors African American entrepreneurial business owners experience (Heilman & Chen, 2003; Kollinger & Minniti, 2006; Kourilsky & Esfandiari, 1997; Robb & Fairlie, 2007). Thus, in the current economic climate, understanding those entrepreneurial business owners who create economic stability is extremely important. By gaining a better understanding of the motivation and success strategies, more African American entrepreneurial businesses may be armed with a success model that generates and sustains successful businesses.

This research documents the motivations and success strategies of African American business owners in Dayton, Ohio. This study identifies and provides important information that more clearly defines why and how African Americans in Dayton, Ohio, make their entrepreneurial businesses work and, further, develops a practical model based on a theoretical foundation that encourages and supports African American entrepreneurial businesses.

Background of the Study

Many economic development initiatives to stimulate the economy in Dayton, Ohio, have been explored. These initiatives include efforts to generate economic growth and development, which includes attracting large companies to the area, developing programs to assist existing companies, and encouraging the development of new entrepreneurial businesses. Many of the efforts toward attracting large companies to the area are considered long-term efforts, and do not address the immediate need for economic stability and growth. Therefore, great emphasis has been placed on establishing alternative methods for rebuilding the economy—namely, the encouragement and support of entrepreneurship.

The Ohio Department of Development (n.d.) has created seven organizations across the state to encourage entrepreneurial activity in the minority community. These organizations, called Minority Business Assistance Centers (MBACs), are primarily focused on providing support to underperforming minority businesses in Ohio with the expectation that by doing so, these businesses will have an improved opportunity for success. In addition to the MBACs, several local organizations in Dayton, Ohio, worked together to create the Minority Business Partnership, an organization dedicated to assisting minority entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio—particularly African Americans—to achieve success. This organization is managed under the umbrella of the Dayton Chamber of Commerce and was designed to provide business assistance, networking opportunities, and business incubator programs to minority entrepreneurial business owners.

Entrepreneurial business ownership in the African American community remains low relative to the per capita population (Bogan & Darity, 2008; Fairlie, 2004). Even with all of the resources targeted to helping this group achieve success, the rate of successful African American entrepreneurial ventures has remained flat. This disparity is not due to a lack of effort of African American entrepreneurs but due to the higher failure rates of this group (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006). Successful African American businesses are a benefit to other African Americans typically suffering unemployment as a result of economic conditions, as well as the community as a whole (Bates, 2006). Therefore, creating successful African American entrepreneurial businesses continues to be an opportunity to improve Dayton's economic future. These businesses, if successful, can provide opportunities for jobs, wealth creation, and economic stability that the city of Dayton so desperately needs.

To put the disparity of successful African American entrepreneurial business owners into perspective, the demographic makeup of Dayton, Ohio, is a critical piece of information to consider. According to the latest estimated Census figures, African Americans make up almost half of the total population in Dayton, Ohio (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). However, only 7.2% of the reported businesses in Dayton, Ohio, are owned by African Americans. Of the 61,081 businesses reported in 2010, only 4,408 are African American owned (Dayton Metropolitan Statistical Area, 2010). These data illuminate the inequity in the number of African Americans participating in successful entrepreneurship in Dayton, Ohio, and further demonstrates the importance of this study in understanding the motivation and success strategies of this demographic group in addressing this imbalance.

The theoretical foundation of entrepreneurship is fractured (Howorth, Tempest, & Coupland, 2005). The literature provides no consensus of its meaning (Gartner, 2008; Montanye, 2006), nor has its home discipline been clearly identified (Gartner, Davidsson, & Zahra, 2006). Montanye (2006) asserted that various themes and definitions of entrepreneurship exist, but most of these lack empirical substance. Focusing on the element of African American participation in the theory of entrepreneurship exposes an even greater gap in the literature. Much of the existing research views African American entrepreneurship through the lens of failure, not success (Bogan & Darity, 2008; Fairlie, 2004; Kollinger & Minniti, 2006).

A paucity of research also exists regarding the motivation and success factors of African American entrepreneurs, although these variables are important to understand. Identifying these factors will provide a much-needed template for those who embark upon the entrepreneurial journey. This study addresses the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio, and adds depth to the existing literature.

Statement of the Problem

The problem is the lack of empirical research concerning motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners. The research is needed to increase successful participation relative to the per capita demographics of this group in Dayton, Ohio. This study provides researchers, practitioners, and other stakeholders insight into the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners. Addressing African American entrepreneurial business owners through

the lens of motivation and success strategies provides a new and different perspective to the current literature. Further, the study's focus on the Dayton, Ohio, area provides a framework from which to build programs to encourage and sustain African American businesses in this geographic area.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. Although resources have been allocated to the development and support of African American entrepreneurial business owners, very few African Americans have either established businesses or developed sustainable entrepreneurial businesses in this area.

Rationale

The entrepreneurial literature does not include a study of motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners specifically in Dayton, Ohio. The research merits attention because of the significant disparity between the African American percentage of the population and the percentage of African American entrepreneurial business owners. Currently, African Americans comprise 45% of the population in Dayton, Ohio; however, they own only 7.2% of the businesses in the area.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study are as follows:

1. What are the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?
2. What are the success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?

Significance of the Study

Nationally, the interest and emphasis in entrepreneurship has increased, especially as it relates to the minority entrepreneur. However, minority entrepreneurs' participation in successful entrepreneurial business is low in relation to their overall population (Fairlie, 2004). In the wake of current economic conditions, many government agencies (both national and local) have identified the importance of entrepreneurship as a means to stimulate the economy.

Much of the existing research that exists regarding African American entrepreneurship focuses on the myriad of challenges these entrepreneurs face (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006). This study viewed the African American entrepreneurial business owners from the perspective of their motivations and strategies for success. The study adds to the existing body of knowledge to better understand what motivates African Americans to be entrepreneurial and the strategies they employ to achieve success. Understanding the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners is important to the organizations providing resources to support these entrepreneurs, as well as to the local economy.

The information gleaned from this study provides a framework for a practical model for African American entrepreneurial business owners and those wishing to become entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. The intent for the use of this model is to help those business owners understand the motivation and success strategies that have helped other African American entrepreneurial business owners achieve success in this geographic area and provide a road map that they may wish to follow to enhance their chances of entrepreneurial sustainability.

Definition of Terms

Black or African American. Persons whose origins are from any Black racial group of Africa (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The terms *Black* and *African American* are used interchangeably in this study.

Entrepreneur. A change agent that identifies and pursues opportunities through establishing an innovative approach to creating business enterprises (Kobia & Sikalieh, 2009).

Entrepreneurial business owner. According to Drucker (1985), every business owner is not entrepreneurial. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the entrepreneurial business owner will be defined as the person who established and owns the business.

Motivation. The internal force that influences, directs, and energizes an individual to reach a goal (Hancock, 2004).

Strategy. A plan or guide for future behavior (Mintzberg, 1987).

Success. Success has no generally accepted definition (Islam, Khan, Obaidullah, & Alam, 2011). For the purpose of this study, *success* will be used to describe any

entrepreneurial business owner who has been in business for 3 years or more and has reportable income through the business of \$25,000 or more per year.

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

1. Participants will answer all questions honestly.
2. Participants will have at least a basic understanding of motivation or success strategies of entrepreneurial business ownership.
3. Entrepreneurial business owners will participate in the interview.
4. Participants will have the time to complete the interview thoroughly and in its entirety.
5. Participation is voluntary, and participants can opt out at any time.
6. Participants will remain anonymous. Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained.
7. Research will be conducted in an ethical manner.
8. Data will be secured and maintained for 7 years.

Limitations

1. The researcher will include only African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio.
2. The research findings will not be generalizable to all African American entrepreneurial business owners.

3. According to Arbnor and Bjerke (1997), researchers are not capable of removing their values from the research. Therefore, the researcher's implicit values that may impact the outcomes of the study should be expressed.

Theoretical Framework

The goal of the study is to examine motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. As shown in Figure 1, the researcher explored the general theory of entrepreneurship, conducted a review of the literature relating to African American entrepreneurship, and reviewed the theories of motivation and success strategies.

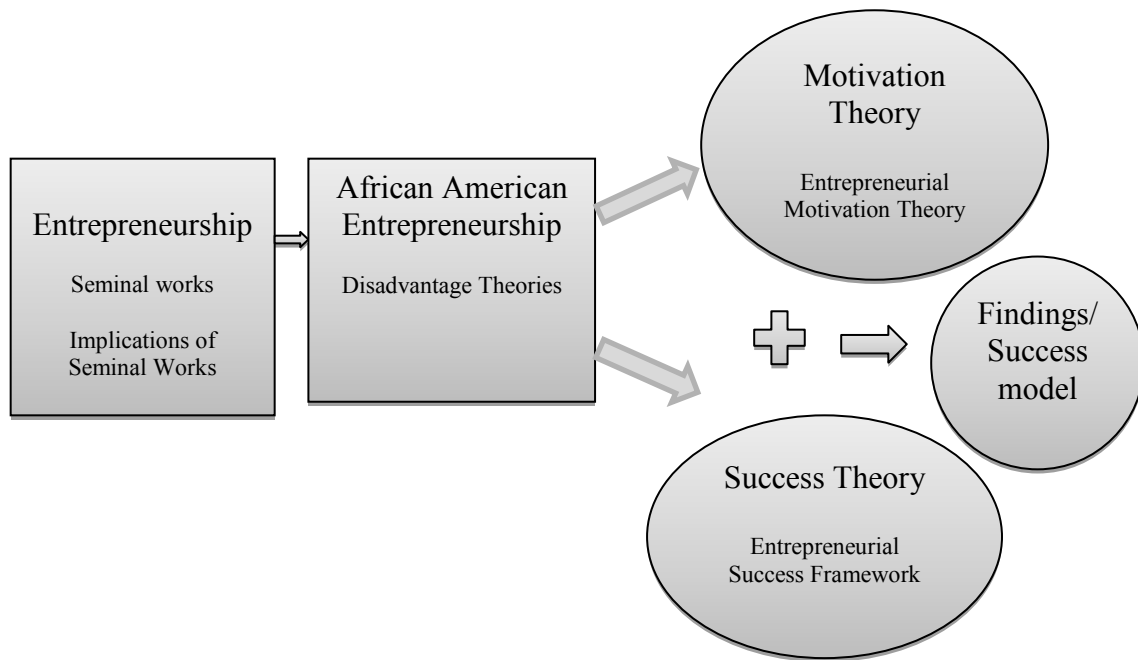


Figure 1. Theoretical framework.

The researcher's philosophical assumption is that the experiences of the participants are subjective. According to Creswell (2003), qualitative research is interpretive because the researcher has the role to interpret the data collected. Therefore, this study was an interpretive (qualitative) study utilizing a phenomenological research design to investigate the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. The findings are demonstrated in a success model for other African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

Chapter 2 provides a review of the associated literature. Chapter 3 details the methodology for the research. Chapter 4 presents the findings. The study ends with the discussion of the outcomes and recommendations for future research in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of seminal and current literature significant to the proposed qualitative study on African American entrepreneurial business owners. The chapter begins with an overview of entrepreneurship with a review of the literature pertaining to seminal entrepreneurship theory. Additionally, to better understand the circumstances surrounding African American entrepreneurship, related literature and studies are reviewed. Further, the theories of motivation and success that form the conceptual framework for the study are reviewed and presented in the body of the chapter. Relevant studies are reviewed, analyzed, and presented in the context of the chapter.

The study builds upon previously approved Capella University studies regarding entrepreneurial minorities and their motivation and success strategies. Ivey (2007) conducted a study of motivation and success factors of African American entrepreneurs in rural Georgia. This researcher proposes that entrepreneurs in different areas of the country may have different motivations and success factors. Therefore, this new study provides even greater depth to the initial study done by Ivey. In addition, the economic environment has changed significantly since 2007. This study provides additional insight as to how the economy has affected the successful African American entrepreneur's motivation and success strategies.

Hunt-Oxendine (2009) completed a similar study with American Indians and entrepreneurship in North Carolina. According to her recommendations for future research, Hunt-Oxendine suggested that other research should be conducted to determine whether the most important motivation factors of American Indians in North Carolina were consistent among other minority groups. Following up on this recommendation, this study furthers the study of the motivation and success factors of minority entrepreneurs.

This study is designed to collect descriptive data that provides a greater depth to the existing literature regarding minority entrepreneurial motivation and success strategies. In addition, targeting a specific geographic area, demographic group, and economic environment provides greater depth to the existing literature. This researcher assumes that these variables will illustrate the minority entrepreneurial experience in an urban area in the United States. The significance of Dayton, Ohio, as the geographic area of focus in the study is demonstrated by the lack of successful minority entrepreneurial businesses and the position of the struggling economy in that area.

Entrepreneurship

No universal scholarly consensus of the definition of the *entrepreneur* exists, although the field has been studied extensively (Bryat & Julien, 2000; Bygrave & Hofer, 1991; Howorth et al., 2005; Montanye, 2006). Entrepreneurship has been primarily explored by focusing on the field of entrepreneurship as it relates to the impact of entrepreneurial actions (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), by emphasizing the individual characteristics of an entrepreneur (Goss, 2005), or by investigating the entrepreneurial process (Bygrave & Hofer, 1991). The complexity of entrepreneurship has caused great

difficulty for scholars in agreeing on the best approach to producing valuable empirical research in the field.

Seminal theorists approached the concept of entrepreneurship from two perspectives: through the impact of entrepreneurial actions or through the behaviorist approach (Filion, 1998). Each is grounded in different fields. The impact of entrepreneurial actions is grounded in economics, while the behaviorist approach is grounded in sociology and psychology (Filion, 1998; Fontaine, 1999).

Traditional economics-based entrepreneurial theorists argue that entrepreneurs are innovators who take the risk of their businesses, establish their businesses, and make decisions regarding their businesses (Edmondson, 1999). However, Light and Rosenstein (1995) criticized this approach, describing this aspect of entrepreneurial theory as elitist because there may not always be innovation in the entrepreneurial businesses. They argued that one should not eliminate those who achieve no innovation in their business operation, as these are sometimes the best business operators (Light & Rosenstein, 1995).

Behaviorist-based entrepreneurial theorists defined entrepreneurship in terms of characteristics and behavior (Filion, 1998). This perspective shifted the field from the impact of the actions of the entrepreneur to the personal qualities of the entrepreneur (Landstrom, 1999). As with the economics-based theorists, behaviorist-based theorists also came up short in their efforts to concretely define the entrepreneur.

According to Bygrave and Hofer (1991), the development of a useful model of entrepreneurship is difficult, primarily because so much of the “essence of entrepreneurship is the entrepreneur” (p. 17). Entrepreneurship involves the action of the entrepreneur (e.g., identifying opportunities, creating ideas, motivation, personality, and

the ability to handle uncertainty and risk; McMullen & Shepherd, 2006). Therefore, in order to develop a true theoretical model of entrepreneurship, these perspectives should be present (Breslin, 2008). These differing perspectives should not cancel one another but instead provide balance and depth between the theories and methodologies pertaining to entrepreneurship.

Three Pioneers of Economics-Based Entrepreneurial Theory

Cantillon. Economic theorist Richard Cantillon (1680–1734) is credited with the first theory of entrepreneurship (Van Praag, 1999). Cantillon's theory described entrepreneurship as the critical phenomena that brought balance to the market system (Fontaine, 1999). Cantillon's (1931/2010) theory of entrepreneurship was described as the role of the entrepreneur and the benefits of his actions in the market system.

Cantillon divided producers into two categories: (a) those that were hired and were paid a fixed wage and (b) those that bore the risk of production and the uncertainty of selling prices (Formaini, 2001). According to Cantillon (1931/2010), the entrepreneur purchased goods and resold those goods either wholesale or retail at an undetermined price. This entrepreneur was the intermediary between the producer and the consumer. The primary characteristic of Cantillon's entrepreneur is the bearing of uncertainty (Berthold & Neumann, 2008). Cantillon's entrepreneur undertakes the risk of uncertainty as a part of the entrepreneurial process (Formaini, 2001). This risk is impacted by the demands and conditions of the market in which the entrepreneur is participating (Gedeon, 2010). Much of Cantillon's theory on entrepreneurship is focused on the economic impact of the entrepreneur rather than the entrepreneur himself (Stevenson & Jarillo, 2007).

While Cantillon's theoretical views were widely acknowledged during his time, his theory of entrepreneurship lacked depth (R. T. Hamilton & Harper, 1994). In later years, economic theorists further developed Cantillon's theory, adding the connection between entrepreneurs, their characteristics, and their ability to identify opportunities to the study of entrepreneurship (Formaini, 2001). This approach integrated the concept of the entrepreneurial process to the theoretical framework of Cantillon.

Say. Jean-Baptiste Say (1767–1832) was a French economist who developed early writings regarding entrepreneurship (Miller & Collier, 2010). He is credited for laying the foundation for the field of entrepreneurship (Filion, 1998). Say defined the entrepreneur as one who moves resources from lower yielding productivity to create higher yields (Drucker, 1985). Say's theoretical entrepreneur was multifaceted with a variety of activities that had to be managed. These activities include determining the need for products, coordinating production activities, accessing capital, and distributing products (R. T. Hamilton & Harper, 1994). Say introduced judgment as a characteristic of his theoretical entrepreneur. This entrepreneur was calculated in his thinking, his understanding of the need for his product, and the risk associated with his venture (Fontaine, 1999).

The entrepreneurial framework introduced by Say built on the works of Cantillon by introducing the concept of value creation (Martin & Osberg, 2007). Cantillon's entrepreneur was merely a participant in the market system. However, he may or may not have created value in that system. Say's entrepreneur not only participated in the market system, he also increased value. According to Say (as cited in Stevenson & Jarillo, 2007),

the entrepreneur himself is an integral factor for stimulating economic activity and growth while creating economic value in the capitalist markets.

Schumpeter. Economist Joseph Schumpeter's (1883–1950) theory of entrepreneurship is more widely recognized among academicians (Fontaine, 1999; Goss, 2005; Landstrom, 2008; McMullen & Shepherd, 2006). Schumpeter catapulted the field of entrepreneurship by introducing the concept of innovation to previous entrepreneurial thought (Filion, 1998). Schumpeter's (1961) seminal works on entrepreneurship described the entrepreneur as a leader who innovates through new goods or services or by developing new processes for existing production methods.

The process of the Schumpeterian entrepreneur is creative destruction (Berthold & Neumann, 2008)—disturbing the natural circular flow of the economic structure, thereby encouraging changes in the economic system that stimulates growth. This entrepreneurial theory is contradictory to that of Cantillon, who believed that the entrepreneur stabilized the economy (Fontaine, 1999). Further, Schumpeter introduced, to a greater extent, the importance of innovation in entrepreneurial theory (R. T. Hamilton & Harper, 1994).

Implications of Seminal Works

The foundation of entrepreneurship theory is grounded in economics. The seminal works of entrepreneurship theorists presented the concept of entrepreneurship from the economic perspective, which made no attempt to establish a new field of research (Bryat & Julien, 2000). Further, the theories of the aforementioned scholars are based on the actions of entrepreneurship and its impact on the economy, but have not fully defined the phenomenon of entrepreneurship or the essence of the entrepreneur. According to

Howorth et al. (2005), the shortcomings in the prevailing theories have become more apparent as scholars struggle to build on an already fragmented foundation.

African American Entrepreneurship

Dadzie and Cho (1989) argued that the consensus in the literature is that minority entrepreneurs are at a greater risk of failure than their nonminority counterparts. Several studies have asserted that the problems faced by African American entrepreneurs have contributed to the group's low numbers of successful businesses (Boyd, 2009; Harris, Grubb, & Hebert, 2005; Kollinger & Minniti, 2006; Lofstrom & Bates, 2011). Many of these problems, while not specific only to African Americans, tend to have a lesser impact on other minority and nonminority groups.

Existing research on the causes of African American entrepreneurial failures has described such factors as discrimination (Coyne, Isaacs, & Schwartz, 2010), lack of access to capital (Harris et al., 2005), lower levels of education (Oyelere & Belton, 2008), barriers to entry into certain industries (Oyelere & Belton, 2008), and the limited availability of mentors to model (Boyd, 2000b). Although these factors sometimes have a detrimental impact on sustainability, they do not dissuade African Americans from pursuing entrepreneurial businesses. According to Kollinger and Minniti (2006), African Americans have a much higher propensity for starting entrepreneurial businesses, but have greater rates of failure; thus, the racial gap in entrepreneurship is widened (Oyelere & Belton, 2008).

The literature addressing the failures of African American entrepreneurs is vast; however "astonishingly little is known about highly successful Black entrepreneurs"

(Boyd, 2009, p. 2061). Although the failure rates and factors for African American entrepreneurs have been heavily documented, African Americans are not dissuaded from entrepreneurial activity (Singh, Knox, & Crump, 2008). Over the past 2 decades, trends show that African American businesses grew over 87% (Fairlie, 2004). However, the number of successful African American entrepreneurial business owners remains flat (Fairlie, 2004). These businesses are in need of research and policies to assist them in achieving sustainable businesses.

The current literature has been criticized by scholars because it does not adequately define the African American entrepreneurial experience (Lofstrom & Bates, 2011). Even in the exploration of reasons for failure, many studies have explored the phenomenon of African American entrepreneurship by comparing it to White entrepreneurship (Harris et al., 2005; Kollinger & Minniti, 2006; Lieberson & Carter, 1979; Oyelere & Belton, 2008; Singh et al., 2008), from an economic perspective, or from the demographic differences between Whites and Blacks (Singh et al., 2008).

During the economic downturn, minorities have been negatively impacted at a disproportionate rate (Schmitt & Baker, 2008). Entrepreneurship has often been viewed as the equalizer of opportunities by African Americans (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006). These entrepreneurs are very optimistic about their ability to create successful businesses. However, few minorities experience the same levels of success that nonminorities experience (Fairlie, 2004). This disparity demonstrates that work still needs to be done in providing equal opportunities for all in the United States.

Successful and sustainable African American entrepreneurship is critical to the growth of the Black community (Bates, 2006), as well as the national economy (Harris et

al., 2005). The success of African American entrepreneurial businesses aids in the revitalization of minority communities and serves as a vehicle for achieving the American dream.

A study conducted by Kollinger and Minniti (2006) compared the rates of entrepreneurial involvement between African Americans and Whites. According to the study, the researchers determined that the problem was the striking difference between the number of successful African American entrepreneurs and the number of successful White entrepreneurs. Although African Americans had a much stronger propensity for entrepreneurship, they were less likely to be in a sustainable business (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006). The purpose of the study was to identify the differences in Black and White entrepreneurship and determine the reasons Black businesses fail at such a high rate.

Fairlie and Meyer (1996) discussed the differences in socioeconomic characteristics to explain the disparities in Black business ownership. However, only a small portion of the gap in self-employment can be attributed to the socioeconomic characteristics between Whites and Blacks (Fairlie & Meyer, 1996). While these conditions have some relevance, they do not explain the widening gap between Blacks and Whites of successful entrepreneurial businesses in America (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006). Therefore, the question posed by Kollinger and Minniti (2006) is, “What else then contributes to the observed differences in entrepreneurial involvement between black and white Americans?” (p. 60).

The researchers used data from a 2002 U.S. population survey of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) project. This survey was conducted to study

entrepreneurial behavior across several countries. The GEM project was established at Babson College in 1997 and is the largest single study of entrepreneurship in the world, with approximately 60 countries participating in the study (Neck, Zacharakis, Bygrave, Reynolds, & Cole, 2002). In the United States, a presurvey of 1,001 individuals to test the instrument was conducted. Following that survey, 6,058 individuals were surveyed. Of these surveys, 4,900 valid observations were completed for the study. The sample consisted of 78.6% Whites, 10.3% Blacks, 2% Asian Americans, and 7.4% other racial groups (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006).

Participants of the survey were coded to determine their position in the entrepreneurial venture. The categories were nascent stages (those in the startup process of business during the 12 months preceding the survey, or being in business no more than 3 months at the time of the survey); young business (those who had owned a business between 3 and 42 months); and established business (those who had been in business for more than 42 months). Participants were also coded based on their answers regarding their confidence in their skills, their ability to identify opportunities, and their fear of failure. In addition, demographics for each respondent were collected. These demographics included age, gender, marital status, level of education, and income (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006).

According to the GEM data (Neck et al., 2002), overall, 6.8% of the sample group was in the process of starting a business during the time of the survey. The findings indicated that African Americans represented the highest percentage (11.1%) of any of the other racial groups in the nascent and young business ownership stages. This was well above the next highest nascent group of “other” (8.5%). White Americans were found to

be significantly less likely (6.2%) to engage in nascent entrepreneurial activities, with an unweighted observed frequency of > 99% statistical significance (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006).

The young business category also demonstrated higher participation of African Americans than any other group. The data in this category showed a 5.6% participation of African Americans and a 3.7% participation of Whites. However, those numbers dropped dramatically in the established business category, with African Americans having the lowest numbers (3.4%), while Whites climbed to the highest (6.5%) in that area. Again, these numbers had a high significance value of > 99% (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006).

The disparity in established African American businesses may not be a result of their lack of entering the entrepreneurial arena but instead a possible result of an overproportionate rate of failure of nascent and young entrepreneurial ventures (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006). These disparities were tested to determine whether socioeconomic characteristics contributed to this high rate of failure of African American entrepreneurs. Although differences in socioeconomic characteristics existed, such as education level (with Whites having higher levels of educational attainment than Blacks), when those differences were controlled in processing the data, these characteristics did not explain the disparities in the success of Black and White entrepreneurs (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006).

The outcomes from the Kollinger and Minniti (2006) study were inconclusive. While the researchers discovered new data regarding the propensity of African Americans to start their own businesses, they were unable to determine definitively the reason that Black businesses fail.

Theorists have developed assumptions regarding the reasons for lower self-employment rates among Blacks, although none have been conclusive. Blanchflower (2004) argued that Black-owned businesses do not have equal access to capital. Their loan denial rates are higher, and, if they are awarded loans, they often pay higher interest rates than their White counterparts. African American business owners are often less likely to apply for credit because of this issue. Kollinger and Minniti (2006) posited that external constraints preventing success of African American entrepreneurs existed, and that Blanchflower's work may be relevant to their study. One limitation of the Kollinger and Minniti (2006) study was that the external constraints of African American business owners were not explored. The authors recommended that additional research be conducted to explore the role of discrimination and other external factors and their impact on African American entrepreneurial failure. Another limitation was that the data were secondary data, collected for another project, and used for the purposes of the Kollinger and Minniti (2006) study. While the data allowed the researchers access to possibly far more participants than would have been feasible, both in terms of time and cost, several limitations of utilizing secondary data exist. The complexities of the data, the lack of control of the data for the purposes of the study, and the absence of some key variables created limitations to the study (Bryman, 2004). Further research should include conducting another study that specifically targets the two demographic groups (Blacks and Whites in America), and more in-depth questions should be developed to discern the lived experiences of both of the groups.

Disadvantage Theories for Minority Entrepreneurs

The role of discrimination and disadvantage is prominent in the existing literature on African American entrepreneurship (Fairchild, 2008). To counteract the discrimination faced by minorities in the labor force, many minorities pursued entrepreneurial business opportunities as a means to alter the status quo (Abbey, 2002). According to Brenner (1987), those minorities who had experienced discrimination or loss of social status were frequently more apt to pursue entrepreneurial business opportunities than those who did not.

The types of disadvantages primarily impacting the African American entrepreneurial decision process are usually in the areas of employment—specifically, unequal or lower wages and the lack of accessibility of jobs, particularly during economic decline (Boyd, 2000a; Fairchild, 2008). These individuals frequently respond to disadvantages in access to resources or labor by becoming “survivalist entrepreneurs” (Boyd, 2000b, p. 647). These entrepreneurs were faced with the need to identify an independent means of creating a livelihood for themselves (Boyd, 2000b). They started businesses in marginal fields with low barriers to entry to become self-sufficient as a means of surviving the disadvantage they faced (Boyd, 2000a).

Simple Disadvantage Theory

One theory explaining the increased participation of minorities in entrepreneurship is called the simple disadvantage theory (Light & Rosenstein, 1995). The simple disadvantage theory is based on the premise that minorities who are most constrained by lack of resources and unequal access in the labor market are encouraged to pursue entrepreneurial businesses. However, empirical evidence does not fully support

this theory. While simple disadvantage theory appropriately applies to some situations, many other aspects are not explained (Boyd, 2000a). Contrary to the findings by Brenner (1987), Fairlie and Meyer (1996) found that many of those minorities who pursue entrepreneurship are actually more advantaged than their counterparts in terms of monetary resources and employment opportunities.

Researchers found that the simple disadvantage theory did not apply to all socioeconomic levels of minority entrepreneurs (Light & Rosenstein, 1995). Therefore, to strengthen the simple disadvantage theory, two subtypes of disadvantage were identified: resource disadvantage and labor market disadvantage (Light & Rosenstein, 1995). These theories of disadvantage offer differentiated versions of the types of disadvantages experienced by minority entrepreneurs (Light & Rosenstein, 1995).

Resource Disadvantage Theory

Resource disadvantage exists when members of a particular group have less access to resources such as education, money, health, confidence, and so forth (Light & Rosenstein, 1995). This type of disadvantage typically stems from a historical experience of the minority group, such as slavery (Light & Rosenstein, 1995). According to Boyd (2000a), Blacks have been the most “severely resource-disadvantaged group in American society” (p. 649). Researchers posit that resource disadvantage has a negative impact on the growth and sustainability of African American businesses in America. They enter into the entrepreneurial setting with little knowledge, undercapitalized and unable to create a viable entrepreneurial business. To compound this issue, often this group enters into low-barrier, low-yield businesses with no growth potential (Boyd, 2000b).

Labor Market Disadvantage Theory

The theory of labor market disadvantage refers to the challenges that minorities face in the search for employment (Boyd, 2000a). Those experiencing labor market disadvantage often receive low wages for reasons not related to their level of productivity (Light & Rosenstein, 1995). Discrimination in the work force is usually associated with labor market disadvantage theory. Minorities are often unemployed or underemployed although they may be capable and qualified for greater positions in the labor market (Light & Rosenstein, 1995).

Motivation Theory

The earliest developments in motivation originated from Greek philosophers (Steers, Mowday, & Shapiro, 2004). Their concept of motivation originated from the hedonistic perspective as the driving force of individual behavior. This simplistic concept viewed motivation as the individual behavior seeking to experience pleasure and avoid pain (Steers et al., 2004).

According to Locke and Latham (2004), “the concept of motivation refers to internal factors that impel action and to external factors that can act as inducements to action” (p. 388). Motivation can be defined as the force that influences, drives, and sustains the behavior necessary to reach the desired goals of an individual (Hancock, 2004). Similarly, motivation is the intensity and effort one exerts toward meeting a goal (Robbins, 2003).

Motivation is considered to be the energy that encourages individuals to overcome difficulties and to achieve greater levels of success (Kanji, Kristensen, &

Dahlgaard, 1995). Motivation is one's persistence, drive, and direction that one follows to achieve desired outcomes. The amount of effort varies based on the individual, with those with higher motivation exerting more energy toward their goals (Buhler, 2007).

Theorists have attempted to predict the basis of motivation in individuals and how motivation is aroused in some and not in others (Campbell & Pritchard, 1976). The ideology of motivation has proven to be difficult to quantify. Theorists have had difficulty agreeing on which theory of motivation best describes its foundation. The basis of human motivation is a reflection of the personality traits of individuals (Kajanova, 2008). Because of this, motivation can be described as multifaceted and ever-changing.

Much of the theory on motivation is based on the seminal works of Abraham Maslow and Frederick Herzberg. These theorists developed foundational models of motivation upon which modern theories were built. Although the foundational theories have been scrutinized by modern scholars, they remain best known for their explanations of motivation (Robbins, 2003).

Maslow's Theory

The concept of motivation migrated from the philosophical Greek perspective to the psychological perspective (Steers et al., 2004). In the seminal works of psychologist Maslow (1943), motivation theory is defined in terms of a hierarchy of needs ranging from basic, lower order physiological needs to higher order intrinsic needs. The needs drive the behavior of the individual based on the level the individual has achieved. Typically, each level in the hierarchy is met before the individual advances to the next.

The lower order needs were fundamentally important to the individual and were satisfied externally (Maslow, 1943). Physiological and safety needs are considered the

lower order needs that individuals must acquire before moving toward the more intrinsic needs (Steers et al., 2004). The status (lower order or higher order) of the social needs component in Maslow's hierarchy differs among theorists, with Steers et al. (2004) positing that the social needs component is at the higher level of the lower order needs, while Maslow (1943) classified social needs as the lower level of the higher order needs. Regardless of the differences of scholars as to the classification of low-order and high-order needs, Maslow's hierarchy of needs has received wide recognition in motivation literature (Robbins, 2003); however, little empirical research exists regarding the relationship between Maslow's theory and entrepreneurial motivation.

Maslow (1943) described the hierarchy of needs that motivate individuals in the following terms:

1. Physiological needs—classified as basic human needs, such as sleep, food, water, sex.
2. Safety needs—classified as the need for shelter and security.
3. Social needs—classified as the need for belonging, love, and affection.
4. Esteem needs—classified as the need for achievement, a high esteem for oneself, and the acceptance of others.
5. Self-actualization needs—classified as the need to become more and to become everything one is capable of becoming.

This researcher's visual depiction of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, as shown in Figure 2, was based on the interpreted content from Maslow's (1943) model.

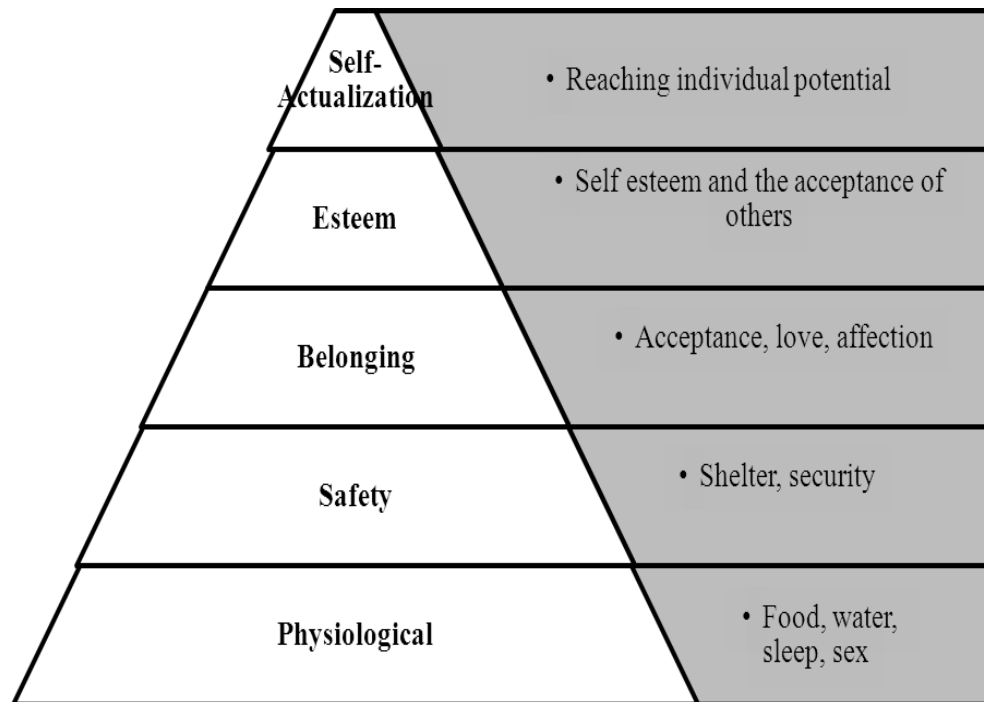


Figure 2. Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

According to Maslow's (1943) theory, needs are addressed in order of importance to humans, and until those needs are met, all others are nonexistent. For example, if individuals are experiencing hunger and have not had any food, their primary motivation is to satisfy their hunger. After that need is met, individuals advance up the hierarchy to address other higher order needs. Once each level is met, individuals have a propensity to develop even higher order needs, thereby driving their motivation. The concept of Maslow's hierarchy refers to the basic needs of individuals and their drive to meet those needs. However, this theory only describes the driving forces of individual motivation based on unmet needs.

Herzberg's Theory

Herzberg (1966) introduced the two-factor theory, also known as the motivation-hygiene theory, to the study of motivation. His research focused on expanding on Maslow's hierarchy by gaining insight into the working relationships and performances of employees (Halepota, 2005). This theory claims that certain factors cause satisfaction and certain factors cause dissatisfaction; however, those factors are not interrelated (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). Therefore, satisfaction and dissatisfaction do not exist on a continuum where an increase in satisfaction decreases dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1966). Herzberg's first-level factors consisted of 16 factors: six motivator factors and 10 hygiene factors. The six motivator factors are

1. Achievement
2. Recognition of Achievement
3. Work itself
4. Responsibility
5. Advancement
6. Possibility of growth

The hygiene factors are:

1. Supervision
2. Company policy and administration
3. Working conditions
4. Interpersonal relations with peers
5. Interpersonal relations with subordinates
6. Interpersonal relations with superiors
7. Status
8. Job security
9. Salary
10. Personal life. (Herzberg, 1966, pp. 95–96)

According to his view, Herzberg believed that the motivator factors lead to satisfaction or no satisfaction, while hygiene factors lead to either dissatisfaction or no dissatisfaction (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). His view assumed that individuals sought to achieve the hygiene factors, but once they did, they needed to achieve motivating

factors to sustain satisfaction (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). As with Maslow's hierarchy, individuals are motivated to continue achievement once basic needs are met.

Modern Motivation Theory

As the concept of motivation continued to progress, theorists began further exploring work motivation as the next evolution of motivation research. Even with the foundational basis of the study of motivation, theorists still struggled with explaining the differences in motivation, goal setting, and performance of individuals (Kehr, 2004). Therefore, new theories of work motivation were developed. In addition to understanding the factors of motivation, theorists explored the aspects of individual actions that affect motivation. The three aspects having an impact on motivation and performance are direction, intensity, and duration (Locke & Latham, 2004). These aspects have an impact on the level of performance and motivation that individuals attain.

McClelland's Theory

McClelland explained that individual motivation was focused on specific, clearly defined needs (as cited in Steers et al., 2004). These needs were categorized as three critical components of human motivation. McClelland's theory introduced the "big three" (Kehr, 2004, p. 480) of implicit motivation: achievement, power, and affiliation.

According to McClelland's (1961) theory, those individuals motivated by a high need for achievement had higher performance standards at work. They are motivated by positive feedback and recognition, either through their interpersonal relationships or intrinsically through the satisfaction of doing good work (Kajanova, 2008). Those individuals with high achievement needs often performed more favorably in entrepreneurial roles (van Vuuren & Botha, 2010).

The power component of McClelland's theory describes the individual's motivation to be influential and to have control over others (Wegge, 2000). These individuals are driven by the need to dominate and lead. Generally, individuals with greater power needs are successful managers (Stanton & Schultheiss, 2009).

Those individuals needing affiliation are motivated by a collegial environment of support and acceptance. They are sensitive to rejection and want to be liked (Hofer & Busch, 2011). Since their motivation is in being liked, many of these managers find it difficult to be successful (Hofer & Busch, 2011). These individuals are generally most successful in team environments.

This researcher's visual depiction of McClelland's (1961) theory of motivation, as shown in Figure 3, was based on the interpreted content from McClelland's theory. Unlike Maslow's hierarchy, the motivation needs in McClelland's (1961) theory are not dependent on each other, and individuals may be driven by one, two, or all three of the components. Maslow's (1943) hierarchy (Figure 2) demonstrates that needs are built upon one another. Individuals must achieve each level starting at the foundation (physiological) before progressing to the next level. As seen in Figure 3, McClelland's needs are not interrelated; one can achieve one or all of the needs, and those needs are not in a hierarchical order.

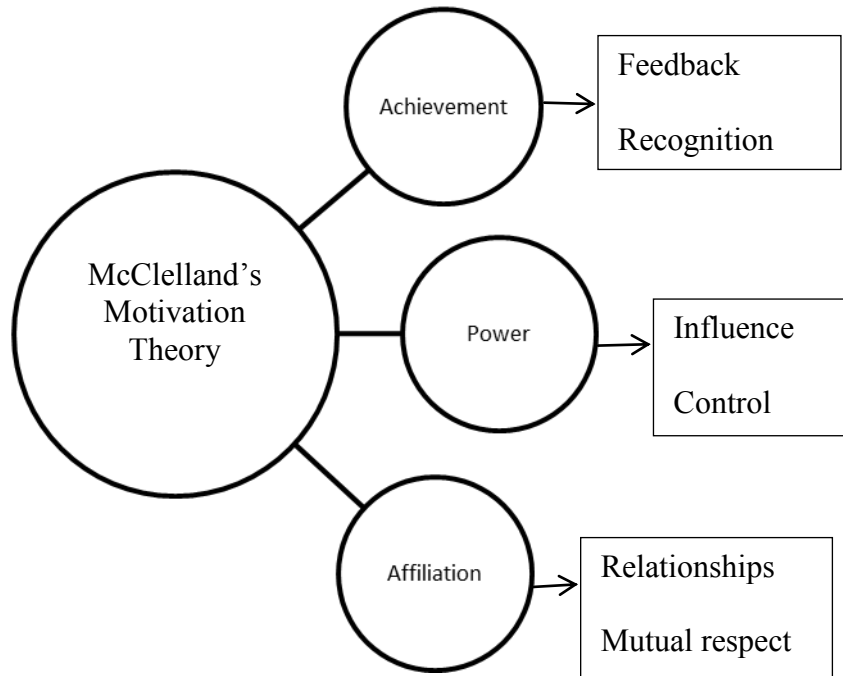


Figure 3. McClelland's motivation theory.

Entrepreneurial Motivation Theory

The study of entrepreneurial motivation has not been fully developed. The evolution of entrepreneurship moved from understanding the entrepreneur to discovering potential entrepreneurs, to nurturing potential entrepreneurs (Carsrud & Brannback, 2011). Entrepreneurial motivation has historically been examined through the same lens as business management. With motivation noted as one of the key components to entrepreneurial success, motivation theory is frequently used in the study of entrepreneurial performance (Robichaud, McGraw, & Roger, 2001). However, the limitation of entrepreneurial motivation theory leaves much to be desired.

Motivation can be characterized in several different ways. For example, task motivation is based on the individual's need for power and position (Stewart & Roth,

2007). Conversely, achievement motivation has little to do with power, and instead is based on the individual's need to attain a level of accomplishment (Stewart & Roth, 2007). McClelland (1961) posited that individuals whose motivations were based on achievement were more predisposed to pursue entrepreneurial ventures. This individual believes that being an entrepreneur provides greater satisfaction than any other position. Further, an individual's source of motivation can be either extrinsic or intrinsic (Benabou & Tirole, 2003). These sources can sometimes compete with each other, with the extrinsic motivation being concerned with the possibility of reward (tangible), while the intrinsic motivation is based on the individual's desire for achievement just for the sake of doing so (intangible; Vansteenkiste & Deci, 2003).

Entrepreneurship is dependent on the decisions, motivations, personality, and knowledge of the individual undertaking the process (Shane, Locke, & Collins, 2003). As such, expanding empirical research on the role of motivation and entrepreneurship is important (Carroll & Mosakowski, 1987). According to sociologists, this empirical research should focus on the role of human motivation in entrepreneurship instead of the trait-based approach utilized by so many entrepreneurial theorists (Shane et al., 2003). The assumption is that understanding entrepreneurial motivation is a critical factor to more fully understanding the phenomenon of entrepreneurship overall.

Relevant Studies in Motivation

The kaleidoscope career model and entrepreneurial motivation. Sullivan, Forret, Mainiero, and Terjesen (2007) conducted an exploratory study of entrepreneurial motivation that built on the concepts of McClelland. The problem identified by Sullivan et al. (2007) was the lack of research on entrepreneurial motivation based on career

theory. The purpose of their study was to increase the understanding of the motivations of entrepreneurs by understanding their career trajectory and intrinsic values.

The study utilized the kaleidoscope career model (KCM) to describe how individuals altered their careers by adapting to their changing relationships and life roles. The KCM had been utilized for helping individuals identify career choices based on their needs at specific periods in their lives. The three underlying needs of the KCM were (a) the individual's need for authenticity in his or her personal values and behaviors; (b) the individual's quest for healthy balance in home, work, and relationships; and (c) the individual's need for challenge through stimulating work, advancement, and self-worth (Sullivan et al., 2007). These needs closely mirror McClelland's need for power (authenticity), achievement (challenge), and affiliation (balance; Kehr, 2004).

Sullivan et al. (2007) provided three major research questions:

1. Do entrepreneurs significantly differ from those who don't own their own businesses in their kaleidoscope thinking?
2. How do the three parameters of the KCM influence an individual's decision to start his/her own business?
3. Do the three parameters of the KCM shift in emphasis for entrepreneurs over their life spans? (p. 7)

Surveys and interviews were used to collect data for Sullivan et al.'s (2007) study.

The surveys were conducted during two separate times to attract different participants.

Surveys 1 and 2 were posted on a marketing research panel website in the United States.

The marketing firm had access to approximately 10,000 individuals of varying races,

backgrounds, and industries. Participants were incentivized by being entered into a

drawing for a \$100 cash prize. The response rate of 22% for Survey 1 was rated as "very

high” (Sullivan et al., 2007, p. 8) by the marketing firm. The second survey’s response rate was lower (19%).

A total of 257 entrepreneurs and 1,390 nonentrepreneurs participated in one of the two surveys. The demographic breakdown of participants was as follows: men 53%, women 47%; European American 87%, African American 3%, Other (Asian, Latin American, Native American) 7%, race not reported 3% (Sullivan et al., 2007).

In addition to the surveys, the researchers conducted interviews using both structured and unstructured questions with 53 participants. Respondents for the interviews were identified using a snowball technique to identify participants (Sullivan et al., 2007). According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), the snowball sampling method is appropriate when the researcher has difficulty identifying respondents. The initial sample group was asked to refer others to the researcher who had the same or similar characteristics (Sullivan et al., 2007). For the purpose of this study, the researchers asked the participants to refer someone whose story was different from theirs. Of those, seven reported owning their own business. The data collected from the group of seven were used in the study.

To address Research Question 1, the researchers conducted *t*-test comparisons to determine whether entrepreneurs ($n = 257$) differed greatly from nonentrepreneurs ($n = 1,390$) in their kaleidoscope thinking (Sullivan et al., 2007). According to the data, entrepreneurs scored significantly higher than nonentrepreneurs in terms of making their own career paths and planning for career change (Sullivan et al., 2007). Entrepreneurs also scored higher in the need for authenticity and challenge. The entrepreneurs described themselves as more aggressive than the nonentrepreneurs in developing their career paths

and in planning for career change. Further, they responded that they work harder than nonentrepreneurs, pay closer attention to networking, and focus on developing their managerial skills. More than 80% of the entrepreneurial participants indicated that challenge was their primary career motivator in their early career, as opposed to 27.9% of the nonentrepreneurs (Sullivan et al., 2007). However, no distinct difference existed between the two groups as it pertained to balance.

Research Question 2 was answered through the qualitative methodology to explore the commonalities and differences of the respondents from the interview sample (Sullivan et al., 2007). This approach was appropriate because the researchers were able to gain depth to the meaning of the participants' experiences and identify concepts that emerged from the data collected (Bryman, 2004). Two of the entrepreneurs reported that the primary motivation for entrepreneurship was authentic and challenge, three entrepreneurs reported that their primary motivation was the pursuit of balance, and the remaining two responded that challenge motivated them (Sullivan et al., 2007).

Finally, Research Question 3 found that the emphasis and motivations for entrepreneurs shifted over time as individuals progressed through their lives (Sullivan et al., 2007). Those who identified themselves in the beginning of their careers indicated at high levels (83%) that challenge was their primary career motivator (Sullivan et al., 2007). The importance of challenge decreased significantly among midcareer respondents (27.9%), and even further (18.6%) in end-career respondents (Sullivan et al., 2007).

While differences in the responses of entrepreneurs were experienced, overall, the study demonstrated that the motivation of entrepreneurs was similar (Sullivan et al., 2007). Apparently, the entrepreneurs were motivated by different factors than the

nonentrepreneurs (Sullivan et al., 2007). Contrary to the nonentrepreneurs, who defined their careers through their corporations, the entrepreneurial participants all defined their careers through their individual values and life choices (Sullivan et al., 2007).

The study demonstrated that the KCM may be a helpful tool in determining whether the motivation of individuals is consistent with entrepreneurs. Even though the study demonstrated a difference in motivation based on the needs of entrepreneurs versus nonentrepreneurs, limitations to the study existed (Sullivan et al., 2007). The low participation of entrepreneurs provided only a surface view of this group (Sullivan et al., 2007). Further, the study included only a small number of minority participants, who may demonstrate a different perspective that should be considered. Further, the lack of longitudinal data as it relates to changes in life experiences and changes in careers should be included. These limitations introduced the possibility of nongeneralizable outcomes.

Cross-cultural comparison of entrepreneurial motivation. Similar to the study by Sullivan et al. (2007), Abbey (2002) also found a common set of values among entrepreneurs. According to Abbey (2002), many researchers have attempted to document the ideology of entrepreneurship by developing a common trait model. However, this approach is challenged because of the differences in characteristics of entrepreneurs. The purpose of Abbey's (2002) study was to explore the role of culture and its effect on the motivational factors of the entrepreneur. In Abbey's (2002); McGrath, MacMillan, and Scheinberg's (1992); Shane, Kolvereid, and Westhead's (1991); and Sullivan et al.'s (2007) studies, the most prevalent entrepreneurial motivation was the desire for job freedom (independence) and greater achievement. The contention

of Abbey's (2002) study is that differences in culture will account for differences in motivation for the pursuit of entrepreneurial ventures.

Abbey's (2002) exploratory study compared the motivation for entrepreneurship from the cultural perspective according to Hofstede's (1980) individualist/collectivist theory of culture. According to this theory, one aspect of global culture was based on the individualist/collectivist continuum. Some cultural societies were individualistic, with the members of the cultural group being more self-centered. Those societies that are collectivistic view themselves as a group (Abbey, 2002).

Abbey (2002) selected individuals who initiated new businesses in the United States and Ghana for the study. These groups were studied because of their stark contrast according to Hofstede's (1980) continuum of individualist/collectivist dimensions. According to Hofstede's (1980) study, the United States ranked highest in individualism, while African countries scored highest in collectivism. The study consisted of 115 male participants: 50 from the United States and 65 from Ghana. All participants had at least a high school education. All participants from the United States were from Maryland and were White, and all of the Ghanaian participants were from the capital city of Ghana (Abbey, 2002).

Abbey (2002) used a questionnaire to measure both culture and motivation for entrepreneurship. The measure of culture was defined according to Hofstede's individualist/collectivist continuum (Abbey, 2002). Culture was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being *of little or no importance* and 1 being *of the utmost importance*, and 2, 3, and 4 varying in incremental importance. The instrument for measuring motivation was developed using an adaptation of McGrath et al.'s (1992) model. The

model listed 23 reasons for prospective business owners to start their businesses (Abbey, 2002). As with the culture instrument, respondents indicated their preference on a Likert-like scale, with 1 being *no extent*, 5 being *very great extent*, and 2, 3, and 4 varying incrementally between the ends of the continuum.

The research instrument had been used in a previous study, and therefore had established reliability and validity. However, Abbey (2002) identified that in the study of culture, there may be some limitation to the study because of differences in the meaning of words and language. Abbey (2002) proposed to overcome this limitation by subjecting the data to factor analysis. Factor analysis is an interdependency technique used to reduce the number of variables to a manageable group of variables to demonstrate intercorrelations (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). The data had to be manipulated by factor loading and rotation because of the wide variety of answers possible. This process was done to secure a less ambiguous condition of the factors for the study (Cooper & Schindler, 2006).

The results of the *t* test in the study in the individualist/collectivist dimension demonstrated a significant difference between the two groups of entrepreneurs (Abbey, 2002). The results suggested that cultural differences existed between the two groups. Each group of entrepreneurs' answers was significant to the direction on the individualist/collectivist continuum that the researcher expected based solely on their cultures (Abbey, 2002).

The second part of the study, which measured motivation for entrepreneurs, showed no significant differences on the motivational dimensions of innovation, challenge, and recognition (Abbey, 2002). Conversely, significant differences were

present between the two groups on the motivational dimensions of social standing ($p < .05$), opportunity ($p < .001$), independence ($p < .001$), and financial ($p < .001$; Abbey, 2002). These differences indicate that some motivational factors were different between the groups. The American entrepreneurs averaged higher scores on independence and the desire to earn more money, whereas the Ghanaian entrepreneurs averaged higher scores in the area of social standing and opportunity (Abbey, 2002).

The results of the study supported that similarities exist in the motivational factors of entrepreneurs; however, culture appeared to have an influence on the emphasis placed on motivational factors (Abbey, 2002). For example, both groups expressed a desire for economic security; however, those participants from the United States placed a greater emphasis on the aspect of motivation. Further, the participants from the United States had a desire to achieve individual economic security, whereas the participants from Ghana expressed the desire to gain economic security for their extended groups (Abbey, 2002). These findings are consistent with Hofstede's (1980) findings that related to collectivistic societies stressing the importance of independence and being more motivated by financial rewards.

Several limitations were identified in Abbey's (2002) study. As with the Sullivan et al. (2007) study, diversity within the pool of participants was limited. While Abbey's (2002) study compared entrepreneurs from Ghana and the United States, this researcher assumes that differences in men and women, as well as the cultural differences that exist within the selected countries, may have added greater depth to the study. In addition, geographic experiences and race may also be a factor to consider for future research within the individualist and collectivist societies. These subtle but important differences

may have resulted in different outcomes to the study. In addition, both geographic locations selected for the study were located in large metropolitan areas. The economic stability may have had an impact in the study's outcomes, and these outcomes may differ in other geographic areas, such as suburban or rural areas.

Success Theory

Success has many different interpretations and is described in objective terms such as growth and performance (Reijonen & Komppula, 2007), or in subjective terms such as satisfaction and flexibility (Rhodes & Butler, 2004). Scholars have not agreed on the definitions and measures of success for small entrepreneurial businesses (Murphy, Trailer, & Hill, 1996). According to E. Walker and Brown (2004), the singular definition of success is difficult to describe from the entrepreneur's perspective.

While the view of business success varies, three general factors arise most frequently from the literature: psychological and behavioral traits of the entrepreneur, the managerial abilities of the entrepreneur, and the external environment in which the entrepreneur operates (H. M. Chu, Kara, & Benzing, 2008). Traditional success measures are viewed in more quantifiable terms (Gorgievski, Ascalon, & Stephan, 2011), such as profitability, positive return on investment, the introduction of new products, or the ability to expand the business operation. However, entrepreneurial business owners often view success through an intangible lens, with their evidence of success being simply the continuation of their businesses (Simpson, Tuck, & Bellamy, 2004).

Generally, entrepreneurship is not pursued as a career choice to improve one's financial situation (Croson & Minniti, 2011). In a study conducted by B. H. Hamilton

(2000), with the exception of those entrepreneurs at the top 25%, most entrepreneurs would make more money if they stayed in a wage-producing job. Those pursuing entrepreneurship are seeking something else from self-employment—namely, autonomy.

According to a study conducted by Carter, Gartner, Shaver, and Gatewood (2003), entrepreneurs cite more than 38 different reasons for becoming business owners. The most common reasons include self-fulfillment, goal achievement, independence, freedom, satisfaction, balance of family life, flexible lifestyle, and contribution to the community (Buttner & Moore, 1997; Carter et al., 2003). Opportunities for growth and monetary rewards are mentioned less frequently (Alstete, 2008).

Theoretical Framework of Entrepreneurial Success

Although research has been conducted concerning factors that relate to entrepreneurial success, “the variables that contribute to the success of small businesses are not unanimously agreed upon by researchers” (Benzing, Chu, & Kara, 2009, p. 62). According to Fratoe (1986), the theoretical framework of business success falls into four general category theories:

1. Psychological factors theory—suggests that the business takes on the characteristics of the owner. The individual strengths, weaknesses, management style, successes, and failures all become those of the business. Therefore, the business takes on the personality of the entrepreneur.
2. Situational (environmental) factors theory—holds that opportunities and environmental factors assist the entrepreneur in achieving success. The environmental factors leading to success may include financing, experience,

availability of a competent labor force, and receptive customers (Bruno & Tyebjee, 1982).

3. Product/service factors theory—relates the product or service to the entrepreneur's decision to start the business. According to Ahiaarah (1993), the product or service offering may be the most important decision in the entrepreneurial process in determining entrepreneurial success. Included in this theory are the type of product or service, the location of the business, and marketing strategies.
4. Process/decisional factors theory—based on the entrepreneur's skills and abilities. The theory includes what the entrepreneur does and how he or she does it (Ahiaarah, 1993).

The aforementioned theories were based on general entrepreneurial research. However, Ahiaarah (1993) posited that they did not include important factors specifically for African American entrepreneurs. Therefore, Ahiaarah (1993) developed a synthesized theoretical model of African American business success from these business success theories. This multidisciplinary theoretical framework describes three factors contributing to the success of African American business owners:

1. Individual-specific, which includes the entrepreneur's drive, ability, knowledge, interpersonal skills, motivation, and decision-making ability.
2. Environmental-consequent, which includes access to capital, customers, human resources, and possibly public programs.

3. Black American group activities, which includes entrepreneurial role models, professional networks, community organizations, and those supporting the African American community (Ahiarah, 1993).

According to Ahiarah (1993), the research on African American entrepreneurship is fragmented and one-dimensional. The framework by Ahiarah (1993) was presented to address those issues and to develop a model for future research in this area. Rhodes and Butler (2004) added to the theoretical framework proposed by Ahiarah's study by including socioeconomic environmental factors. Components such as family background, assistance from family and friends, and levels of capital resources are included in the socioeconomic factors (Rhodes & Butler, 2004).

According to Rhodes and Butler (2004), Ahiarah's (1993) framework was applicable for Black businesses of the past, but was no longer relevant to today's Black business environment. Today's environment must make reference to the increase in Black businesses operating outside of their racial communities and how this change impacts the sustainability of these businesses.

Relevant Study in Success

Benzing et al.'s (2009) study was done to address the importance of entrepreneurship in improving the economic issues of Turkey. Benzing et al. (2009) stated that 20% of the Turkish population lives below the poverty line, and Turkey's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is 28.5% of the European Union's per capita GDP. The authors argued that in order for Turkey to improve its economic position, entrepreneurship is critical (Benzing et al., 2009).

The literature on Turkish entrepreneurship is scarce; therefore, Benzing et al. (2009) posited that the study was necessary to understand the lived experiences of entrepreneurs in Turkey. The importance of entrepreneurship to the growth and stability of the economy in Turkey further established the study's importance. Therefore, the study examined the motivation, success, and problems that Turkish entrepreneurs face.

Benzing et al. (2009) argued that the literature showed that motivation fell into four categories: “[a] extrinsic rewards, [b] independence/autonomy, [c] intrinsic rewards, and [d] family security” (p. 61). Extrinsic rewards were defined as the financial or economic reasons that entrepreneurs pursued their businesses; intrinsic rewards were defined as growth and fulfillment in their work. The studies reviewed did not indicate which motivations were more prevalent among entrepreneurs (Benzing et al., 2009).

A random sampling was used to select 200 businesses from the 37,922 registered entrepreneurial establishments in Ankara, Turkey, for the survey. Of these 200 businesses, 23 were excluded because they were too large, six were closed, and 32 declined the survey or ended the survey early. This left 139 entrepreneurs who answered the survey, for a response rate of 78.5%. Surveys were conducted by interview, lasting an average of 30 minutes (Benzing et al., 2009).

The questionnaire used to collect data was initially designed and written in English, and translated into Turkish. The instrument was checked by a translator to ensure consistency in the language. The instrument was deemed satisfactorily reliable because the Cronbach's alphas and Guttman split-half coefficients were high for the motivation, perceived success, and problem items. The alpha and split-half coefficients for motivation were 0.758 and 0.754 (Benzing et al., 2009). The split-half coefficient of

0.795 also demonstrated reliability. Motivation strength and success perceptions were measured using a Likert scale, with the higher score indicating greater importance.

Consistent with the data indicating lower numbers of Turkish women entrepreneurs, 9% of those surveyed for the study identified as women and 91% identified as men (Benzing et al., 2009). The average age of those surveyed was 41; 32% had completed high school and 28% had completed college. Sixty-six percent of those surveyed indicated that they had created the business themselves. The average number of employees was 24.9 full-time employees and 1.4 part-time employees. The average number of years in business was 14 (Benzing et al., 2009).

Measuring the results from the Likert scale, with 5 being *most important* and 1 being *least important*, the two most important motivations were “to increase income” ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.92$; Benzing et al., 2009, p. 68) and “to have job security” ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.12$; p. 68). The third most important motivation was “to maintain personal freedom and independence” ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.46$; Benzing et al., 2009, p. 68). This outcome led the researchers to develop four factors of motivation for Turkish entrepreneurs: security factor, income factor, independence factor, and intrinsic factor. These four factors accounted for 70.8% of the responses collected (Benzing et al., 2009).

The success variables of the study were also measured using a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being *extremely important* and 1 being *least important*. Of the 17 success factors, Turkish entrepreneurs rated their reputation for honesty ($M = 4.82$, $SD = .67$) as the most important success factor. The importance of honesty correlates directly to the Islamic values of honesty, respect, and obedience, and may explain why that factor ranked so high with Turkish entrepreneurs. Friendliness and charisma ($M = 4.42$, $SD =$

.83) was ranked second, and social skills ($M = 4.39$, $SD = .94$) ranked third.

Entrepreneurs ranked satisfactory government support ($M = 2.68$, $SD = 1.53$) lowest of the success factors (Benzing et al., 2009).

The conclusion from Benzing et al.'s (2009) study is that the primary motivation for Turkish entrepreneurs is to increase income and gain job security. Further, according to the study, the primary success factors are honesty, friendliness, and charisma. These can be categorized as "reputation" (Benzing et al., 2009, p. 85) factors to entrepreneurial success. Because these factors are under the control of the Turkish entrepreneur, they argued that they have direct influence over their individual business success.

Entrepreneurial Goals and Success

Dobbins and Pettman (1997) posited that entrepreneurs often evaluate their level of success with the achievement of goals. Because these goals are often related to the various reasons that individuals pursue entrepreneurial opportunities, it could be argued that those goals should be the basis of determining entrepreneurial success, instead of the traditional measures of success (Reijonen & Komppula, 2007). The achievement of individual goals is often the impetus of the entrepreneur's activities, motivations, and behaviors. As such, one way to understand entrepreneurial success may be to study the impact of goals in the entrepreneurial process.

Goal-Setting Theory

The concept of goals and their importance relates to both entrepreneurial motivation and success. Locke and Latham (1984) introduced the ideology of the goal-setting theory in the 1970s, but the theory continued to evolve well into the 1990s. According to this theory, higher levels of individual goals (motivation) yield higher

levels of individual performance (success; Locke & Latham, 2005). The selection of goals and strategies is related to the assumptions that individuals have of their capabilities and identities (Latham & Pinder, 2005).

The assumptions of this theory assert that (a) goals encourage performance by motivating individuals to exert the effort necessary to achieve the goal, (b) goals motivate individuals to be persistent in their activities toward achieving the goal, and (c) goals provide focus to relevant behaviors and tasks necessary to achieving the desired outcomes (Locke & Latham, 2005). Although the goals set by entrepreneurs are different than those set by individuals operating within an organization (Alstete, 2008), they are important to the entrepreneur's perception of success (Reijonen & Komppula, 2007).

Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 consisted of a review of the literature and studies regarding entrepreneurship, motivation, and success. The literature review included the theoretical foundation of entrepreneurship, African American entrepreneurship, and the theories of motivation and success. Relevant studies were also reviewed and included research method, sample size or population, conclusions, and limitations. These concepts were analyzed to better understand the characteristics and components of the entrepreneurial framework. Chapter 3 details the methodology for this research.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This study is to identify motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. According to H. M. Chu et al. (2008), the definition of success is not widely agreed upon among scholars. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the successful entrepreneur was identified as being in operation for 3 years or more and reporting annual revenues of \$25,000 or more. In addition, respondents for the study certified that they are of African American descent and that they started the business. The following questions were answered by this study:

1. What are the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?
2. What are the success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?

Methodology and Research Design

Three philosophical paradigms exist in research: positivist, interpretive, and critical science. The positivistic paradigm suggests that the world is objective (Swanson & Holton, 2005). The assumption of this paradigm is that reality is concrete and that variables can be measured and explained in quantitative terms. Positivists focus on verifying or testing hypotheses through quantitative methods (Swanson & Holton, 2005).

The interpretive philosophical paradigm is concerned with the meaning of the participants studied. Interpretive researchers suggest that knowledge and meanings are constructed by the individual's perspectives (Swanson & Holton, 2005). This paradigmatic approach seeks to understand the subjective meanings of the phenomenon studied. The research design for the interpretive researcher may employ qualitative measures.

The critical science paradigm "is a combination of critical theory and postmodernism" (Swanson & Holton, 2005, p. 21). Researchers utilizing this paradigmatic approach are in search of understanding historical perspectives through the "reexamination of important events to surface unacknowledged forms of exploitation and domination" (Swanson & Holton, 2005, p. 21). A research design for this assumption may be a mixed-method design, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative measures.

The methodological approach to the study must be developed from the demands of the particular study (Lowder, 2009). According to Arbnor and Bjerke (1997), the problem determines the method of inquiry. The research methodology is dependent on the research question and the researcher's approach to the question. The approach to research is usually based on the researcher's paradigmatic view of the topic (Mangan, 2004).

The qualitative research design proposed for this study was based on the researcher's underlying philosophical assumptions (Creswell, 2007). The researcher's philosophical assumption is that the experiences of the participants are subjective. Therefore, this is an interpretive (qualitative) study utilizing a phenomenological research design to investigate the motivation and success strategies of African American

entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. Qualitative research methods have three major purposes: to explore, to explain, or to describe (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

According to Creswell (2007), researchers make certain assumptions when approaching a study. They can be characterized by three primary assumptions: ontological, epistemological, and axiological. In interpretive research traditions, ontological assumptions represent the nature of social reality (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006). This assumption is the subjective nature of reality to the participants (Creswell, 2007). The ontological assumption suggests that the realities of individuals are based on multiple realities, depending on their experiences. Therefore, open-ended questions are necessary to allow the participants to explain their experiences to the researcher.

The epistemological assumption refers to the relationship between the researcher and the phenomenon being researched (Creswell, 2007). The epistemological assumption suggests that knowledge is gained through the lived experience of the study participants. With this approach, the researcher typically collects data either in person, in focus groups, or through interviews. According to Bryman (2004), the researcher must take the view of the participants to acquire social knowledge. This tendency involves the researcher within the study, with the researcher reporting the investigation through the positions of the participants (Bryman, 2004). The epistemological approach integrates interactionism to the phenomenological study (Bryman, 2004). This approach reveals an empathetic position of the phenomenon being studied.

The axiological assumptions reflect the role of the researcher's and the participant's values in the study (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). The assumption of the researcher is that values are an important part of the study and cannot be ignored. The

researcher is not reluctant to integrate his or her passion about the project, as long as it does not cloud the outcome of the study (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). The role of the researcher's values is important because it reflects the researcher's perspective of the participants' experiences.

Phenomenological research describes the essence of the lived experience of participants of a study (Creswell, 2003). "The understanding of meaningful concrete relations implicit in the original description of experience in the context of a particular situation is the primary target of phenomenological knowledge" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 14). Rubin and Rubin (2005) argued that interviewing is appropriate when the researcher is trying to understand the experiences and events in which the researcher did not participate.

The rationale for the phenomenological research design is that the researcher sought to understand the lived experience of African American entrepreneurs and their perceptions of motivations and strategies that resulted in the success of their businesses. According to Gibson and Hanes (2003), phenomenology allows the researcher to "gain an understanding of the complexities of human life and the fullness of our experience of it" (p. 182). This approach gives the researcher insight to the phenomenon studied from the participants' perspectives. The phenomenological study allows the researcher to understand the consciousness, intuition, and intentionality of the participants (Giorgi, 1997). Qualitative research methods are considered appropriate when researching emerging trends or where little is known about the topic to be studied (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). The nature of the topic of this study—African American

entrepreneurial business owners—lends itself to the qualitative approach because of the limited scholarly research available (Creswell, 2003).

Sampling Design

This phenomenological study focused on African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. The group of participants was selected to better understand the motivation and success strategies of African Americans for entrepreneurship in this city. Information is lacking regarding this demographic in Dayton, Ohio. This study fills a gap in the literature. The information may be used by Dayton city leaders to develop appropriate policy regarding African American entrepreneurs.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), “sample sizes for qualitative research vary by technique but are generally small” (p. 203). However, the appropriate number of participants for the study is often difficult to prespecify (Robson, 2002). The notion is to continue collecting data until a point of saturation is experienced (Robson, 2002). Creswell (2003) stated that phenomenology research procedures include studying a small number of participants through extensive engagement. Therefore, this researcher recruited a minimum of 20 participants for this study. The participants were interviewed by telephone for 1 hour. The criteria for participation are as follows:

1. African American entrepreneurial business owners
2. Business in operation for 3 years or more
3. Reported annual tax revenues of \$25,000 or more.

Creswell (2003) argued that “the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question” (p. 185). According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), qualitative research utilizes nonprobability sampling, as little attempt is made to generate representative samples. One of the most common types of nonprobability sampling is purposive sampling. Further, purposive sampling consists of two major types: judgment sampling and quota sampling. Judgment sampling is utilized when the researcher selects sample members who meet a certain criteria. This approach is appropriate when the researcher seeks to study a select group of participants who have experienced the topic studied. Based on the specific criteria established for this proposed study, the researcher used judgment sampling to select participants.

The list of participants was developed by the researcher based on a purposefully developed group of businesses that met the aforementioned criteria. The researcher is familiar with the African American business community in Dayton, Ohio. The researcher utilized public resources for obtaining information on African American businesses in the city of Dayton, including an open source directory of African American businesses in the city; therefore, no permission was required for the use of data.

The researcher selected each 10th business listed in the open source directory until 20 participants were identified and agreed to participate in the study. The researcher utilized an Internet database to verify time in business and annual receipts of each prospective participant. The researcher visited the 20 participants and gave them the recruitment letter and informed consent form with a stamped self-addressed envelope. The research project was not discussed with the prospective participants during the initial

visit. Prospective participants were asked to return the signed and dated informed consent by mail if they agreed to participate in the study. After the consent was received, the researcher contacted the participant to schedule an interview. The researcher also notified the prospective participants that their participation is voluntary, information collected will be kept private, and they will remain anonymous. The researcher informed the participants that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Prospective participants were also advised that they would be protected according to Capella University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements.

Setting

Data collection was done through interviewing participants using a semistructured interview guide (see appendix). Telephone interviews were conducted for 1 hour or less. The researcher ensured that the space was quiet and private. The interviews were conducted in a locked office in the researcher's home and were digitally recorded and transferred to the researcher's computer. Interviews were scheduled at a convenient time for each participant.

According to Creswell (2003), the advantages of the interview method are that the participant has the ability to provide historical information and the researcher has more control over the questioning. The disadvantages are that the data are collected in a designated location as opposed to the natural setting of the participant, there may be variances among participants based on each participant's language and comprehensive proficiency, and a greater possibility for the introduction of the researcher's biases exists (Creswell, 2003).

Instrumentation

One way to collect data in qualitative studies is through the use of interviews (Swanson & Holton, 2005). Interviews can be unstructured, semistructured, or structured (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). The unstructured interview consists of an interview that has no specific questions or topic order. Semistructured interviews generally begin with a group of specific questions. The researcher then allows the interview to flow based on the participant's thought process. Finally, the structured interview consists of an interview guide with specific questions. The researcher asks open-ended questions in a specific order. For the purpose of this study, the researcher proposed a structured interview.

The instrument used in the research project was a slightly modified, valid, and reliable instrument. The instrument has been used in a previously approved Capella study (Hunt-Oxendine, 2009). The modifications made to the instrument made it appropriate for the targeted group of participants and the specific variables studied. The designer granted approval for its use. The instrument consists of 17 questions related to the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners (see Table 1).

Field Test

A field test was conducted according to IRB guidelines. This allowed the researcher to evaluate the changes to the interview guide and clarify the language of the questions from the participant's viewpoint. Three terminally degreed individuals with experience in the subject matter participated in the field test. Their responses enabled the researcher to more clearly develop questions for the interview.

Table 1. *Research Matrix*

Research question	Interview questions
RQ1. What are the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?	7–8, 14–17
RQ2. What are the success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?	9–14, 16–17
Demographics/background	1–6

A second field test was conducted utilizing individuals similar to the participants for the study. These individuals will not be part of the study, but all were entrepreneurs. Both field tests yielded valuable recommendations regarding the language of the interview. All participants stressed the importance of specifying the projected length of the interviews and adhering to the time allotted. Based on the feedback of the participants, some of the language in Question 3 was revised.

Question 3 asked, “How long have you been self-employed? How many individuals are employed by your company?” Participants of the field test recommended that the questions be more specific by clarifying how long the individual has been self-employed in his or her current business and by defining employees by full-time and part-time classifications. As a result of their feedback, Question 3 was revised as follows: “How long have you been in this entrepreneurial business? How many full-time individuals does your company employ? How many part-time individuals does your company employ?”

Data Collection

The focus of the phenomenological study is to capture the essence of the lived experiences of the study's participants (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). This can be achieved through a qualitative interview to collect data from the study's participants. These interviews will be conducted by telephone with participants identified for the study.

Kvale (as cited in Bryman, 2004) identified 10 criteria of successful interviewers:

1. Interviewer is familiar with the core of the interview.
2. Interviewer appropriately structures the interview.
3. Interviewer articulates clearly, using proper, easy-to-understand language.
4. Interviewer allows participant to complete his or her point.
5. Interviewer listens attentively, with empathy of how the responses impact the participant.
6. Interviewer is flexible and responsive to participant.
7. Interviewer is skilled at drawing out data that he or she needs.
8. Interviewer challenges inconsistencies in participant's responses.
9. Interviewer demonstrates engagement by remembering what has been said in the interview.
10. Interviewer interprets and clarifies meanings without imposing his or her bias.

The researcher's ability to adapt the aforementioned criteria has proven valuable to the interview process of this study.

The interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim, and checked by participants to ensure accuracy of data captured. To ensure anonymity of participants, each interview was coded with a number instead of the participant's name. The

researcher did not record any identifiable information during the interview. Each interview took an hour or less, and the entire data collection process took place within 4 weeks of IRB approval.

Data Analysis

One of the challenges for phenomenological researchers is the reduction of the data collected (Giorgi & Giorgi, as cited in Camic, Rhodes, & Yardley, 2003). This research method allows the researcher to collect large amounts of data, and these data must be analyzed. According to Giorgi and Giorgi (as cited in Camic et al., 2003), once the interviews have been transcribed, the researcher must sift through the raw data utilizing a structured approach. The approach consists of the following steps: read all of the raw data, establish the meaning of the experience, and transform data into specific meaning units.

Further, Trochim (2006) described a three-step method to data analysis. First, the researcher should prepare the data for analysis by cleaning and organizing the raw data. Second, data should be described in general terms, by documenting what the data describe. The third step is to test the outcomes to reach conclusions that extend beyond the raw data.

The researcher utilized word processing software for the data analysis process. The transcribed raw data was reviewed in full. After the data were verified by the respondents and the researcher, data was analyzed using the features of a word processing program to identify emergent themes in the data.

Validity and Reliability

According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), the characteristics of a good measurement tool for research are validity, reliability, and practicality. Validity is imperative to the research design to confirm the findings and to determine whether the researcher's objectives have been met (Bryman, 2004). Validity is described in several forms, with the two major forms being internal and external validity.

Internal validity refers to the research instrument's ability to measure the phenomenon studied. A study is considered to possess internal validity if a correlation between the researcher's observations and the theoretical ideas that are developed in the study exists (Bryman, 2004). According to LeCompte and Goetz (1982), internal validity is a strength of qualitative research because the researcher's participation in the life of the group studied allows for high levels of comparison between the observations and the concepts of the study. The research matrix in Table 1 demonstrated that each question in the interview was aligned to meet the criteria of internal validity by answering the research questions proposed.

Validity in qualitative research has different connotations than in quantitative research. In quantitative research, validity is measured by the generalizable nature of the research (Bryman, 2004). Conversely, validity in qualitative research is measured by the accuracy of the findings from the perspectives of the researcher and the participants (Creswell, 2003).

Reliability refers to the consistency of the results from the study (Swanson & Holton, 2005). Reliable instruments are concerned with the collection of data that are free from random error (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). Further, qualitative researchers utilize

reliability to identify consistent patterns in the data (Creswell, 2003). Reliable instruments are robust and work well for the purpose for which they are designed and for the group studied; “however, reliability and generalizability play a minor role in qualitative inquiry” (Creswell, 2003, p. 195).

Variations of the instrument that will be used in this study have been used in previous dissertations approved by Capella University (Hunt-Oxendine, 2009; Ivey, 2007; Riley, 2006; Whitley, 2009). Each of these researchers successfully addressed the issue of validity and reliability in the instrument design.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher must anticipate any ethical issues that may occur during the study (Creswell, 2003). The researcher has the responsibility of ensuring that respondents are protected from adverse actions as a result of their participation in the study, and the researcher must provide security for the data collected.

According to Creswell (2003), the following steps can be taken to minimize the risk of harm to respondents during the study:

1. Advise respondents that their participation is voluntary and they have the right to withdraw at any time.
2. Provide information about the purpose of the study, so that respondents can understand the nature of the research and its impact on them.
3. Review the procedures of the study so that participants can understand the process.
4. Assure respondents that they have the right to ask questions at any time.

5. Offer a copy of the research study results.
6. Describe the benefits of the study to respondents.
7. Collect signatures of respondents agreeing to the provisions as described.

The researcher ensured the privacy of participants by utilizing the coding process to identify each respondent. Further, because of the nature of the minority population of this study, the researcher completed the CITI training on *Research With Protected Populations—Vulnerable Subjects and Group Harms: Research With Culturally or Medically Vulnerable Groups*. The researcher expected minimal risk to the participants.

Informed Consent

All respondents were provided an informed consent form, and their information remains confidential. The researcher collected signed informed consent forms from respondents before data collection occurs. The researcher provided general information regarding the process of the study, giving the respondents an overview of what to expect. Respondents were advised that they had the option of withdrawing from the study at any time during the process with no adverse impact.

Risks/Benefits

The researcher did not anticipate any great risk to the respondents. Everyday general risks aside, the researcher expects no risk of violence or trauma as a participant in the study (Robson, 2002). The researcher reduced the risk of any retribution or any other adverse effect by maintaining confidentiality and anonymity for participants.

The benefit for respondents is that they participated in a study that may have a positive impact on public policy. A paucity of scholarly literature exists in reference to the subject matter of this study. The contributions of the participants provided great

insight regarding the lived experience of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio.

Bias

According to Arbnor and Bjerke (1997), one of the most fundamental challenges of social scientists is the presence of bias. Although the researcher's bias exists and is impossible to fully remove from the study, researchers must be aware of their biases and work to minimize them in the interpretation of the data. Therefore, the researcher is expected to exhibit a high degree of self-awareness of how his or her values and bias influence his or her knowledge creation (Arbnor & Bjerke, 1997).

Privacy/Confidentiality

Privacy refers to the respondent's right to refuse the interview or to refuse to answer any question in the interview (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). According to Stanford University's Office of the Dean of Research (n.d.), *privacy* can be defined as the respect of the individual's right to be free from unauthorized intrusion. The right to privacy is important to most individuals. Invading the privacy of individuals in any way is not an acceptable ethical practice in research (Bryman, 2004).

Confidentiality respects the freedom of unauthorized release of individual information of the participant (Stanford University, n.d.). The participant's information should not be released without prior consent. Further, the researcher is responsible for ensuring that the information released is consistent with the original request.

Confidentiality ensures that the participant's identity is protected and will not be revealed.

Each of these components of ethical considerations is critical to the research project. Without these elements, respondents may not answer questions fully or truthfully. The issues of privacy and confidentiality were addressed by assuring that the researcher did not publish any identifiable information of the respondents.

Security

All data collected was kept on the researcher's computer and a USB drive. Both were password-protected. The USB drive and any corresponding notes are kept in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's office, access to which is limited to the researcher. Data will be kept for 7 years, and then destroyed by shredding paper documents and smashing the USB drive.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed description of the proposed research methodology and process. The sample population was defined and the interview process explained. Further, the instrumentation for the study, the method of data collection, and the process of data analysis were described. Finally, the chapter addressed the ethical considerations for the study.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Introduction

This phenomenological study was designed to identify the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. The motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio, were answered with two research questions. Chapter 4 addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?
2. What are the success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?

This chapter presents a review of the data collected and a description of the findings from interviews conducted with the study participants. The theoretical framework of the study guided the researcher in answering the research questions.

Researcher's Interest and Background

The researcher developed an interest in the topic as a result of identifying the lack of empirical research on the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners. Through further investigation of the subject matter and

its impact on the Dayton, Ohio, community, it became apparent to the researcher that a significant gap in the knowledge existed. The researcher intended for this study to contribute to the knowledge and provide a framework from which programs are built to encourage and sustain African American businesses in this geographic area.

Through the successful completion of doctoral coursework as well as the self-guided study of research design, the researcher demonstrated the ability to understand and conduct research. In addition, the researcher has conducted several research projects in her professional career. The researcher collected all data directly from participants, through the use of telephone interviews. The researcher utilized a semistructured approach to the interviews and followed the interview guide closely. The researcher fully understands the role of bias in research and was careful to minimize bias in the collection and analysis of data for this study.

Description of the Sample

The sample for this phenomenological study consisted of 25 African Americans who (a) were identified as entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio; (b) had been in business for 3 years or more; and (c) had reportable taxable income of \$25,000 or greater. The individuals selected for the study were identified through an open-source, public directory of African American entrepreneurs in Dayton, Ohio. The researcher randomly selected the participants by selecting every 10th business listing in the directory.

Once the initial list of 25 prospective participants was identified, the researcher accessed an online database that provided information on the length of business operation

and estimated annual revenue to confirm that those businesses selected met the criteria of the study. The criteria for the study were also documented on the informed consent form that all study participants signed.

Each of the 25 prospective participants received a written recruitment letter and informed consent form explaining the nature of the study and the expectations of participation. These documents were delivered to each of the prospective participants' places of business. Participants agreeing to participate were asked to return the signed consent form to the researcher in a stamped, addressed envelope that was included with the delivered documents.

Of the 25 prospective participants, 20 completed consent forms indicating their willingness to participate in the study, demonstrating an 80% response rate. All 20 of the participants who returned their completed consent forms were interviewed. The participants were all very excited to participate in this study because, as one participant stated, "It is important to support the study of African American entrepreneurship." The interview process took approximately two weeks, due in part to the researcher's flexibility in availability to meet the scheduling needs of the participants.

The researcher received information from three of the five participants who chose not to participate in the study. One replied that he could not participate because his company had just lost a significant contract and he did not feel that his focus would be on providing valuable information for the study. The other two initially agreed to participate, but then withdrew due to time constraints. The final two prospective participants did not respond in the time frame specified in the recruitment letter.

Participants' Background Data

Questions 1–3 of the Interview Guide were designed to collect demographic data. Each of the participants was assigned a number (i.e., P1, P2, etc.) to protect their identity and adhere to the confidentiality terms stated in the informed consent and recruitment letters.

All of the individuals selected for the study were African Americans over the age of 18. Seven women (35%) and 13 men (65%) participated in the study. The demographic data of the participants are provided in Table 2.

Participants ranged in age from 38 to 65. Table 3 provides these ranges and the participation in each grouping.

Participants were asked how long they had been in their respective entrepreneurial businesses. Number of years in business was grouped into ranges. Table 4 demonstrates these ranges and the participation in each grouping. The largest grouping in the study was entrepreneurs in business for 16–25 years (40%). Three of the participants indicated they had been in business for over 25 years.

Questions 4–6 of the Interview Guide were designed to collect background data of the businesses. To understand how the entrepreneurs entered into their respective businesses, participants were asked to discuss the career paths that led them to their current roles. All but one of the entrepreneurs had held traditional jobs in the past. Their careers varied greatly, from menial jobs to military service. One of the entrepreneurs reported never holding a traditional job, indicating that he had worked in several entrepreneurial ventures during his lifetime.

Table 2. *Demographic Data of Sample Population*

Participant	Gender	Age	Years in business
P1	F	38	3
P2	F	60	24
P3	F	46	10
P4	M	65	42
P5	M	55	40
P6	M	39	3
P7	M	48	14
P8	M	41	14
P9	M	48	25
P10	F	38	4
P11	M	57	18
P12	M	53	37
P13	F	39	15
P14	F	48	6
P15	M	45	17
P16	M	40	17
P17	M	53	17
P18	M	65	17
P19	F	46	3
P20	M	56	18

Table 3. *Participants' Age Range*

Age range	<i>N</i>	%
18–30	0	0
31–45	7	35
46–60	11	55
60+	2	10

Table 4. *Participants' Years in Business*

Years in business	<i>N</i>	%
3–8	5	25
9–15	4	20
16–25	8	40
25+	3	15

He stated,

Well, I started as an entrepreneur when I was about 15 years old. So, I didn't have any jobs prior to that. When I was younger, living down South, I was an entrepreneur there, too. I used to pick apples, blueberries, blackberries, cotton, and they paid you by the bag, contract labor. So, I never had a job.

The study participants operated various entrepreneurial businesses, from insurance to information management services. All but three of the businesses (85%) were service-industry businesses. The three product-industry businesses (15%) were a

newspaper company, a gravestone sales company, and an insurance agency. Table 5 depicts the occupational categories of the study's participants.

Table 5. *Participants' Occupational Categories*

Occupational category	<i>N</i>
Consulting	2
Food service	2
Insurance	1
Newspaper	1
Real estate	1
Information management	2
Security	1
Gravestone sales	1
Childcare	1
Health/fitness	2
Beauty salon/spa	2
Publishing/media	2
Construction	1
Retail	1

Participants were asked to identify whether they were in the early, mid, or approaching retirement stage of their careers. Figure 4 illustrates the identified career stages of the participants.

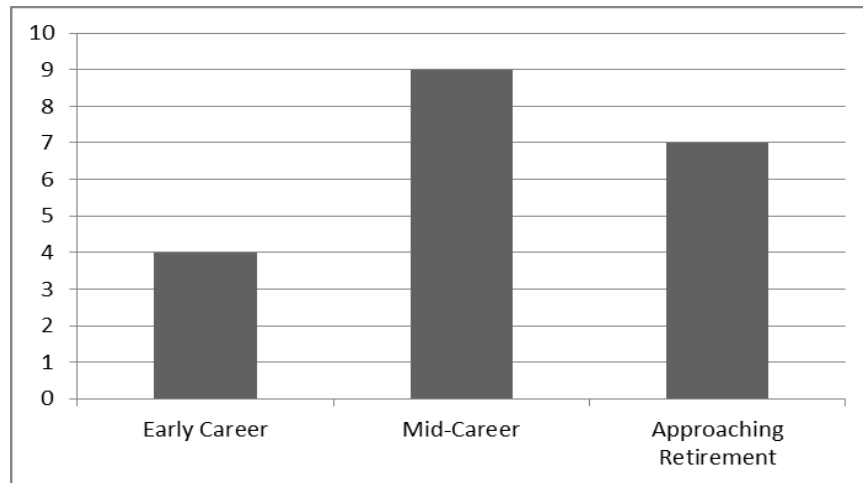


Figure 4. Participants' career stages.

Four participants responded that they were in the early stage of their careers (20%), nine (45%) were in midcareer, and seven (35%) were approaching retirement.

One participant stated,

I guess I'm at the age of retirement, but I have no plans for retirement because I love what I do and it's just something I never really think about because, as long as it's exciting, as long as I enjoy doing it, I'll be doing it. If I'm 90, I might be doing it.

Participants were asked about the number of full-time and part-time employees their businesses employed. As indicated in Figure 5, the majority of the entrepreneurial business owners were split between no full-time employees (6) and 1–5 full-time employees (6). The rest of the participants were also split between 6–10 full-time

employees (4) and more than 10 employees (4). Within the category of more than 10 full-time employees, the number ranged from 15 to 270.

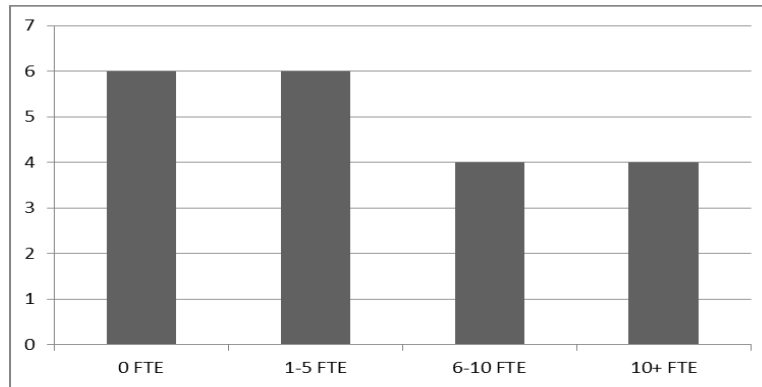


Figure 5. Number of full-time employees.

Figure 6 illustrates the numbers of part-time employees the entrepreneurial business owners employed. The largest number of participants reported employing no part-time employees (9), while eight participants reported employing 1–5 part-time employees. One of the entrepreneurial business owners reported employing 6–10 part-time employees, and two employed more than 10 part-time employees. Within the category of more than 10 part-time employees, the number ranged from 12 to 20.

Research Methodology Applied to Data Analysis

According to Creswell (2003), phenomenological research “identifies the ‘essence’ of human experiences concerning a phenomenon, as described by participants of a study” (p. 15). The phenomenological approach was appropriate for this study based on the researcher’s desire to collect data directly from the participants’ points of view and

to clarify the concepts of motivation and success strategies as they relate to African American entrepreneurial business owners (Bryman, 2004; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003).

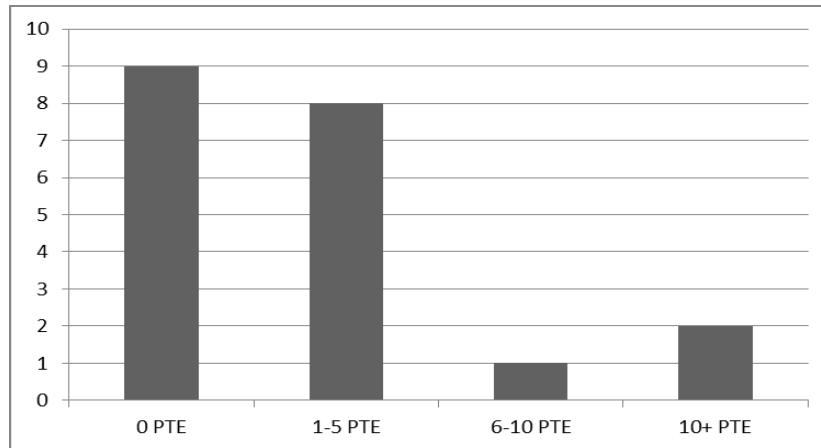


Figure 6. Number of part-time employees.

The literature has documented cases of the challenges that confront researchers completing qualitative research. According to Bryman (2004), the qualitative researcher provides what may be considered trivial details, but those details are of importance to how the researcher experienced the study. In the description and reporting of data, this researcher was conscientious about not becoming “too embroiled in descriptive detail” (Bryman, 2004, p. 281). The researcher’s goal was to provide enough background data to illustrate the experiences of the group studied, without inhibiting the data analysis by providing excessive descriptions of the participants’ responses.

The researcher collected data from the participants using a semistructured interview guide consisting of 17 questions. All interviews were conducted via telephone and were digitally recorded. The recordings were transcribed verbatim by the researcher.

The researcher followed the steps of Giorgi and Giorgi (as cited in Camic et al., 2003) by progressively refining the original qualitative data to interpret their meaning. The approach consisted of the following steps: read all of the raw data to grasp a basic sense of the whole, establish the meaning of the experience with respect to the phenomenon studied, and transform data into specific meaning units (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003).

Once the transcripts were completed, the researcher reviewed each transcribed interview to gather an overall basic sense of the interviews. On the initial review, no conclusions were drawn, and no data reduction was performed. On the second review of the interviews, the researcher began to establish meaning for the data (Giorgi & Giorgi, as cited in Camic et al., 2003). The researcher made notations on the transcripts as meanings developed through the review of the interviews. During this process, the researcher also categorized similar topics together and began the initial organization of themes. These themes were reviewed again for common themes throughout the data.

The researcher further reduced the data into specific meaning units by “rendering implicit factors explicit” (Giorgi & Giorgi, as cited in Camic et al., 2003, p. 254). Therefore, the researcher transformed some of the expressions used by the participants into “expressions that highlight psychological meanings” (Giorgi & Giorgi, as cited in Camic et al., 2003, p. 254) of the lived experiences of the participants. For example, the researcher noted several of the underlying themes in the data, such as the entrepreneurial spirit of the participants, as well as the participants’ views of the impact of race, referred to both implicitly and explicitly in the interviews.

The categories were annotated on an Excel spreadsheet and color coded to highlight relationships between the data. The last step in data analysis was a final review

of the coded data to ensure that the essence of the interviews was captured as understood by the researcher.

The researcher followed the protocols described in Chapter 3 of this study. The only departure from this was when a participant requested clarification of a question. For example, Question 10 asked the participants to describe their level of success.

Participants struggled with understanding what the researcher meant by this. Many asked whether to describe their level of success on a scale of 1–10 or to describe their level of success in terms of minimum, midlevel, or high-level success. As a result of the confusion regarding this question, the researcher added the description of minimum, midlevel, and high-level to the question to gather consistent results from each of the participants.

Some participants went into great depth in describing experiences they thought would be meaningful to the study. However, some of these descriptions did not answer the question asked. In those instances, the researcher restated the question to get an answer to the question posed, but made note of the themes described by the participants.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The results of this study are presented by each of the research questions. The first research question addressed the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio.

Research Question 1

What are the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?

To answer Research Question 1, participants were asked questions related to their personal motivations to become and continue as entrepreneurs. Their responses to the questions are presented as follows.

What motivated participants to become entrepreneurs? Participants were asked to describe their motivations behind becoming entrepreneurs. Table 6 illustrates the entrepreneurial motivations of the participants. The majority (55%) stated that their primary entrepreneurial motivation was their desire for independence, autonomy, or control over their careers. One participant indicated, “I wasn’t going to work for anybody. I already had my mind made up.”

Table 6. *Entrepreneurial Motivation*

Entrepreneurial motivation	<i>N</i>	%
Independence	11	55
Altruism	3	15
Money	3	15
Family expectations	2	10
Need	1	5

Another participant stated,

I like the independence. I like the independence of self-will. I’m a self-starter by nature. I’m one of these people who don’t give up until there’s nothing to work for, so being self-employed was basically from my desire to be independent at what I did.

One participant summarized his desire to be independent by saying, “Since I was in the third grade, I just knew I wasn’t going to work for anybody. I just didn’t want to work for anyone else. I knew I could do it on my own.” Another participant said, “I was tired of making money for other people. No matter how hard I worked and how much I achieved, my income stayed the same. I wanted to be in control of my own destiny.”

Most of the participants had experience working in a traditional work environment and had dealt with many of the challenges of doing so. Some described their motivation from the context of those experiences. For example, one participant indicated that her primary motivation was money; however, as she continued, it became clear that she was also motivated from her desire to be in control of her ability to be promoted and to not have to face the bureaucracy and politics of the traditional work environment. She stated,

In my mind, if I sell a product, and I am good at what I do, there’s no glass ceiling . . . I am never going to reach the top. I can always work harder and make more because it is based on my productivity. It doesn’t get political, I don’t have to worry about getting a promotion, I don’t have to please anybody. All I have to do is make sure I’m producing, and as long as I’m producing, I’m going to make money. I am in control of my growth.

Altruism (15%) was also a strong motivator in the responses of many of the participants, although not their primary motivator. According to Batson (2011), *altruism* is defined as the “desire to benefit someone else for his or her sake rather than one’s own” (p. 3). The researcher categorized *altruism* as the desire to make a positive impact on the lives of others, wanting to make a difference in the community, and the desire, as one participant said, to “hire our own people.” Another participant stated,

When I was a youth, I wanted the money, the grandiose. But, as I got older and became an entrepreneur, it became providing a service to a community in need.

All of our life, we've been programmed to be consumers, and I never subscribed to that. What I thrive on is the respect I get in the community from those that I have helped. It's a great feeling that the kids in the community respect me, they look up to me. It's a very rewarding feeling when the elders in my community respect me and I can hear them saying good things about me and what I'm trying to do. It's those simple things: the respect I get in the community.

Another participant stated,

I like to, I actually get satisfaction from making an impact on other people's lives, and I like developing others personally and professionally, and I felt that with my experience, I have the ability and skill set to really make a difference in other people's lives.

Another participant added, "I wanted to create an atmosphere in my community that would be more professional and more upscale. And an atmosphere that would help young people in my community to develop their careers."

Other motivations for entrepreneurs were money (15%), family expectations (10%), and filling a need (5%). One participant stated,

I wanted to become a multimillionaire. When I read the books of Rockefeller, Howard Hughes, Dale Carnegie, I knew I could do it just like they could do it. But only one thing I didn't understand was they were White. I didn't realize that . . . I just saw that they were men, and they could do it. As a little boy, I just saw that if they could do it, I could do it, too: become a multimillionaire.

While a question specific to the impact of race was not included in this study, the theme was apparent throughout the interviews. One participant said,

It's just so many things that you see that are present that, um, you know, a weaker person would get discouraged, and I can see why there are not a lot of Black entrepreneurs today: because it is so easy to get discouraged by the elements that are out there and that stand in your way.

Another participant, who cited family expectations, stated, "I come from a family of entrepreneurs, and as a result of that, it was an inherent part of my family to become an entrepreneur."

The next question asked whether the participant's businesses is incorporated and, if so, why. This explained participants' business structures and reasons for the structure they selected. This question addressed the motivations surrounding the experience of entrepreneurial business owners by giving insight as to how they make decisions regarding their organizational structure and the motivation behind doing so. According to the responses, five (25%) of the participants were not incorporated at all, 12 (60%) were structured as limited liability companies (LLCs), and three (15%) were structured as either S corporations or C corporations.

The majority of participants who were incorporated responded that their companies were structured under the LLC structure. This structure limits the personal liability of the business owner. According to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS, n.d.), S corporations are corporations that pass income, losses, and deductions through to the shareholders. Like an LLC, the S corporation allows the owner to utilize the tax benefits of reporting the income and losses of the business as the shareholders' personal taxable assets. The main difference between the LLC and S corporation is that with the LLC, the owner has the authority to assign ownership as he or she wishes. With the S corporation, the owner can receive only a percentage of profit based on the percentage of shares owned (IRS, n.d.). The C corporation is a traditional corporation. This type of corporation allows for continuing existence of the business once the owner leaves or dies. One of the disadvantages to the C corporation is double taxation.

Business owners were asked their reasons for incorporating their businesses. The reasons cited were as follows:

- **Protecting assets (73%).** This means that personal assets are separate from business assets. Therefore, should one's business suffer a great loss, one's personal assets would be protected from the business's liabilities.
- **Requirements for licensure or franchise (13%).** One of the participants noted that he had to incorporate because incorporation was a component of the licensing his industry requires. The other participant disclosed that the franchise required incorporation.
- **Tax benefits (7%).** Participants described that with incorporation, they have more flexibility in how they are taxed. One participant said, "I thought it would be more straightforward from a tax standpoint and offer me more flexibility as I grew . . . as I start to scale the business."
- **Planning for business into perpetuity (7%).** The participant citing this as the reason for incorporating stated, "We're an entity in itself. We are an ongoing entity. This business has been planned into perpetuity, so it is much bigger than me."

Figure 7 illustrates participants' motivations for incorporating.

What was the motivation to continue after failure? To answer Research Question 1, participants were asked about their experiences with failure. Many of the participants struggled with the term *failure* in the interview question. While all participants acknowledged that some things did not quite go their way, many were resistant to acknowledge failure within their individual businesses and would entertain the question only from the standpoint of roadblocks or distractions.

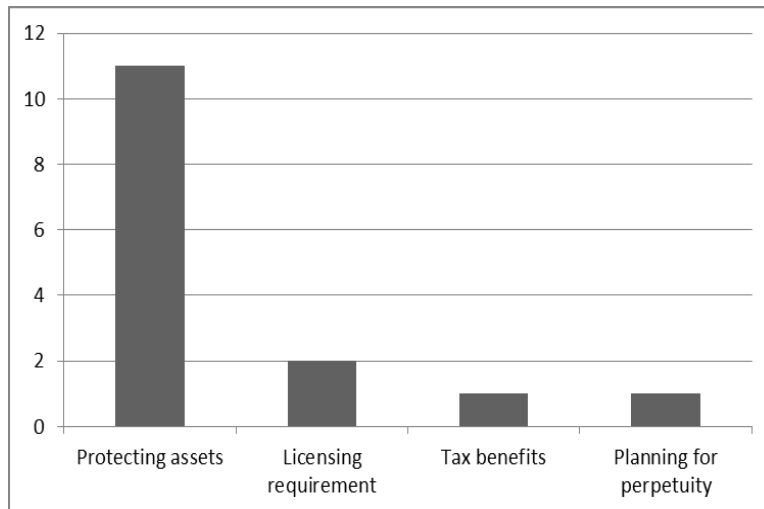


Figure 7. Motivations for business incorporation.

One participant said, “Failure is not in my karma.” According to Kumar (2012), *karma* is the “mantra of the mind” (p. 3). Further, *karma*, as defined by Merriam-Webster (n.d.), is a force generated by a person’s actions that determine the nature of the person’s existence. The participant stated that if he accepted that failure was a part of his life, it would enter into his consciousness. Because he does not allow the thought of failure to enter into his consciousness, he believes it keeps failure from destroying his business.

The researcher did not address the concept of failure; however, the follow-up question of motivation to continue after failure was of importance to the study. The overwhelming majority stated that they did not want to fail, failure was not an option, or discontinuing in their businesses never comes to mind (95%). As one participant said, “The desire to succeed motivates me to keep going. Failure is not a thought, nor an option.”

One of the participants described his motivation to continue as follows:

I've experienced failures every week. I have a cash flow problem right now. I'm worried about it because I'm trying to make sure that I can pay this month's bills. I mean, I experience it all the time. I'm sort of like what Nixon said when he was leaving the White House: "I'm not a quitter." You know, when I leave, it will be because there's nothing left. I'm just, I always find a way to get up, some kind of way. And that's just the way it is. I will not fail.

Another participant stated,

It's just determination; failure is not an option. You know, you have a lot of choices to make when you get up in the morning, and failure is not one of them. And so for me, being hit with many obstacles and many challenges, I just kind of realized that I have to press on and keep moving forward, so, for me, um, I think failure is not an option, and I just constantly strive to do better than I did the day before.

Another participant said, "I don't like to get beat. I don't like to lose. I don't like to feel like I gave in too soon." One participant described her sense of responsibility to others as the motivation to continue after failure:

Well, just knowing that I had a lot of younger stylists that were looking up to me, and that were depending on me to help them with their next steps, and then, a lot of people in the community kind of encouraged me to continue because they really appreciate the type of environment that we have.

Figure 8 illustrates the results.

Research Question 1 summary. In summary, the motivation of African American entrepreneurial business owners was largely due to their desire to be independent (55%). Other motivations included altruism (15%), money (15%), family expectations (10%), and filling a need (5%). Most of the entrepreneurs (75%) acknowledged some type of organizational incorporation (LLC, S corporation, or C corporation).

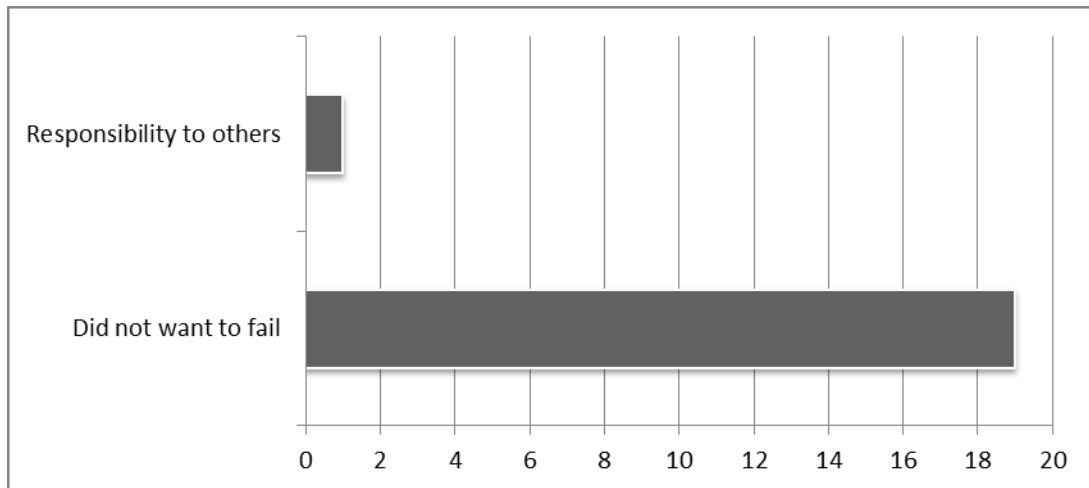


Figure 8. Motivation to continue after failure.

The motivations the participants cited for incorporating their businesses are protection of personal assets (73%), requirements (13%), tax benefits (7%), and planning for ongoing business (7%).

When asked about failure, all had some type of failure, or, as they referred to it, “setback” in their businesses. Their motivation to continue after failure was primarily due to their unwillingness to fail (95%). The distant second response was responsibility to others (5%).

Research Question 2

What are the success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?

To answer Research Question 2, participants were asked a series of questions that pertained to how they defined success, how they described their level of success, and how they achieved their level of success. Participants’ responses to the questions are presented as follows.

How do entrepreneurs define *success*? Participants were asked how they defined success. A summary of the results is provided in Figure 9.

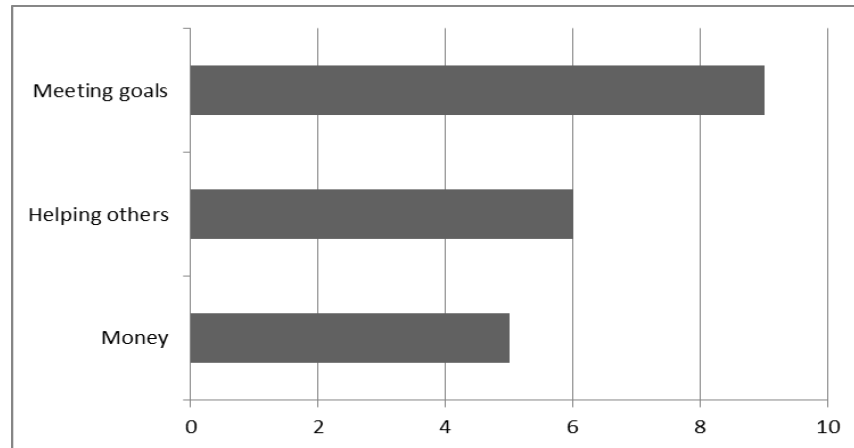


Figure 9. Definition of success.

Nine participants (45%) defined *success* as meeting goals. According to one participant, “I would define *success* as accomplishing the goal, meeting the objective.”

Another participant stated,

Success is when you meet your goal. However, success is a temporary thing, because goals should change constantly. Success happens to all of us in our lives at some point. People oftentimes confuse *success* with *successful*, which is two totally different words, although they start off with the same root. Because success means that you had an opportunity and a goal and you made it, that doesn't mean you maintained it. So, success is something to me that is temporary, you know? A temporary thing.

Another participant stated,

Success is hard to describe because the goal is always moving. I can't ever say I have met my success, because I keep changing the goal. It's like, I understand that I must be successful to have been in business so long, but I don't relax on that. I am always trying to do more to see even greater achievement. It's the nature of what I do.

Six participants (30%) described *success* as helping others. One participant stated,

Being able to reach back and grab someone and give them an opportunity. Giving many individuals the opportunity to be gainfully employed, where in many cases they may not have had an opportunity otherwise. And then being able to be a role model for different individuals to be able to challenge themselves to do something that will make them better off today than they were yesterday.

Another participant said, “Success to me is being able to affect and infect the lives of others with the work that I do. I want to make a positive impact on the lives of my clients, my community, and my people.”

Five participants (25%) defined *success* in terms of money. According to one participant, “I define success as financially secure, um, financially secure . . . totally financially secure.” Another participant stated,

I heard this from one woman, and I am going to use this as a mantra for my business: One measure of success is how much money I make while I’m asleep. Right now, I don’t make any money while I’m asleep because everything I earn is because I specifically make the money myself. So, I am positioning myself for my business to make money for me even when I am asleep, when I’m on vacation, or wherever.

When asked whether these definitions of *success* had changed over time, nine of the participants (45%) indicated that their definitions had changed, while 11 (55%) indicated that their definitions had remained constant. Of those whose definitions of success had changed, most (78%) indicated that their idea of success used to be defined by monetary gain. One participant said,

At a time, I thought success was driving in fancy cars and living in a nice home, and a title behind my name. I realized that this is not success. Success is the simple things, like the recognition of the community and helping others achieve their goals.

Another participant stated,

I used to think that success was defined by how much money you had or recognition you got. Now, success is defined by the fact that you even wanted to interview me, because you could have interviewed anybody else. That says I must have done something right.

Entrepreneurs' self-reported levels of success. Many of the participants had a difficult time evaluating their level of success. While all agreed that they had met the standard criteria of success, the majority said their success is measured by reaching their goals, and these goals are constantly moving. The researcher clarified the question by giving entrepreneurs a choice of three levels of success: minimal, midlevel, and high level. This clarification provided continuity in the rankings and participants' responses.

Two of the entrepreneurs (10%) categorized their level of success as high. One high-level participant stated,

I have helped thousands of people over the years to change their lives, and every time I think that I'm down or things aren't going right for me, one of those people will come up to me and say something that lets me know I've got to keep doing this. I've touched some people over the years, and money can't make you feel that good.

The remaining participants were split between minimal success (45%) and midlevel success (45%). One participant described midlevel success:

It's all based on those goals and objectives that you've established from the outset. Just like anything else, you have a goal, and you periodically measure how you, some benchmarks to measure how you are performing in relation to that ultimate goal. So, given my length of time in business, I can say I have a reasonable level of success.

Another participant described his level of success as midlevel:

I think I still have a long way to go, so I think I am at the midpoint in my success. There are so many things that I'd still like to accomplish. I want to make sure that this business is one that my children can inherit once I am ready to retire. I want to set it up to make that happen. That's something that we don't always think

about in our businesses: whether our children will be able to inherit and run the business. I am setting this up to be a family business.

Another participant described her level of success as minimal:

I am going to say I have not reached my goal, but, you know, personality traits for me has a lot to do with it, because I always move the goal. So, I won't ever get to my goal. My goal used to be: I cannot wait to have 1,000 clients. Well, I'm really close to that now, so now, I want 1,500. Success is not met for me until I have saturated my region.

One participant said, "Being as I am in the early stages of my entrepreneurial venture, I would say that my level of success is still very much elementary; it's still very new, but I am in the process of succeeding."

Attributes to entrepreneurial success. The top two attributes to success for African American entrepreneurial business owners are the use and availability of mentors (30%) and faith in God (30%). One participant describing the significance of mentors said,

Mentors, oh my gosh, you gotta have, I mean, you don't have to, but it definitely helps to have someone who has paved the way and has done what you're doing, who is willing to give you guidance to help minimize the potential pitfalls that you may incur. They can steer you away from the things that may not be in your best interest and guide you toward those things that can benefit you. So, I have three mentors right now mentoring me, each in different capacities, but they are business people, all African American, two men and one woman, and they are giving me instruction on positioning myself as a subject matter expert.

Another participant added,

Mentors are so important. I sit at the feet of great people, and I try to learn all that I can. It's important to take what they say and fit it to my business. I know what I do, but I never really understood how to run a business. I have mentors that understand business and give me ideas on how to make my business work. They are valuable to me and my success.

According to another participant, citing her faith in God as an attribute to her success, "Faith is my biggest thing. I believe that the main reason I am in business is

because of the God-given purpose that I have.” Another participant stated, “It’s spiritual for me. I think that God has ordered my steps from the beginning.” The remaining responses are family (15%), work ethic (10%), planning (5%), ability to identify opportunities (5%), and optimism (5%).

One participant stated that he attributes his success to his “strong work ethic, knowledge and information, desire, discipline.” Another participant attributed his success to his father: “He started my entrepreneurial journey. He also taught me to work for myself. He taught me how to be a business man.” Another participant, who attributed his success to the ability to identify opportunities, said, “It was easy for me to find and spot out where the demands were, and take advantage of the demands.” Table 7 demonstrates participants’ attributes to entrepreneurial success.

Table 7. *Attributes to Entrepreneurial Success*

Attribute	N	%
Faith in God	6	30
Mentors/professional relationships	6	30
Family	3	15
Work ethic	2	10
Planning	1	5
Ability to identify opportunities	1	5
Optimism	1	5

Strategies and planning for entrepreneurial success. Participants were asked whether they used specific strategies in preparation for being successful. Sixteen participants (80%) indicated that they used specific strategies for success. One participant said,

One of the things that I did was I tried to assemble a good team around me. I always tried to be surrounded by people that knew more than me, and I was fairly successful at times in doing so. I just think being around positive people, I've had many mentors over the years, that have influenced my life and influenced the way that I take challenges on. I think being around positive people and mentors that supported me.

Another participant stated,

I can't really call it strategy. I can't sit and say, "Well, I always do this" or "I always research that." No, I don't really sit up and say, "Yeah, I do this" or I go through a logarithm. A lot of this is just a blessing. I guess that's what I'm boiling it down to.

When asked whether they had developed written strategic plans, 12 participants (60%) had and eight (40%) had not. One participant stated that plans are "all paper. It sounds good, but the reality of it is much different. Entrepreneurship is about the gut instinct."

Challenges and the chance to start over. Participants were asked about the challenges that remained for them in their entrepreneurial businesses and what they would do differently if they had the opportunity to start over.

On the question of the challenges that remain, 55% indicated their ability to build capacity. Participants described capacity building as their ability to keep up with all of the demands of their businesses while trying to grow their companies. According to one participant,

We need to continue to put processes in place, and make sure we communicate those processes with our people. We need to make sure our human assets utilize those processes, and are part of putting in place and building those processes. That's what we are focused on now.

Another participant stated,

I guess my whole challenge is finding out where I fit in in the new normal. I recognize certain things, there's going to be a whole lot of winners and losers, but they are separating classes now into winners and losers. So, quite frankly, my whole goal now, my biggest challenge is figuring out how can I fit into the new normal and still make it. How can I continue to strive and make it in this new environment, and how do I set up my business to do that? The economy is so tight, so I can't really keep the people on staff that I need, so fitting all of this into the new normal is a challenge.

Some of them indicated that their infrastructures were not as strong as they desired, which concerned them in regard to their being able to sustain their businesses. Issues such as weak back-office management, lack of continuity of processes, and lack of recordkeeping processes surfaced in the discussions. Access to capital (25%), time management (10%), staffing (5%), and dealing with stereotypes (5%) were additional challenges for the African American entrepreneurial business owners. As one participant stated regarding access to capital,

The challenges are unique every year, every quarter, every week. Right now, we are really in a more competitive environment than we were 20+ years ago. With all of the competition, we have to be aware of pay structures that make it really challenging for us to compete. For us, we need to figure out how to maintain our income in a market that is shrinking. We are hit from both sides. The downturn in the economy has also impacted our financial position.

When asked what they would do differently if they were starting over, 35% of the participants indicated that they would do nothing differently. One participant stated, "If I was starting over right now, what would I do differently? Nothing. I think, I mean, I like the way I did it, and there's nothing I would do differently." Another participant stated,

I think that I wouldn't do anything differently from the fact that you learn from your mistakes. You know, I think that if I hadn't experienced some of the things that I had and made some of the mistakes that I've made, I wouldn't have learned.

Another participant added,

I wouldn't do anything differently because I'm a strong advocate and believer in entrepreneurship, not so much because I've spent my life as an entrepreneur, but because I believe that that's the salvation of Black people. One of the problems that we have in this country is we don't own nothing. 'Cause everybody and their mama comes over here, and when you come down Salem and all those streets, all you see is Arabs, Asians, standing there taking our money. We don't get anything in return. Something like \$900 billion we spend annually, and probably less than a half of a half of half of a half of a percent comes back to us. We're great, we're gladly consumers, and unfortunately, we don't leave much for our kids to look forward to for their future.

Other responses included better planning (25%), better staffing (15%), better location (10%), acquiring more money (5%), starting earlier in life (5%), and getting more education/training (5%). One participant stated,

I would come out of the box with a hired professional, instead of making a whole bunch of mistakes and then I have to pay a bunch of money to straighten it back up, so my back office would be running real tight. I would be more selective in hiring. Those are probably the two things that have caused me the most pain and what I would do differently.

Another participant said,

I would leave Dayton. I'm just being honest. I'd leave Dayton, because back in 1971, I was looking at Atlanta, and Atlanta was just beginning to buzz then. Maynard Jackson was running for mayor, and people were just beginning to look at Atlanta; it was still just an old southern city. Had I gone to Atlanta, I think my life would be different.

Research Question 2 summary. In this study, the success strategies of entrepreneurs were addressed through several questions. The participants responded that success was defined in three ways: meeting goals, helping others, and the acquisition of

money. The participants established their levels of success primarily as minimal or midlevel. Only two participants ranked their level of success as high.

Mentors and faith in God contributed greatly to the success of African American entrepreneurs (60%). Further, most entrepreneurs (80%) reported using specific strategies in preparation for success, and 60% reported having written strategic plans.

The entrepreneurs discussed the challenges that remain for their businesses, with capacity building being most cited most often (55%). Other challenges included access to capital, time management, staffing, and stereotypes. Interestingly, 35% of the entrepreneurs reported that if they were to start over, they would do nothing differently.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the data from this qualitative study were presented to reveal the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. The semistructured interviews were conducted to understand the lived experiences of African American entrepreneurs, to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?
2. What are the success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?

Chapter 4 presented the findings from the interviews. The demographic data collected from the 20 participants indicated that they met the requirements to participate in this research study.

Chapter 5 provides a discussion, implications, and recommendations for future research on the subject of motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Chapter 5 is the concluding chapter of this study. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the outcomes, implications, and recommendations for future research on the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurs in Dayton, Ohio. The chapter consists of a summary of the results of the study, discussion of those results, discussion of the conclusions, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

Summary of the Results

Research Problem

The research problem for this study was the lack of empirical research that exists concerning motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners. These factors are important because, although African Americans enter into business at rates higher than their White counterparts, their success rates are disproportionately lower (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006).

Significance of the Study

The incidence of successful African American entrepreneurial business owners is low in relation to their overall population (Fairlie, 2004). Further, much of the existing

research regarding African American entrepreneurship focused on the challenges those entrepreneurs face (Kollinger & Minniti, 2006) rather than elements of success. This study viewed the African American entrepreneurial business owners from the perspective of their motivations and strategies for success. Understanding the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners is important to the organizations that provide resources to support these entrepreneurs. Further, the outcomes of the study will be beneficial to the local economy by guiding programs to encourage business participation and growth.

The information gleaned from this study provides a framework for a practical model for African American entrepreneurial business owners and those wishing to become entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. The intent for the use of this model is to help those business owners understand the motivation and success strategies that have helped other African American entrepreneurial business owners achieve success in this geographic area and provide a road map to follow to enhance their chances of entrepreneurial sustainability.

Literature Reviewed

This phenomenological study built upon the research conducted by Hunt-Oxendine (2009) that examined the motivation and success strategies of American Indian entrepreneurs in North Carolina. In addition, this study also built upon the study conducted by Ivey (2007) of the motivation and success strategies of African American business owners in rural Georgia. Both Hunt-Oxendine (2009) and Ivey (2007) identified personal drive/independence as a strong motivator for entrepreneurs. However, the outcomes of Ivey's (2007) study indicated that family influence was the most cited

motivator for African American entrepreneurs, whereas Hunt-Oxendine's (2009) outcomes from American Indian entrepreneurs showed independence/personal drive as the primary motivator, which is consistent with this study.

The researcher also reviewed seminal works in entrepreneurship, motivation, and success. Classic works, such as Cantillon's (1931/2010) and Schumpeter's (1961) for entrepreneurship, Maslow's (1943) and Herzberg's (1966) for motivation, and Fratoe's (1986) and Ahjarah's (1993) for success, were reviewed.

New research that has been published since the completion of this study's proposal views entrepreneurial motivation through the lens of the new economy. This new economy has contributed to an increase in entrepreneurship; however, the motivation of those entering into entrepreneurship has changed. According to Figueroa-Armijos (2012), the motivation of individuals to become entrepreneurs has shifted from opportunity entrepreneurship to necessity entrepreneurship. The difference between these two types of entrepreneurship is that opportunity entrepreneurship builds on the opportunities in the market observed by the individual. Necessity entrepreneurship comes from a need to generate income as a result of low wages or joblessness (Figueroa-Armijos, 2012). This changing entrepreneurial paradigm is addressed in the section on recommendations for future research.

Methodology

The phenomenological approach used for this study was appropriate based on the researcher's desire to understand the lived experiences of the participants. Twenty-five participants were asked to participate in the study; 20 participated, which represents an 80% response rate. The criteria for participation in the study were African American

entrepreneurial business owners in business for at least 3 years, with greater than \$25,000 in reportable taxable income. The researcher utilized a 17-question semistructured interview, using open-ended questions that gave participants the opportunity to articulate their experiences as entrepreneurs. Data were collected from telephone interviews. Each participant was given the opportunity to review a draft of his or her transcript, to ensure accuracy, which adds to the validity of the study. The researcher followed Giorgi and Giorgi's (as cited in Camic et al., 2003) three steps of qualitative data interpretation to arrive at the findings identified in the study.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?
2. What are the success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?

Findings

This exploratory study sought to answer the two research questions driving the project. The findings from this research indicated that the top three motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners are independence, altruism, and money. The two motivations to continue are the unwillingness to fail and responsibility to others. The top three attributes to success are mentors, faith in God, and family. The top three success strategies are access to mentors, creating value for customers, and determination.

Discussion of the Results

Research Question 1

What are the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?

According to Maslow (1943), the priorities of an individual's needs are based on a prioritized hierarchy of needs, with the most basic needs having greater priority. In Maslow's (1943) theory, until those basic needs are met, the others are nonexistent. The needs, arranged in prioritized order are psychological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization. One of the limitations of Maslow's (1943) theory is that the driving forces (motivations) of individuals are only described in terms of achieving unmet needs.

More contemporary views of motivation, such as McClelland's (1961) theory, introduced a theory based not on a hierarchy but on clearly defined needs of the individual. The "big three" (Kehr, 2004, p. 480) approach introduced achievement, power, and affiliation as the motivation factors of individuals. These needs are not related or in hierarchical order; an individual may achieve one, two, or all three of McClelland's big three.

Though theories of motivation have existed for many years, it is not until recently that the motivation of entrepreneurs has been of interest to scholars. This interest has illuminated the difficulty in understanding what drives the entrepreneur to assume the personal, social, and financial risks that are associated with starting a business. Compounding the complexity of research regarding the motivation of entrepreneurs overall, there exists even less scholarly consensus on the motivation of the African American entrepreneur.

Some of the literature suggests that there is a difference in the experience of African American entrepreneurs and Whites—in their approach to entrepreneurship (Boyd, 2000a), their motivations to pursue entrepreneurship (Fairchild, 2008), and their theories of success (Ahiarah, 1993). Also, the theory of Kollinger and Minniti (2006) demonstrates that African Americans often are more motivated to begin entrepreneurial ventures than their White counterparts. However, although they have a higher propensity to pursue entrepreneurial businesses, African Americans are less likely to build sustainable businesses. However, these theories of the challenges of African American businesses do not provide strong conclusions that explain the widening gap between African American and White successful entrepreneurs.

Participants were asked six questions relating to motivation. They were asked (a) to describe what motivated them to become entrepreneurs; (b) if they were incorporated and why; (c) if they experienced any failures along the way, and what motivated them to continue after failure; (d) what challenges remain for them, and how they plan to address them; (e) what they would do differently if they were starting over; and (f) whether they wanted to share anything else regarding their motivation to become entrepreneurs.

Conclusion 1: What motivated you to become an entrepreneur? The participants were motivated by (a) independence, (b) altruism, (c) money, (d) family expectations, and (e) filling a need.

Conclusion 2: Did you experience any failures along the way? If so, what motivated you to continue? The participants were motivated to continue after failure by (a) an unwillingness to fail and (b) responsibility to others.

Meaning of the results. Participants provided five factors related to their motivation to become entrepreneurs. The top three factors (85%) were independence, altruism, and money.

Independence. The motivating factor most frequently cited by the participants (55%) was independence. This finding confirmed the outcomes of previous studies on minority entrepreneurs, such as the study conducted by Hunt-Oxendine (2009). Additionally, this study's outcomes supported the theory of Sullivan et al. (2007) regarding entrepreneurial motivation, in which independence was a significant motivation for entrepreneurial activity.

This finding describes evidence of a high need for achievement for entrepreneurs—supporting McClelland's (1961) theory that posits that individuals whose motivations were based on achievement are more predisposed to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

Altruism. The second highest motivating factor described by the participants (15%) was altruism. Maslow's (1943) theory described the highest level on the hierarchy of needs as self-actualization. Individuals at this level are motivated to reach their full potential.

The entrepreneurs interviewed for this study had reached a level of success, as defined by the criteria set forth by the researcher. All of the participants had reached a level in their businesses where their basic needs were met. This would explain the self-actualization or altruism that three of the participants cited as a motivating factor.

The participants felt strongly that they were responsible for providing opportunities for their people that otherwise would not be available. They were interested

in being role models in their communities and providing services and products that previously had not been readily available in the African American community. One of the participants shared that he took pride in the fact that he employed 16 people, with an average family size of four. He stated that he was directly responsible for the livelihoods of 84 individuals, and that was not a responsibility he took lightly.

Money. Three participants (15%) cited money as their motivation to become entrepreneurs. This outcome supports McClelland's (1961) theory of power. Those indicating money as their motivation cited other motivators as well, but understood the importance of money to the survival of their businesses, as well as affording them the power to do the things they set out to do. Abbey (2002) also found in his study on culture and entrepreneurs that American entrepreneurs were more motivated by independence and money than other cultural groups studied.

Participants articulated two factors that motivated them to continue after failure: unwillingness to fail and responsibility to others.

Unwillingness to fail. Ninety-five percent of the participants cited unwillingness to fail as their motivation to continue after failure. Many of the entrepreneurs interviewed did not entertain the concept of failure; further, all of them stated that they did not consider failure an option. These participants described their dedication to their business, their community, and the individuals they serve or employ.

Responsibility to others. The single participant (5%) who provided this answer described the sense of responsibility she felt to the community and the people who worked for her. She communicated that her assumed responsibility kept her going, even in the face of failure. Maslow (1943) described one of the motivators of individuals as

esteem needs. This need for achievement and to be accepted by others was exhibited in the answer the participant provided. Her focus for continuing after failure was the impact it would have on others if she did not continue, and the perception of the community in which she operates her business.

The results illustrate the motivations of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. All of the participants described their desire to be independent, although independence was not the primary motivator of 45% of the participants. Further, after experiencing a failure, the unwillingness to fail in business was important to the entrepreneurs interviewed.

From the data collected, the researcher identified themes that were consistent throughout most of the interviews. The entrepreneurial spirit, which, according to Dyck and Ovaska (2011), is the inclination to start a business, was a part of the essence of each participant. All of those interviewed expressed that the desire to be an entrepreneur was a part of their DNA. From their perspectives, they never doubted that they would pursue entrepreneurship, primarily because of their aspirations to be in control of their work, priorities, and destiny. Only one of the participants stated that she approached entrepreneurship because of need, which was to generate income after being laid off. However, even though she did not become an entrepreneur until being laid off, she stated that entrepreneurship had always been a desire for her, and one that would have been pursued at some point in her lifetime.

The impact of race was another strong theme in this study. Although the study included no questions regarding the impact of race on their businesses, motivations, or strategies for success, participants described the challenges they faced. Their perceptions

related to the lack of access to capital, absence of opportunities, and discrimination in business dealings—both within and outside of their racial group. One participant described his challenges dealing with other African Americans in his business, stating that his services are often viewed more critically by Blacks than Whites. Another participant stated that he kept his identity as the business owner secret, for fear of losing opportunities in his business dealings.

Conclusions. The outcomes of this research question are supported by McClelland's theory. Most of the participants had successful traditional careers before they decided to pursue entrepreneurship. Their high levels of achievement led them to succeed in their entrepreneurial ventures. In addition, the majority of participants noted a need to “do more” with their lives. Working for others and awaiting employers' decisions for growth were not desirable options for this group. According to van Vuuren and Botha (2010), those who are motivated by achievement often succeed in entrepreneurial ventures. This is consistent with the participants interviewed for this study, because they met the criteria to be identified as successful entrepreneurs.

In addition, Kajanova (2008) discussed the intrinsic motivation of achievement as the motivation to do good work. Many of the participants, either primarily or secondarily, mentioned their desire to do good work and to be comfortable knowing that their efforts benefitted others in some way.

This study's outcomes are also supported by Benzing et al. (2009). Their mixed-method research project studied the motivation and success of entrepreneurs. According to the findings of the study, entrepreneurs rated their reputation as the most important motivation for their success. As with the findings of this study, most of the participants

(95%) indicated that their motivation for continuing after failure was their refusal to fail. This outcome can be further analyzed to draw conclusions that their unwillingness to fail was related to their reputation, as they did not want to be viewed as failures in their communities. Further, the theme derived from many of the responses described participants' desire to be well-respected in their community, which also aligns with the concept of the importance of reputation to entrepreneurs.

Research Question 2

What are the success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio?

The term *success* is very difficult to quantify, primarily because so many interpretations of its meaning exist. Some view success in traditional or tangible measures—cars, clothing, and so forth—while others view success by intangible measures—life balance, fulfillment, and so forth (Gorgievski et al., 2011; Simpson et al., 2004). According to Benzing et al. (2009), “the variables that contribute to the success of small businesses are not unanimously agreed upon by researchers” (p. 62). Therefore, the concept of entrepreneurial success is difficult to quantify.

Dobbins and Pettman (1997) found that entrepreneurs often equate their levels of success on the ability to achieve their goals. As such, goal-setting theory is an important component to understanding the success of African American entrepreneurs. According to Locke and Latham (2005), individuals establishing higher individual goals (motivation) yield greater results (success).

The researcher asked eight questions relating to success. Participants were asked (a) to describe their definition of success and whether the definition had changed over

time; (b) how they described their level of success as an entrepreneur; (c) the attributes to their success; (d) whether they used specific strategies for success and what strategies they used; (e) if they formulated a written strategic plan and the components of the plan; (f) whether they experienced any failures and the lessons they learned that led to success; (g) what they would do differently if they were starting over; and (h) if they would like to share anything else regarding their success strategies.

Conclusion 1: To what do you attribute your success as an African American entrepreneur? The participants attributed their success to (a) mentors, (b) faith in God, (c) family, (d) work ethic, (e) planning, (f) identifying opportunities, and (g) optimism.

Conclusion 2: What strategies did you use for success? The participants used the following strategies for success: (a) use of mentors, (b) creating value for customers, (c) determination, (d) planning, and (e) flexibility.

Meaning of the results. Participants provided seven attributes that contributed to their success. The top three (75%) were mentors, faith in God, and family.

Mentors. Boyd (2000a) asserted that one of the causes of African American entrepreneurial failure is the lack of mentors. Six participants (30%) articulated the importance of access to mentors in their businesses. One participant summed up her dependence on mentors by saying that “having a mentor is critical.” She mentioned that mentors provide experience and expertise crucial to African American entrepreneurial success. By having mentors, entrepreneurs can sidestep some of the pitfalls they face, saving them time and money, which may mean the difference between failure and success.

Faith in God. Six participants (30%) attributed their success to their strong spiritual values. Many participants stated that they felt they were doing the work God would have them do. As a result, they believed that God granted them business success. This outcome confirmed the findings of both Hunt-Oxendine (2009) and Ivey (2007) regarding the importance of faith to minority entrepreneurs and their success.

Family. Fratoe's (1986) framework of business success includes four general categories of success for entrepreneurs: psychological, situational, product/service, and process/decisional. According to the psychological category, the business takes on the characteristics of the owner. As such, the owners placing a strong value on their families also identified that this value brings them success. Therefore, the business and its success is a reflection of the entrepreneur.

Eighty percent of participants indicated that they utilized specific strategies for the success of their businesses. Those indicating that they used specific success strategies provided five strategies. The top three (88%) were the use of mentors, creating value for customers, and determination.

Mentors. This response further confirmed the importance of mentors to African American entrepreneurs, as argued by Boyd (2000a). The data indicated that mentors are important in both the strategies and attributes of successful African American entrepreneurial business owners.

Creating value for customers. Creating value was identified as an essential component of success strategies for entrepreneurs. The success strategy of creating value for customers was not confirmed in the literature review of this study; however, it closely relates to the values of Sam Walton in valuing customers (Walton & Huey, 1992).

Determination. Twelve percent of those who utilized success strategies cited determination as their strategy for success. They noted that, although they were often faced with challenges in their businesses, they were determined to be successful. The researcher further analyzed the context and themes of this response and drew a relationship between determination and persistence. This finding confirmed the outcomes of Hunt-Oxendine's (2009) study in which the participants indicated that persistence contributed to their success.

Conclusions. The results illustrate the success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. The most frequent responses for success strategies and attributes to success were split among participants—30% cited mentors, 30% cited spiritual values. The next most frequent response was faith in God. While faith has a strong presence in the African American community, the researcher did not expect the outcome to be so strong in this category, because the value of faith in God was not as strong in a comparable study (Ivey, 2007) with the same racial group.

Initially, all of the participants struggled to acknowledge that their businesses were successful; however, once able to quantify their definitions of success, they were more apt to acknowledge their success. As demonstrated in the literature, the evaluation of success is often difficult for the entrepreneur to describe (E. Walker & Brown, 2004).

The outlier responses were planning, identifying opportunities, and optimism, with one response for each category. One participant strongly suggested that planning was key to his success as an entrepreneur. He described the years of planning that preceded the launch of his business. However, another participant's response—directly refuting the other participant's response—was that success often comes from “going with

your gut” and not spending time planning business moves. He described the ability to identify an opportunity, trust one’s gut, and take risks as attributes to his success.

Discussion of the Conclusions

According to Boyd (2000a), one of the causes of African American entrepreneurial failure is the lack of mentors. In support of this theory, 38% of those successful entrepreneurs interviewed for this study indicated the importance of mentors as a strategy for success, and 30% of participants directly attributed their success to mentors.

As with Hunt-Oxendine’s (2009) study, many of the participants of this study attributed their success to their faith in God. Utilization of mentors (30%) and strong spiritual values (30%) were tied as the two most frequently cited attributes to success. The researcher found that faith in God was an underlying theme throughout the interview process, although not indicated as the primary answer to interview questions. Most of the participants stated that they experienced a “call” to pursue their business ventures. One participant said he believed that by answering this call, “I have been given the gift of success.”

Further, 45% the participants of this study described their definitions of success as meeting their goals. This relates to the work of Dobbins and Pettman (1997), who posited that entrepreneurs often evaluate their levels of success by the achievement of their goals, not the traditional measures of success such as money or power. Many of the participants measured their levels of success by the number of people they were able to help, their

ability to be role models in the community, or by giving opportunities to those who may otherwise not have such opportunities.

Entrepreneurial Motivation and Success Model

Through the identification of motivations to begin and continue in their businesses, and the strategies and attributes to success utilized by the participants of this study, an entrepreneurial motivation and success model was developed using the most frequent answers in each category.

Figure 10 demonstrates the primary motivation and success strategies described by African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. These components are identified as traits necessary for those pursuing successful entrepreneurial opportunities.

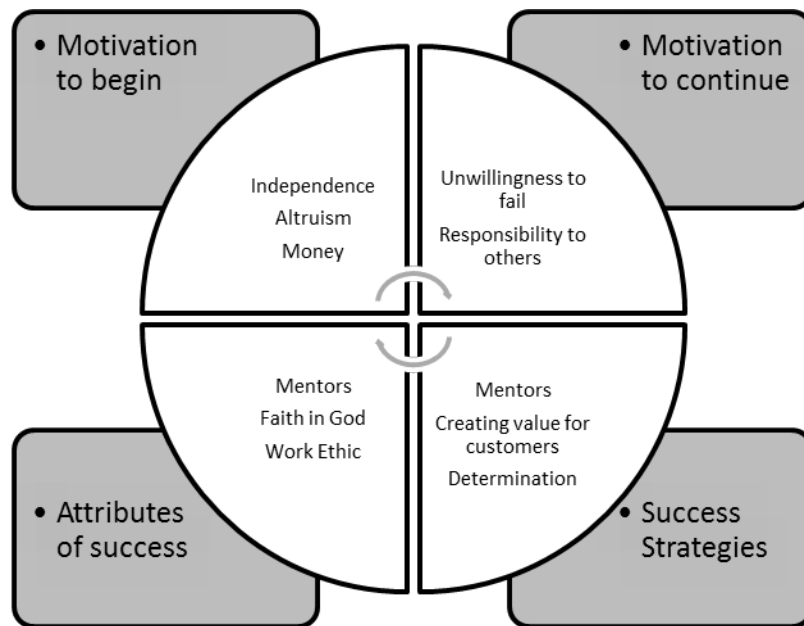


Figure 10. Stone model of motivation and success for African American entrepreneurs.

Limitations

The researcher identified a few limitations of the study.

1. The research was an exploratory, qualitative study that was not intended to produce generalizable results.
2. The interviews were conducted with African American entrepreneurial business owners located in Dayton, Ohio.
3. The questions used in the Interview Guide were not prepared by a specialist; the Interview Guide was amended from a previous study on ethnic minority and was reviewed by experts in the field by means of a field test. The field test yielded a change that was made to one of the research questions. The limitation is mitigated by the fact that the interview questions were submitted to Capella's IRB for approval prior to the study; the questions were accepted with no revisions.
4. The participants were interviewed by telephone; therefore, the researcher may have missed cues from body language that could have added depth to the data. Further, according to Creswell (2003), a limitation of interviews is the possibility of unequal perception and participants' inability to articulate.
5. Researcher bias may have affected the validity and reliability of the study, because the researcher is the same race as the participants selected. In addition, the researcher also resides in the same city as the participants of the study. However, Riley (2006) noted that similarities between researchers and their participants are considered beneficial to the study, thereby reducing threats of validity and reliability.

Recommendations for Future Research

This exploratory study is important because of the absence of empirical research on the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners. The study provides a foundation to understanding what motivates African Americans to become entrepreneurs and what motivates them to continue after experiencing failures. Further, the research provides understanding of the success strategies utilized by African American entrepreneurs, and their attributes to success. The findings of this phenomenological study provide a foundation for future research on African American entrepreneurial business owners. As a result, the following recommendations for future research are provided.

1. Additional research should be done to investigate the role of spirituality in the success of business owners. This additional research should review the theories that exist to confirm the findings.
2. The new economy shifts the entrepreneurial paradigm from opportunity entrepreneurship to necessity entrepreneurship. Research should be conducted to study the impact of the new economy on African American entrepreneurs.
3. Further empirical research should be conducted to understand the goal-setting process of entrepreneurs. Most of the entrepreneurs defined *success* as meeting goals. Therefore, it would be beneficial to understand how the goal-setting process impacts the success of entrepreneurs.
4. Comparative research should be conducted on the motivation and success strategies of African American and White entrepreneurs to determine the

differences in the prioritized values placed on those motivations and success identified in the study.

5. This study should be conducted with other minority groups and in different geographic locations to determine whether ethnicity or location is a factor of the findings of this study.
6. The findings from this study supported Boyd's (2000a) finding that mentors are critical to the success of African American entrepreneurs. Further research should be conducted to determine the value those mentors bring, and how their value relates to the success of the businesses.

Conclusion

This qualitative, exploratory study was designed to understand the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurs in Dayton, Ohio. A paucity of empirical research exists regarding this racial group in terms of entrepreneurial motivation and success. Through this study, the researcher was able to identify that African American motivation and success strategies are very similar to those identified in the general literature. However, the emphasis placed and the priorities of those values appear to differ.

African Americans who reside in Dayton, Ohio, and are current business owners, nascent business owners, or failed business owners should read this study. This would provide the reader the opportunity to understand the motivations and strategies that benefitted successful entrepreneurs, which may help to minimize the success gap of African American entrepreneurs in Dayton, Ohio.

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APPENDIX. INTERVIEW GUIDE

Script: Hello, I am Tyria Stone. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study of the motivation and success strategies of African American entrepreneurial business owners in Dayton, Ohio. I would like to remind you that your privacy will be protected, and all information shared will be documented anonymously. Your name and your business name will not be published in the report, and your answers will not be shared with anyone in your business network. Your information will be coded with a corresponding number, which will be the only identification of you in the study. This interview will be digitally recorded, and transcribed. You will only be identified on the recordings by the number assigned by me. All recordings will be kept on my computer and will be password protected. Any notes or USB files will be kept in a locked drawer, and destroyed after 7 years. If, at any time, you would like to withdraw from this study, you may do so with no consequence, and the data collected will not be used in the study.

If there are no questions, I will begin recording the interview.

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your age?
3. How long have you been in this entrepreneurial business? How many full-time individuals does your company employ? How many part-time individuals does your company employ?
4. What is the occupational category of your business?

5. What is the stage of your career: early career, midcareer, or approaching retirement?
6. What was the career path that led you to the current position?
7. What motivated you to become an entrepreneur?
8. Are you incorporated? Why?
9. How do you define success? Has your definition of success changed over time? If so, how?
10. How would you describe your level of success as an entrepreneur? When did you first feel you had succeeded?
11. To what do you attribute your success as an African American entrepreneur?
12. Did you use specific strategies in preparation for being a successful entrepreneur? If so, what strategies did you use?
13. Did you formulate a strategic plan for success? If so, what were the elements in your strategic plan?
14. Did you experience any failures along the way? If so, what motivated you to continue? What lessons did you learn from the failure that contributed to your success?
15. What challenges remain for you and how do you plan to address them?
16. If you were starting over right now, what would you do differently?
17. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your motivations or success strategies?