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The Educational Encounter-Storytelling of Successful African American and Latino Immigrant
Male High School Graduates

By
Melvin Bustamante,
Moody S. Fuller
and
Thomas Welter

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
Of Lynn University of Boca Raton in Partial Fulfillment
Of the
Requirement for the Degree
Of
Doctor of Education
Boca Raton, Florida
2017

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to study the academic and professional success of African American and Latino Immigrant Males and how to understand how this success can be useful in helping young African American and Latino Immigrant young men attain similar levels of success. This study aimed at learning of any challenges or barriers these young men faced throughout their high school journey. Through individual interviews, the researchers tried to learn about commonalities among the participants in regards to challenges, motivators, and any other factors that helped them achieve the academic success throughout their high school career and that led to them becoming professional members of society. By triangulating the data collected through the individual interviews with survey results, the researchers were able to identify common themes among the participants. The first phase of the study consisted of advertising the study throughout various locations in the Palm Beach County to select a group of participants that met the characteristics needed to participate in this research. The participants had to be African American or Latino Immigrant Males, high school graduation, and currently employed. After the selection of the participants, individual interviews were recorded and transcribed. The second phase of this study, consisted of identifying common themes from the individual interviews to develop a Likert Scale Survey (LSS). The participants were emailed the LSS and given ample time to respond. The LSS results, provided rankings on a scale from 1 to 10 on the themes from least influential (1) to most influential (10). The LSS results, identified role models and positive home environment as two of the most influential aspects throughout their high school journey that played a role in their success. However, other themes not as influential throughout high school for these participants was extracurricular activities, positive school environment, low socioeconomic status, access to high level courses, and self (intrinsic)-motivation.

Acknowledgements

Melvin Bustamante, M.Ed.

I want to express my deepest and sincere gratitude to my wife, Carrie, for her unconditional support all these years as I have pursued my passion, education. Carrie, you have encouraged me to work my hardest and to always finish what I started. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Suzanne King, for her endless support throughout this journey. Dr. King, you have been an amazing colleague and boss that has always guided me and advised me to continue improving in all aspects of my professional career. Also, I want to thank Dr. Geoff McKee for opening the doors to me as a brand new teacher. Dr. McKee, you have always inspired and assured me that education was my calling and that I had the potential to positively influence the lives of children. I would like thank committee members Dr. Jennifer Lesh and Dr. Kelly Burlinson for your guidance and unlimited revisions of this dissertation. Your support has been greatly valued and appreciated. Lastly, I would like to thank all participants in this study and for their valuable input that made this study possible.

Moody Fuller, M.Ed.

First and foremost I would like to thank God for giving me the strength and ability to persevere through this journey. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my wife Laura for her unconditional love, and support throughout this journey. Laura you have encouraged me to be, and do better than I thought possible of myself, and words cannot express my gratitude. To my entire family, you have endured too many evenings and weekends when I could not be with you. I promise to make up for lost time. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. King for you continuous support of our study, for your patience, motivation, and immense knowledge. Your guidance helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis. Your high expectations and high standards encouraged me to continue working to complete the finished product. I could not have imagined having a better advisor and mentor, for not only in our E.Dd

study but also in the field of education. I would also like to thank Dr. Geoff McKee for providing me the opportunity to enter the field of education as a new teacher. Dr. McKee, you inspired, and challenged me to be an amazing educator, mentor and role model our students. I would like thank each of the committee members Dr. Jennifer Lesh and Dr. Kelly Burlinson for your direction expertise and patience with us throughout this process. Your immense support, wisdom, and professionalism has been greatly valued and will forever be treasured. Many other individuals contributed to and supported this research and I would like to acknowledge their contributions. Lastly, I would like to thank the 10 men who shared their lives with us, you are examples of possibility, perseverance and passion, and I am honored to know you. I thank you for your time and input, without that this study would be impossible.

Thomas Welter, M.Ed.

First, I would like to thank my loving wife Shelly for supporting me throughout this journey. Your support and encouragement have been paramount to my success and the sacrifices you have made throughout this process portray an unconditional love that continues to amaze me. Next I would like to thank my family and closest friends for your support, guidance, and providing me with the tools to be successful. I would also like to thank Dr. Susanne King for persuading me to pursue this endeavor and advising me through this process. Your guidance and feedback have empowered me beyond my imagination. I would like to thank my cohort and my professors for challenging me, providing me with constructive criticism and assisting me through this process. Lastly, I would like to thank our participants for providing valuable perspectives enabling us to develop solutions to help our students succeed.

Dedication

Melvin Bustamante, M.Ed.

To my mom and dad, who moved to the United States and sacrificed so much to make sure that I had the opportunities not afforded to them. Also, to my sister Norma, who gave up so much and looked after me after my parents passed away while in high school. To Carrie, Cheyanne, and Thomas for their support, encouragement, and unconditional love from day one.

Moody Fuller, M.Ed.

To my mother and father Viola and Izelle Fuller who adopted me when I was removed from my birth parents care and afforded me the opportunity to follow my dreams and be successful. To my sister Roxann who has sheltered me from family issues so I would remain focused throughout this process. Finally to Laura for her unconditional love and support throughout my entire academic journey.

Thomas Welter, M.Ed.

To my parents, Bill and Michele Welter, who have always supported me through every endeavour and encouraged me through every pitfall. To my wife Shelly, who has been by my side and supported me with unconditional love and understanding.

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Chapter I

Educational Challenges for African American and Latino Immigrant Students

Introduction

African American and Latino Immigrant male students end up dropping out of school or graduating from high school without the type of academic skills that would allow them to obtain a better paying job support their families or to pay the higher education or technical preparation they might need to get the desired professional jobs (Hernandez, Si Les, & Rochin, 2001). As Black and Latino males prepare to pursue a higher education or to go into the labor workforce, they need to acquire those skills required in a globalized society. Educational institutions have the task of ensuring that these students are prepared to achieve success.

Background

The purpose of public schooling in America is a debatable concept with different roles in the eyes of every United States citizen. The Center for Education Policy (2007) claims the purpose of public schools is to produce skilled thinkers for the economy whereas others may argue the purpose is to ensure future generations have an understanding of democratic values, American culture, and the skills necessary to be productive members of society. The Center for Education Policy (2007) states, “American public schools have been expected to fulfill certain public missions that go beyond the purely academic purposes of schools” (pg. 2). According to the Center for Education Policy the purpose of public schools is to,

1. To provide universal access to free education;
2. To guarantee equal opportunities for all children;
3. To unify a diverse population;
4. To prepare people for citizenship in a democratic society;

5. To prepare people to become economically self-sufficient; and
6. To improve social conditions.

Although there are many different ideas regarding the purpose of public education, an idea schools share is that public education's responsibility is to prepare people to be productive members of society (Peterson, 2009).

Significance of Study

Current data identifies a plethora of issues hindering the academic success of African American and Latino immigrant males (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). A multitude of solutions has been researched and presented such as providing a support system to students to help them with their school work, parental engagement activities, and a more welcoming environment for students and parents that might prove to be beneficial to these students' overall academic and professional success (William Perez, 2009). Even with all the research and proposed solutions, the academic achievement gap between African American, Latino immigrant, and White males is becoming wider (William Perez, 2009). The path for African American and Latino Immigrant males from high school through college/vocational training to career success is one that is extremely treacherous. There are endless barriers that lead to failure including but not limited to the following (Evans-Brown, 2015):

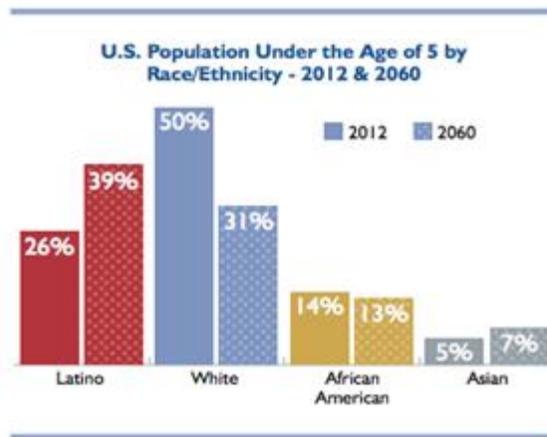
1. the lack of high school and college completion;
2. high prison rate;
3. high unemployment rates;
4. as well as many other motives that contribute to the abandonment of their aspirations to become productive members of society.

Past research provides educators, policymakers, and other minority males insight into how and

why African American and Latino immigrant men earn educational and career success or why and how they fail to do so (Evans-Brown, 2015). The academic and professional success of African-American and Latino immigrant males is crucial in determining certain commonalities whether that played a factor in them becoming productive members of their societies (Evans-Brown, 2015). The Educational experiences of these African American and Latino Immigrant males may give some insight on factors that drive them to rise above their challenges and to become productive members of their communities (Evans-Brown, 2015).

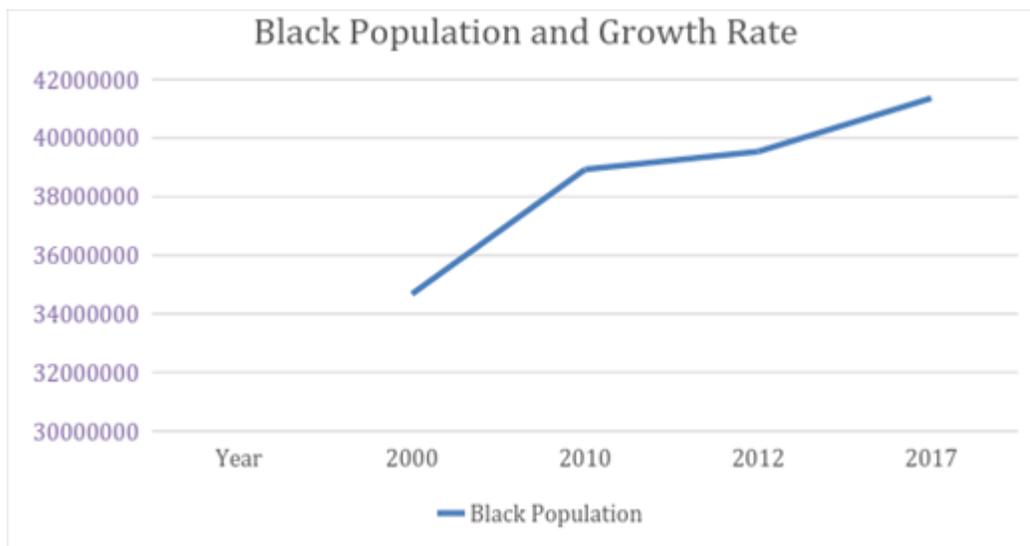
The significance of this study can also be attributed to the prediction of a U.S. population growth of 56 million in the first 20 years of the Millennium and most importantly, 46 million will be from ethnic minority groups, led in numbers by African American and Hispanic, excluding Asians (McGlynn, 2011). The U.S. is progressively becoming a nation with an ethnic minority, majority population (McGlynn, 2001). If the U.S. is to compete in the global economy, the high school degree attainment rates must improve considerably for ethnic minorities, such as African American and Latino immigrant males in all sectors of the economy (Austin, 2011).

Table 1 below shows by 2060 there will be an increase of young people from minority groups that will begin entering our educational system. Therefore, it is imperative that to start to take notice of ways that education can be promoted for these groups to attain success.



(Census 2012)

Table 2 displays the Black population growth rate has steadily increased in the last twenty years.



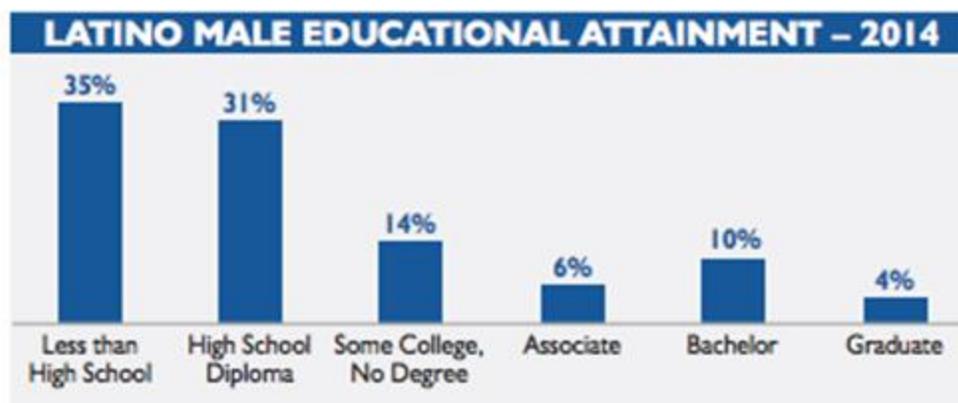
(Census, 2000)

By giving voice to successful African American and Latino immigrant males, educational policy makers and practitioners will be privy to information that can help improve the educational success factor of this minority population. The findings of this study may support strategies to increase the academic performance of African-American and Latino immigrant male students. Incarceration and college retention rates point to a dismal plight for many African American males (Rusin, 2015). Although there are many strategies in place to halt the course of

African American males from academic hazards, in most instances, the spiral of African American males' education continues to plunge exponentially (Rusin, 2015).

In the same manner, Latino males are not receiving the educational opportunities nor the professional guidance needed to achieve academic and vocational success (Fergus & Noguera, 2014). Educational institutions and policymakers are responsible for ensuring that more equitable practices are put in place to help support the Latino immigrant male population. For instance, the adoption of policies that would allow undocumented Latino male students to enroll in higher education institutions would prove to be more beneficial in the long-term, rather than preventing these students from acquiring the necessary skills to obtain high paying or professional jobs (Excelencia in Education, 2014). In 2013-14, only about 22% of Latino males 25 years and over had earned an associate degree or higher in comparison to African Americans (31%), and Whites (46%), excluding Asians, which raises the issue of equity among higher educational institutions (Excelencia in Education, 2014).

Table 3 below explains male educational attainment in 2014. The number of Latino males with a high school diploma (31%) is still lower than the percentage of Latino males without a high school diploma (35%). In the same manner, the proportion of Latino males with some college but not a degree (14%) is higher than that of an Associate's (6%) or a Bachelor's (10%) degree.



(Excelencia in Education, 2014)

Even more alarming are the educational gaps that exist in secondary schools including Latino male dropout rates, lack of access to advanced placement (AP) courses, lack of parental involvement, and the lack of access to extracurricular opportunities to acquire skills to go on to higher educational institutions (Excelencia in Education, 2014). For instance, data shows that although Latinos represented 17% of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) test-takers in 2013 college bound seniors, they scored the lowest in all areas when compared to their counterparts (Galdeano and Taylor, 2016). High schools must do a better job at preparing Latino students to take these tests as the results are influential in obtaining financial aid and getting accepted to prestigious universities (Galdeano and Taylor, 2016).

Studies that address the actual lived experiences, perceptions, and reactions of African American and Latino immigrant males who have graduated high school, pursued higher education or career and technical training, and are participants in the workforce at a professional level, can be essential to early intervention strategies and curriculum adjustments needed to assist in the academic success of African American and Latino immigrant males.

Rationale

Despite educational policies aimed at providing an equal and fair education to all, "the plight of Latino males tends to mirror that of Black males" (Fergus & Noguera, 2014, p. 3). The success of these two minority groups depends on the educational opportunities society, and schools have to offer to them. African American and Latino immigrant males have been unable to succeed in comparison to other ethnic groups (Fergus & Noguera, 2014). Among some of the barriers, these groups have encountered as they try to achieve economic prosperity is marginalization, few educational opportunities, low parental involvement in school, and a lack of participation in the labor force (Santiago, 2015).

Many Black and Latino youth live in neighborhoods with few educational and economic opportunities (Noguera, 2006). To help these minority groups achieve their desired success, whether it be in attaining a higher educational degree or a vocational skill, educational institutions must be responsible for addressing the fact that Black and Latino educational opportunities are scarce (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).

Black and Latino immigrant males, many of these young people, have managed to rise above their challenges and have attained a level of success that can be useful to help other young struggling individuals to do the same (Noguera, 2006). The resiliency and hard work with which they have been able to achieve success, could be replicated, if not at least understood, as educators, leaders, and policymakers design a plan for these groups to achieve educational, economic, and social success (American Psychological Association, Presidential Task Force on Educational Disparities, 2012).

Problem

African American and Latino immigrant male high school graduation rates are at least 15% lower than their White male counterparts (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Several

factors are responsible for this plight, including lack of support systems including mentoring, access to higher level courses, and familiarity with the educational system (Santiago, 2015). The disparity in the graduation rates is a factor to consider as these students fail to acquire the necessary skills to succeed and compete in a globalized society (Santiago, 2015).

Table 4 below depicts the public high school 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR), by race/ethnicity and selected demographics for the United States, the 50 states, and the District of Columbia: School year 2012–13.



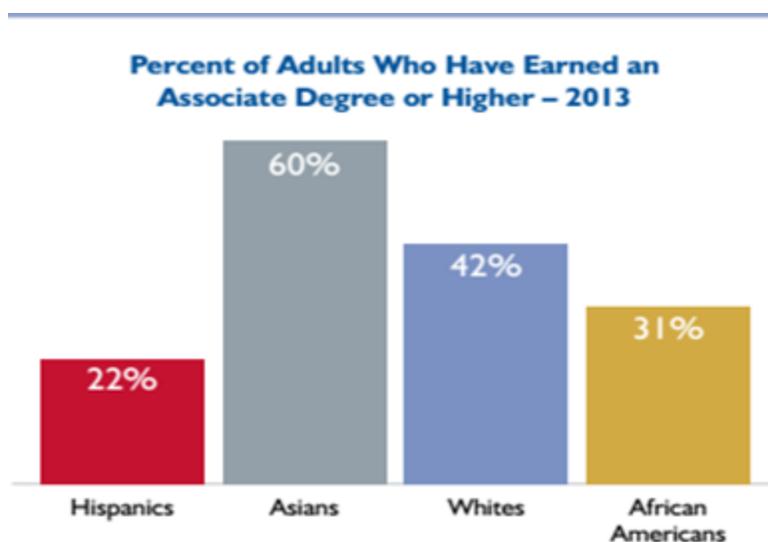
(National Center of Education of Statistics, 2015)

The Obama administration in partnership with educators and families across the nation created and implemented the Every Student Succeeds Act which is focused on adequately preparing all students for success in college and careers (Civic Impulse 2016). With the implementation of this policy, the graduation rate of African-American and Latino immigrant males in public education should be the same as White males (U.S Department of Education, 2011). Pedagogical practices have not been able to close the achievement gap (American Psychological Association, Presidential Task Force on Educational Disparities, 2012). Even more important, higher educational institutions have failed to prepare teachers to teach our

diverse student population (Davila & Aviles de Bradley, 2010). Data from 2013 shows, 6.4 % of African American students and 13% of Latino students dropped out of high school in comparison to 4% of White students, excluding Asians (Santiago, 2015). "The high school graduation gap between African-American and White males has increased from 19 to 21 percentage points" (Santiago, 2015). The low academic performance of African-American boys inevitably leads to high school dropouts, which then leads to a life of poverty (Jerald, 2007). By 2022, the number of Hispanic students in public elementary and secondary schools is projected to grow 33 percent from the 2011 numbers (Santiago, 2015). The number of multi-racial students is expected to increase 44 percent (Santiago, 2015). As the number of students of color increases, the U.S. must address an education system that does not serve the majority of children properly; the gaps in education will prove especially problematic (Santiago, 2015).

In the same manner, the high school graduation gap between Latino and White students in 2010 was 12 points (Santiago, 2015). The lack of educational attainment among Latino students is one of the main factors for which the poverty rates have seen an increase (Borjas, 2011). The low levels of educational attainment among Latino students are reflected at all educational levels. In comparison to 46% of White students that earned an associate degree or higher, only 31% of African-Americans, and 22% of Latinos earned an associate degree or higher among those 25 years old or over (Santiago, 2015).

Table 5 below shows the disparities in the educational achievement among African Americans, Latinos, and White students, excluding Asians.



(Santiago, 2015)

African American and Latino parents, likely do not possess the economic, social and cultural capital that affords them the broad range of resources, knowledge, and skills inherited by multiple generations of middle and upper White class children that are crucial to academic success (Dimaggio, 1982; Kalmijn & Kraaykamp, 1996). Therefore, the responsibility of providing a fair and equitable education to students rests with the schools at all levels (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009).

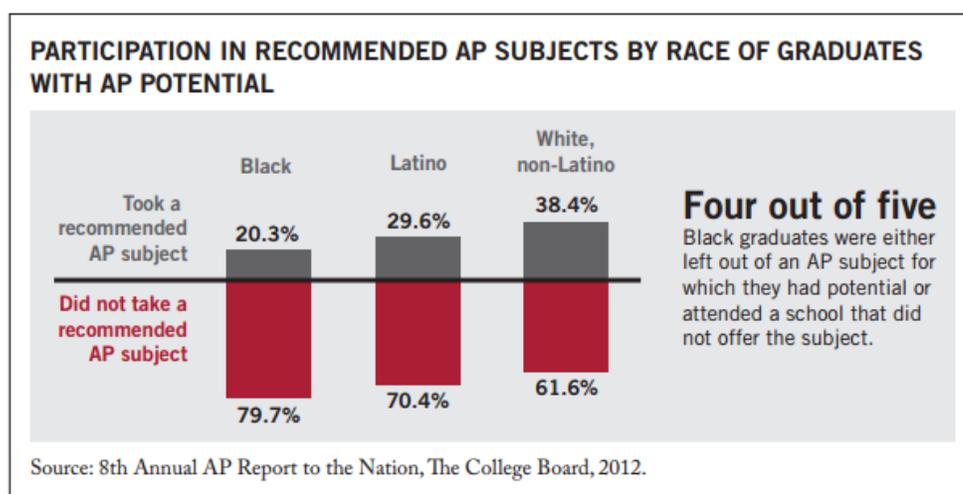
In providing a fair and equitable education, we have a responsibility to afford our African American and Latino males the same opportunities to take accelerated coursework as their white and female counterparts. However, according to Moore III and Flowers (2012), African American males are more likely to be underrepresented in gifted and talented programs and less likely to be selected for accelerated learning opportunities (Moore III & Flowers, 2012). Table 6 below shows the representation of African American males in gifted and talented programs in the twenty largest school districts.

School District	State	African American Male Enrollment in the School District	Percentage of African American Male Enrollment in the School District	African American Male Enrollment in Gifted and Talented Programs	Percentage of African American Gifted and Talented Students (as a percentage of the total enrollment of African American male students in the school district)	Percentage of African American Gifted and Talented Students (as a percentage of the total enrollment of gifted and talented students in the school district)
New York City Public Schools	NY	150,150	15%	5,490	4%	12%
Los Angeles Unified School District	CA	30,395	5%	1,730	6%	3%
Chicago Public Schools	IL	92,210	22%	1,010	1%	16%
Dade County Public Schools	FL	44,380	13%	2,385	5%	7%
Clark County School District	NV	23,080	7%	160	1%	3%
Broward County Public Schools	FL	51,115	20%	785	2%	7%
Houston Independent School District	TX	27,220	13%	1,540	6%	6%
Hillsborough County Public Schools	FL	22,710	12%	275	1%	4%
Fairfax County Public Schools	VA	9,855	6%	1,265	13%	4%
Philadelphia City School District	PA	53,380	32%	1,250	2%	20%
Palm Beach County Public Schools	FL	25,605	15%	285	1%	4%
Orange County Public Schools	FL	24,705	14%	360	1%	4%
Gwinnett County Public Schools	GA	22,375	14%	1,325	6%	6%
Dallas Independent School District	TX	20,500	13%	1,450	7%	8%
Montgomery County Public Schools	MD	16,860	12%	7,110	42%	9%
Wake County Public Schools	NC	18,650	13%	1,025	5%	4%
San Diego Unified School District	CA	8,170	6%	85	1%	2%
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NC	30,665	23%	1,165	4%	8%
Prince George's County Public Schools	MD	46,550	37%	3,535	8%	30%
Duval County Public Schools	FL	28,265	23%	210	1%	6%

(Moore III & Flowers, 2012)

Additionally, Moore III & Flowers (2012) explain how the selection process for gifted and talented students is most commonly based on standardized test scores which they claim does

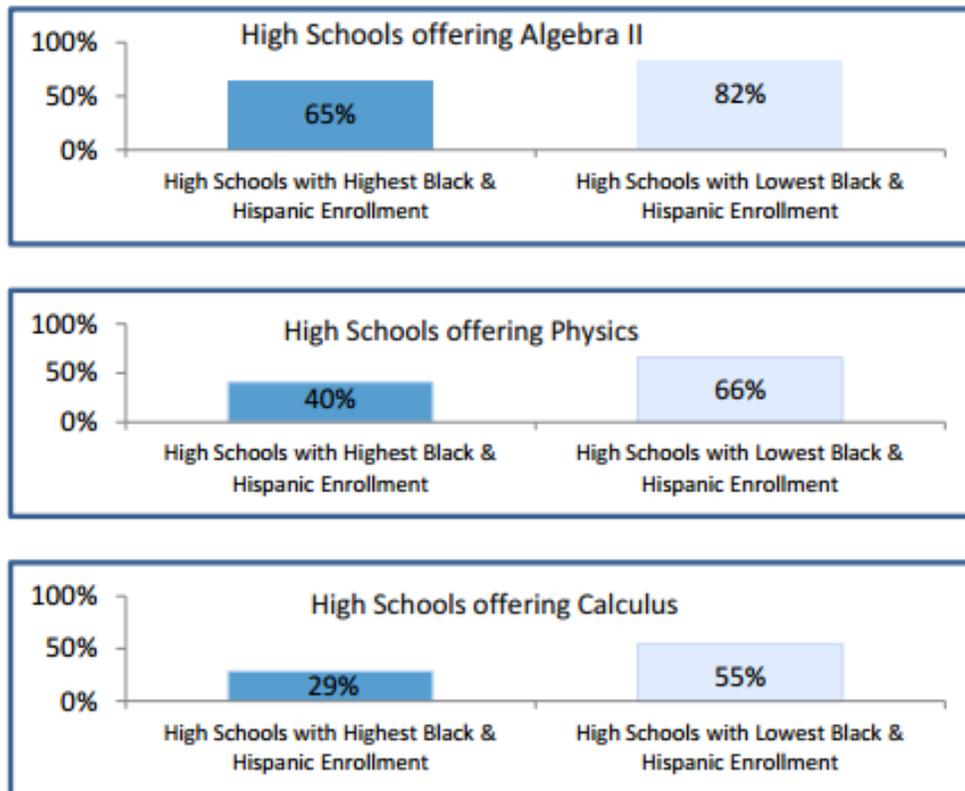
not always support the identification of the unique academic abilities of African American males causing these students' academic potential to go unrecognized (Moore III & Flowers, 2012). Furthermore, Moore III & Flowers (2012) reference a landmark study conducted by M.D. Jenkins (1936) where African American females were twice as likely to be selected for gifted and talented programs as males with corresponding test scores. They attribute this disparity to teacher selection and teachers' negative biases towards African American males (Moore III & Flowers, 2012). The Schott Foundation for Public Education (2012) refers to this phenomenon as "The gifted/talented and advanced placement lockout" as illustrated in table 7 below. This table also indicates Latino opportunity for advanced placement to be considerably lower than their white counterparts.



(as cited by the Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2012)

To further illustrate this point, the Office for Civil Rights (2012) has provided data showing how schools and school districts throughout the nation are limiting college and career readiness to African American and Hispanic students through neglectful rigorous course offerings such as upper level math and science courses. Table 8 below compares schools having the highest enrollment of African American and Hispanic students and their upper level math and science

course offerings, to schools having the lowest enrollment of African American and Hispanic students.



(Civil Rights Data Collection, 2012)

In addition to limiting African American and Latino males from equitable access to accelerated coursework, the Schott Foundation for Public Education (2012) explains how having overreliance on testing and standards has limited teachers from implementing student-centered learning methods making it “practically impossible for educators to give students who do not fit standard student criteria the attention needed to engage in a meaningful learning process” (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2012, pg. 11). The Schott Foundation for Public Education (2012) refers to this lack of student-centered teaching as the “Student-centered learning lockout” where a “cookie cutter” approach does not provide all students a fair and substantive opportunity to learn (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2012).

African American and Latino Immigrant Males Today

According to the U.S. poverty count by race in 2003 many African American and Latino youth live in neighborhoods with few educational and economic opportunities (Noguera, 2006). African American and Hispanic Americans suffer very high rates of poverty with a 24.4 percent rate and 22.5 percent rate compared to a 12.5 percent poverty rate for all races and an eight percent incidence of poverty for Whites (Rodgers, 2015). Educational institutions must address the issues that African American and Latino males currently face if they want to help these minority groups to achieve their desired success whether it be in attaining a higher educational degree or a vocational skill (Rodgers, 2015). Statistics show African American and Latino males complete less education than do their peers (Rodgers, 2015). Nationally, approximately 52% of African American and 59% of Latino boys graduated from high school in 2010, compared to 78% of White, non-Latino male students. While the national average for attaining a bachelor's degree among individuals aged 25 to 29 was 33% in 2012, only 16% of young African American men and 11% of young Latino men held bachelor's degrees (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2013).

"The plight of Latino males tends to mirror that of African American males" (Fergus & Noguera, 2014, p. 3). Despite educational policies aimed at providing an equal and fair education to all, the success of these two minority groups depends on the educational opportunities society and schools should to offer them (Fergus & Noguera, 2014). Statistics show that African American and Latino immigrant males have been unable to succeed in comparison to other ethnic groups (Noguera, 2014). Among some of the barriers, these groups have encountered as they try to achieve economic prosperity are marginalization, few educational opportunities, low parental involvement in school, and a lack of participation in the labor force (Santiago, 2015).

Even with the barriers to African American and Latino immigrant males, many of these young people have managed to rise above their challenges and have attained a level of success that must be analyzed to help other young struggling individuals to do the same. The resiliency and hard work with which they have been able to achieve success, should be replicated if not at least understood, as educators, leaders, and policymakers design a plan for these groups to achieve educational, economic, and social success (American Psychological Association, Presidential Task Force on Educational Disparities, 2012). African American and Latino immigrant boys have not been able to replicate the success of their peers, these minority groups' access to higher education institutions and the labor markets have contributed to their lack of achievement (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009).

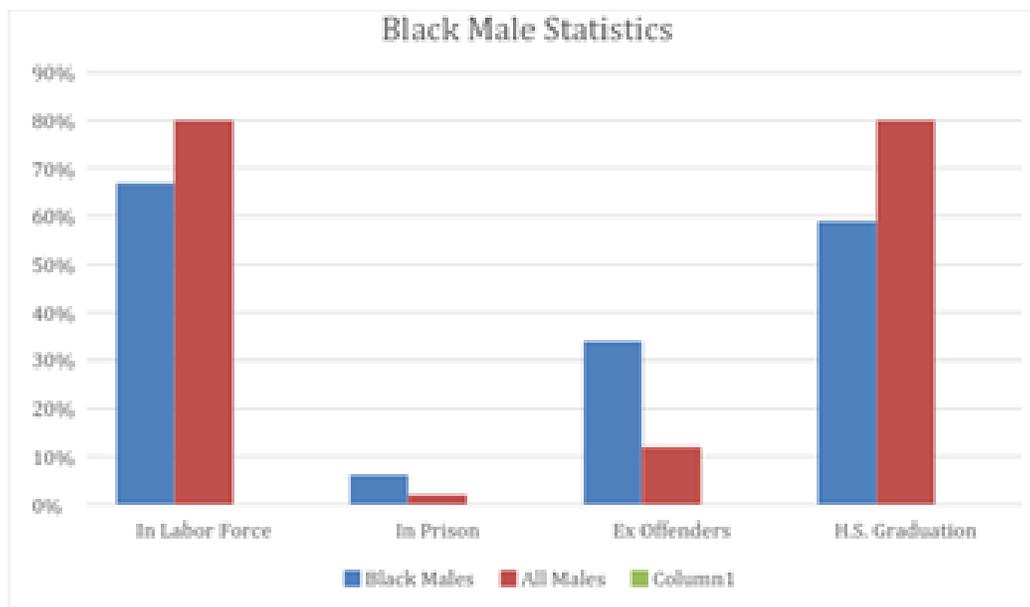
Plight of the African American Male

The social injustice of African American males in America can eventually lead to issues with the development, growth and competitiveness of the U.S in the global economy (McCabe, & Meissner 2010). The 2014 data shows that African Americans (11.3%) and Latinos (7.3%) had higher rates of unemployment than Whites (5.3%) (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015, p. 1). Those actively in the labor force have, for the most part, achieved higher educational success and thus, tend to earn more income than those who have not completed their high school diploma (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Normally, those with higher levels of education are not only most likely to be employed but also tend to have higher paying jobs- such as those in management (Glynn 2014). On the other hand, “About 2 in 10 employed African American and Latino men were employed in service occupations” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Also, more Latino (26%) and African American (12%) men were employed in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations in comparison to White men (18%) (U.S. Bureau of

Labor Statistics, 2015, p. 4).

As the following chart shows, African American males ages 16 to 64 had a lower participation rate in the labor force (67%) compared to all males (80%) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). Labor force participation refers to the percent of men who were either working or looking for a job. Males not in the workforce include those who may be full-time students, disabled and others who are not looking or gave up looking for employment.

Table 9 below presents the percentage of African American Males either in prison, participating in the labor force, are ex-offenders, and have a High School diploma compared to the proportion of all males in the United States. African American males are consistently lower in every category in comparison to all men.



(Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012)

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012) about 6% of working-age (18-64yrs old) African American men are currently in state or federal prison, or in jail. These numbers are three times higher than the 2% of 'all men' in the same age group. Approximately 34% of all working-age African American men not incarcerated are ex-offenders compared to 12% of all

men, which means they have at one point in their lives been convicted of a felony (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012). This data coincides with the increased absence of African American men in the labor force because ex-offenders are prevented from obtaining plenty of employment opportunities by law and experience legal discrimination by private employers (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012).

The advantages of college completion include, but are not limited to, potentially enjoying better jobs, healthcare, and retirement. The government also benefits from having to allocate less funding to social, and educational service programs, and increased tax revenues generated by college graduates who have entered the workforce (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2010). More minorities earning degrees will result in a nation that will help develop toward socio-economic stability, growth, innovation, and competitive standing on a global stage (Wendler, C., Bridgeman, B., Cline, F., Millett, C., Rock, J., Bell, N., & McAllister, P. 2010).

Plight of Latino Immigrant Males

In the last ten years, the educational system in the United States has experienced an influx of Latino immigrant students (Santiago, 2015). Although, these students have made significant progress in schools there are certain disparities between these students and their white counterparts that create educational gaps between these two groups (Santiago, 2015). Data (2004) shows that the number of Latino students enrolled in public schools has increased from 19 to 24 percent of all students (Santiago, 2015). Even more important, the Latino population is estimated to experience an increase by 2060 to approximately 129 million or 31% of the total U.S. population (Santiago, 2015, p. 4). For this reason, it is imperative that schools, educational leaders, and policymakers begin to realize that it is more important than ever to ensure that Latino male students receive an adequate preparation to become productive members of society

(Santiago, 2015).

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to address the issues confronted by African American and Latino immigrant males as they embark on an educational path that is intended to guide them to become active participants in their communities. At the same time, these individuals are responsible for ensuring that our current society continues to prosper for a better tomorrow. Latino immigrant males are arriving in this country with the hopes of becoming productive members of their communities; however, data shows that Latino immigrant males are not succeeding at the same rate as their White male counterparts with similar educational and professional opportunities available to them (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).

Among some of the barriers faced by Latino immigrant students are a lack of access to financial aid, unfamiliarity with the educational system, institutional rejection due to their legal status, poverty, traumatic experiences as they try to get to the U.S., and language differences (Perez, Roberta, Ramos, Coronado, & Cortes, 2009). These barriers are the result of policies that have made it more difficult for these students and their families to have access to higher education and other professional opportunities that might contribute to their stability in the communities in which they reside (Perez, Roberta, Ramos, Coronado, & Cortes, 2009).

These barriers not only occur in higher educational institutions, but secondary public schools also exclude many of these students from obtaining the skills needed to be more productive outside the school setting (Santiago, 2015). Many of these students end up dropping out of school or graduating from high school without the type of academic skills that would allow them to get a better paying job to support their families or to pay the higher education or technical preparation they might need to get the desired professional jobs (Hernandez, Si Les, &

Rochin, 2001).

Latino immigrant students are faced with the daunting task of overcoming the barriers as mentioned earlier as they try to become productive members of the new society in which they reside. At the same time, despite their rejection by the educational institutions they attend, these students do not lack the motivation and resilience to achieve their dreams and to make their families proud (Fergus & Noguera, 2014). Therefore, it is imperative that these students, along with their African American counterparts, receive the adequate educational guidance opportunities to succeed.

A personal, insightful, and multi-layered investigation is required to gain a clearer understanding of the factors that contribute to the high school graduation and the academic achievement gap between African American, Latino and White males (Noguera, 2006). The low academic performance of African-American and Latino male students inevitably leads to dropouts, which then result in a life of poverty (Jerald 2007). High School dropouts have a greater chance of being unemployed when compared to graduates (Santiago, 2015). High School dropouts are also 65 percent more likely to receive public assistance, becoming a burden to society (Santiago, 2015).

To end the vicious cycle of poverty and inequality that these minority groups experience, it is imperative that our educational system increases the academic success of African American and Latino immigrant male students (Fergus & Noguera, 2014). This increase in academic success not only closes the gap in educational achievements between African American, Latino, and White males but also increases life chances for African American and Latino immigrant students. Policies such as No Child Left Behind (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2003) required school districts to address low academic achievement; however, throughout the length of that

policy and even now after the policy, low academic achievement in African American and Latino immigrant males still exist. One of the solutions to moderate academic success is informed educational leadership (A Center Policy Brief, 2011). Few studies have documented and examined the perceptions of successful African American and Latino immigrant students, which can be critical to helping educators and policymakers determine similar educational components that have contributed to their academic achievement and apply them in our educational setting with today's youth.

Theoretical Framework

The current study will use Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Entity Theory (ET) in understanding the plight of these students. Many scholars use Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a theoretical framework for studying the impact of race, gender, and racism on African American students' experiences in the K-12 educational system. CRT assists in exposing natural barriers encountered by African-American males in high school and places the issue of racism in a broader context, including history, economics, and politics (DeCuir-Gunby, (2009). *Entity Theory* as described by Gandara (2004) states, "Entity theorists would argue that Latino high achievement is often masked by cultural practices and that culturally biased measurement simply fails to uncover the existence of this ability or set of competencies" (p.20). Due to possibly cultural norms and language barriers, many Latino immigrant students might not be able to demonstrate their cognitive skills effectively (Gandara, 2004). Additionally, of the previously mentioned barriers, these students may not receive the same educational opportunities to showcase their academic and social skills, which adds to the belief that these students have weak cognitive abilities (Gandara, 2004).

Overall, teachers' stereotypes are detrimental as expectations play a role in students'

confidence level (Gandara, 2004). The purpose of the study is to identify effective strategies that can be utilized to help empower African American and Latino immigrant males in their search for success. Most importantly, the researchers want to articulate clearly assertion that African American and Latino immigrant males not only can succeed in education and participate at a professional level in the workforce but also, must do so to sustain families, build stronger communities, and involved fully in the American society. This research is conducted to put forth the men's authentic voices and experiences to highlight commonalities in hopes these similarities can be utilized in an educational setting via interventions or curriculum development.

Research Design

This research is a mixed method study and is both qualitative and quantitative in design. The first part of our study will be qualitative in nature. The researchers will be presenting the experiences, perspectives, and actions of the selected participants truthfully, with respect, and with rigor. The principles, methods, and tools used for that purpose are discussed in detail for several reasons: (a) to inform the reader of the biases and perspectives of the researcher, thereby establishing a basis for a contextual evaluation of the findings and conclusions; (b) to provide a framework for the research methods employed, including consideration of the issues that may help or harm a similar inquiry; and to differentiate this research report from simple journalism by indicating a thorough and purposeful procedure for handling the data, making interpretations, and drawing conclusions. At the conclusion of the study, a manual will be developed from the research analysis that will help schools adapt to the needed strategies to help these students achieve both high school and post graduate success.

Research questions

Each of the following questions will serve as our framework for the development of a

manual to help schools adapt to the needs of African American and Latino males to achieve academic success in school and beyond. Using our African American and Latino Immigrant Male questionnaire answers, some strategies for improving the success of African American and Latino immigrant males will be created. Also, several categories such as mentoring, knowledge of the educational system, school environment, and staff support will be identified as possible factors that contribute to the success of these students. The research questions guiding this study are the following,

1. What types of educational experiences do successful African American and Latino Immigrant males perceive to have contributed to their achievement?
2. Were there any barriers that African American and Latino Immigrant males had to overcome throughout their academic career?
3. What do they attribute to successfully navigating through those challenges in their academic career?

Limitations of the study

Limitations to the study include the sample of interviewees may not be representative of the target population or adequate in size. Another limitation of the study is the participants responding openly and truthfully to questions posed in the interviews. The participants must also candidly share information regarding what has contributed to their successes or failures. This study is limited to engaging five African American and five Latino immigrant males working in professional careers in one-on-one interviews, in addition to participating in an online survey. Time spent with participants will be concentrated on provoking profound reflections around their experiences and generating detailed responses to the research questions. The participants will be provided with the questions before the interview in an attempt to allow them to reflect on the

questions before the session. The purpose of this strategy is to help them to produce meaningful responses to the research questions.

Among the Latino participants (n= 5), one of the limitations will be the selection of a diverse group of Latinos who identify themselves as African American or White representing different countries from Latin America as their experiences may vary. Understanding the different experiences of Latino immigrant students will also be a challenge, as some of these Latino immigrant participants will have been undocumented at one point while others not, which may or may not have contributed to their educational opportunities while in school. Also, it will be important to consider the experiences of African American Latino immigrant and White Latino immigrant males. However, as in any other study, the researcher will maintain objectivity in the collection and interpretation of field notes. All of the participants will be part of a convenient sample, they live and work in the South Florida area so no generalizations can be made about all African American and Latino immigrant males throughout the United States. Therefore, subjectivity in the interpretation and translation of field notes will prove essential.

Definition of terms

African American Male: A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009).

Critical Race Theory: The critical race theory (CRT) movement is a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

Job-Market: The availability of employment and labor, concerning supply and demand; the market for jobs (Dellibovi-Ragheb 2016).

Latino Immigrant Male: A person of Latin ancestry who was not born in the country they reside,

these individuals come from Latin American countries such as South and Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

Marginalization: This is a form of acute and persistent disadvantage rooted in underlying social inequalities. It represents a stark example of clearly remediable injustice (Unesco.org)

Narrative Inquiry: Relaying/conveying an understanding of the experiences of others (Clandinin & Connelly, 2004).

Student Success: The desire and action of a student to stay within the education system from the beginning year through degree/certification completion (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009).

Success- a Productive member of society, Participant in the workforce at least at the Operational or Technical level -This category includes support, operational, technical, skilled or semi-skilled positions, where the skills are typically acquired through vocational education and apprenticeships, certifications, specialized, or on-the-job training. Problems are usually solved through knowledge of past practices and procedural guidelines, or knowledge gained through a certification or licensing program

Self-Efficacy Theory: One's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task (Bandura 1977).

Stereotype Threat: Stereotype threat is defined as a situational predicament in which individuals are at risk of confirming negative stereotypes about their group. It is the resulting sense that one might be judged regarding negative stereotypes about one's group instead of on personal merit (Inzlicht & Schmader 2012).

Chapter 2 Review of Literature

African American Males: Barriers, and Proposed Solutions

The purpose of this research is to examine the experiences of academically and career successful African American and Latino immigrant males to identify common factors they attribute to their attainment of accomplishments. The goal of this research is to determine if there is a link between extracurricular participation, motivational factors, and academic achievement. Factors to consider include socioeconomic background, family educational background, and student's involvement in extracurricular activities in the school and their community, as well as intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors.

Data indicates African American males have chronically high unemployment, are over-incarcerated, have different health conditions, and ultimately lower life expectations than any of the largest racial/ethnic and gender groups in the United States (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2007, 2009). The experience of African American males in America is unlike any other experience faced by other immigrants (Douglass, 2007). During slavery, African-Americans were dehumanized and treated as inferior based solely on skin color (Douglass, 2007; Anton, 2009). African American males are often thought of as possessing less than acceptable qualities such as being lazy and irresponsible (Douglass, 2007; Swanson, Cunningham, and Spencer, 2003).

Factors associated with the success or failure of African American male students include but cannot be limited to, socioeconomic status (Walpole, 2008; Fhagen-Smith, 2010), the prison pipeline (Meiners, 2011, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011), stereotype threat (Aronson & Good, 2002; Steele, 1995, Cabrera, 2006), blind racism (Harper, 2006), tracking, issues related to

cultural relevancy, and several other contributing factors (Richardson-Shavers, 2007). Other barriers to success include the development of African American males' social identity. (Steele, 1997). This evolution of social identity is complicated by the images they receive from direct and distance sources, such as family, community, church, and the media (Noguera, 2003). Other barriers to academic achievement for African American males include the lack of development of their academic identity (Steele, 1997). Rolland (2011) suggested that student attitudes, masculine identity, and social organization of schools and curriculum have the greatest potential for affecting the academic achievement of African American males in the early years of their education.

There are many proposed solutions to the educational needs of African American males. Some contend that the increased presence of active and successful African American male adults in educational environments is essential for enhancing African American boys' academic and social development (Fashola, 2005). Another proposed solution to low academic achievement is extracurricular participation. For example, involvement in athletics has a positive association with academic achievement (Singh, Uijtdewilligen, Twisk, Van Mechelen, & Chinapaw, 2012). According to Child Trends Data Bank (2013), 63.9 percent of males and 59 percent of African-American students in high school participate in athletics. Studies have shown that high school athletes have higher grades than non-athletes, lower absentee levels, a significantly smaller percentage of discipline referrals, lower percentages of dropouts, and higher graduation rates (Calhoun, 2014).

Rolland (2011) indicates supportive parents, caring teachers, positive school environment, peer support, and community initiatives that are not only associated with athletics but different activities, are the top components influencing academic success for African

American males.

In addition to successful African American male role models, extracurricular participation, and supportive persons involved in students' lives, the Schott Foundation for Public Education (2015) suggests that states and school districts "adopt tailored approaches adapted to personal educational needs, social contexts and students' learning styles" (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2015). In providing such a tailored approach, the Schott Foundation (2012, 2015) proposes a "Personal Opportunity Plan" referencing a similar plan developed in North Carolina which requires schools to develop Personal Education Plans (PEP) for at-risk students which are customized to the students' learning (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2012). According to Malhoit (2012), the North Carolina PEP should include proven educational strategies including tutoring, mentoring, coaching, smaller class size, and extended instructional days for students struggling academically (Malhoit, 2012).

Another example of student-centered learning as a plausible solution to closing the achievement gap between African American males and white counterparts presented by the Schott Foundation for Public Education (2015) is The Fellowship Initiative sponsored by JP Morgan Chase & Co. which enrolls young men of color in a "comprehensive, hands-on enrichment program that includes academic, social and emotional support to help them achieve personal and professional success (JPMorgan Chase & Co., 2017). The Schott Foundation (2015) describes the program as "a multi-discipline approach to expanding opportunity and career horizons for Black, Latino and other young men of color" (Schott Foundation, 2015). Through the program, JPMorgan Chase & Co. (2017) conducted a pilot study to show that using a broad-based, integral approach including tutoring to improve academics, college preparation classes, leadership experiences, mentoring, and social support networks resulted in 100% of twenty-four

fellows graduating on time and being accepted into 4-year colleges (JPMorgan Chase & Co., 2017).

Barriers to academic achievement

Yancey's alienation thesis

Yancey's (2003) alienation thesis attempts to identify societal, school, and communal factors that often result in negative educational outcomes for African American males. Yancey (2003) explains that race is not a natural creation but a social one. Yancey (2003) posited that because of an unusually oppressive alienation African Americans had not been able to experience the process of assimilation other racial groups have realized. Absent the ability to become part of the mainstream society; African Americans were destined to remain an outcast and marginalized race. Yancey (2003) thesis is essential to explaining the disengagement of African American men from the education process. This estrangement leads to a more accurate way of assessing the inability of African Americans to assimilate into the dominant society (Yancey, 2003, p. 13).

Critical Race Theory

Ogbu and Fordham (Fordham, 1996, p. 46; Ogbu, 1987, p. 34) argue that African-American students hold themselves back out of fear their peers will ostracize them. African-American males can also be hindered by the school culture running within their educational facilities (Howard, 2013). African-American males may engage in behaviors that contribute to their underachievement and marginality, but Ogbu (1987) believes they are also more likely to be channeled into limited roles and discouraged from challenging themselves by adults who are there to help them. Shor (2008) believes that to survive in "the streets successfully" the young African-American man has to portray the persona of toughness (Shor, 2008). The limited

resources for young African American men who are socialized using a natural progression child rearing model or raised in “the streets to preserve an image of toughness, the emotional and cognitive development of young African American males is sacrificed (Pickett, 2009).”

African American males are also more likely to be subjected to stereotypical forms of treatment in schools (Noguera 2009). Stereotypical views that individuals of their race and gender may excel in sports, but not in other subjects such as math or history, create negative stigmatism the student must deal with as they navigate the educational system (McGee, & Martin 2011). The roles African American males perform within school suggest they are good at playing sports or non-academic activities, but being involved in clubs and class leadership roles are out of bounds because there are not enough African American role models who manage to participate in such activities without compromising their sense of self (Noguera, 2009).

The small number of African American males who participate in clubs or leadership roles violate traditional norms (Noguera, 2009). Their deviance from traditional patterns often places them under scrutiny from their peers who are likely to regard their disobedience of group norms as a sign of "selling out" (Fordham, 1996, p. 46; Ogbu, 1987, p. 34). CRT challenges the myth that American society is fair and access to the educational system is predicated on meritocracy while concurrently addressing the negative ramifications of society's hegemonic structure (DeCuir-Gunby, (2009). One of the most critical developmental challenges facing an adolescent is the establishment of a sense of identity. "Student athletes, in general, develop the dichotomy of two identities as an athlete and as a student (Ferguson, 2009)".

Academic Identity

Pringle, Beverley, Lyons, James, Booker, Koenya (2012) discuss some of the perceived barriers causing African American students to disengage from academic work and not to develop

their academic identity. Stereotypical views hinder a student's achievement. The theory of domain identification assumes that "in school domains where groups are negatively stereotyped, face the further barrier of stereotype threat, the threat that others' judgments or their own actions will negatively stereotype them in the domain (Steele, 1997)". The stereotypical views of the educators lead students to dis-identification from school, which results in the disengagement of the students (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012). "Social Reconstructionist have acknowledged that some teachers enter education with their personal developed philosophies and must be involved in the examination of their own culturally based beliefs as well as the historical and cultural context from which schooling has emerged" (Cannell and Reiff, 2012). African American students must feel a sense of belonging and it is up to the teachers to create an inviting atmosphere that will enable students to be successful (Cannell and Reiff, 2012). "Constructivist philosophical orientations can provide the foundation for teacher education programs that address cultural diversity (Cannell and Reiff, 2012)".

Media Portrayal of African American Male, and Stereotypes

African Americans' deal with a psychological factor often referred to as "stereotype threat" (e.g., Aronson et al., 1999; Aronson et al., 1998; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Stereotype threat is defined as the "social-psychological dilemma in American media of African Americans as intellectually inferior (Inzlicht, & Schmader, 2011)".

In situations where a stereotype about a group's intellectual abilities are relevant, such as in the classroom "taking an intellectually challenging test, being called upon to speak in class, and so on can result in the cognitive and emotional burden of African American students. This difficulty can be described as performance-disruptive apprehension, or anxiety about the possibility of confirming a negative racial inferiority (Good, Aronson, & Harder, 2000).

Stereotype threat appears to undermine the academic achievement of African American males in two ways. First, it can impair performance by inducing anxiety (Aronson, 1999; Aronson et al., 1998; Blascovich et al., 2001; Steele & Aronson, 1995), and second is the psychological disengagement from achievement. Many researchers have noted that to promote and maintain self-esteem, students tend to identify with domains in which they can excel, but also fail to identify with things they deem to be above their intellectual capacity (e.g., Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Harter, 1990).

There is increasing evidence that suggest African Americans are more prone than their White counterparts to disassociate from academics (e.g., Major & Schmader, 1998; Osbourne, 1995; Steele et al., in press). Identification with academics is assumed to be crucial for success in college or school, and this disassociation is a serious barrier to the achievements of African American males.

Cultural Inversion

Growing up in a culture that is rich with positive African American images and role models can lead to a strong sense of African American identity and pride (Boyd-Franklin 2013). Though this is considered to be desirable, it can also be a major drawback for those that refuse to relinquish their identity to the dominant and different culture that often exists. (Ogbu, 1992; Taylor & Usborne, 2010). African American male college students who are unable or unwilling to “fit in” by adopting behaviors, habits or characteristics of the dominant culture may lead to a condition of cultural inversion (Negga, et al., 2007; Hooks, 2003, Elion, et al. 2012). In these situations, African American male students are viewed as defiant, outcasts or arrogant, when in actuality, their behavior may be one of solidarity and a refusal to be assimilated.

Development of the Athletic, or Entertainer Identity

Brewer, Van Raalte, and Linder (1993) define athletic identity as the degree to which an individual identifies with the role of an athlete. After the recognition of early sports talent in young athletes, the consistent development of their talents and sports skills may lead toward and internalized athletic identity (Bimper, & Harrison 2011). Because African American student athletes often foresee few other perceived routes to becoming successful outside of sports. These high profile sports often provide the opportunity for funding college expenses and considerable financial gain for athletes that ascent to the professional ranks (Bimper, & Harrison, 2011).

African American Male Athletic Versus Academic Identity

African American student athletes mentally host a competition between their academic and athletic identities (Whipple, 2009). Whipple (2009) came to the conclusion that athletes need stability in their character and personal autonomy. Athletes require independence and confidence in their intellectual capabilities just as it is necessary for their athletic abilities (Whipple, 2009). Their "academic identity must be nurtured and built up in the same manner that their athletic identity has over the past by receiving recognition from others, being respected, challenged, supported, and held accountable for his actions" (Whipple, 2009). The student-athlete is searching for the appropriate identity to choose for himself, and this is molded by interactions with peers, as well as authoritative figures (Ng & Feldman, 2009). Student athletes are searching for social values, which are embedded in the culture of the educational institution, it is the culture of the students, teachers, and other faculty members that either support of denouncing the student athletes (Ng & Feldman, 2009).

Whiting (2009) suggest that African American men may adopt defense mechanisms to affirm their identity in an oppressive society. A study exploring the relationship between ethnic belonging and traditional masculinity ideology among African American, Latino Americans, and

European American men found a positive correlation between ethnic identity and masculinity identity development (Abreu, Goodyear, Campos, & Newcomb, 2000).

African American Identity development model

African American identity development involves the stages people of color go through in the process of developing their identity. African American people begin with a lack of awareness concerning their African American identity and grow to adopt positive views, about themselves as an African American individual, and also positive views concerning other racial groups (Noguera, 2009). Throughout this process people become aware of the historical ramifications of what it means to be "African American," they generate ideas and make plans of action to help educate and uplift the African American community (Jackson III, 2012). Utilizing Cross's (2009) Nigrescence theory can contribute to putting into context the issues that can happen developmentally with an African American student regarding their racial identity in college or any other educational setting. As the population predicts a more multicultural society, educators and policy makers should be aware of the different stages of African American identity development (Milner 2008).

The African American Identity Development Model (Jackson III, 2012) is defined as the psychological process African Americans undergo to become "African American." The process consists of five stages including:

1. Pre-Encounter

In the Pre-encounter stage acknowledgment of race as something affecting their lives is nonexistent (Jackson III, 2012). Cross (1991) stated that "anti-African Americans loath other African Americans; they feel alienated from them and do not see African Americans or the African American community as potential or actual sources of personal support" (p. 191).

Usually, people in this stage of identity development do not realize that they have been raised with White westernized ideologies, because it is so embedded in their culture (Jackson III, 2012). Cross (1991) said that “persons have frequently been socialized to favor a Eurocentric cultural perspective” (p. 193).

2. Encounter

The encounter stage of identity development is broken down into two steps, encounter and personalize. In the encounter phase, an event transpires that shapes an individual's view on race. The personalize phase occurs when a person takes action as a result of the impact the event evoked on that person. Cross (1991) pointed out that the encounter does not "need to be negative" for the event to have an impact and steer a person towards Nigrescence (p. 197). The encounter only has to have a personal significance impact to be the catalyst to spur change in their thinking (Jackson III, 2012).

3. Immersion-Emersion

During the immersion-emersion stage, African American people will start to shed their old view of the world, race and how it works and construct a new frame of mind with the information they now have about race (Jackson III, 2012). At this point in their identity development, the person commits to change. Cross (1991) said that "immersion is a strong, powerful dominating sensation that is constantly energized by rage [at White people and culture], guilt [at having once been tricked into thinking African American ideas], and developing a sense of pride [in one's African American self, African American people, and African American culture]" (p. 203).

4. Internalization

Internalization is the transition period where one is working through the challenges of their new identity (Cross, 1991). During this time people tend to isolate themselves from others and their view of them in an effort of focusing on how they view themselves. According to Cross (1992), "African American people begin to think critically about their new found racial identity and how it has shaped their life" (Jackson III, 2012). This ethnic identity results in the acceptance of African-American culture, what it means to be African American and have African American self-love. Most importantly, "African American identity functions to fulfill the self-protection, social anchorage, and bridging needs of the individual" (p. 220).

5. Internalization-commitment

The final component of the African American Identity Development model is the Internalization-Commitment phase. This phase is focused on the long-term interest of African American Affairs (Cross, 1991). According to Benjamin et al. (1998), African American identity development model helps "African Americans begin to shed a poor self-worth and move toward embracing a positive African American self-definition" (p. 96). This final component of the African American Identity Development model is the last stage of their identity transformation. Having a healthy racial identity is important for all students, no matter someone's race (Jackson III, 2012).

School to Prison Pipeline

The next barrier to the achievements of African American males is what has come to be known as the School to Prison Pipeline (Meiners, 2011). The "School to Prison Pipeline" (Meiners, 2011) describes the pervasive negative and dysfunctional conditions that contribute to the eventual academic downfall of many African American boys and adolescents due to socioeconomic factors and social inequities that exist in numerous at-risk neighborhoods.

Standardized tests, tracking, zero-tolerance, and other negative influences established within the K-12 system have the potential to influence African American boys towards deviant behavior, low self-esteem, and the need to find acceptance often among others who are already in this prison pipeline (Meiners, 2011).

Latino Immigrant Males: Academic Challenges to Success

It is predicted that in the next fifty years, the U.S immigrant population will rise to approximately 78 million (Lopez, 2015, p. 24). It is important to note, that about 18% or 57 million people of the immigration population from 1965 to 2015 was comprised of Hispanics (Lopez, 2015, p. 27). With these changes among the school-age population enrolling in secondary schools, Latino students are a group that shows far different educational results than their white counterparts (Lopez, 2015). Also, these students, especially males, deal with inequitable educational opportunities that lead to damaging permanent results that limit their ability to succeed (Alvarez de Davila, 2016).

In the same manner that African Americans are faced with barriers to achieve academic and professional success, Latino immigrant male students encounter barriers associated with,

1. Lack of parental or family support;
2. Social identity issues related to society's perceptions and media portrayal of their abilities to succeed; and
3. Educational exclusions that isolate these students from full participation in extracurricular school activities and a lack of academic opportunities to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses (Alvarez de Davila, 2016).

Also, another important barrier to address is that Latino immigrant families are unfamiliar with the educational system in the U.S., which hinders their children's educational opportunities

(American Psychological Association, Presidential Task Force on Educational Disparities, 2012).

More damaging to their future educational achievement are the inadequacies that exist in schools that Latino immigrant children often enroll (Noguera, 2006). These schools, tend to suffer from “segregation by ethnicity, poverty, and language” (American Psychological Association, Presidential Task Force on Educational Disparities, 2012, p. 30). Commonly found in these schools are teachers with little or no preparation in dealing with immigrant students that bring a variety of cultural differences associated with language, norms, traditions, and motivation (American Psychological Association, Presidential Task Force on Educational Disparities, 2012).

Regardless of the challenges, these students face while trying to achieve academic and professional success, Latino immigrant parents and their children highly value education as a way to achieve success in their new environment (Alvarez de Davila, 2016). Unfortunately, there is a concern that many "Latino immigrant teens are tending not to pursue formal schooling and many of them are not acquiring English fluency" (Fry, 2003, p. 4). This lack of formal education might prove to be a reason for which many of these teenagers often lack the necessary skills that will make them more marketable in a global society (Fry, 2003). The lack of education and professional skills these teenagers fail to acquire by not attending school will not only affect their current labor value but will have an even greater negative impact into adulthood as they will end up in the low-end of the U.S. labor market (Fry, 2003, p. 4).

It is important to consider that although Latino students are achieving significant progress in society, Latino males still lag behind females and their White counterparts (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Gurian and Stevens (2005), found that Latino boys are educated within a system that fails to understand the probable mismatch of the male learning style through current educational practices (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011, p. 7). Another important fact to consider is that Latino boys

are twice as likely as girls to be held back a year, which leads to further academic disparities between the two genders (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). Latino immigrant males lack the reading and writing skills that other men in other groups have acquired in the same educational timeframe (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011).

Table 10 illustrates the disparities which hinder the acquisition of educational achievement by Latino males, excluding Asian men.

TABLE 1
Percentage of Public School Students Who Have Repeated a Grade, Been Suspended, or Been Expelled by Race/Ethnicity and Gender 2007

RACE/ETHNICITY	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
% in K–12 that have repeated a grade			
Total ¹	11.5	13.9	8.9
White	8.7	11.2	6.1
Black	20.9	25.6	15.3
Hispanic	11.8	12.4	11.1
Asian	3.5	6.5	0.0
% in grades 6–12 that have ever been suspended			
Total ¹	21.6	27.9	14.9
White	15.6	21.3	9.7
Black	42.8	49.5	34.7
Hispanic	21.9	29.6	14.1
Asian	10.8	14.9	‡
% in grades 6–12 that have ever been expelled			
Total ¹	3.4	4.5	2.3
White	1.0	1.3	0.7
Black	12.8	16.6	8.2
Hispanic	3.0	3.1	2.9
Asian	‡	‡	‡

NOTE: All data are based on parent reports. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity.

‡ Reporting standards not met.

¹ Total includes other race/ethnicity categories not separately shown.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Parent and Family Involvement in Education Survey of the National Household Education Surveys Program, 2007

(Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011, p. 7)

Statistics show that Latino men from grades K-12 are not only held back at high disproportionate rates but also, suspended and expelled from school at higher rates than females from all minority subgroups (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011). The effects of the treatment of Latino immigrant males during their early education years tends to have even worse consequences for their future professional achievements as adults in their new environment (Fry, 2003).

Parental Involvement

Research indicates there exists a strong link between parental involvement and student academic achievement (Ordonez-Jasis, 2012, p. 67). Although research shows that Latino immigrant parents consider education to be crucial for their children's positive future success, their lack of knowledge of how to navigate the U.S. educational system proves to be a barrier (Guzman, 2012). This "gap in information stems from the marked differences between the school systems they are familiar with in their home countries, and the U.S. schools their children are attending" (Guzman, 2012, p. 95). Another issue that comes up when there exists a lack of parental involvement among Latino immigrant students is associated with those students' parents' legal status (A Center Policy Brief, 2011). Unfortunately, parents' undocumented status leads these parents to not actively participate in the school for fears of deportation or discrimination (A Center Policy Brief, 2011).

Parental involvement is also affected by these students' parents' employment instability, that in many cases forces parents to obtain multiple jobs that keep them away from home and school participation (Guzman, 2012). As parents are obliged to work multiple low-paying jobs their children are left unsupervised and with non-academic responsibilities such as cleaning, cooking, and with taking care of their younger siblings (Borjas, 2011). In other cases, Latino immigrant males of working age are required to obtain low-paying jobs to help their parents

support the household (Borjas, 2011). These types of responsibilities on Latino males, prevent them from fully engaging in their academic responsibilities which lead to a lack of acquisition of needed skills to attain higher paying jobs or to continue their higher education (Borjas, 2011). Latino immigrant children' lack of economic resources can adversely affect their economic achievement and even more important, it leads these students to drop out of high school and has an adverse impact on their success as adults (Borjas, 2011). Even more concerning is the lack of parenting practices that are supportive and responsive. Among these practices are discussions related to school work, selection of academic courses, and their social interactions in school (Eamon, 2005).

A great theory that presents the value of parental involvement and student achievement is the ecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). This theory argues that it is crucial to consider the immediate environment that surrounds an individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Therefore, Latino parental involvement is deemed to be an essential aspect of the overall development of Latino immigrant males and their overall growth into adulthood (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). As a result, it is imperative that schools and the communities in which Latino immigrant students reside must present these students and their parents with the needed academic and social support to achieve success beyond the school environment (A Center Policy Brief, 2011).

Latino Immigrant Male Social Identity

Latino immigrant students' social identity takes shape once they arrive in the United States and is the result of the social, political, and economic forces that highly influence its development (Noguera, 2006). However, Latino immigrant students often find themselves caught between two worlds, the world of their culture and that world with new norms and

traditions (Noguera, 2006). Due to this identity dilemma, it is often difficult for Latino male students to assimilate to the educational environment that places demands but yet, it limits their educational opportunities to achieve success (Noguera, 2006).

At times, it is even more of a challenge for these students to establish themselves in the new environment because they have left behind known social and family support systems and it is often difficult for them to re-establish similar relationships that it makes them feel unwelcome (McCarthy, n.d.). These changes they experience as the result of their immigration to the United States, often create trauma complicating their assimilation and establishment of a social identity (McCarthy, n.d.). Contributing to this social identity issue are the painful choices between accepting school norms or those of their parents (McCarthy, n.d.). Other matters that arise are the perceptions that surround these students in the new environment that come from society and their teachers (William Perez, 2009).

Latino Immigrant Male Self-esteem

Latino immigrant male students, like their counterparts, are in a state of finding their identity while in high school (Eamon, 2005). As a result, the social interactions they experience while in school influence their self-esteem and self-worth. In a study by Neseth, Savage, and Navarro (2009) "three social support systems were identified that affect the self-esteem and self-worth of these students,

1. Social support within the school;
2. social support within the community; and
3. Familial, social support" (p. 60-61).

The social support provided in each of these systems, allows these students to place greater value in their cultural traditions and the relationships they form with those around them.

Other events that may create low self-esteem among immigrant students are those experiences that cause high levels of stress. Potochnick and Perreira (2010) explain, "separation from family, exposure to traumatic events, discrimination, loss of social status, and changes in family roles can cause these students and their families to have low self-worth" (p. 2). On the other hand, many Latino immigrant male students have high aspirations to achieve academic success in their new environment despite social barriers and their experiences with traumatic events (McCarthy, n.d.)

Potochnic and Perreira (2010) place great emphasis on the social support system established in the home of these immigrant students as they explain, "our results demonstrate that social support at home and in school can ameliorate the adverse effects of discrimination and other stressors" (p. 8). Positive social support systems help these students maintain high levels of self-esteem and self-worth (Potochnic and Perreira, 2010).

Suarez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, Teranishi, & Suarez-Orozco, M.M. (2013) explain, traumatic experiences that affect the self-esteem and self-worth of these immigrant student are associated with "crossing borders and contact with human smugglers that disrupt a period of development in these students with significant ramifications that can have lasting effects and carry on into adulthood" (p. 141). As a consequence, active social support systems help these students counteract the social and psychological implications left by those traumatic experiences.

Society and its Perceptions of Latino Immigrant Students

Over the years there has been a negative perception of Latino students as having academic and intellectual "deficiencies" within their family, culture, and language background (Katz, 1999). There are several perceptions of Latino immigrant students held by the society, or the community in which they try to assimilate, among these are the following:

1. That they all have the same cultural values and norms;
2. That all speak the same language; and
3. That they all come to the U.S. with the same educational needs

(Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009).

Among Latino immigrant males, "*machismo*" is a determinant factor that prevents them from asking for help (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Latino males are expected to be the "men" of the house in the absence of their fathers, they are supposed to hide their emotions which can lead to a socio-psychological disconnection that can create feelings of depression, vulnerability, and failure (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009, p. 59).

"Another phenomenon that plays a conspicuous role in the schooling experiences of young males of color, especially within urban settings, is the notion that African American and Latino males somehow reject academic excellence because they perceive it as 'acting White.'" (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009, p. 60). Latino males are constantly under pressure to develop and maintain their identity, which creates the perception by those around them as rejecting education because they want to keep their cultural values (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Osborne (1999) explains, "The stigma of acting White among African American and Latino Immigrant males is ultimately a reflection of their lack of identification with traditional norms of academic success, which ultimately results in their devaluing of academics and education in the traditional sense" (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Overall, society's expectations of Latino immigrant males fail to take into account, much less honor, their individual and collective contributions to their new environment (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2011).

Teacher Perceptions of Latino Immigrant Students

Teachers' reluctance to provide minority students with the opportunities to be part of the

regular academic activities has proven to be detrimental to their academic achievement, especially for Latino males (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Yip (2013) explains that "to appreciate the challenges that come in the way of high school graduation for newcomers, one must examine the complex web of interrelated factors and processes that impact the possibility of Latino immigrant students' educational success" (para 14). Teachers' stereotypes have the power to disengage students from taking an active role in activities in the classroom and throughout school (Yip, 2013). Also, teachers' lack of Spanish language proficiency or and understanding of cultural differences add additional barriers to Latino immigrant male students (Yip, 2013).

“There is a belief by secondary teachers that Latino immigrant males are not worth the effort, as they might take more time to improve than those who already speak and write English well” (Faltis & Arias, 2007, p. 21). Teachers’ perception that Latino immigrant students’ cognitive skills are lower than their counterparts without taking into consideration that limited language skills might be the primary reason for the lack of academic success (American Psychological Association, Presidential Task Force on Educational Disparities, 2012). As a result, these teachers tend to water down the content presented to these students. Faltis and Arias (2007) point out, “English learners placed in grade level content classes achieve academically when teachers rely on principles of practice and use appropriate resource material and instructional support in the student's’ home language to support participation” (p. 30).

In many circumstances teachers believe that parents simply do not care much about the education of their children and as a result they are often demonized for now showing a more active role (Sattin-Bajaj, 2009). Most important, there is a stereotype by many that all Latino immigrant students share the same language skills and culture (Sattin-Bajaj, 2009).

Unfortunately, immigrant students from different parts of Latin America have entirely different

cultures, and they might communicate using a multitude of dialects rather than the common language of Spanish (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009). Adding to these stereotypes is what Gandara (2004) describes, "Societal beliefs about the intellectual or cultural inferiority of Latinos can result in both constrained opportunities and choices" (p. 10). Language and cultural stereotypes are barriers that hinder students' opportunities for academic achievement.

Teachers' expectations

Teachers' academic and social expectations for Latino immigrant students are skewed by these students' language skills (Gandara, 2004). Gandara (2004) explains that in a study conducted by Adelman (1997), "It appears that both parents and students wish for particular academic outcomes, but that these dreams are tempered by a realistic assessment of the constraints imposed by their educational situation" (p. 11). Teachers' nonverbal cues act as lower expectations for some students. For example, teachers' wait time for a response to a question tends to be lower than for those of their counterparts (Gandara 2004). "Teachers are more likely to provide the correct answer or move quickly on to another student" (Gandara, 2004, p. 11). At the same time, language barriers also help in the creation of lower academic expectations for these students.

Limited English Proficiency Students (LEPs)

Limited English proficiency of Latino immigrant male students can influence teachers' pedagogical skills to simplify the lessons because immigrant students are expected to have lower language and academic skills (Katz, 1999). In a study conducted by Burstein & Cabello (1989), "That limited proficiency in English is one characteristic of many Latino students that appears to negatively influence their teachers' assessments of their abilities" (Gandara, 2004, p. 12). More important, Latino immigrant males sense of belongingness is affected as these expectations

discourage them from feeling as they are part of the classroom community (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009). Portes and Rivas (2011) explain, "Along with aspirations and expectations, the self-identities and self-esteem of children of immigrants are essential to their assimilation" (p.228). As students develop their identity, they place great emphasis on their cultural assimilation.

Language: A Crucial Obstacle for Many Latino Students

Latino immigrant students enter the schools with limited or nonexistent English language skills. In some cases, these students do not have Spanish as their mother tongue, but a dialect that makes it even more difficult for schools to develop effective channels of communication (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009). Romo (2014) states, "students and parents have already difficulty communicating in English let alone understanding information sent home from school translated and written in scholarly fashion" (p. 9). Another aspect that prevents these students from improving their language skills at the secondary level is *hypersegregation*. Faltis & Arias (2007) explain, "At the high school level, the most typical policy for teaching immigrant students who do not have enough English abilities to participate in and benefit from instruction in English is to hypersegregate these students into classes where curriculum consists primarily of English as a second language (ESL) and sheltered content classes for most of their day" (p. 19). Limiting the practice of language skills to be acquired by these students creates a difficulty in learning the English language.

The learning and acquisition of English (which for some of these students means learning Spanish and English) requires lots of practice in their academic setting (Alvarez de Davila, 2016). Bandura (1971) states, "People who mentally rehearse or perform modeled patterns of behavior are less likely to forget them than are those who either think about nor practice what

they have seen" (p. 7). An environment that does not provide these students with an opportunity to practice their language skills does not allow these students to learn the English language skills needed to achieve academic success and to form social relationships (Bandura, 1971). When students lag in their English language proficiency, their chances of participating in mainstream classes such as Advanced Placement (AP) diminish (Noguera, 2006). Faltis & Arias (2007) point out, "Linguistic isolation is especially detrimental to students who have gained conversational proficiency in English, but been denied access to the multiple discourse communities considered indispensable for academic success in content area classes where proficiency in oral and written communication is highly valorized" (p.23). Recognizing these students' acquired language skills is an academic and social benefit for them.

Limited language skills also prevent these Latino students from accessing other social aspects of their educational environment. "When Latino immigrant students are kept in English as a Second Language (ESL) ghettos, there is little chance that they will become full members of academic communities of practice" (Faltis & Arias, 2007). To prevent this from happening, Norrid-Lacey and Spencer (2000) conclude, "Schools should quickly, mainstream these students, provide more academic curriculum, and eliminate the isolation of these students, so their language skills improve" (p. 52).

Cultural Differences

Latino immigrant students bring with them cultural values that guide their behavior at home and school. Rong and Preissle (2009) explain, "Hispanic-Americans practice several religions and speak different languages. This diversity shows that the U.S. Hispanic population represents a merger of cultures, religions, and ethnicity-races" (p. 212). These cultural differences found in Latino immigrant students create a conflict between what is to be accepted

and what is to be rejected. Lopez, Ehly, & Vazquez (2002) describe the process of acculturation, "...this is the process that results in the modification of the culture of a group or an individual as a result of contact with a different culture as explained by Redfield, Lenton, & Herskovits (1936, p. 246)." Also, "...acculturating to the dominant culture, or adapting certain dominant cultural traits, increases the likelihood of succeeding in school" (Lopez et al., 2002).

Two theoretical views attempt to explain immigrant children's assimilation of the dominant culture. As described by Portes and Rivas (2011) "Culturalist researchers emphasize the newcomers' place in the cultural and linguistic life of the host society; structuralists, on the other hand, explain that these students find their place in the socioeconomic hierarchy" (p. 219). Latino immigrant students can achieve academic and social success by learning the language of the host society while maintaining their home country's cultural values and norms (Gandara, 2004). Additionally, Latino immigrants are divided into social classes based on their socioeconomic levels that have an influence on their overall academic and social success (Portes & Rivas, 2011). This idea is supported by Portes and Rivas (2011) because they say, "These young immigrants also differ by their countries of origin and their socioeconomic background" (p. 220).

Socioeconomic labels and educational levels are also thought to be influential in the assimilation of the host's culture. Political scientist Samuel Huntington (2004) explains, "Unfortunately children of immigrants are not assimilating into the host culture" (Portes & Rivas, 2011, p. 222). In other words, immigrant children tend to resist learning the host country's language as they place greater value in their cultural traditions and are adamant about making any changes (Portes & Rivas, 2011). Richard Alba and Victor Nee (2003) point out, "that cultural and political assimilation continues just as it has in the past and that immigrants

assimilate not into specific segments of society, but rather into a broad mainstream that is simultaneously changed by them" (Portes & Rivas, 2011, p. 223). Although the assimilation of the culture by Latino immigrant students may take time, Alba & Nee (2003) conclude that adaptation will eventually take place and these students will join the host society.

A lack of cultural assimilation by Latino immigrant students causes disengagement between students and those who are trying to educate them, namely teachers and school administrators (Portes & Rivas, 2011). Alba & Nee (2003) point out in their research, "The challenge is to avoid the suggestion, implicit in the old melting-pot perspective, that assimilation essentially means imposing the dominant culture on newcomers" (as cited in Portes & Rivas, 2011, p. 223). As previously mentioned, Latino immigrant males are at an educational disadvantage not only within other ethnic groups but also, face gender obstacles within their groups.

Theoretical Rationale

Valdes (1998) explains, "LatCrit has been defined as 'the emerging field of legal scholarship that examines critically the social and legal positioning of Latinas/Latinos, especially Latinas/Latinos within the United States, to help rectify the shortcomings of existing social and legal conditions'" (Fernandez, 2002, p. 47). "Psychological resilience theory has been used to explain the processes used by Latino immigrant males to overcome their challenges, traumatic experiences, and the negative paths associated with those risks" (Perez, 2009, p. 153). The cultural, ecological theory suggested by Ogbu (1974) differentiates between voluntary and involuntary immigrants (Conchas, 2001, p. 477).

Ogbu (1974) explains that voluntary Latino immigrants immigrate to the United States on their terms. This voluntary process allows these immigrants to have a different outlook in their

new environments and assimilate easier to the new culture. On the other hand, Ogbu (1974) describes the internal conflicts in Latin American countries that drive their population to leave their homes and environment. Therefore, the immigration of these people to the United States becomes involuntary but more of necessity. These people leave their countries of origin because they are escaping the violence and armed conflicts, in some cases, to be able to survive and to provide for their children (Ogbu, 1974).

Although, this theory does not necessarily explain how some Latino immigrant students succeed while others do not, it is important to understand the reasons for which they immigrate to the U.S. and individual motivation factors that might help explain these students' success, or the lack thereof (Conchas, 2001). For instance, Latino immigrants that involuntarily immigrated to the United States might feel that they will never attain the academic success achieved by their peers (Conchas, 2001, p. 477). On the other hand, "Latino immigrants that voluntarily moved to the United States despite the discrimination practices against them feel that their situation in the U.S. is still better than that of their home country" (Conchas, 2001, p. 477). These theories offer insight into the educational challenges and achievement of Latino immigrant male students.

Critical Latino Theory (LatCrit)

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Critical Latino Theory (LatCrit) have a similar framework that helps explain the injustices suffered by Latino male students as they try to assimilate to the environment (Davila & Aviles de Bradley, 2010). CRT and LatCrit allow for the recognition of our shared experiences of oppression and subordination while simultaneously recognizing and supporting areas of divergence (Davila & Aviles de Bradley, 2010). LatCrit focuses on those issues commonly encountered by Latino immigrant male students such as "segregated schools, unequal educational opportunities, no academic, financial support,

vocational classes, advanced placement courses, just to name a few" (Davila & Aviles de Bradley, 2010, p. 47).

Psychological Resiliency Theory

"Resilience theory, though it is concerned with risk exposure among adolescents, is focused more on strengths rather than deficits and understanding healthy development in spite of high-risk exposure" (William Perez, 2009, p. 154). Resiliency theory takes into account the social and environmental factors that are highly associated with the characteristics that might determine success such as motivation (William Perez, 2009). Bernard (1995) reports the "importance of personal characteristics in resilience such as social competence, problem-solving skills, and autonomy, a sense of purpose and future, and high positive expectations" (Perez, 2009, p. 154).

Werner and Smith (1992), explain that "resilient students share similar personality characteristics associated with good communication skills, a sense of responsibility, they are goal oriented, concern for others, a positive self-concept, and self-motivation" (Perez, 2009, p. 154). Resilient adolescents tend to show more positive attitudes towards their schooling, despite the challenges encountered (Perez, 2009). Among Latino immigrant males, the family has been a factor in the development of resiliency that encourages students to do well academically (Perez, 2009).

Cultural Ecological Theory

The Cultural Ecological Theory identifies characteristics to achieve success between two groups of immigrants: voluntary and involuntary (Conchas, 2001). "This theory considers the broad societal and school factors as well as the dynamics within the minority communities. Ecology is the 'setting,' 'environment,' or 'world' of people (minorities), and 'cultural,' broadly,

refers to the way people (in this case the minorities) see their world and behave in it" (Ogbu & Simons, 1998, p. 158). The "setting" component of this theory focuses on the pedagogical policies and mistreatment of Latino immigrant students and their return on the educational investment (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). The second part of this theory addresses issues associated with perceptions of Latino immigrant students on the educational opportunities offered to them. Among these problems are weak cognitive skills and a lack of interest in education from parents (Ogbu & Simons, 1998, p. 158).

Summary

Young African American and Latino men face a plethora of factors that threaten a positive association with their group, social, and racial identity. As a result, these factors in society have the potential to affect their self-esteem (Howard, 2008). To cope with the psychological effects of slavery or the social injustice issues of the development of the social identity and social group affiliations, African American men have and still need to be both attached and detached from mainstream culture (Medina, 2012). African American and Latino

men must try at all cost to avoid internalized racism. Internal racism has been shown to lead to a host of adverse outcomes such as hypertension, sleep disturbance, obesity and substance abuse in African American men (Johnson & Greene, 1991).

Our current society and the media have the tendency of depicting young African American males as either; athletes, entertainers, or criminals (Mosley, 1972). As a result, these stereotypes have created a social injustice issue of the development of the social identity and social group affiliations of the young African American male (Hare & Hare, 1991). “African Americans [African Americans] frequently have no clear, positive, or realistic adult ambition...they wish to succeed, but have no clear notion of how or what that will entail for them” (Hare & Hare, 1991, p.10). Invariably, they will have extreme difficulty finding role models (Hare & Hare, 1991). African American and Latino men cannot relate to Malcolm X, Ella Barker, Barbara Jordan, or James Baldwin because these are giants of the past (Bell, 2010). African American males need positive role models for the present (Bell, 2010).

The influx of African American and Latino immigrant male students into American schools will continue to take place, and the implementation of a support system will be essential for the academic and social achievement of these students. These minority group of students shares the plight of challenges on their road to success. It is imperative these students receive the educational, social, and economic opportunities as they try to become productive members of society. It will be helpful for educators and teachers to be familiar with the differences in culture and language and to understand that parental involvement tends to be lower for these students than that of their counterparts.

In understanding these students' needs, educators and schools' leaders must be willing to change their current ways of thinking about educating these African American and Latino

immigrant males. It is also necessary that data is analyzed in determining those areas such as labor force and higher education participation of these students to create programs that facilitate the access of these students to jobs and higher education institutions. Research has shown that there must be an improvement in educational programs that serve these students which create a safe and effective learning environment to help them achieve social and academic success.

Noguera (2006) explains, students of color find themselves at a disadvantage as they navigate the educational system. This limited access to education contributes to their inability to change their current and future economic opportunities. Therefore, the responsibility falls on the school system to provide African American and Latino immigrant males with the social and educational opportunities for success.

Chapter III

Methods

As part of the qualitative tradition, the role and function of the researcher are subject to scrutiny and evaluation. Given that participant interviews will provide the data, the researchers plan to serve as the primary instrument for data collection (Marshall & Rossman, 1995; S. B. Merriam, 1998). As such, the researchers' perspectives, assumptions, biases, and skills are integral to the construction of this qualitative research project and are presented here as part of the overall research design (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). One of the researchers is an African American male who has worked as a school administrator, high school teacher, coach, and

mentor. The researcher has worked with at-risk African American males in several capacities. The researcher's experiences add credibility to the findings. The second researcher is a Latino immigrant male with degrees in psychology and education, experience in mentoring At-Risk students, and currently working as an assistant principal and is a current immigrant that attended secondary public school in the United States. The third researcher is a caucasian male with a science background currently working as an assistant principal. He has a wealth of experience ranging from coaching, mentoring and facilitating services for at-risk youth, to curriculum development and professional development assisting with the growth of educators. The diversity in cultural backgrounds and variety of experience exhibited by the researchers provides a wide angle lens from which the data will be analyzed.

The researchers' aimed to develop a trustworthy study. Establishing trustworthiness involves procedures for attaining credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Stringer, 2014). Credibility is the plausibility and integrity of a study. The researchers aim to develop credibility by providing the transcripts and information gathered to the participants to ensure accuracy throughout the data collecting process. Transferability is whether or not results might be applied to other contexts than the research setting (Stringer, 2014). The setting for this study was interviews followed up with a survey identifying and rating themes developed through the interview process. Dependability is when research processes are clearly defined and open to scrutiny. All of the research and data collected was presented to the participants and any questions or concerns were addressed prior to the end of the study period. Lastly, confirmability is the outcomes of the study are demonstrably drawn from the data (Stringer, 2014). The themes developed from the interviews were surveyed by the participants, these themes came directly from common information provided to the researchers from the participants. Trustworthiness,

therefore, is established by recording and reviewing the research procedures themselves to determine the extent to which they ensure that the phenomena studied are accurately and adequately represented (Stringer, 2014).

This study aimed to identify those barriers that hindered and those areas that propelled African American and Latino immigrant males' success beyond high school. This chapter is comprised of four significant areas related to the overall methodology of the project: (a) research design, (b) participant selection, (c) data collection and management, and (d) data analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Socio-economic background, family educational background, family values on education and students' involvement in extracurricular activities in school and community will be taken into consideration. The individual participants' interviews will represent the qualitative methods utilized by this mixed methods study, which sought to address those factors influencing the success of African American and Latino immigrant males at the secondary level and beyond. After the interviews were analyzed, the responses of the participants were triangulated, and the participants completed a follow up survey. The triangulation process increases the credibility and validity of the results, as well as ensures the data collected is comprehensive and well developed. Triangulating the data after conducting the interviews and following up with a survey develops "consistency in finding because they are generated by different data collection methods" (Patton 2001).

Qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings and "where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" (Patton, 2001, p. 39). The strength of qualitative research derives from the methodological intent to build accounts that more clearly represent the experience, perspective, and voice of those studied (Stringer, 2014).

The selection and the demographics of the participants for this mixed methods study was limited to academically and career successful African American and Latino immigrant males currently participating in the job market. Creswell (2002) suggests that purposive sampling seeks to select participants for a variety of purposes. These include people who represent the diverse perspectives found in any social context (maximal variation sampling), particularly troublesome or enlightening cases (extreme case sampling) and participants who are "typical" of people in the setting (typical sampling), or participants who have particular knowledge related to the issue studied (theory or concept sampling) (Stringer, 2014).

The participants are deemed successful if they have graduated from high school and are now employed in a high skilled position such as:

- Long-term on-the-job training lasting one or more years;
- Work experience in a related occupation;
- Post-secondary vocational training;
- Associate's degree;
- Bachelor's degree;
- Master's degree;
- Doctoral degree; or
- First professional degree (e.g., M.D. J.D).

The materials used to identify participants included personal data collected from the participants through a demographic profile (appendix B) information to be collected will include; race, age, employment status, degrees, and certifications. This data will be collected through the interviews with the participants of the study. The initial demographic profile administered to the participants will attempt to gain an understanding of the participants educational, vocational, and

career development.

Participants

A total of ten participants, (n=10: age range 18-40) five African American and five Latino immigrant males, collected through convenience sampling were selected for this study. The participants did not receive any compensation for their participation in the study. All participants were employed, and hold at a minimum a high school diploma. Participants were given a preliminary survey to gather information about their age, occupation, education level and race.

Once selected for the study an initial meeting with the participants was held in person to discuss the purpose of the study and to answer any questions the participants may have before participating in the study. Participants were interviewed using a questionnaire that includes five questions related to their educational experiences. The purpose of the interviews is to get direct feedback from participants regarding their experiences toward their career attainment. For validation purposes, all data was triangulated, and transcribed and then shared with the participants to ensure that information is true to the words and experiences of the participants.

Each step of the procedure was completed once during the survey timeline of six weeks. At the end of the survey period, all data was analyzed and evaluated. The evaluation process consisted of comparing the common themes developed between the men to see what characteristics had the most impact on their success. Extracurricular activities and motivational factors will also be assessed to determine if a relationship exist between extracurricular participation, motivation and the academic achievement of African American and Latino immigrant males. The results of this study concentrate solely on African American and Latino immigrant males. This study was conducted over a six-week period. Participants had the right

to withdraw from the study at any time. It is important to note that participants' information will be confidential and not shared for any purposes.

Materials

The participants were provided a consent form (see appendix A), which contained the purpose of the research, to participate in the study and that gives permission to the researcher to record the interview. The individual interviews with the participants were taped using a portable digital recorder and backup recorders such as a cellphone or laptop, the interviews lasted between twenty-five and sixty minutes. However, the actual software that will be utilized to transcribe the recorded interviews will be a software called Audacity. "Audacity is a free, easy-to-use, multi-track audio editor and recorder for Windows, Mac OS X, GNU/Linux and other operating systems ("Audacity," 2016).

Procedure

The researchers developed seven open-ended questions that will lead to more questions during the interview process. The interview questions were developed to address the research questions;

1. What types of educational experiences do successful African American and Latino Immigrant males perceive to have contributed to their achievement?
2. What barriers did African American and Latino Immigrant males perceive to have to overcome throughout their academic career and what do they attribute to successfully navigating through those challenges?

Upon receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board at Lynn University, the researchers contacted the participants for voluntarily participation in the study. After confirmation of participating, interviews were scheduled and a consent form was presented and

signed prior to the interview by each participant. The participants were informed that the interviews would last approximately 60-90 minutes. The data for this study was collected by conducting an in depth audio-taped interview with each participant. Each participant responded to approximately seven semi-structured, open-ended interview questions to gather as much information from each participant on his perception of factors they attribute to their success. The interviews commenced with a review of the purpose of the study, an assertion of confidentiality, and description of participant's rights. During the interviews, to help ensure understanding of interviewee responses, the researchers repeated answers and use probing questions to obtain clarification. The researchers' recorded notes from the interview were transcribed into a Word document after each interview concluded. The researchers returned the interview transcripts to each participant for feedback and clarification. The data collected from each of the participants including the audio files from the interviews was be stored on each of the researcher's laptops and on a portable hard drive, secured with a password. None of the data collected will be accessible by anyone other than the researchers and the researcher's committee members. At the conclusion of all the interviews, data was analyzed to identify common themes between the participants. A Likert scale survey was developed and sent to the participants so they can rate each theme as it relates to their success. The data collected in the interviews and through the surveys were analyzed to answer the research questions.

The first phase, a qualitative research design, consists of open-ended questions given to focus groups made up from the convenient sample. The study will consist of 10 separate interviews, five for Latino Immigrant Males, and the other five for African American Males. The interview sessions will be guided by several grand tour questions. The benefits of grand tour questions allows the researcher to understand the participants' descriptions of their experiences

as they revisit those experiences through some *time* period (Spradley, 1979). The study aims to explore and expose, from African American males as well as Latino immigrant males, their feelings, thoughts and lived experiences about their educational attainment at different stages in their career. Even though observation is a data collection approach common to qualitative research, it does not allow researchers to ask specific questions as to perspectives and experiences as an interview protocol does (Merriam, 2009), and with the participants already having graduated from high school observing them in an educational setting is not available. The objective of the interviews are to identify common factors successful African American and Latino Immigrant males share.

The interviews are recorded by electronic device and transcribed by the researchers. Participants are provided copies of the transcription to ensure validity of the collected data. The researchers will rely on the Critical Race and Entity Theories to examine commonalities that participants attribute to their success regarding their academic experience, educational aspirations and expectations, future career and educational plans, peer relationships, extracurricular activities, student-teacher interactions, parental support and involvement, family formation, and work experience.

The next phase of the study consist of data triangulation, the coding of participants, and a follow up survey. After the responses of the participants have been transcribed. The data will be triangulated, and a likert scale will be created and the participants will rate the common themes found throughout the interview process. Data triangulation will be used to determine if there is a correlation between factors attributed to the participants success. This survey created after the focus group interviews, transcription and triangulation of the data will provide a statistical analysis for the ranking of common themes participants attribute to their success. For data

presentation and the privacy of participants all data will be coded based on the individual participants. Participants names will throughout the study will be random numbers 1-10 with the addition of the first letter of their race. This will be assigned to each participant at the beginning of the study. The codes utilized serve as a way to “label, compile and organize the data” (Saldaña 2015).

Role of Researcher

To help eliminate the researchers’ biases on African American and Latino immigrant subgroups, the African American researcher will interview the Latino immigrant participants and the Latino researcher will interview the African American group. The participants in the study will also provide their written answers to survey questions which engage the participants in the participatory process. This then adds credibility to the study. "A greater degree of credibility is gained through the use of participatory processes. When research participants engage in the processes of collecting and analyzing data, they are in a position to constantly check and extend the veracity of the material with which they are working.

As they read the data from their interviews, they not only "see themselves" more clearly (the looking-glass-self), but are drawn to extend and clarify the events they describe" (Stringer, 2014). The researchers will transcribe the interviews and triangulate the data collected. Once this process has been completed, the researchers identify themes that will guide this study and the development of the checklist that will help school administrators in the application and development of strategies to help these students.

Summary

This chapter examined the methodology used in executing this research project. The mixed methods study involved presenting the experiences, perspectives, and actions of these individuals truthfully, with respect, and with rigor. The principles, methods, and tools used for that purpose were discussed in detail for several reasons: (a) to inform the reader of the biases and perspectives of the researcher, thereby establishing a basis for a contextual evaluation of the findings and conclusions; (b) to provide a framework for the research methods employed, including consideration of the issues that may help or harm a similar inquiry; and (c) to differentiate this research report from mere journalism by indicating a thorough and purposeful procedure for handling the data, making interpretations, and drawing conclusions.

The overall results will help school administrators, teachers, parents, and coaches to create a checklist that high schools can apply in development a program that addresses the needs of African American and Latino immigrant males. The ultimate goal of this checklist will be to help school administrators and staff provide these students and their parents with the opportunities that these individuals need in acquiring the skills that will prepare them to achieve success in school and beyond.

CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The findings of this study were developed through in-depth interviews with African American males and Latino Immigrant Males. The purpose of this mixed method study was to examine the perceived issues Latino immigrant males and African American males face and how they managed to circumvent those barriers. The study focused on their perceptions of their total educational experience, what they perceived as obstacles and factors they attribute to their success. The goal of the study was to gain a better understanding of factors that contribute to the high school graduation and the academic achievement gap between African American, Latino and White males (Noguera, 2006). This was completed by interviewing five successful African American males and five successful Latino Immigrant males currently employed in Palm Beach and Broward County. Ethical issues with this study were carefully considered and examined. The study was approved by Lynn University Institutional Review Board as a human subject research study (see Appendix). The ten participants were briefed about the study and signed consent forms. Confidentiality was maintained, and the names and schools of the participants are not included in the results. Participants were allowed to pick a place in which they felt comfortable and had some privacy to ensure confidentiality. A private conference room was provided in the local afterschool program building for many of the interviews. Responses obtained from the interviews were transcribed so that the replies could be evaluated and themes extracted. Interviews lasted about an hour.

Participant Information

Each participant chosen was an African American or Latino Immigrant male over the age 18 years old, had graduated high school, and at a minimum enrolled and was on pace to receive a college degree. To ensure confidentiality, the participants were coded as AAM Participant 1 through AAM Participant 5, and LIM Participant 1 through LIM participant 5.

AAM participant 1 is an African American male with both parents of African descent. 25 years of age with a bachelor's and Master's degree in accounting from a State University. AAM participant 1 is currently employed in a public accounting firm. He was engaged throughout the interview process and provided insightful answers to all of the interview questions.

AAM participant 2 is an African American with one parent of African descent and the other parent of Asian descent. AAM participant 2 is 32 years of age with a Bachelor's degree, EMT certification, and Fire Fighter certification. He is currently employed as a Firefighter and holds the title of "Driver engineer." AAM participant 2 was also very active in the interview process and provided thoughtful insight to each interview question.

AAM participant 3 is an African American male with both parents of African descent. AAM participant 3 is 55 years of age and has received a Bachelor's degree as well as a Paralegal certification. AAM participant 3 is a Marine veteran and is currently a police officer more specifically the Media Spokesperson for the local county Sheriff's department. He was an active participant in the interview process and provides perceptive answers to all of the interview questions.

AAM participant 4 is an African American male with both parents of African descent. AAM participant 4 is 37 years of age and holds a technical certificate in radiology. AAM participant 4 is a special procedures technician at a local hospital in south Florida. He was an active participant in the interview process and provides perceptive answers to all of the interview

questions.

AAM participant 5 is an African American male with one parent of African descent and the other of European descent. AAM participant 5 is 38 years of age and holds an Associate's Degree. AAM participant 5 is a web designer working for a successful web design company in South Florida. He was an active participant in the interview process and provides perceptive answers to all of the interview questions.

Participant Background Information

All participants graduated from high school and have achieved a certain level of success beyond the classroom and in their field of work. The table below describes the age, education level, current employment, and country of origin of the participants. To start, all participants completed their high school education and went onto obtaining different degrees in higher education. All participants are currently employed and two of them are currently pursuing a higher degree of education.

Table 11 summarizes the background information from the participants in this study.

	Age	Bachelor's Degree	Associate's Degree	Master's Degree	Ph.D/Ed.D/ Other	Current Job	Country of Origin
LIM 1	20+	X			Pre-Law	Intern at a	Cuba

					Student at an Ivy League University	Law Firm	
LIM 2	50+		X			Law Enforcement	Honduras
LIM 3	30+	X	X			Real Estate	Nicaragua
LIM 4	30+	X	X			Car Insurance Sales	Nicaragua
LIM 5	30+	In-Progress	X			Federal Government (Immigration Services)	Nicaragua
AAM 1	20+	X		X		Accountant	United States
AAM 2	30+	X			EMT/Firefighter Certification	EMT/Firefighter	United States
AAM 3	50+	X			Paralegal Certification	Police Officer	United States
AAM 4	30+		X		Radiology Technician/MRI Technician Certificate	Special Procedures Technician	United States
AAM 5	30+		X			Web Designer	United States

The participants' responses gathered through the individual interviews recorded and transcribed, show similarities and differences in what each considered to have played a crucial role in their academic success and preparation for their current job. The questions created, were developed with the sole purpose of understanding those factors that most influenced each of the participants' overall academic success at the secondary level.

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Question 1. Please share with me your academic journey and how you arrived at your current position?

This question was asked to obtain basic demographic, academic path, and other employment information from each of the participants. Among the LIM participants, their arrival to the United States from their home country at an early age helped shaped their thinking processes and those of their families. The LIM participants shared certain commonalities in their goals to attain success and to learn the English language to succeed inside and outside the school setting. Some of the participants stated that their high school education did play a role in their current position while others stated that it had little or no positive influence at all. Table 11 shown in the previous page, summarizes the achieved academic level, employment, and country of origin for each of the participants. Among the African American Male (AAM) population several motivating factors helped to shape their journey. Just like the LIM participants some of the participants stated that their high school education did play a role in their current position while other state that in had little or no influence at all.

Question 2. Who has played a significant role in your ability to be academically successful? How?

The commonalities found among the AAM and LIM participants for this question was strikingly similar. One hundred percent of the participants stated that a “role model” had played a significant role in their abilities to attain academic achievement. The most commonly identified role model by most of the participants were associated with an immediate family member (i.e., father, mother, sibling, etc.). However, one of the LIM participants stated that due a deceased parent and the remaining parent being unfamiliar with the educational system did not have a positive influence in his high school success as previously assumed that at least one

immediate family member positively influenced the participants in their high school academic journey.

Table 12 shows the “role model” identified by each of the participants that each stated contributed to his academic success at the secondary level. For the exception of one LIM participant that stated he did not have a role model at home or outside the home environment that played a significant role in his overall academic success.

	Parent	Sibling	Grandparent	Other Family Member (i.e., aunt, cousin, etc.)	Other
LIM 1			Grandma		
LIM 2	Mother				
LIM 3	Father				
LIM 4	Mother				
LIM 5					Self-motivated
AAM 1	Mother	Sister			
AAM 2	Parents				
AAM 3	Mother	Sister			
AAM 4	Parents			2 older cousins	
AAM 5	Parents				

The association of the “role model” to a close family member was somewhat assumed to be an important factor in the success of AAM and LIM participants. However, throughout the interview process some of the participants stated that at different stages of their secondary academic career there were a number of “role models” such as teachers, administrators, and friends that in ways played a role in their academic success. But, when asked about the most

influential “role model” throughout their academic career the LIM participants mentioned a primary family member. This is also the same for the AAM participants. 100 percent of the participants stated that a positive role model significantly influenced them throughout their academic journey. The commonality here seemed to be the role models either being both parents or the mother, but never just the father. AAM participants also identified other role models in; teachers, counselors, coaches, and administrators who took an interest in them and seemed to really care that they succeeded.

Question 3. What barriers or obstacles did you have to overcome to achieve success?

Prior to conducting the individual interviews, there were several assumptions by the researchers that some factors positively influenced the success of each of these individuals. In the same manner, it was perceived by the researchers that there were possible barriers or challenges that had hindered the academic and professional success of AAM, and LIM throughout their high school journey.

Table 13 for instance, shows the barriers identified by the AAM and LIM participants that they experienced during their high school journey.

	Low Teacher/ School Expectations	Low Socioeconomic Status (LSES)	Language Differences	Unfamiliarity with the School System	Negative Stereotypes	Lack of Self - Motivation / Direction
LIM 1			X	X	X	
LIM 2	X	X		X	X	

LIM 3	X		X			
LIM 4	X	X		X		
LIM 5	X	X	X	X		
AAM 1	X	X		X	X	X
AAM 2	X			X		X
AAM 3	X	X		X	X	
AAM 4	X	X		X	X	X
AAM 5	X	X		X	X	X

The LIM and AAM participants stated that those identified barriers became more obvious as they matured and progressed through high school, they stated that during their high school years they did not know anything different but looking back those barriers did in fact hinder some of their social and academic opportunities. The LIM participants' low SES during high school according to them, limited their access to technology and participation in extracurricular activities. For example, having to work after school to help support their family limited their participation in academic and extracurricular activities such as sports that required staying on campus after school, involvement in clubs that required of them to participate on weekend events, etc. For AAM they did not notice they were low SES until they went to college and started living on their own, they assumed to a certain extent everyone lived the same. One of the biggest reported barriers for the AAM participants seemed to be teacher and school expectations.

Question 4. What factors would you say had the greatest impact on overcoming those barriers?

Among the AAM and LIM participants the identified barriers were a source of motivation to try to achieve academic and professional success. Some of the participants stated

that given their limited economic resources, they were driven to learn or improve on skills such as organization, developing good study habits, and on being more responsible as their families depended on them. Also, among the factors mentioned that helped these LIM participants were associated with their family's high expectations to succeed as newcomers in the United States. For the AAM participants, it was either an intrinsic motivation to change their environment or high expectations set at home to be successful. It was the constant reminder for 100 percent of these participants, that their parents worked hard and sacrificed a lot for them to be successful. LIM parents had to come to the United States so their children could have a better future. For the AAM participants, it was parents and caretakers sheltering them from their environment and ensuring they had everything they needed to be successful. That may have included working several low paying jobs or sacrificing furthering their own education.

Question 5. Describe your high school, college and/or technical experience including: academics, extracurricular activities, social experiences, environmental factors and the culture of the school.

The LIM participants explained that their experiences throughout their high school years were limited due to circumstances outside the school setting that in a way forced them to get a job, becoming less active in school functions, and to having limited academic opportunities. However, for some of the LIM participants' experiences included participating in school clubs and organizations such as debate. Also, taking vocational training classes such as culinary and auto mechanics was part of their high school experience they attributed to be an "enriching" part during those years.

All (100%) of the AAM participants were involved in extracurricular activities in their school. 60 percent of the participants were involved in sports throughout high school. 100

percent of the participants were involved in at least one club or other organization. 80 percent of the AAM participants also received some sort of certification after attending college and obtaining a degree.

In reference to social experiences, some of the participants explained that being surrounded by a diverse group of people in school including students, teachers, and administrators was an opportunity to develop an appreciation for cultural differences. It also helped to teach them how to navigate the world as a minority. It taught them how to navigate the work environment comfortably where they may be one of the few people of color, and how to deal with different situations.

Question 6. What effect did your school environment have on your ability to achieve academic success?

The school environment for several of these LIM participants did have a positive effect on their overall academic and social success. During the interviews, the participants were asked to describe their environment and how influential it was in achieving academic success throughout their high school career. Again, the researchers' perspective was that the school environment did in fact have a positive influence in their high school success.

Table 14 lists the types of school environment that LIM participants identified to have played a crucial role in their high school success.

Participants	School Environment	Influential	Non-Influential
LIM 1	Diverse	X	
LIM 2	Challenging	X	
LIM 3	Positive	X	
LIM 4	Diverse	X	
LIM 5	Challenging		X

AAM 1	Diverse		X
AAM 2	Challenging	X	
AAM 3	Diverse	X	
AAM 4	Positive	X	
AAM 5	Positive/Engaging	X	

In accordance with the preconceived notions that the school environment has a positive influence on the academic success of these students, it was confirmed that for these LIMs their school environment helped and guided them in developing the skills needed to attain the desired academic and social success. Some of the LIMs in the study mentioned, that positive relationships with peers and teachers positively influenced their careers. 80 percent of the AAM participants noted that their school environment positively influenced their academic success. They also stated that positive school officials worked with the to help create that positive environment.

Question 7. How would you describe your educational experience in terms of preparation for your current position and life after school?

This question appeared to be more challenging to some of the AAM and LIM participants, for some of the participants interviewed it seemed that it was more difficult to make a connection between their high school experience and their current position. For others the connection was easy.

Table 15 shows some of the responses from several of the participants interviewed.

LIM 3	“My high school experience did not help me at all to do the job at do today...”
LIM 5	“It was the military that provided me with the skills I need today for my job...”

AAM 1	“My high school, and college curriculum did not teach me what I needed to know in the workplace...”
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However, in the same manner some AAM and LIM participants stated that their high school experiences did play a role in the skills needed that are applied in their current jobs.

Table 16 shows the response from four of the participants to this question.

LIM 1	“Participating in debate club helped me see others’ point of view and to express my thoughts...”
LIM 4	“Access to technical courses helped learn the computer and technical skills that I need for my job today...”
AAM 3	“being able to express yourself through good writing is a major skill in my profession, same goes for the ability to learn new skills which is what high school is all about.”
AAM 2	“School minus the curriculum aspect taught me how to follow rules, follow a chain of command, basic organizational skills and even things as simple as how to be on time all are workplace, and life skills.”

Based on these responses, it appears that academic guidance is an important factor in helping student identify career goals.

Major Themes Developed From Individual Interviews

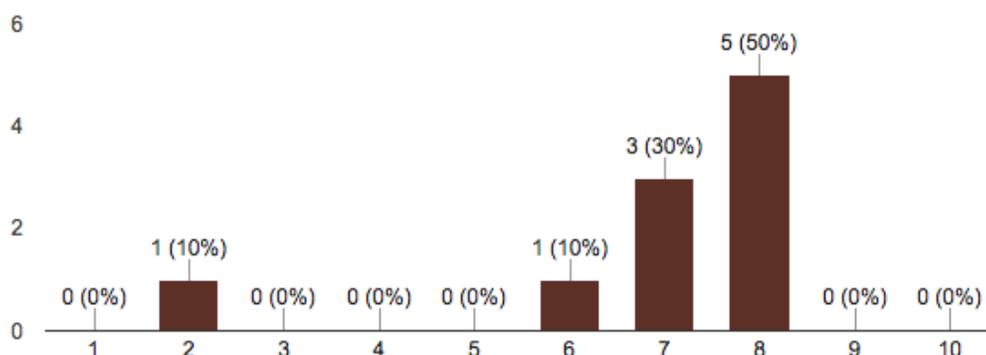
The first and most common theme identified by participants throughout this study, is a supportive home environment. Participant responses to interviews identified a supportive home environment as one of the most influential factors in driving them to be academically successful and become productive members of society. The second most influential factor for these participants was the presence of a positive role model. Each of the interview participants stated that a positive “Role model” had played a significant role in their ability to attain academic achievement. The most commonly identified role models were associated with an immediate

family member (i.e., father, mother, sibling, etc.). Other themes identified by the participants as factors attributed to their success included supplemental reading, intrinsic motivation, competition, positive school environment, access to accelerated coursework, extracurricular activities, influential peer relationships, and a culture of high expectations. Each participant ranked the themes in order from 1 - 10 with 1 being the least influential to 10 being the most influential.

Sub-Theme 1. Positive Role Model

The LIM and AAM participants in this study, identified having a positive role model throughout their high school journey as part of the success each of them attained during this time. However, as previously mentioned some of the participants stated that different role models influenced their success at different stages during their career as students and then later as professionals. In the Likert-Scale Survey, participants were asked to identify the level of importance of a role model in their academic and professional success.

Positive Role Model (10 responses)



The 90% of the participants of this study rated the influence of a positive role model between the scale of six and eight, which would make it very or highly influential in their high

school journey. It is clear based on the results of the survey and the interviews, that having a positive role model positively influences the success of AAM and LIMs.

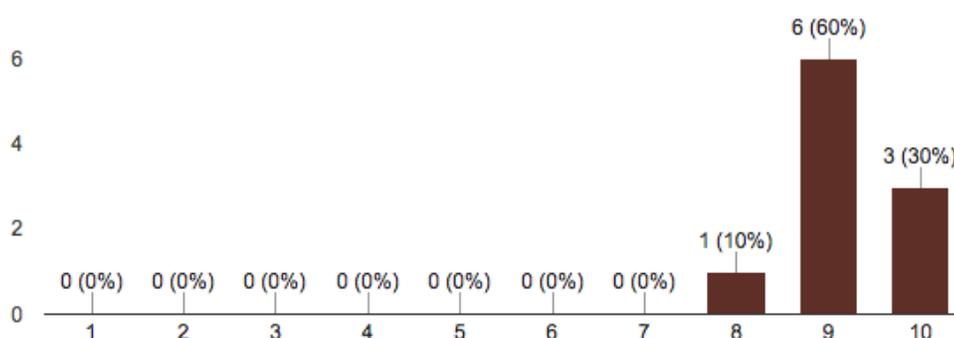
Sub-Theme 2. Supportive Home Environment

In our research throughout this study, a supportive home environment is an important factor in helping AAM and LIMs achieve academic and social success. The Likert Scale Survey shows that a supportive home environment is one, if not, the most most factor in driving these participants to become productive members of society.

LIM participants rated the importance of a positive home environment as the most influential aspect of their success throughout high school. Based on their responses, it can be assumed that a positive home environment can have the greatest positive impact on the academic and social achievement of AAM and LIMs.

Table 18 shows how participants of this study rated the influence of a Positive Home Environment.

Supportive Home Environment (10 responses)

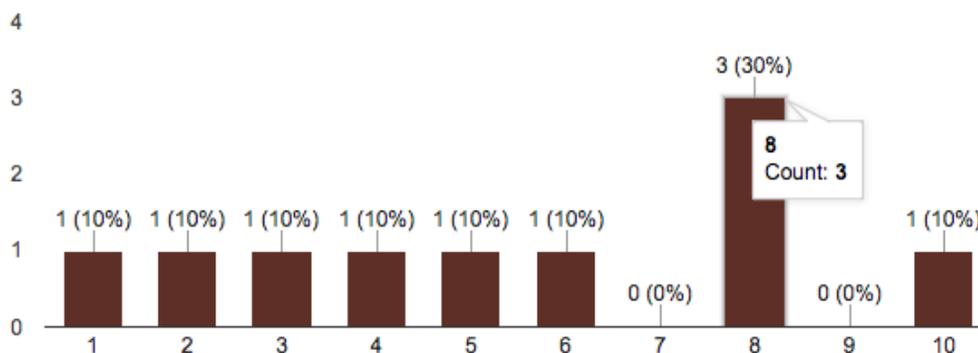


Sub-Theme 3. Positive School Environment

During the interviews, some of the participants went to explain the reasons why they thought that a positive school environment, regardless of any other difficulty students are facing,

it is an important factor that influenced their success. Other participants acknowledged the importance of a positive school environment but did not list it as one of the most influential factors.

Positive School Environment (10 responses)



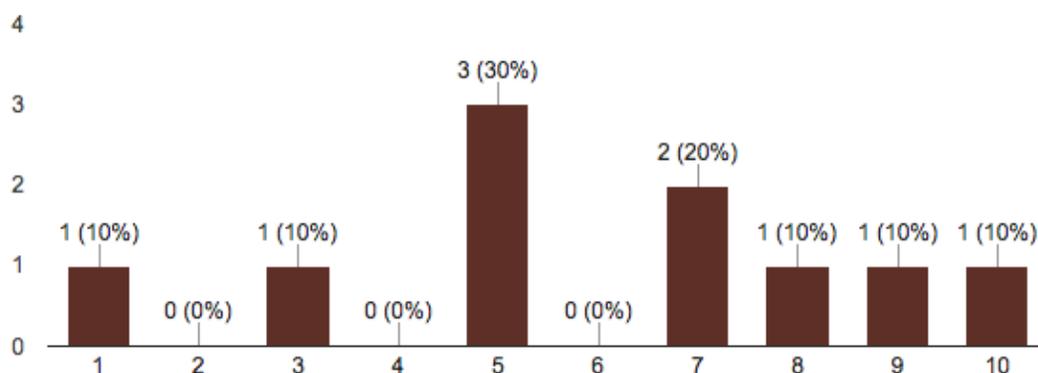
Sub-Theme 4. Supplemental Reading

Supplemental reading received different ratings by the study participants. For several of the participants, reading was not a very important aspect of their high school journey. However, for others, reading was pivotal in developing the skills needed to continue with their academic success.

Several participants did not think that reading was an important factor during their high school years, because it did not provide them with the immediate skills needed for their jobs at the time. Based on these responses, it can be assumed that the school and home environment are also part of the motivation to read. For instance, students with jobs have less time to dedicate to

reading as they are working jobs that for the most part require little to no reading.

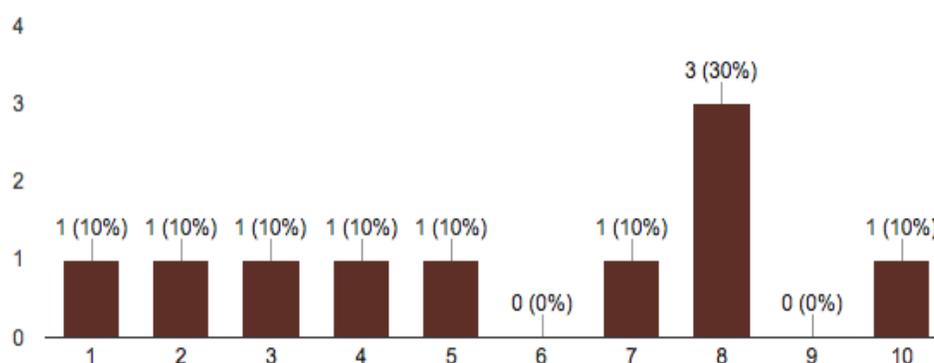
Supplemental Reading (10 responses)



Sub-Theme 5. Access to Accelerated Coursework

Accelerated work has been identified in past research as a crucial aspect of the education of all students, especially for the success of AAM and LIMs. However, the results from the survey were somewhat surprising as most of the participants rated the access to accelerated coursework thought as “somewhat influential” in their overall academic success. It can be assumed, that for the LIM study participants’ school setting and academic opportunities were somewhat limited and priorities were focused on possibly learning the English language.

Access to Accelerated Coursework (10 responses)



Sub-Theme 6. Extracurricular Activities

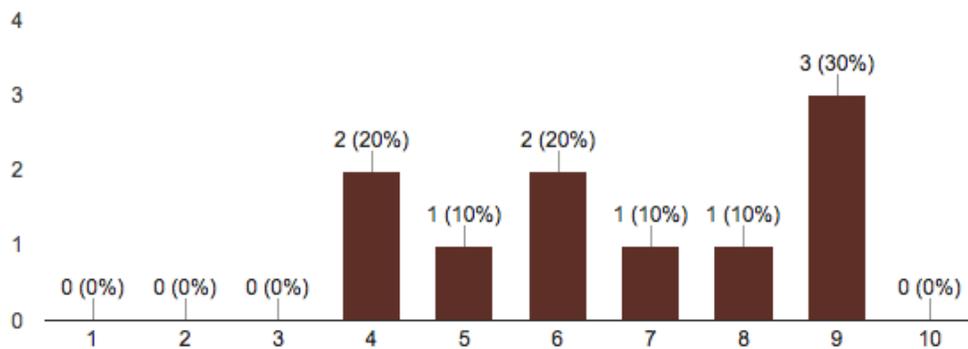
Extracurricular activities involved participating in sports and school events such participation in academic and social clubs. Based on the LIM participants' responses, it was clear that extracurricular activities had little influence on their overall success while in high school. When the LIM participants were asked about their participation in extracurricular activities, the responses varied,

"I never participate in any social club or activities. I was trying to learn English because Spanish is my first language and I still learning English." LIM 5

The LIM participants were asked about participation in their school's organization or clubs, some of them stated that that was simply never thought about it. This brings back the belief that the school environment simply was not created in a way that promoted this type of involvement from all students in school functions. This is not the case for AAMs. Every AAM

that participated in this study was involved in extracurricular activities.

Extracurricular Activities (10 responses)

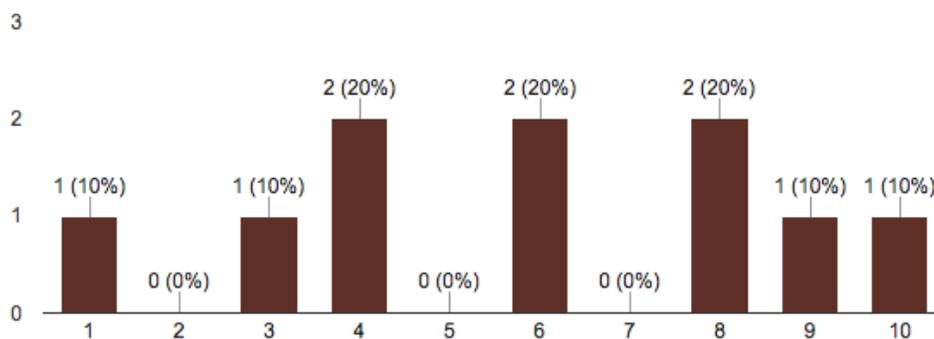


Sub-Theme 7. Culture of High Expectations

High expectations was a theme identified throughout the interviews as a factor that propelled the success of LIM participants. According to the participants, expectations at home and school were crucial in shaping these participants' academic and social path.

The survey results, indicate a varied response to the influence of a culture of high expectations.

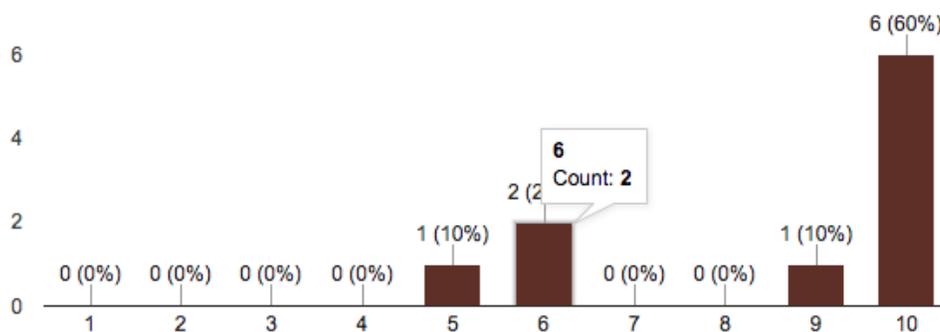
Culture of High Expectations (10 responses)



Sub-Theme 8. Self (Intrinsic) Motivation

It was assumed, that self motivation was going to be highly identified factor in the success of participants. Throughout the interviews, the participants stated that due to their parents' lack of familiarity with the educational system, or the motivation to change their circumstances they were intrinsically motivated learn to succeed. Their economic situation also was attributed to their self motivation, the participants explained that their parents' low SES was a reason for the participants' desire to work hard and to do their best to achieve a level of success that would allow them to financially help their families.

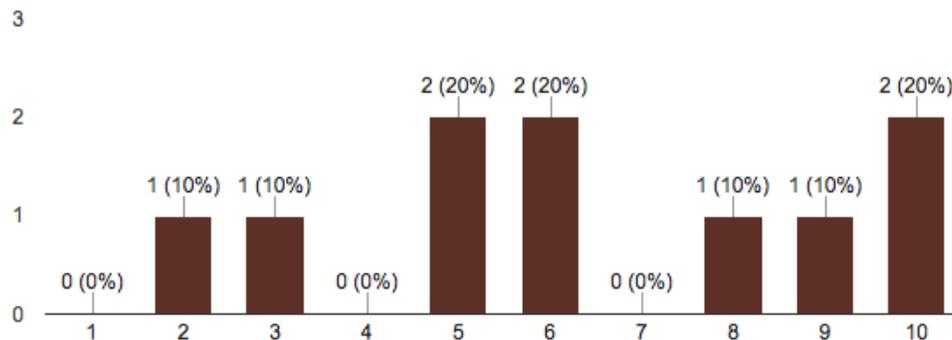
Self (Intrinsic) Motivation (10 responses)



Sub-Theme 9. Influential (Positive) Peer Relationships

Positive peer relationships was highly important throughout the participants high school journey. Although, it was not rated as the most influential aspect of their success, for LIM participants building and maintaining positive peer relationships was important in learning and navigating the school environment. Also, due to the lack of at times family support, friendships were one of the key aspects the LIM participants relied on to achieve some success.

Influential (Positive) Peer Relationships (10 responses)

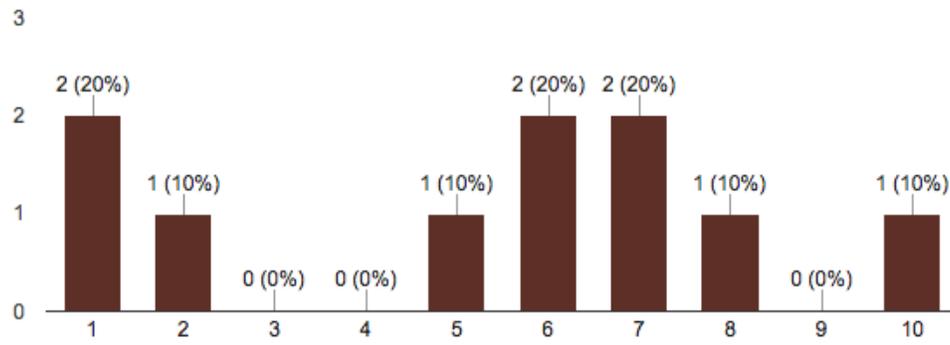


The individual interviews reinforce the researchers' theories that at one point during the participant's' academic journey, there was a meaningful and influential peer relationship that contributed to success of each of the participants.

Sub-Theme 10. Competition

During the interviews, several of the participants identified that their school environment was academically competitive. Therefore, during the Success Attributes Survey the participants were asked to help identify how influential the competitive environment was in quest for academic success. Based on the responses, several of the participants stated that the fast-paced and competitive environment motivated them to work harder and improve on their skills to succeed. While others did not feel that competition played a major role in their success.

Competition (10 responses)



Summary

Analyses of data associated with the two research questions were presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 4 contains tables illustrating the analyses of data for clarification. Utilizing the CPED model the researchers developed a manual for school districts and schools that provides a summary of the findings and interpretation of the data analyses in addition to recommendations for future research and conclusions. This study identified the perceived barriers that hinder the success of African American and Latino Immigrant males. This study also identified several factors successful African American and Latino Immigrant males attribute to their success. The researchers have developed a manual utilizing these themes and barriers to increase the academic success of of these two minority groups.

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(Appendix A)

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

1. Please share with me your academic journey and how you arrived at your current position?
2. Who has played a significant role in your ability to be academically successful? How?
3. What barriers or obstacles did you have to overcome to achieve success?
4. What factors would you say had the greatest impact on overcoming those barriers?
5. Describe your high school, college and/or technical experience including: academics, extracurricular activities, social experiences, environmental factors and the culture of the school.
6. What effect did your school environment have on your ability to achieve academic success?
7. How would you describe your educational experience in terms of preparation for your current position and life after school?

(Appendix B)

Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study

Lynn University

The Educational Encounter-Storytelling of Successful African American and Latino Immigrant Male High School Graduates

Description of the research and your participation

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Moody Fuller and Melvin V. Hernandez. The purpose of this research is to identify effective strategies that can be utilized to help empower African American and Latino immigrant males in their search for success.

You will be part of a focus groups and that will be administered a survey and interview.

Risks and discomforts

There are no known risks associated with this research.

Potential benefits

The identification of educational barriers African American and Latino immigrant males experience throughout their academic career at the secondary level. Also, the study aims at identifying strategies that schools and implement within their organization to help these students acquire the necessary skills to be successful in school and beyond.

Protection of confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report, we make public we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researchers will have access to the records. If we tape-record the interview, we will destroy the tape after it has been transcribed, which we anticipate will be within three months of its taping.

Voluntary participation

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide not to take part or to skip some of the questions, it will not affect

your current or future relationship with Lynn University. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

Contact information

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Moody Fuller at ----- or Melvin V. Hernandez at [REDACTED]. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Lynn University at -----

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____ **Date** _____

Your Name (printed) _____

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having the interview tape-recorded.

Your Signature _____ **Date** _____

Signature of person obtaining consent _____ **Date** _____

Printed name of person obtaining consent _____ **Date** _____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study.

The Educational Encounter · Storytelling of Successful African American and Latino Immigrant Male High School Graduates

APPLICATION AND PROTOCOL FOR REVIEW OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS OF A NEW PROJECT

IRB Project Number _____

Request for Exempt Status Expedited Review Convened Full-Board

IRB ACTION BY IRB CHAIR OR ANOTHER MEMBER OR MEMBERS DESIGNATED BY THE CHAIR

Exemption Status (See FORM 2): Approved -Approved w/provision(s)

Expedited Review (See FORM 3): Approved _- Approved w/provision(s) __ ,

Complete FORM 2 (Exempt Status, including categories for exempt status) and Resubmit

Complete FORM 3 (Expedited Review, including categories for expedited review) and Resubmit

Referred For Convened Full-Board Review

Comments:

Consent Required: No **Yes** Not Applicable Written Signed Consent forms must bear the research protocol expiration date of _____

Application to Continue/Renew is due:

(1) For an Expedited IRB Review, one_month prior to the due date for renewal

(2) For review of research with exempt status, by a College or School Annual Review of Research Committee

Other Comments:

IRB Reviewer: Title Date _____

Name of IRB Chair (Print) _____

Signature of IRB Chair _____ Date: ____ _

IRB ACTION by the CONVENEED FULL BOARD *If Applicable*

Date of IRB Review of Application and Research Protocol _____

IRB ACTION: Approved Approved w/provision(s) Not Approved Other

Comments:

Consent Required: No **Yes** Not Applicable Written Signed

Consent forms must bear the research protocol expiration date of _____

Application to Continue/Renew including an updated consent, is due:

(1) For a Convened Full-Board Review, two months prior to the due date for renewal

(2) For an Expedited IRB Review, one_month prior to the due date for renewal

(3) For review of research with exempt status, one_month prior to the due date for renewal

Other Comments:

Name of IRB Chair (Print) ____Dr. Robert W. Reich

Signature of IRB Chair



Date: March 3, 2017

10 factors successful African American males attribute to their success.

Melvin Bustamante, Moody Fuller, & Thomas Welter

African American male high school graduation rates are at least 15% lower than their White male counterparts (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). The graduation rates between black males and white males should be the same. Data indicates African American males have chronically high unemployment, are over-incarcerated, have different health conditions, and ultimately lower life expectations than any of the largest racial/ethnic and gender groups in the United States (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2007, 2009). The experience of African American males in America is unlike any other experience faced by other immigrants (Massey, 2007). Several factors are responsible for this plight, including lack of support systems including mentoring, access to higher level courses, and familiarity with the educational system (Santiago, 2015). The disparity in the graduation rates is a factor to consider as these students fail to acquire the necessary skills to succeed and compete in a globalized society (Santiago, 2015).

Current data identifies a plethora of issues hindering the academic success of African American males (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). A multitude of barriers and solutions have been researched and presented throughout the years. Even with all the research and proposed solutions, the academic achievement gap between African American and White males is becoming wider (William & Perez, 2009).

The academic and professional success of African-American males is crucial in them becoming productive members of their societies (Evans-Brown, 2015). A recent study took a

different approach and focused on the successful African American males and their perceptions of how they achieved their success. The Educational experiences of these African American males may give some insight on factors that drive them to rise above their challenges and to become productive members of their communities (Evans-Brown, 2015).

This study utilized Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Entity Theory (ET) in understanding the plight of these students. Many scholars use Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a theoretical framework for studying the impact of race, gender, and racism on African American students' experiences in the K-12 educational system. CRT assists in exposing natural barriers encountered by African-American males in high school and places the issue of racism in a broader context, including history, economics, and politics (DeCuir-Gunby, (2009).

In a mixed method study aimed to identify effective strategies that can be utilized to help empower African American males in their search for success, commonalities were identified through the interviews of successful African American males. Participants were deemed successful if they had graduated high school and employed in a position that either required extensive training or post-secondary degrees or certifications. The occupations for the participants in this study ranged from many different sectors and included but not limited to Lawyers, Police Officers, Firefighters, Web designer and accountants. The first and most common theme identified by participants throughout this study, is a supportive home environment with 100% of the participants listing a supportive home environment as the number one most influential factor or the second most influential factor (Bustamante, Fuller, & Welter 2017). Overall participant responses to interviews identified a supportive home environment as the most influential factor in driving them to be academically successful and become productive members of society.

The second most influential factor for these African American males was the presence of a positive role model (Bustamante, Fuller, & Welter 2017). One hundred percent of the participants stated that a positive “Role model” had played a significant role in their abilities to attain academic achievement. The most commonly identified role model were associated with an immediate family member (i.e., father, mother, sibling, etc.).

Other themes identified by successful black males as factors attributed to their success is supplemental reading, intrinsic motivation, competition, positive school environment, access to accelerated coursework, extracurricular activities, influential peer relationships, and a culture of high expectations (Bustamante, Fuller, & Welter 2017).

Studies have identified many barriers that hinder the success of African American males, this study identified several factors successful African American males attribute to their success. Perhaps school districts should develop a program utilizing these themes to increase the academic success of African American males.

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Secondary Level

In the last decade, there has been an influx of Latino Immigrant Males (LIMs) arriving at U.S. schools. The arrival of these LIMs has highlighted those areas in our educational system that need attention. Data (2004) shows that the number of Latino students enrolled in public schools has increased from 19 to 24 percent of all students (Santiago, 2015). Even more important, the Latino population is estimated to experience an increase by 2060 to approximately 129 million or 31% of the total U.S. population (Santiago, 2015, p. 4). As a result, it is imperative that schools begin addressing those areas of need if these LIMs are to be successful and to become productive members of the society in which they live. Unfortunately, LIMs are not achieving a similar success as their counterparts, White students (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).

LIMs are facing many challenges that hinder their ability to attain the academic success at the secondary levels for a variety of reasons. For instance, a lack of parental involvement, familiarity with the educational system, cultural differences and values, and language differences are among those barriers associated with the limited of academic success. A lack of cultural assimilation by Latino immigrant students causes disengagement between students and those who are trying to educate them, namely teachers and school administrators (Portes & Rivas, 2011).

There are several perceptions of Latino immigrant students held by the society, or the community in which they try to assimilate, among these are the following:

1. That they all have the same cultural values and norms;
2. That all speak the same language; and
3. That they all come to the U.S. with the same educational needs

(Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009).

However, despite those barriers faced by most of the LIMs, there are LIMs that have been able to overcome those challenges, have academically succeeded, and have become productive members of society. Valdes (1998) explains, "LatCrit has been defined as 'the emerging field of legal scholarship that examines critically the social and legal positioning of Latinas/Latinos, especially Latinas/Latinos within the United States, to help rectify the shortcomings of existing social and legal conditions'" (Fernandez, 2002, p. 47). "Psychological resilience theory has been used to explain the processes used by Latino immigrant males to overcome their challenges, traumatic experiences, and the negative paths associated with those risks" (Perez, 2009, p. 153). LatCrit focuses on those issues commonly encountered by Latino immigrant male students such as "segregated schools, unequal educational opportunities, no academic or financial support, vocational classes, advanced placement courses, just to name a few" (Davila & Aviles de Bradley, 2010, p. 47).

In this mixed methods study (Bustamante, Fuller, & Welter, 2017), LIMs were asked to identify some factors that positively influenced their academic success throughout their high school journey. The LIM participants identified a positive home environment and positive role models as the most influential aspects of their success. As a result, these two factors are important for schools to consider as they take on the daunting task of preparing students to achieve academic success and to helping them become productive members of society.

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