An Examination of Student Involvement as a Factor Impacting the Graduation of Black Males in Higher Education Opportunity Programs at Four Colleges In Western New York

Montrose A. Streeter
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An Examination of Student Involvement as a Factor Impacting the Graduation of Black Males in Higher Education Opportunity Programs at Four Colleges In Western New York

Abstract
Abstract The primary purpose of this study was to examine the extent that involvement promotes persistence towards graduation for Black males participating in New York State's Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP). The general question was, "Which factors, if any, promote graduation for Black males in the Higher Education Opportunity Program? To build an answer, a cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted to identify and examine the college experiences of HEOP students who were currently enrolled or had recently graduated from four independent higher education institutions in New York State. Participants in this study included 147 currently enrolled and recently graduated students from Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Nazareth College, Saint John Fisher College and Syracuse University. All data were analyzed using SPSS generated frequencies and descriptive statistics for each research question. The major findings of this research seemed to indicate that some academic activities such as attending class and engaging with faculty in and outside of class may promote graduation for Black males in HEOP. Also, participation in some co-curricular activities may promote graduation for Black males in HEOP. Off-campus involvement such as spending time with faculty as a guest in their home proved to benefit the participants of the study. Institution involvement initiatives such as Admissions Tour Guide, attending lectures, and athletic events suggest little if any, positive persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree.

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An Examination of Student Involvement as a Factor Impacting the
Graduation of Black Males in Higher Education Opportunity Programs at Four Colleges
In Western New York

By

Montrose A. Streeter

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by
Dr. Arthur L. Walton, Jr.

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Dedication

To the glory of God and my mother, Mrs. Olivia S. Streeter this dissertation is humble dedicated. The opportunity to be challenged and molded on this journey was not done in isolation. The members of Cohort 3 and especially my group of Queens; Debbie, Melisa, Kathy, Tonja and Jo forged a forever bond serving as an extended family as we traveled this voyage towards degree completion.

The professors who have guided our ship have each contributed to my success in prevailing when I felt overwhelmed. My committee chair, Dr. Arthur “Sam” Walton has been an excellent example of scholarship and support beyond my imagination. He stated “failure was not an option” and though I have tested his words, he was committed to my success as a scholar-practitioner. Words can never convey my debt of gratitude for your leadership and friendship. Dr. Whitney Rapp and Jon Iuzzini have served beyond the call of committee members in seeing me through this program. Betsy Christiansen, you have been a friend who has surpassed any expectations in assuring my success. God bless you all for being patient and understanding.

I am forever indebted to “Aunt Beverly,” Louise, “Cousin Blanche,” Marissa and Darnell and so many others who have been encouragers through this difficult yet rewarding experience. “Thank you” seems inadequate to convey the depth of my gratitude and appreciation. I never would have made it without my faith in God and your love. Peace and Blessings!
Biographical Sketch

Montrose A. Streeter presently serves Hobart and William Smith Colleges located in Geneva, NY as the Associate Dean of Student Conduct and Campus Safety. Mr. Streeter attended Lees-McRae College situated in Banner Elk, NC from 1980 -1982 and graduated with the Associate of Arts degree in Religion in 1982. He furthered his studies at Wake Forest University, Winston Salem, NC from 1982-1984 and graduated in 1985 with the Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion in 1985. He attended North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, NC from 2002 – 2004 and graduated with a Masters of Science degree in Adult Education in 2004. He came to Saint John Fisher College in the summer of 2008 and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D program in Executive Leadership. Mr. Streeter pursued his research in an examination of student involvement as a factor impacting the graduation of Black males in Higher Education Opportunity Programs at four colleges in western New York under the direction of Dr. Arthur L. “Sam” Walton, Jr. and received the Ed.D degree in 2011.
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Hobart and William Smith Colleges have made this journey possible through the efforts of Robb Flowers, Vice president of Student Affairs and Sarah Mullins, his assistant who have supported me from day one. The privilege of being able to have release time each class weekend and whenever needed to meet with my committee, or writing sessions I am eternally grateful. The support of my colleagues with SPSS problems, critiquing a paper or your words of encouragement has all been appreciated.

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My neighbors, Nan Arens and David Kendrick, thank you for making sure I had meals when I was stressed and being concerned throughout this process. Tom Bortz and the staff at Microtel Inn, thank you for discounting our rooms and being so helpful.
Abstract

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the extent that involvement promotes persistence towards graduation for Black males participating in New York State’s Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP). The general question was, “Which factors, if any, promote graduation for Black males in the Higher Education Opportunity Program? To build an answer, a cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted to identify and examine the college experiences of HEOP students who were currently enrolled or had recently graduated from four independent higher education institutions in New York State.

Participants in this study included 147 currently enrolled and recently graduated students from Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Nazareth College, Saint John Fisher College and Syracuse University. All data were analyzed using SPSS generated frequencies and descriptive statistics for each research question.

The major findings of this research seemed to indicate that some academic activities such as attending class and engaging with faculty in and outside of class may promote graduation for Black males in HEOP. Also, participation in some co-curricular activities may promote graduation for Black males in HEOP. Off-campus involvement such as spending time with faculty as a guest in their home proved to benefit the participants of the study. Institution involvement initiatives such as Admissions Tour Guide, attending lectures, and athletic events suggest little if any, positive persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the study and provides the problem statement, theoretical rationale, significance of the study, research questions, null hypotheses, purpose of the study and definition of key terms.

Black males as a racial and gender group in the United States of America continue to face extensive challenges to success. “Many individuals have addressed various aspects of this broad topic, from the general social conditions that affect African American males to specific instances that have special impact” (Cuyjet, 2006, p 4). Employment, the criminal justice system, interracial social interactions, intra-racial social interactions, P-12 education and higher education are just a few of the topics that have been examined in relation to the challenges faced by Black males (Cuyjet, 2006; Harper, 2009).

During the last two decades, the decline in participation and graduation rates among Black males in higher education institutions has been a subject of much concern, discussion and research (Astin, 1993; Cuyjet, 2006; Garibaldi, 2007; Harper, 2009). New York State has been at the forefront of efforts to increase participation and graduation rates among Black males and underrepresented groups since 1969. The Governor and the Legislature passed legislation designed to increase access to independent colleges and universities in New York State for student who were “educationally and economically” disadvantaged. The legislation established the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP). The legislation was amended in 2006 approving a change in the name of the
program as a commendation of the significant role of former Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve played in increasing access to higher education in New York State (NYSED, 2009). The current name of the program is the Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program.

These programs were created to increase the participation of students from educationally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds by providing financial and academic support. Academic support includes pre-freshman summer programs, counseling, tutoring, specialized coursework and other support services designed to promote retention and graduation. To qualify for HEOP, students must be from low – income households based on New York State guidelines. Students must also exhibit potential for success at the college level but need additional academic support to acquire “college readiness” skills that sustain them during the college experience (NYSED, 2009).

“In general, students in opportunity programs are individuals from families with low incomes, with high potential for successful collegiate experience but who have not acquired the verbal, mathematical and other cognitive skills required for collegiate level work. Generally, their grades fall in the bottom half of their high school graduating classes. They are students who have not earned Regents diplomas, are assigned to high schools which have poor records for developing students, or have been tracked or scheduled into general, commercial, or vocational high school programs. Students eligible for HEOP will generally rank low on such traditional measures of collegiate admissions as SAT scores, high school average, or class standing” (p.1)
This study extends the research by examining the extent to which student involvement impedes or promotes the graduation of Black males in the Higher Education Opportunity Programs (HEOP) at four colleges in Western New York.

The remainder of this chapter provides the general context for the study and includes the problem statement, theoretical rationale, research questions, purpose of the study, limitations of the study, and definition of terms.

Problem Statement

Black men are graduating from colleges and universities at a lower number than Black women and White males, (Cokley & Moore, 2007; Garibaldi, 2007; Daire, LaMothe & Fuller, 2007; Flowers, 2004-2005). Garibaldi (2007) asserts, “… these young men are losing educational and economic ground to just about all other racial and gender groups” (p. 331).

Most students enroll in post-secondary institutions with the expectation of obtaining a degree. The desire to complete this goal is realized by the majority of students. Unfortunately, a significant number of Black male students are not successful in acquiring a degree. Black male students enrolling in post-secondary institutions complete degree requirements and graduate at a disproportionately lower rate than their White male counterparts (Harper, 2009).

Given the significant educational, social and economic consequences of this issue on society in general and the Black community in particular, this study sought to identify and examine the extent that student involvement may hinder or encourage the graduation of Black males in the Higher Education Opportunity Program at four colleges in Western New York.
Theoretical Rationale

The theoretical rationale for this study is based on Astin’s (1984) research suggesting that involvement plays a key role in the retention and graduation of students in higher education. The theoretical construct that involvement by college students in activities such as the classroom, laboratories, studying and other curricular and co-curricular experiences promote student retention and graduation in higher education is at the center of Alexander Astin’s Involvement Theory. Astin (originally shared in 1984 and republished in 1999) states, “student involvement refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience” (p. 518).

Astin’s (1984) theory of student involvement is represented by the following tenets:

(a) Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects; (b) regardless of its object, involvement occurs along a continuum; (c) involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features; (d) the amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program; and (e) the effectiveness of any educational policy is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement. (p. 519)

Astin’s (1984) theory of student involvement served as the theoretical foundation for this study. Involvement incorporates both the amount of time students are engaged and the value students place on the time spent being engaged (Astin, 1999).

Astin’s involvement theory has been the core of significant bodies of research in higher education over the last two decades (Flowers, 2004-2005; Grier-Reid, Madyun
and Buckley, 2008; Hernandez, Hathaway, and Lovell, 1999; Moore, Lovell, McGann and Wyrick (1998). The body of research using involvement theory according to Flowers (2004-2005) indicates “that student involvement experiences positively impact college student development in a variety of important ways” (p. 635). Flowers identifies cognitive and moral development and leadership skills as examples of these competencies (p. 635). This body of research supports Astin’s (1999) theory and the continued use of this theory in examining the impact of involvement factors on the persistence of college students. An important goal of this study was to extend this body of research specifically to Black males in HEOP by exploring the impact of involvement in promoting graduation for this population of college students.

Significance of the Study

The number of Black males graduating from higher education institutions in the United States has declined since the 1970’s (Garibaldi, 2007; Harper, 2009). The social and economic consequences attributable to the continuing decline of Black males graduating from higher education institutions has caused researchers to investigate the factors which promote or impede graduation for Black males (Cuyjet, 2006, Harper, 2009). Consistent with this research, the current study examined the factors that impact the Black males participating in HEOP at selected higher education institutions in New York State. Although HEOP does not discriminate on the basis of color or gender, the program has historically provided increased access to higher education for students of color, and other underrepresented groups including Back males. Despite this effort, the gap has widened significantly in the past forty years between Black females and males graduating from college (Allen, et al., 2005; Astin, 1999; Cuyjet, 2006; Harper, 2006b).
The significance of this study is that it uses a “strength based” approach by focusing on factors that promote the retention and graduation of Black males as opposed to a “deficit model” that focuses on factors that impede retention and graduation. The information garnered from this study may assist institutions, administrators, parents and future HEOP students in successfully navigating the undergraduate college experience. Furthermore, this study contributes to the body of knowledge and informs professional practice in higher education. The topics are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Which if any curricular activities facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward graduation?

2. Which if any co-curricular activities facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree?

3. Which, if any, off-campus activities facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree?

4. Which, if any, institution involvement initiatives facilitate persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree?

Null Hypotheses

The null hypotheses which also guide this study are:

1. The persistence of Black males in HEOP toward graduation is not related to attending classes, completing assignments, studying abroad, and engaging with faculty in and outside of the classroom.
2. The persistence of Black males in HEOP toward graduation is not related to participation in athletics, clubs and organizations, intramurals, or other campus leadership opportunities?

3. The persistence of Black males in HEOP toward graduation is not related to involvement with off-campus activities such as being a guest in a professor’s home, volunteering, attending religious services/meetings, exercising off-campus, being involved in a romantic relationship off-campus, parental involvement, alcohol and drug use.

4. The persistence of Black males in HEOP toward graduation is not related to participating in institution sponsored activities such as lectures, athletic events, concerts, being a resident assistant, Admissions Tour Guide or serving on the Campus Activities Board.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent that involvement promotes persistence towards graduation for Black males participating in New York State’s Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program. To this end, a quantitative study was conducted to identify and examine the college experiences of HEOP students who were currently enrolled at or had recently graduated from four independent higher education institutions in New York State.

Definition of Key Terms

The following key terms are used throughout this study:

*African American*: used throughout the study to identify African American and Black students. The terms African American and Black are used interchangeably in this study.
African American may otherwise be seen as a direct quote. References to people or students of color refer to Asian Pacific Americans, Native Americans, Black, and Latina/o people as a collective group.

**Black**: used interchangeably with African American to identify students who are not Hispanic yet may self-identify as being multiracial with Black or African American as one of their racial groups. Black is more reflective of the Diaspora.

**College**: refers to any four-year institution, public or private, college or university also used interchangeable with “institution of higher learning”.

**Co-curricular activities**: For the purpose of this study the following activities have been used to define this term; socializing with friends, attending parties, spending time in a professor’s home, participating in student clubs or organizations, being a member of a fraternity or sorority, being elected to a student office, participating in intercollegiate athletics or intramural sports, exercising on campus, reading for pleasure, volunteering on campus, attending religious services or meetings on campus, participating in hobbies or being involved in a romantic relationship on campus.

**Curricular activities**: For the purpose of this study the following activities have been used to define this term; attending classes, studying, doing homework, using a personal computer for academic reasons, working on an independent research project, tutoring another student, being tutored, talking with faculty outside of class, working on a professor’s research, discussing course content with students outside of class and discussing racial or ethnic issues with others.
Disadvantaged students: individuals from low-income families with potential for successful collegiate experiences but have not acquired the verbal, mathematical, and other cognitive skills required to complete college.

Dominant culture: refers to the majority White population within a college setting.

Education Opportunity Program (EOP): refers to a New York State program serving academically and economically disadvantaged students who are enrolled in New York public colleges.

Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP): refers to a New York State program serving academically and economically disadvantaged students who are enrolled in New York private colleges.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU): denotes any predominantly Black college in the United States established before 1964 with the intent of educating the Black community.

Institution Involvement: For the purpose of this study the following activities have been used to define this term; campus sponsored concerts, lectures, forums, athletic events and campus leadership positions such as resident assistant, campus activities planning board, and Admissions Tour Guide.

Involvement/Engagement: Used interchangeably throughout this document and refers to the “quantity and quality of the physical and psychological energy that students invest in the college experience” as defined by Alexander Astin (1984).

Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs): refers to any college or university established to educate White students only or as a result of inequity enroll White students in mass.
Students of color: refers to Asian Pacific Americans, Native Americans, Black, and Latina/o people as a collective group. (Yasin, 2008).

Summer Institute (SI): a mandatory HEOP pre-college summer program in which students are brought to a campus for courses prior to the start of the fall semester. (The University of the State of New York, 2009).
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Background

There is a disparity between the number of Black males and other ethnic/racial groups attending and graduating from post-secondary institutions. The United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2005) report Black students earning only 22% of all college and university degrees in the 2002-2003 academic year and African American males were 23% of the total degrees conferred.

Background information related to Black students graduating from high school and entering colleges and universities is presented for an understanding of this topic. The history of the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) and the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act for the state of New York is included as a matter of historical context.

An overview of theories considered for this research is provided. The chapter concludes with principles and rationale for framing the research using the involvement theory.

There are mitigating variables to consider before many Black males are able to seriously consider education beyond high school. Wilson-Sadberry, Winfield, and Royster (1991) studied data from Black males participating in the National Opinion Research Center for the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 1982). These males identified five variables of influence for pursuing post-secondary schooling: family background, familial and extra familial (counselors, teachers) influence, educational preparation, educational aspirations and mediating factors such as age, parental status, father’s presence in his life and county unemployment. The researchers identified “a
father’s influence” as a high predictor as well as “best friends or peers influence” for Black males choosing to attend college. The conclusion cited “… along with other direct programmatic interventions, the nurturance of belief in self in young African American men is critical to their resilience and persistence” (p. 93).

The high incidence of young Black men entering armed forces, higher rates of incarceration and perhaps unfamiliarity with college environments contribute to the decline of Black males pursuing a college education (Roach, 2001; Cuyjet, 2006). Roach (2001) affirms the recruitment of “young Black men to college has grown increasingly complex, higher education officials and administrators have continued to struggle to increase the retention of Black students” (p. 20). Consequently, several colleges in the state of New York are attempting to meet this challenge.

In 1964, Congress passed the Economic Opportunity Act which launched the initial Upward Bound Programs. Other initiatives followed for “the public sector College Discovery and SEEK- Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge in response to pressure from civil rights leaders” (Glazer, 1985). A program for New York public higher education institutions, identified as the Education Opportunity Program (EOP) and eventually, the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) was established in 1969 (Blake, 1998). The governor and the New York legislature approved the name change to the Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Program in honor of the former assembly man who was a proponent of increasing the higher education in New York State. HEOP is specifically commissioned for independent colleges and universities within the state of New York. HEOPs are charged with emphasizing the educational development of students and the expansion of educational opportunities for those from economically and
educa tionally disadvantaged backgrounds. The majority of HEOP students are students of color because of economic and other disadvantages confronted by nonwhite populations. Males appear to be most devastated by these real and perceived disadvantages which include increased high school drop-out, unemployment and incarceration (Baker & Steiner, 1995; Roach, 2001; Cuyjet, 2006).

Educators, especially in higher education, have investigated various aspects of the Black student experience on predominantly White college and university campuses. During the past thirty years attention has gone beyond treating Black students as a monolithic group to disaggregating them by gender (Harper, 2006 b). There are specific factors preventing Black males from attaining college degrees. The voice of this subgroup may become silent on many campuses if more Black males are not admitted and eventually graduate from post-secondary institutions. Colleges and universities have as a goal “access to equal opportunity through education” (Harper, 2006 a, p. vii). The absence of a specific ethnic and gender group such as Black males would be a disservice for any campus, especially those who seek to become more culturally diverse.

Garibaldi (2007) compared high school graduation rates of Black males and females in the United States between 1990s and the early 2000s. His research taken from his 1987-1988 study of Black males in the New Orleans public school and national data on high school graduation rates of Black males and females comparing their educational performance to national measures of academic achievement. A finding from his research of interest for this study was “ [Black males] usually had the highest rates of suspension, expulsions, non-promotions, dropouts, special education placements, and the lowest rates of secondary graduation and gifted and talented assignments in the majority of more than
16,000 school districts across the country” (p. 324). Harper (2006 a) states “disparities that disadvantage black male students clearly exist all over the country” (p. 12). Garibaldi (2007) offers further insight into the declining number of Black males enrolling in colleges and universities. The concern extends beyond attending college into employment. There is clear evidence that low participation of Black males in higher education will translate into low participation as full time employees at the same institutions (McJamerson, 1991). The absence of Black males as students impacts the number of potential faculty and administrators for future role models on college campuses and educated professionals in the workplace. The cycle is thereby repeated without Black males assuming any prominent role such as student, professor or administrator in higher education.

Purpose

The reduced number of Black males graduating from high schools impacts the number of eligible Black males admitted to colleges and universities. There is a need for systemic interventions promoting high school graduation for this group of students. The access to college is not a viable option when male students have not prepared themselves academically. Most colleges and universities have minimum academic requirements in order for students to be admitted. When students do not meet these standards or graduate from academically low performing high schools they are considered academically under-prepared. HEOP exists to bridge the gap between academic under preparedness and college admittance. Several Black males graduate from post-secondary institutions because of the academic and social support of HEOP each year. Others are unable to navigate the higher education environment with success. According to Baker and Steiner...
HEOP builds upon the idea of equal access to higher education for all citizens. Colleges and universities receiving federal funds are to be accessible for all who meet the admissions standards.

*Topic Analysis*

It is a fact that Black men graduate from colleges at lower numbers than Black women (Baker & Steiner, 1995; Cokley, 2002; Cokley & Moore, 2007; Daire, LaMothe & Fuller, 2007; Flowers, 2004-2005; Garibaldi, 2007; McJamerson, 1991; Roach, 2001; Strayhorn, 2008). This may be related to what is referred to as the “educational pipeline”: ‘Higher education is dependent upon completion of high school, entry to college and completion of college’ (McJamerson, 1991, p. 46). A progression exists which is dependent upon a high school diploma or equivalent to enter most colleges or universities. In the absence of high school credentials students are unable to enter post-secondary institutions. Black males continue to fall behind Black females on most educational performances from high school and undergraduate and graduate programs (Cuyjet, 2006; Garibaldi, 2007; Harper, 2006 a; Harper, 2006 b).

Therefore, academic achievement of Black males must be reinforced at every level of the academic continuum in order for the young men to be motivated beyond doing well in elementary and secondary grades, but to also pursue a college education. The athletic successes of Black male athletes receive more celebration than academic achievement (Garibaldi, 2007; Harper, 2006 a). Sports are often the identity of many Black males’ educational experience. They have trophies, community and family support as they perfect their respective sport. Many Black male youth derive respect, self-esteem and a sense of identity from nonacademic pop culture and sports-related activities
(Cokley & Moore, 2007; Cuyjet, 2006). However, there is a need to celebrate the academic as well as the athletic triumphs. The idea of one or the other (athletics or academics) is not the concern. Each may coexist with the same intensity.

There are other factors to be considered as Black males choose to enroll in college. Hagedorn, Maxwell and Hampton’s longitudinal study (as cited in Flowers, 2004-2005) shows high school rank, grade point average (GPA), and pre-college programs as factors to consider when predicting retention for Black males. Garibaldi (2007) adds, “Colleges and universities must also develop more pre-college programs to increase the number of students enrolled in America’s more than 4,000 colleges and universities” (p. 331). As an example of the efficacy of Garibaldi’s premise, HEOP has a bridge program identified as Summer Institute (SI). Students are brought to campus for summer courses six weeks prior to the start of the fall semester. SI promotes relationships between students, faculty and staff and supports them throughout the academic journey (Harper, 2007).

It is possible the early exposure to significant college personnel is an element promoting success for all HEOP students and males specifically. Strong support persons have served as a major element for Black males’ resilience in higher education. Strayhorn (2008) believes relationships formed during pre-college programs with faculty and peers are nurtured and sustained throughout the male students’ career, they “provide the social capital needed to become affiliated with the university community” (p. 37). Positive affiliations for most students usually equates to a high level of satisfaction. Satisfaction may be extended into involvement for students. The SI component of HEOP has the potential of contributing to higher post-secondary success rates among Black men.
Harper (2007) chronicles the experience of an academically low-performing Black male high school graduate admitted into a large state university. Groups Student Support Services Program is an example of an effective summer bridge program. The young man “understood he would not be allowed to fully matriculate at the university if he did not achieve a certain GPA in the summer courses” (p. 65). The director of that program identified resources and support persons to assist the young man. He became involved in several student organizations and assumed leadership positions. Four years later he graduated with a 3.4 GPA.

Promoting student retention on any campus facilitates a desire for students to become comfortable and connected to the institution. Comfort is extended beyond the facilities and a reasonable level of safety. Students must feel an affinity towards their surroundings. The attributes of trust, honesty and respect should be evident among faculty and staff. Students who are not members of the dominant culture desire an atmosphere devoid of racism and prejudice. Once a level of comfort has been established, students are apt to become involved and engaged with the campus. Attaining good grades, participating in clubs and serving on committees are examples of students connecting to the campus and being involved. Black males should especially extend themselves. If they choose not to participate in collegiate athletics, including intramurals, having done so at other ventures of their education, there is the potential of disconnecting with the institution. Mental health and emotional wellness then become factors of concern. Masculinity and depression are concerns complex in nature but worthy of mentioning, although not focal points for this study (Cuyjet, 2006; Harper, 2006 b). The twenty years higher education experiences of this researcher have shown Black males are
not exempt from these real and perceived mental health factors. A holistic approach must be used in attempting to identify factors of support.

Self-esteem and confidence are variables to be considered in assessing HEOP. Most HEOP programs are located on predominantly White institutions (PWI). Many of the students of color, including Black males, may have been socialized with students and teachers of the dominant culture in high school. Yet, they reside in communities that are usually more diverse than the PWI campus. Once they arrive on PWI campuses, the experience may be overwhelming and perhaps threatening. The perceptions or misconceptions of the institution’s faculty, staff and students may alleviate or intensify these feelings. A campus climate may even give the impression of being racist by some Black males (Cuyjet, 2006).

*Isolation and Alienation*

Racism has been a part of the Black experience in this country (Cokley, 2002; Davis, Dias-Bowie, Greenberg, Lukens, Pollio, Thomas & Thompson, 2004; Harper, 2006b; Ogbu & Simon, 1998; Smith, 2008; Yasin, 2008). Pinel, Warner, and Chua (2005) administered the Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ) to 128 undergraduates at a large, northeastern, predominantly White university. Their small sample produced the following result: “Specifically, stigmatized males who experienced an increase in race-based stigma consciousness upon arriving at college exhibited a tendency to perform poorly and to disengage psychologically from school” (p. 497). If a student is faced with this behavior he may become withdrawn and uninvolved or choose not to remain as a student.
This idea is further supported by Davis et al. (2004) as they conducted research on a southeastern predominantly White campus. The phenomenological study involved eleven Black undergraduate students from the 26,000 students enrolled. Seven female and four males comprised the sample. Each student had been selected because they had satisfied the requirements for their degree and were about to graduate. Research rooted in phenomenology is a qualitative study of the lived experience of a phenomenon emphasizing the in-depth exploration of the experiences of a small number of research participants (Grier-Reed, Madyun & Buckley, 2008; Harper, 2007).

Individual taped interviews were conducted for each student. The tapes were transcribed and interpreted by a six-member multidisciplinary research group. A hermeneutic technique was used. The transcripts were “read aloud until a change in topic is perceived to occur, at which point reading stops for a period of discussion concerning that passage” (Davis et al., 2004, p. 426). Phrases and statements were then identified on the basis of tentative interpretations for use in developing themes. Findings were considered plausible if descriptive themes were supported by textual evidence.

Five themes of concerns for Black students were revealed. Two themes are noteworthy in regard to males. The students reported “It Happens Every Day: Unfairness/Sabotage/Condescension” and “They Seem the Same; I’m the One Who’s Different” as barriers in pursuing the degree (Davis et al., 2004). Insensitivity on the behalf of the institution was internalized as hurt. The daily routine of campus life was perceived as condescending and unfair. Injustices that appear to be repeated without challenge produced adverse effects resulting in poor academic performance. The isolation theme inferred in these themes is indicative of barriers perceived by the Black students.
The students felt unable to connect with the dominant culture. In fact, the institution sponsored events for all new students were counterproductive. Black students viewed them as cliquish and divisive instead of welcoming. Perceptions of always being different reinforced feelings of isolation and alienation. The obstacles expressed through these particular themes diminished the students’ ability to fully assimilate into campus life. They felt the actions of faculty, classmates and the larger community failed to support an environment that was comfortable for the Black students (Davis et al., 2004). The other themes were “You Have to Initiate the Conversation,” Isolation and Connection, “I Have to Prove I’m Worthy To Be Here” and “Sometimes I’m Not Even Here/Sometimes I Have to Represent All Black Students”: Invisibility and Supervisibility” (p. 427).

Without support systems to process their emotions, the academic performance and the quality of life for Black students are likely to be negatively affected. Students may stop caring about their performance and no longer identify with academics. Regardless of whether self-esteem or academic self-concept is examined, academic disidentification seems to be more prevalent among African American males. Academic disidentification is defined as “a process whereby the general self-concept becomes increasingly less identified with academic performance the longer one stays in school” (Cokley, 2002, p. 379). Devaluing academic success is the first process of psychological disengagement. The study revealed that some African American males begin to devalue academics as early as middle school and thereby lessen their chances of completing high school or entering post-secondary institutions (Cokley, 2002). Academic and emotional support for this group of males becomes very important in their middle and high school grades if they are to eventually enroll in colleges and universities.
Student Involvement Theory

The field of student affairs has focused on whether or not student involvement influences student development and learning. These practitioners have focused less on what they do and more on what students are doing in and outside of the classroom. Motivating students to become active participants in their learning process has been part of Alexander Astin’s foundation in crafting his theory. Astin’s student involvement theory originally published in 1984 was created with this premise. Additional researchers Hernandez, Hogan, Hathaway and Lovell, 1999; Moore, Lovell, McGann and Wyrick 1998; and Harper, 2006 have found the influence of curricular and co-curricular involvement as the basis for much dialogue and study.

Astin’s (1999) involvement theory has five postulates:

1. “Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects.” The object may be the student’s experience in a generalized manner or something as specific as preparing for a chemistry examination.”

2. “Regardless of its object, involvement occurs along a continuum; that is, different students manifest different degrees of involvement in a given object, and the same student manifests different degrees of involvement in different objects at different times.” A student’s involvement is not constant but shared. Varying activities will require more or less attention at varying times.”

3. “Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features. The number of hours spent studying, attending meetings, or thinking about a subject and qualitatively by examining a depth of reflection, student’s comprehension of material.”
4. “The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program. The energy invested into an activity or task will produce proportioned results”.

5. “The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase involvement. Activities in the classroom and out should allow students to invest themselves in opportunities to enhance and expand their involvement” (p. 519).

Involvement is the “quantity and quality of the physical and psychological energy that students invest in the college experience” (p. 528). The participation of students in observed activities and through aspects of concentration, commitment and motivation involvement is the result.

The educational postulates are acknowledged in the last two items, identified as 4 and 5. They provide the clues necessary for educational programming and services. Although they are subject to empirical proof, Astin (1999) include them as postulates. Student achievement and development should be considered when crafting programs and policies. Pedagogical research is designed to test the propositions.

*Studies Using Involvement Theory*

That students learn by becoming involved is an accepted foundation of the theory (Astin, 1999; Flowers, 2002; Grier-Reid et al., 2008; Hernandez et al., 1999; Moore et al., 1998). The theory has been replicated with supporting results using the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) data. CIRP data is self-reported, which may or may not be accurate. Additional research using survey data from the Corporation for
National Service’s Learn and Serve America Higher Education (LSAHE) program was used to expand the theory examining service participation. Again, the information provided was through self-reported surveys. The control group of students involved in the service project may have been skewed (Astin and Sax, 1998).

Astin and Sax (1998) collected CIRP freshmen data from five consecutive years 1990-1994 and a follow-up survey in 1995 of the College Student Survey (CSS). The follow-up survey was sent to selected students at 42 universities receiving LSAHE grants. Multivariate analyses of the longitudinal survey provided a framework Astin employed in subsequent longitudinal impact studies: the input-environment-outcome (I-E-O) model.

The I-E-O model addresses methodological problems with non-experimental studies in the social sciences, specifically nonrandom assignment of inputs to environments. They examined the effects of service participation after controlling for the effects of student input characteristics. The independent variable, service participation, may be confounded because some institutions may operate service programs of varying degrees.

The survey included 35 dependent variables identified by LSAHE expected to promote student development. The variables were further classified into three domains of development: civic development (12 measures), academic development (10 measures), and life skills (13 measures). The independent variables were organized into six blocks. The findings support Astin’s (1999) student involvement theory. Each academic development measure, (college grade point average, persistence in college, time devoted to studying or homework and amount of contact with faculty) was positively influenced
by at least one type of student participation. Education related service is more directly related to tutoring and teaching. “Providing education-related service had positive effects (p < .001) on more academic outcomes (9 of 10) than any other type of service and with one exception, showed stronger effects than the other three types of service” (p. 257).

Limitations to the study include the possible response bias related to the population surveyed. The study was largely exploratory with a wide range of student development outcomes. The dependent variables may contain significant measurement error. Also, there was a low response to the follow up survey. Astin and Sax (1998) concluded “participating in service activities during the undergraduate years substantially enhances the student’s academic development, life skill development and sense of civic responsibility” (p. 259).

Involvement by students has been shown to be a positive factor for college students. Grier-Reed et al., (2008) noted a number of stressors Black college students face on predominantly White campuses. “Institutional racism, poor health and energy, social isolation, and family and economic problems” (p. 476) are examples of stressors when there are small groups of Black and/or students of color. A college campus should be accommodating and affirming for all students in order to minimize the stressors. Intact social support systems are essentials for members of underrepresented groups especially on White campuses. An environment which promotes cross-cultural involvement for Black students would support Astin’s (1999) theory for all.

Most colleges and universities have nondiscriminatory statements as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (Hobart and William Smith Colleges, 2008). The stresses, cited earlier by Black students, would be significantly reduced, if
college campuses become as accommodating and affirming as they purport. Institutions that achieve widespread cross-cultural and intra-cultural successes by themselves are exceptions rather than the norm.

A phenomenological study (Grier-Reid et al., 2008) piloted by faculty at a PWI large Midwestern research institution examined student involvement as it relates to academic and outside of class activities. The study included two males and three females ranging from 19-23 years old. The students were active in a retention and graduation program started by two faculty members of the institution. The African American Student Network (AFAM), signifying African American and Family, is the program. AFAM provides Black students space to “address, understand and cope with stressors. The network includes university faculty and staff and provides students with access to upper classmen in a supportive atmosphere” (p. 476).

Students participating in the study had been involved with AFAM from as little as one to four semesters. The faculty had identified stressors for Black college students, “including lack of knowledge about the college process, institutional racism, poor health and energy, social isolation, and family and economic problems” (Grier-Reid, 2008, p. 476).

An African American graduate student conducted a semi-structured interview with each participant. The graduate student was not otherwise affiliated with AFAM. Each interview included the following five questions:

Why do you participate in AFAM? What is it like to be a part of AFAM? What are the meetings like for you? Can you talk about your most significant or
meaningful meeting? What does it mean for you to have AFAM on this campus? (p. 479)

The seven themes as articulated through the students’ AFAM experience are: “(a) a safe place, (b) connectedness, (c) validation, (d) resilience, (e) intellectual stimulation, (f) empowerment, and (g) a home base” (p. 479).

The results provided empirical evidence of how the needs of Black students are being met on this campus. The students are engaged and as a result become involved in the campus community.

AFAM provides students with a safe space or home base where they can find connectedness, validation, intellectual stimulation, empowerment, and resilience; that is, AFAM provides a warm and intellectually stimulating space on campus that is free of stigma and stereotype threat, where Black students can express themselves as individuals and cultural beings. (p. 485)

Criticisms of Involvement Theory

The involvement theory is among the most common models of student success, but its relevance to students of color has been challenged. Lundberg (2007) states the assumption that students of color must involve themselves or become engaged in the college experience at predominantly White institutions may be an intimidating and overwhelming event. The theory does not consider that students may have been negatively impacted by the dominant culture prior to their campus enrollment. Involvement alone should not be the variable. An appreciation for and valuing diversity in ways evident to students should be obvious.
Environmental factors for a particular institution must be considered in the student involvement theory. Astin (1999) acknowledges “it is easier to become involved when one can identify with the college environment” (p. 524). The degree to which students from varying diverse backgrounds are comfortable and connected with an institution may hinder involvement. If there are perceived biases or discrimination a student may choose to remain isolated or within a small group of friends. The level of involvement has thereby been diminished.

Adult learners’ involvement is another factor to be considered. Students between the ages of 18-22 are typically the traditional group studied on campuses as mentioned by Morgan (2001). As more non-traditional students enroll in colleges and universities further consideration must be given to “involvement” because the level of participation for non-traditional students may be affected by time and family commitments.

Astin (1999) also recognizes areas of further consideration such as exceptions to the rule of involvement. Students are actively involved in the classroom and positions of leadership yet they drop out. They counter the premise of the theory. In like manner, there are students who are not involved, yet they persist toward graduation. Does one form of involvement enhance or diminish the effects of others?

Tinto’s (1993) revision of his student departure theory supports Astin’s theory of student involvement with caution. Milem and Berger (1997) acknowledge Tinto (1993) by stating “… he emphasized the need to better understand the relationship between student involvement in learning and the impact that involvement has on student persistence” (p. 387).
Tinto’s (1988) student departure theory “focuses on the movement of individuals from membership in one group to membership in another, especially as this movement occurs in the ascendancy of individuals from youthhood to adult status in society” (p. 440). The theory has its roots in the work of anthropologist Van Gennep who studied tribal societies’ rites of membership. Tinto (1988) referenced Van Gennep’s (1961) study as follows:

Van Gennep argued that the process of transmission of relationships between succeeding groups was marked by three distinct phases or stages, each with its own specialized ceremonies and rituals. These so-called rites of passage were referred to as the stages of separation, transition, and incorporation. (p. 440)

Tinto (1988) modeled his process of student persistence in college from the stages of Van Gennep (1961). “The first stage of the college career, separation, requires students to disassociate themselves, in varying degrees, from membership in the past communities, most typically those associated with the local high school and place of residence.” (p. 442). Students are to separate themselves from their past. This may be a stressful time for new students on a college campus. The second stage is transition: “a period of passage between the old and the new, between associations of the past and hoped for associations with communities of the present. Students are beginning to make connections yet there is stress and perhaps desolation” (Tinto, 1988, p. 444). If students are not committed during the transition stage, persistence is jeopardized.

Black males at PWIs should be provided access to mentors, college personnel and resources to ensure positive passage through Tinto’s stages. According to the theory,
failure to become incorporated into the campus endangers persistence and may lead to a feeling of alienation and isolation. These elements are in opposition to involvement.

Lundberg (2007) tested Astin’s (1984) student involvement theory and Tinto’s (1988) student departure theory to understand how student involvement predicts student learning for students of culturally diverse backgrounds. Her study specifically addressed Native Americans. A sample of 643 students was taken from undergraduate students who took the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ) between 1998-2001. The sample was extracted from a database of over 20,000 students. Six hundred forty three students identified themselves as “American Indian or Other Native” (p. 407).

The CSEQ is a 166-item instrument used to ascertain where students expend effort related to their college experience and what they may learn as a result of their involvement. The responses are self-reported which may question their validity.

Lundberg (2007) identified two dependent variables: gains in academic learning and gains in personal learning. Measuring gains in academic learning occurred by utilizing a composite variable with the mean of 15 self-reported items (alpha = .90), such as understanding science, appreciation for the arts, and synthesizing ideas in writing. Gains in personal learning were calculated by averaging student scores on five items (alpha=.81), such as being a team player and managing one’s time.

The independent variables included measures of involvement with others outside of the classroom. The frequency of involvement with others outside of the classroom included six composite variables. They are interaction with faculty (alpha=.90), use of campus facilities (alpha=.78), participation and leadership in student organizations (alpha=.78), becoming acquainted with others whom students perceived as different
from themselves (alpha = .92), discussing various topics with other people (alpha = .90), and reflection and integration of ideas based on conversations with others (alpha = .87). The study concluded that “independent variables predicted 49% of the variance in academic learning with the strongest predictor being frequency of time spent in conversation with others” (Lundberg, 2007, p. 408). Astin (1999) describes time spent in conversation with others as involvement. Lundberg’s (2007) research was limited in as much as Native Americans were not randomly selected for the study. The CSEQ has not been normed for the Native American subgroup which did not provide a means of comparison. Black students share some of the same issues relative to cultural identity on PWI’s as Native American students. The interactions with faculty from the dominant culture, leadership and participation in student organizations and becoming acquainted with students perceived as different from you are mutually challenging concerns for both groups.

Cultural-Ecological Theory and Involvement

John Ogbu, a Nigerian immigrant (Foster, 2004), studied minority education throughout the world from 1968 until his death in 2003. He began trying to explain the low performance in his words of “minority students in school” (p.369). Using comparative studies in countries such as Japan, New Zealand, Britain, Israel, India, and the United States, he concluded lower academic performance correlated with barriers in adult opportunity structure (Ogbu and Simons, 1998).

Cultural-Ecological Theory (CE) considers “the broad societal and school factors as well as the dynamics within the minority communities. Ecology is the “setting”,….or “world of people (minorities), and “cultural,” broadly refers to the way people see their
world and behave in it” (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). The theory was conceptualized with three major factors impacting minority school performance: school, society and community but in later writings the school and societal forces were combined. Two major components of the theory, the way minorities are treated or mistreated and the manner by which the minorities perceive and respond to schooling as a consequence of their treatment are the foundation of the theory. “Community forces” constitute one of the influential factors in minority school performance and the other is “The System” (Ogbu & Simons, 1998, p.158).

There are four important layers to the theory. By considering each layer and applying them, we find that “…the general idea that students’ academic success is impacted by community forces and system forces, and that not enough attention has been paid to the ways in which community forces contribute to involuntary minority student failure” is the first layer (Foster, 2004, p. 370). Historically, Black students had been denied equal educational opportunities as it relates to resources, treatment in school and rewards for employment and wages for educational accomplishments (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). The community forces and the system are the parts of Ogbu and Simon’s (1998) “problem of minority schooling” (p. 158). The policies and practices of an educational society, rewards for accomplishments and credentials and treatment of minorities are the system. The community forces, which include beliefs about interpretations of schooling, relational beliefs, and symbolic interpretations of schooling in concert with the system lead to minority educational strategies. The strategies impact social adjustment and academic achievement for the members of the minority group. The manner by which Black students are treated or mistreated in education specifically pedagogy, and returns
for their investment is a way to view the system. The consequence of the treatment perceived and responses by minorities constitute the community forces.

The second layer is “the distinction of voluntary, involuntary and autonomous minorities” (Foster, 2004, p. 370). Voluntary groups are the immigrants who chose to come to this country freely, in contrast to the involuntary groups who were forced against their will to become a part of the country. Descendants of African slaves as well as Native Americans are included in this second group. Autonomous minorities refer to groups small in number and perhaps different in ethnicity, religion or language from the dominant group. Mormons, Amish or Jews in the United States are examples of autonomous minorities (Ogbu & Simons, 1998; Foster, 2004).

The third layer is “the recognition of universal, primary and secondary discontinuities between students and the schools they attend” (Foster, 2004, p. 370). Ogbu and Simons (1998) explain this phenomenon as follows:

Understanding how the system affects minority school performance calls for an examination of the overall white treatment of minorities. The latter includes the barriers faced by minorities qua minorities. These barriers are instrumental discrimination…relational discrimination…and symbolic discrimination. Ogbu calls these discriminations collective problems faced by minorities (p. 158).

The instrumental discriminations in employment and wages, relational discriminations in social and residential segregation and symbolic discrimination through the denigration of culture and language reflect these issues. The “collective problems” are related back to the system and community forces necessitating a response through minority school orientation, adjustment, strategies and/or performance (p. 159).
The final layer is “the idea that involuntary minorities have developed survival strategies” (Foster, 2004, p. 370). The minorities’ perceptions and responses to the impact of White treatment are expressed through collective solutions. The “collective problems” mentioned in layer three have solutions. The solution to the instrumental discrimination is “a folk theory of how they can ‘make it’ in the face of economic discrimination” (Ogbu and Simons, p. 161). Relational discrimination is countered with collective struggle by the group. This may manifest itself as less dominant cultures become mistrustful of White Americans and the institution. Symbolic discrimination’s solution is combated by developing an oppositional culture and language frame of reference by adopting “white ways” (Ogbu and Simons, 1998, p.161).

The multiple levels of the theory forces institutions to examine sociocultural dynamics between voluntary and involuntary groups. The theory contends the manner by which minorities are treated in the wider society is reflected in the education of minorities. Educators on predominantly White campuses may consider this theory as they seek to understand sociocultural dynamics affecting students of color. The theory suggests there are issues relating to academic institutions failure of involuntary minority groups specifically Blacks. Mistrust of Whites, oppositional identity and the pressure not to “act White” by assimilating into the dominant culture are perceived as real concerns for some Black male students. Ogbu and Simons (1998) seek to offer strategies that may work in addressing school failure of involuntary minority members. While citing Erickson (1987) they remind educators to build trust by “having the student’s best interests at heart and the students’ identity and self-esteem will not be harmed” (Ogbu & Simons, 1998, p. 180). Institutions are challenged to have culturally responsive
curriculum as well. This theory places an enormous emphasis on non-school community factors that directly and indirectly affect school success. Educators are encouraged to examine community beliefs and attitudes as they perform the demands of educating students. Ogbu and Simons (1998) acknowledge this is not a simple task. Building trust between parents and the community continues to be an issue for education in 2009 (Ogbu & Simons, 1998, p. 179-183). The emotional and culturally sensitive matters of students are a part of who they are. If a campus does not offer a supportive and caring environment for all students generally and Black students specifically, involvement may decrease.

There is apprehension associated with embracing Ogbu’s (1986) theory. Although Foster (2004) describes Ogbu as “influential among educational researchers and practitioners and has been widely cited in scholarly literature” (p. 377), he also recognizes the criticisms of the analyses and application of the framework developed rather than the theory itself. The theory articulates the historical circumstances by which groups of people attain their minority status. This is an important and necessary element of the theory. There appears to be an “unintended slippage into a culture of poverty argument” with Ogbu (1986). He fails to acknowledge the range of normative and status earning behaviors within the groups he studied. He also appears to be preoccupied with academic failures of marginal groups (Foster, 2004, p. 377).

The idea of “racial uplift” is not embraced in this theory. There are individuals with deep roots into the Black community who possess intrinsic fortitude allowing them to overcome obstacles and barriers even in the area of academics. The notion of a “talented tenth” is not embraced nor community responsibility as a means of striving for
academic and professional success with the Black community. Du Bois’ 1903 essay is associated with the term “talented tenth”—a trained group of Blacks who would transcend and serve as a buffer zone between underprivileged Blacks and White society (Harper, 2006 a; James, 1997). The “talented tenth” are to emerge as college-educated citizens who would “lead the social, economic, and political advancement of the race—those who will use their access to higher education for the public good” (Harper, 2006 a, p. 12). Ogbu (1986) does not consider this element. Many Black males have the academic and social skills to successfully involve themselves in otherwise challenging campus environments.

Stereotype Threat Theory and Involvement

There are social constructs and psychological concerns which cause students who perceive themselves stereotyped negatively and, in some situations, these students feel threatened. Steele’s Stereotype Threat Theory addresses such issues. Steele (1997) posits “that to sustain school success one must be identified with school achievement in the sense of its being a part of one’s self-definition, a personal identity to which one is self-evaluatively accountable” (p. 613). The threat is internalized as they identify with a negative stereotype or stigma directed towards a group in which they are members.

This theory has implications for Black males in HEOP primarily because HEOP students are situated on predominantly White campuses. They are admitted and enrolled through a specific program which may set them apart on their respective campus. The potential for students of color in general and Black students in particular to experience increased anxiety is great. The research ‘suggests that merely being a member of a stereotyped group can lead to decreased performance in certain situations, presumably by
increasing the psychological stakes of failure on a task of importance to the individual” (Davis, Aronson, & Salinas, 2006, p. 401). The internalized deficiency may compel a Black male to disengage and opt out of socializing with the dominant culture, thereby restricting involvement.

Steele (1997) tested the theory by comparing female to male math students. Female undergraduates were placed in a controlled setting where their gender was emphasized, and then performed poorly. However, under the identical condition without regard to gender, females performed as well as the males. This is the focal point of the theory. In a different setting he compared Black and White students. The Black students who were in the setting emphasizing race performed lower than their counter parts. “Where bad stereotypes about these groups apply, members of these groups can fear being reduced to that stereotype. And for those who identify with the domain to which the stereotype is relevant, this predicament can be self-threatening” (p. 614).

In the decade since the initial studies were published, scores of studies have replicated the basic consequences, establishing some of the mediators of stereotype threat such as test anxiety and reduced working memory and identifying other groups also affected by “the salience of ability stereotypes” (Davis et al., 2006, p. 401). Following this study, Latinos, White men, and the elderly have now been researched and included in studies.

All students should maintain a positive social identity. Creating “favorable comparisons through discrimination or ingroup bias is clearly not the best means to achieve this positive identity” (Wolfe and Spencer, 1996, p. 182). The extent to which racist or sexist beliefs are created in research settings is a challenge to overcoming the
stereotyping. Confronting stereotypical statements and prejudiced ideology will dispel misperceptions and allow students of color to feel respected and valued on campuses (Wolfe & Spencer, 1996, p. 182).

Osborne (2007) states “there is controversy and debate in the literature regarding the relationship between physiological changes and emotionality” (p. 150). He agrees that under high stereotype threat, physiological reaction is increased compared to low stereotype threat. However, he does not support the science of psychophysiology in identifying the reactions as anxiety. His recommendation is for the “field and paradigm to move to a more individualistic approach to understanding the effects of stereotypes at an individual level” (Osborne, 2007, p. 150).

“Targeting race can increase stereotype” (Wolfe & Spencer, 1996, p. 182). The University of Michigan established The 21st Century Program, which focuses on reducing stereotype threat for first-year African American students. Students are recruited for the program and early results are encouraging. The challenge goes beyond students to “addressing and accepting cultural differences in our pedagogy and course content, we can create multiculturally sensitive classrooms that make education relevant and accessible to all students” (Wolfe and Spencer, 1996, p. 183). The future outcomes of this program will be worth studying. An outcome is for more African American students to feel comfortable and connected with the University of Michigan campus. Many campuses desire their students to have an experience which promotes an atmosphere of social and academic stimulation, regardless of ethnic background.
Summary

Astin (1999), Harper, (2006 b) and Tinto (1998) offer a theoretical frame for examining involvement as a factor in Black males persisting to college graduation on PWI campuses. A coordinated institutional and faculty response will be necessary to ensure success for Black students (Davis et al., 2007). The number of Black males obtaining college degrees is a concern for many disciplines and areas of study. The diverse workplace and cultural experiences in academia will be diminished without the Black male voice.

It has been demonstrated that the factors preventing Black males from enrolling into colleges and universities are varied and complex. Therefore, the variables promoting success must be multifaceted. Black males have been defined by society and the media, within their culture and without. The obstacles they have faced have been insurmountable at times. The history of Black males in the United States has often been troubled. Colleges and universities with HEOP may provide a link for Black males attaining undergraduate degrees by clarifying how these students identify themselves and the successes they have accomplished in pursuing their college degree.

The student involvement and student departure theories have elements which may impact Black males persistence to college graduation. Black HEOP students have many of the same concerns as all other college students. Yet, there are cultural and ecological needs that should be addressed in preparing young men for academic success. They are products of their environments and should not be expected to lose their identity while pursuing a degree. Students participating in HEOP are encouraged to become involved in the activities of their respective campus.
There is a need for research documenting effective strategies and services assisting Black males in their pursuit of a college degree. This study will hopefully add to the knowledge and provide educators within the academy, tools to meet the needs of this group of students and more.
Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter clarifies the research design and methodology for this study of campus involvement of HEOP students at four Western New York institutions. The alignment of the research problem, research questions, null hypotheses and design is described. An overview of research context, participants, instrumentation, procedures used, protection of human subjects and data analysis are provided.

The General Perspective

Understanding the effect of campus involvement as a factor impacting graduation for Black males in the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) was investigated using a quantitative methodological approach. A cross-sectional online survey was administered (Appendix A). The survey instrument was comprised of a five part, on-line questionnaire adapted from Astin’s (1984) Student Involvement Questionnaire. The dependent variables examined in this study included currently enrolled and recently graduated Black male HEOP students and grade point average. The independent variables that were examined in this study included demographic factors, classification by academic year, involvement in academics, involvement with peers, involvement in co-curricular activities, involvement in social activities on- and off-campus, involvement in institutional initiatives, and parental involvement. This method is preferred because surveying a sample population provides “numeric descriptions of trends, attitudes or opinions” (Creswell, 2009, p. 145). From the resulting study, this researcher makes an interpretation based upon responses of individuals who have shared a common
experience in a HEOP academic setting and their level of campus involvement. The involvement extends beyond the classroom and academic setting into the co-curricular and individual lifestyles of the participants during their collegiate experience. The purpose of the survey was to develop an understanding of the relationship between the participants’ involvement in and out of the classroom and their persistence towards graduation so the following research questions and null hypotheses could be addressed.

**The Research Questions**

1. Which, if any, curricular activities facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree?

2. Which, if any, co-curricular activities facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree?

3. Which, if any, off-campus activities facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree?

4. Which, if any, institution involvement initiatives facilitate persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree?

**The Research Context**

Glatthorn and Joyner (2005) state the research context is used to identify the location and time the study is being conducted. The research activities for this study include the campus involvement of students enrolled in four Western New York colleges the summer of 2005 through June 2010. Four independent liberal arts institutions located in Western New York with HEOP on their campus participated in the on-line survey. The survey was administered by using their campus email address or an email address
provided to their respective campus, for those who graduated in 2009 and 2010 as identified by the campus HEOP office.

HEOP is specifically commissioned for independent colleges and universities in the state of New York. However, a separate program for New York public institutions, EOP, preceded HEOP. Both of these programs were created to provide higher education access to students from underserved ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The four college campuses for this research study are Hobart and William Smith Colleges (HWS), St. John Fisher College (SJFC), Nazareth College (NAZ) and Syracuse University (SU). The three smaller institutions were considered for the research context because of their similar enrollment. Syracuse University, a larger institution, is included to provide a different perspective of Black students participating in HEOP. Each of the institutions selected have unique attributes, but still possess some similarities. All four institutions offer varying levels of graduate or professional degrees. Yet, only the undergraduate enrollment was taken into consideration for this study because HEOP does not extend into graduate school. Athletics opportunities for students are offered on each campus.

Three of the institutions: Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Nazareth College, and St. John Fisher College compete at the Division III level in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Division III institutions sponsor at least five sports for men and five for women, with two team sports for each gender. Each playing season is represented by both genders. At Division III institutions, athletic departments are staffed and funded like any other academic department. Division I and II institutions may offer athletic scholarships for their participants (http://www.ncaa.org). However, student athletes in Division III receive no financial aid related to their athletic ability. Division III
places special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the spectators. Division I is the highest level of competition and students may be recruited specifically for athletic competition and scholarships. The athletic division is significant because Division I institutions, like Syracuse University, may recruit students who may also be eligible for HEOP. Athletics has provided access to higher education for many Black males who otherwise might have elected a different path such as the military or work force.

All institutions are located within 60 miles proximity of each other. Nazareth College and St. John Fisher College campuses are less than a mile apart. Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Nazareth College, and St. John Fisher College are situated in suburban areas, whereas Syracuse University is located in an urban setting. Table 3.1 is a comparison of the four institutions, including the undergraduate enrollment, student to faculty ratio, annual number of HEOP students, and NCAA division of competition. The information was obtained from the respective campus HEOP directors.
### Table 3.1

**Institutional Profile Comparison Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Undergraduate Enrollment</th>
<th>Student/Faculty Ratio</th>
<th># of HEOP Students</th>
<th>NCAA Division</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HWS</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>11:1</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Men’s lacrosse is Division 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAZ</td>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>12:1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SJFC</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>14:1</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU</td>
<td>11,800</td>
<td>15:1</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hobart and William Smith Colleges**

The all-male Hobart College, founded in 1822 by Episcopalian bishop John Henry Hobart, identifies itself as an independent college and is not aligned with a church. William Smith College was founded in 1908 and is a women’s coordinate college with Hobart. They share one president and one faculty, but have separate student governments and athletic directors. The initial study was conducted at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, situated on Seneca Lake in Geneva, NY, with an undergraduate enrollment of 2,000 students and an 11:1 ratio of students to faculty. This campus has approximately 70 students participating in HEOP each year. The non-White student population is approximately 12.5%. HWS competes in NCAA Division III with the exception of men’s Lacrosse, which is Division I.
This researcher is employed by HWS as the Associate Dean of Student Conduct and Campus Safety. The impact of the researcher’s role on the study results was diminished by using an online survey disseminated by the HEOP office. Any potential conflicts due to the researcher’s position of power were addressed in the letter of invitation to all participants (Attachment G). The researcher had no direct contact with students who chose to respond to the survey. The survey was administered on this campus first, in an attempt to circumvent any unforeseen issues that could be corrected prior to administering the survey to the other campuses. The HEOP director has been on this campus for eight years and works diligently to increase the number of students graduating each year.

*Nazareth College*

Nazareth College, although founded by the Sisters of Saint Joseph in 1924, is not self-identified as a Catholic institution. The College is located in Pittsford, New York and has an undergraduate enrollment of 2,200 with a 12:1 student - faculty ratio, with approximately 75 HEOP students annually. This college’s athletic affiliation is Division III of the NCAA. The overall non-White student diversity is approximately 12%. NAZ had an interim HEOP director at the time of initial research for this study. The director has many years of higher education administration experience and was named the Associate Vice President for Student Support Services including HEOP during the study. Although, his association with the students on this campus was limited the administrative assistant of HEOP was very helpful in contacting the students and sending the emails on this campus. The campus survey was administered third in the sequence of institutions.
St. John Fisher College

St. John Fisher College, established in 1947, both acknowledges its Catholic heritage through the Basilian Fathers and is guided by those roots. It is located in Rochester, New York and has an undergraduate enrollment of 2,600 students, 14:1 student-faculty ratio and approximately 85 HEOP students each year. This college also competes in the NCAA Division III. The overall non-White student diversity is approximately 11%. The HEOP director has been on the campus for over a decade and has a history of graduating many of the students in this program. St. John Fisher College is the institution where the researcher was enrolled while conducting the study. This campus administered the survey second in the sequence of institutions.

Syracuse University

Syracuse University, founded in 1870, is an independent nonsectarian research university. SU is situated in the city bearing its name, Syracuse, NY. It has an undergraduate enrollment of 11,800 students, 15:1 student-faculty ratio and approximately 220 HEOP students each year. Their athletes participate in the highest level of collegiate competition, NCAA Division I. Some of the athletes are HEOP students. The overall non-White student diversity is approximately 20%. This campus has the only female HEOP director of the participating institutions. The campus was the final campus to administer the survey and had the least number of days for completion. The survey was available for more than ten days on this campus and the participants were afforded the same reminders as the other campuses.
The Research Participants

Since the program’s inception, the majority of HEOP students have been students of color with socioeconomic and other disadvantages represented by non-White populations. In addition, males of color appear to be most devastated by these real and perceived disadvantages, which include increased rates of high school drop-out, unemployment, and incarceration (Baker & Steiner, 1995; Roach, 2001; Cuyjet, 2006). All HEOP students from the respective campuses and recent graduates were invited to participate in the study. The Black males identified as juniors and seniors were the target population. The recent graduates from each campus responded to provide a useable sample of those who have successfully completed their degree requirements. The small number of Black males on each campus was the reason for extending the survey to all HEOP students. The sample size was more effective by including all HEOP students and recent graduates from each institution. The HEOP office on each campus administered the survey. Participation in this study was voluntary as detailed in the letter of invitation for all prospective participants (Appendix G). Permission was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of St. John Fisher College, first and each of the respective institutions, afterwards.

Instrument

Permission was obtained from Alexander Astin to modify his Student Involvement Questionnaire (Appendix J). The resulting modified instrument is included as Appendix A. The instrument was affirmed by a panel of experts, professionals familiar with HEOP and research instruments, thereby validating the use of the survey. The validation survey (Appendix B) was sent to five professionals who consented to offering
their expertise in reviewing the survey. Four experts responded. The suggestions and recommendations offered were discussed with the dissertation committee and incorporated appropriately. The instrument has demographic information for each respondent and five sections addressing areas of student involvement with faculty, student peers, campus life, work and other areas of involvement. The only identifying information was the signed consent form for those choosing to participate in the campus random drawing. Once the drawing was held on each campus the researcher shredded the forms.

Procedures Used

In accordance with the requirements of the doctoral program, IRB approval was obtained to begin the project. Separate IRB approvals (Appendix C, D, E, and F) were needed for each institution involved in the study. The purpose of this research project, examining the extent that involvement promotes persistence toward graduation for Black males in HEOP, was explained.

The survey and research questions were revised using the input of the panel of experts. While awaiting IRB approval the survey was distributed to the dissertation committee and members of the researcher’s cohort group. The test allowed the results to be reviewed in SurveyMonkey.com. The trial feedback was thought to be sufficient for the actual survey once IRB approval was granted. Unfortunately, an initial analysis of the data did not occur, which would have identified data analysis problems encountered later during the study.

St. John Fisher College IRB approved the study in July 2010. Hobart and William Smith College and Syracuse University IRB applications were then submitted with the
letter of approval from St. John Fisher College IRB (Appendix C). Eventually, the application for Nazareth College was submitted and approved by their Human Subjects office. The IRB process was delayed at Syracuse University because their application required the approval letters from all cooperating institutions.

All students currently enrolled in HEOP on each campus were invited to participate in the study with a detailed letter describing the research and giving their implied consent. The participants’ confidentiality was outlined in the letter assuring them that the questionnaires would be stored in secure email folders and the other information in a locked file cabinet at the researcher’s home until the project was completed. The institutions were identified by name because there was no identifying information to compromise the individual participants from each institution.

The students from Hobart and William Smith Colleges were invited to participate on September 14, 2010. The campus director sent the letter of invitation (Appendix G) via email to the current HEOP students and 2009 and 2010 HEOP graduates. The same letter of invitation (Appendix G) with a specific link for SJFC was sent on September 15, 2010. NAZ sent their email invitation on October 4, 2010. SU students and graduates were invited to participate on October 14, 2010. The reminder email (Appendix H) to all participants was sent seven days after the original invitation informing the participants they had four days to complete the online survey.

Due to the delay in the SU survey being distributed, it was recommended that each campus online survey be extended until the allotted 10 days for SU would expire. An additional reminder, (Appendix I) was sent extending the time for survey completion at HWS, NAZ, and SJFC. The extended time did result in more responses from each
campus. The online surveys for all campuses were closed for responses the morning of October 26, 2010.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in quantitative design is analyzed through applying statistical procedures (Polit & Beck, 2008). Analysis began with entering the data. Frequencies and descriptive statistics regarding the participants were conducted. Relationships between two variables are described through correlation procedures (Polit & Beck, 2008). Pearson correlations were conducted to assess the relationship between GPA (as an indicator of likely persistence) and variables related to each research question.

Protection of Human Subjects

Once the study was completed and a successful dissertation defense was accomplished the survey materials were destroyed. The campus director notified the winner of each campus random drawing and presented them with the $50 gift card. No published findings contain the identity of any participant. All research notes will be destroyed within one year of the successful dissertation defense.

Summary

Alexander Astin’s (1999) student involvement theory contends that motivating students to become active participants in their learning process is a factor promoting success towards graduation. Research data from Black males in HEOP were collected to answer selected research questions. Harper (2006a) shares that “In most states, Black males, in comparison to their same race counterparts and their white male peers, remain strikingly underrepresented among college goers” (p. 2). The phenomenon of Black males not persisting towards graduation is of concern for educators and researchers alike.
A study of this caliber for Black males enrolled in a predominantly White institution serves a dual role: providing a level of support for the participants, in addition to acquiring data for the research. The shared experiences of the participants when compared with their peers may allow others from the various institutions to be affirmed in their pursuit of a degree. The information gathered through the research may inform the programming and professional practice of HEOP directors as well as add to the body of research. Institutions serving underrepresented populations as represented through HEOP may also benefit from this study.
Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent that involvement promotes persistence towards graduation for Black males participating in the New York State Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP). The relationship between the involvement of Black males in certain college activities and their persistence towards graduation was examined. To examine this relationship, this study employed a quantitative methodological approach using a cross-sectional, online survey. The survey was sent to currently enrolled HEOP students and recent HEOP graduates at four higher education institutions in Central and Western New York. The dependent variables for this study were currently enrolled and recently graduated Black male HEOP students and GPA. The independent variables that were examined in this study included demographic factors, classification by academic year, involvement in academics, involvement with peers, involvement in co-curricular activities, involvement in social activities on and off campus, involvement in institutional initiatives, and parental involvement.

This chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to the research questions. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 16.0 (SPSS Inc. Chicago, IL). Demographic information relating to the respondents is provided to help set the contextual framework of the study.

Demographic Information

This section provides a summary of the results based on the demographic data collected on the survey. For purposes of this study, the demographic data is presented in
two parts. The first part includes demographic data for all respondents and the second part includes demographic data only for the self-identified Black male respondents.

HEOP programs affiliated with four higher education institutions in New York State participated in this study. The participating institutions included Hobart and William Smith College (HWS), Nazareth College (NAZ), St. John Fisher College (SJFC), and Syracuse University (SU). One hundred and forty seven out of a population of 489 HEOP students, including students currently enrolled and recent graduates, from the four participating institutions responded to the survey, yielding a 30% response rate, overall. Thirty-four respondents (23.15%) were from HWS, 25 respondents (17%) were from NAZ, 34 respondents (23.15%) were from SJFC and 54 respondents (36.7%) were from SU. Ninety-five (64.6%) of the respondents were identified as males and 52 (35.4%) identified themselves as females. The self-identified grade point averages for all respondents were as follows: 26 (18.2%) reported a grade point average ranging from 2.0-2.5, 52 respondents (36.4%) reported a grade point average in the range of 2.6-3.0, 57 (39.9%) respondents reported grade point averages ranging from 3.1-3.5, 8 respondents (5.6%) reported a grade point average greater than 3.5, and 4 of the respondents did not complete this survey item. No one reported a grade point average below 2.0, which is the minimum overall grade point average required for graduation by most higher education institutions. Seventy-eight (54.6%) of the respondents self-identified as being in their junior, senior, fifth year, or recent graduate. One hundred forty (95.2%) of the respondents began and/or completed their college experience at the same institution. Five (3.4%) of the respondents were transfers from other institutions and 2 (1.4%) of the respondents did not complete this survey item. The ethnicities of the respondents were
self-reported as follows: Asian, Pacific Islanders 14 or 9.5%; Black non-Hispanics, 56 or 38.1%, the highest representation among all ethnic groups; Hispanic, Puerto Ricans were 10 or 6.8%; Hispanics, Other, 37 or 25.2%; Native Americans, 2 or 1.4%; White, non-Hispanics, 16 or 10.9%; and Other, 12 or 8.2%.

Forty (27.2%) respondents were 18 years of age. Sixty-one (41.5%) of the respondents were in the age range of 19-20 years, 27 (18.4%) were in the age range of 21-22 years and 19 (12.9%) were 23 years of age or older.

Table 4.1 provides demographic data for all respondents participating in the study. The demographic data reported in Table 4.1 include the participating institutions, gender, grade point averages, class, institution residency, ethnicity, and age. Table 4.2 provides the same demographics reported in Table 4.1 but only for the Black male respondents who participated in the study.

The 20 Black male respondents are identified by institution as provided in Table 4.2. Seven Black males (35%) were from HWS, four Black males (20%) were from NAZ, five Black males (25%) were from SJFC, and four Black males (20%) were from SU. The range for grade point average reported by the Black male respondents is as follows: 2.0-2.5 = 5 (25%); 2.6-3.0 = 7 (35%); 3.1- 3.5 = 6 (30%); and > 3.5 = 2 (10%). The academic classifications for the Black males responding were: first year students, 3 or 15%; sophomores, 4 or 20%; juniors, 3 or 15%; seniors: 1 or 5%; fifth year students, 1 or 5%; and graduates, 8 or 40%. All of the Black males (20 or 100%) began and completed their college experience at the same institution (Table 4.2).
Table 4.1

Demographics for all Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HWS</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAZ</td>
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<td>17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SJFC</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.6-3.0</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>36.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1-3.5</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
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<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fifth Year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution Residency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Began at institution</td>
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<td>3.4</td>
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<td>Ethnicity</td>
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<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 or over</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2  
*Demographics for Black Male Respondents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institution</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HWS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAZ</td>
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<td>SJFC</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>SU</td>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Males</td>
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<td><strong>GPA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.0-2.5</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
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<td>Fifth Year</td>
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<tr>
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<td>23 or over</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Data Quantity and Quality

Survey data were downloaded from Survey Monkey in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and verified by visual inspection. Based on the number of items and the number of potential choices for each item, the spreadsheets generated an overabundance of data making it difficult to categorize the data in an efficient and effective manner for purposes of analysis. Given the time constraints for completion of the study, the researcher consulted with his dissertation committee and other experienced researchers on acceptable approaches to address these issues while maintaining the methodological integrity of the study. The first approach recommended by the committee and adopted by the researcher included removing data from the spreadsheets that were not directly related to the purposes and research questions of the study. The second approach adopted by the researcher included collapsing the remaining relevant data into categories that corresponded more directly with the study’s research questions. These approaches assisted in categorizing and subsequently analyzing the remaining related data. To this end, the researcher made four adaptations to facilitate the management and analysis of the data.

The first adaptation employed, combined responses for each year of enrollment in college to determine a cumulative enrollment percentage. To accommodate this adaptation, the researcher calculated the percentages for the years of attendance for items 7 and 25. For example, question 7 of the survey, “Where do or did you reside while in college”? This question provided the respondents with the following options for each year of attendance: “on campus, off campus, or both.” This option used percentages of the responses for the specific question. The calculation used an average of the time a
student lived on campus. A student who indicated they spent four years living on campus received 100% for this question. A student who spent two years living on campus and two years living off campus received 50% for this question.

The second adaptation condensed the responses by combining the options on survey items 8, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 23 and 26. An example is found in question 8, “Please indicate the amount of time you spend per week on the following in your college experience; attending classes, studying, doing homework, using a computer for academic purposes.” This adaptation condensed the responses by combining each respondent’s choices. The original choices presented to the respondents were “None, < than an hour, 1-2 hours, 3-5 hours, 6-10 hours, 11-15 hours, 16-20 hours, > 20 hours.” For purposes of calculating the responses, the researcher collapsed the choices to include: less than an hour, 1-2 hours, 3-5 hours, 6-10 hours, 11-15 hours, and more than 15 hours.

The third adaptation was applied to survey item 10. For this item, the researcher combined responses that were similar or related. The question on item 10 was, “How many courses have you taken that emphasized: ethnic studies, women’s studies, men’s studies, honors courses, interdisciplinary courses, study abroad courses, college internship programs, basic skills courses, developmental courses, and racial/cultural awareness courses.” By combining certain courses under a single category, the researcher was able to better manage and analyze the data in relation to the relevant research question while maintaining the integrity of the results. For example, basic skills and developmental courses were combined into one category instead of two and analyzed in accordance with the relevant research question.
The fourth adaptation related to survey items 11, 20, and 25. This adaptation related to the values assigned to a given response. Question 11 on the survey was: “Please indicate how often, if ever you engaged in the following during your college experience: worked on an independent research project, received tutoring in courses, tutored another student, given or gave a presentation in class, took a multiple-choice exam, took an essay exam.” The original values assigned to each response were presented in ascending order. For example, giving a response of “frequently” was assigned the numeric value of 1 while a “not at all” response was assigned a numeric value of 4. The values associated with the responses were changed to a descending order giving the response “frequently” the value of 4, “occasionally,” was changed from a value of 2 to 3, “rarely” was changed from 3 to 2, and “not at all” was changed from a value of 4 to 1.

The adaptations noted assisted the researcher in managing and analyzing voluminous amounts of data in the context of this study’s research questions while maintaining the integrity of the results. Consistent with these adaptations, the following is summary of the data analysis and findings for each research question.

Data Analysis and Findings

This section describes the techniques that were used to analyze the data for each research question and the resultant findings.

Research Question 1: Which, if any, curricular activities facilitate the persistence of Black males toward a college degree?
Table 4.3

*Questions Used as Indicators for Research Question 1.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Question Wording</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Please indicate the amount of time you spend or spent per week on the following activities during your college experience? Attending class, studying, doing homework, or using a computer for academic purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>How many undergraduate courses (not including Summer Institute) have you taken that emphasized: writing skills, math, science, history, business, health, technology or foreign language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>How many courses have you taken that emphasized: ethnic studies, women’s studies, men’s studies, honors, interdisciplinary, study abroad, college internship, basic skills, developmental or racial/cultural awareness?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Please indicate how often, if ever you engaged in the following during your college experience, worked on an independent research project, tutored another student, given or gave a presentation in class, took a multiple choice exam, took an essay exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Please indicate the number of hours per week, spent talking with faulty outside of class during your college experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Have you ever assisted faculty in teaching a course?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Have you worked on a professor’s research project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Have you had a paper critiqued by an instructor during your college experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Please indicate the number of hours per week spent on the following academic activities during your college experience, working on a group project for class, tutoring another student, being tutored by another student, discussing course content with students outside of class, discussing racial or ethnic issues with someone from the same racial or ethnic group, or discussing racial or ethnic issues with someone from a different racial or ethnic group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 lists the indicators used to measure this research question. Given the low number of subjects, current HEOP students were compared to graduated HEOP
students in their responses to the survey. Comparison of frequencies and descriptive statistics were used to average the number of hours per week spent in each activity.

When examining the average hours per week spent in class, Table 4.4 shows that current students reported spending an average of 5.41 hours attending class weekly, which was .40 hours less than the graduates’ average of 5.81 hours. The current students and the graduated students each reported attending class 5.5 hours per week during the junior year. The current students reported spending an average 4.55 hours studying weekly, which was .05 hours less than the HEOP graduates’ average of 4.60. Black males currently enrolled in HEOP reported spending an average of 4.22 hours doing homework weekly which was .28 hours less than the HEOP graduates’ average of 4.50 hours. Black males currently enrolled in HEOP reported spending an average of 4.26 hours using a personal computer weekly, which was 1.55 hours less than the HEOP graduates’ average of 5.81 hours. Table 4.4 compares the currently enrolled HEOP Black male students to the HEOP graduates in the average amount of time spent in academic activities.

In general, Table 4.5 shows there was no significant difference in the number of selected course taken by the current students or the graduates. The effect sizes were small across all courses selected (d<0.5). Table 4.5 also identifies the most courses taken by the current students and the graduates were diversity courses followed by Basic Skills courses.
Table 4.4

*Average of Hours Per Week spent in Academic Activities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black Males</th>
<th>Time Spent in Class</th>
<th>Time Spent Studying</th>
<th>Time Spent on Homework</th>
<th>Time Spent Using Computer for Academics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FY SO JR SR FY SO JR SR FY SO JR SR FY SO JR SR FY SO JR SR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td>5.16 5.33 5.5 5.5 4 4.16 4.5 4.16 4.09 4.18 4.37 4.16 4.72 4.45 5.12 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>5.87 6 5.5 6.5 5 5.33 5 5.5 4.25 4.33 4.66 6.25 5.37 5.83 5.5 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5

*Selected Courses Taken While Enrolled*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black Males</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>Basic Skills</th>
<th>Diversity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Students</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.651</td>
<td>.568</td>
<td>.701</td>
<td>1.368</td>
<td>1.252</td>
<td>1.749</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Students</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>8.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.246</td>
<td>1.553</td>
<td>.926</td>
<td>1.035</td>
<td>2.232</td>
<td>2.031</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>-1.559</td>
<td>-0.838</td>
<td>-0.109</td>
<td>-0.247</td>
<td>-0.873</td>
<td>-1.609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Effect Size)</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>-0.614</td>
<td>-0.386</td>
<td>-0.0547</td>
<td>-0.122</td>
<td>-0.400</td>
<td>-0.626</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Twenty-seven percent (3) of the currently enrolled HEOP students reported that they were more “frequently” involved in independent research during their first and junior years (Table 4.6). In comparison, 25% (1) of the graduates reported being frequently involved in independent research during their first year while 50% (4) of the graduates reported being frequently involved in independent research during their junior year. During the first year, 54% of the current students were either occasionally or frequently involved in independent research compared to 37% of the graduates during their first year. Overall, a higher percentage of HEOP graduates reported that they were either “occasionally” or “frequently” involved in independent research during their enrollment. Table 4.6 provides the aggregated responses to this item for currently enrolled HEOP students and HEOP graduates by their year of enrollment (first year, sophomore, junior, senior years).

The amount of time spent by current students and graduates talking with faculty outside of class was similar. The amount of time spent by both groups on this item ranged from two to three hours per week during their years of college attendance. Each group reported spending more time talking with faculty outside of class during their junior year. Table 4.7 compares the average reported number of hours each group spent with faculty outside of the class.
Table 4.6

Frequency of Being Involved in Independent Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black Males</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Independent Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>SO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Students</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were three survey items in question 19 (Table 4.3) relating to the amount of time respondents spent in discussions with peers outside of class on course content and
racial or ethnic issues. Current HEOP students reported a higher frequency rate on these items than the HEOP graduates. In the first instance, 91.7% (11) of current students reported “occasionally” or “frequently” discussing course content with peers outside of class. The remaining currently enrolled student (8.3%) reported “rarely” discussing course content outside of class. By comparison, 87.5% (7) of graduates reported ‘occasionally’ or “frequently” discussing course content outside of class. The remaining graduates (12.5%) reported “rarely” discussing course content outside of class. One graduate did not answer this question. Secondly, 58.3% (7) of the current students reported “occasionally” or “frequently” discussing racial/ethnic issues with someone from the same race. The remaining students’ responses ranged from “rarely” 33.3% (4) to “never” 8.3% (1). The contrasting data identifies 62.5% (5) of the graduates reported “occasionally” or “frequently” discussing racial/ethnic issues with someone from the same race. The remaining graduated students (37.5%) reported a range of time spent in these conversations. Specifically, 12.5% of the graduated students reported never discussing racial/ethnic issues, 12.5% rarely discussed racial/ethnic issues and 12.5% chose not to answer the question. Finally, 50% (6) of the current students reported “occasionally or “frequently” discussing racial/ethnic issues with someone from a different race which was a higher rate (+ 12.5) than the graduates. In addition, 33.3% (4) and 16.7% (2) of the remaining current students respectively reported “rarely” or “never” discussing racial/ethnic issues with someone from a different race.

Only 37.5% (3) of the graduates indicated they “occasionally” or “frequently” discussed racial/ethnic issues with someone from another race. The other graduates either
“rarely” 12.5% (1) or never 37.5% (3) discussed racial/ethnic issues with someone from a different race.

Next, the researcher examined SPSS correlations, using GPA as an indicator of likely persistence for current students. For the most part, GPA did not correlate significantly with the variables measuring curricular activities for the current students. There were two significant positive correlations. GPA was significantly correlated with tutoring another student in one’s first year ($r = .60, p < .05$) and in one’s sophomore year ($r = .77, p < .05$). Black males enrolled in HEOP are significantly impacted by involvement in some curricular activities specifically tutoring another student.

*Research Question 2*: Which, if any, co-curricular activities facilitate the persistence of Black males toward a college degree?

Table 4.8 lists the indicators used to measure this research question. Given the low number of subjects, current HEOP students were compared to graduated HEOP students in their responses to the survey using effect sizes (Cohen’s d and r). Comparison of frequencies and descriptive statistics were used.
Table 4.8

Questions Used as Indicators for Research Question 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Question Wording</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Please indicate the number of hours per week spent doing the following activities during your college experience, socializing with friends, attending parties or participating in student clubs and organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Please indicate whether or not you participated in any of the following student groups or activities during your college experience, joined or been a member of a fraternity or sorority, participated in campus protestor demonstration, elected to a student office, participated in intercollegiate activities, played intercollegiate football or basketball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Please indicate how often, if ever, you engaged in the following during your college experience participated in intramural sports, participated as a member of a fraternity or sorority, elected to a student office, participated in student clubs or organizations or socialized with someone from another racial or ethnic group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Please indicate the number of hours worked for pay and where it occurred during your college experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Please indicate whether or not you participated in any of the following campus activities during your college experience resident assistant or resident advisor, served as an elected officer in student government or participated in the college work study program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Please indicate the amount of time per week spent on the following activities during your college experience, exercising on campus, playing sports for fun on campus, reading for pleasure, volunteering on campus, watching television, attending religious services/meetings on campus or participating in hobbies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Please indicate whether or not you were involved in the following activities, a romantic relationship on campus, engaged while enrolled in college or married while enrolled in college.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, Table 4.9 shows that current students spend more time socializing, attending parties and participating in groups than graduates. By the senior year the differences in participation were over 1 standard deviation (d > 1.3). When examining the
amount of time spent per week socializing with friends, graduates averaged almost five hours per week socializing with friends during the first year of their college experience. The average amount of time spent per week by graduates on these social activities decreased to four hours by their senior year. In contrast, currently enrolled students reported spending less time (3.3 hours) socializing in their freshman year and more time (6 hours) socializing during their senior year. Currently enrolled students reported spending 3.83 hours per week attending parties during their freshman year and 4.50 hours per week attending parties during their senior year. In comparison, graduates reported attending parties 4.13 hours per week during their freshman year and 2.62 hours per week during their senior year. The amount of time currently enrolled students spent participating in clubs and organizations was different than the amount of time spent by graduates in such activities. For example, the amount of time spent on such activities by graduates remained constant at approximately 3.5 hours per week during their college attendance. In comparison, the amount of time spent on such activities by currently enrolled students increased from 3.67 hours in their freshman year to 6 hours in their senior year. In summary, currently enrolled students in their senior year reported spending over 16 hours per week in the three co-curricular activities noted above while graduates reported spending approximately 11 hours per week during their senior year in these activities. Effect sizes were smaller across all three indicators (d<0.5) during the sophomore year. Table 4.9 compares the hours per week the graduates and current students spent in these activities.
Table 4.9

*Mean Standard Deviation and Effect Size for Selected Co-curricular Activities of Current Black Males Compared to Graduates*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black Males</th>
<th>Socializing with Friends</th>
<th>Attending Parties</th>
<th>Clubs and Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>SO</td>
<td>JR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Students</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.985</td>
<td>1.288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.886</td>
<td>.744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>-1.515</td>
<td>0.589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Effect sizes)</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>-0.604</td>
<td>0.282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two of the currently enrolled students, one sophomore and one junior, reported being members of a fraternity. Only one of the graduates reported being a member of a fraternity during the entire college experience, having joined a fraternity during the junior year. The two colleges that reported having fraternities on their campus were HWS and SU.

Only two (10%) of the currently enrolled students reported having been elected to a student office during their college experience. A higher number of the graduates, four (50%) reported they were elected to student offices during their college experience.

The survey results indicate that currently enrolled students’ participation in intercollegiate sports declined as they progressed in their studies. For example: three (25%) of the currently enrolled students reported that they participated in intercollegiate sports during their first year; two (16.7%) currently enrolled students reported participating in intercollegiate sports during their sophomore year; one (8.3%) currently enrolled student reported participating in intercollegiate sports during their junior year; and no currently enrolled students reported participating in intercollegiate sports during their senior year. Figure 4.1 compares the participation rates of graduates and currently enrolled students in intercollegiate sports.

Participating in intercollegiate sports during the college experience also declined each year as reported by the graduates. Four of the graduates (50%) reported they were involved in intercollegiate sports their first year, three (37.5%) in the sophomore year, and two (25%) in their junior year. No graduates reported participating in intercollegiate sports during their senior year. (See Figure 4.1) The comparison of the groups revealed Black males did not participate in intercollegiate sports after their junior year.
The current students participated in intramural sports slightly more frequently than the graduates (+.17) with an average of 3.46 hours compared to 3.29 hours per week by the graduates. The graduates’ participation in intramural sports was reported on an average of 3.29 hours per week throughout their college experience.

![Bar graph illustrating participation in intercollegiate sports by class.](image)

**Figure 4.1.** Participation in intercollegiate sports by class.

Table 4.10 compares the average of hours per week spent volunteering on campus. The current students reported slightly above 2 hours (2.01) and the graduates reported almost 3 hours per week (2.93). The current students averaged playing sports for fun on campus 1.62 hours per week which is almost the same amount of time as the graduates reported at 1.71 hours per week. The current students averaged spending more time attending religious services at 1.75 hours per week compared to the graduates who reported 1.29 hours per week. The current students reported watching less television, 2.72 hours per week when compared to the graduates at 3.35 hours per week. However, the current students reported spending more time reading for fun weekly at 2.45 hours per week when compared to the graduates at 2 hours per week. Table 4.10 shows the average hours per week spent in these activities.
Research Question 3: Which, if any, off-campus activities facilitate the persistence of Black males toward a college degree?

Table 4.11 lists the indicators used to measure this research question. Given the low number of subjects, current HEOP students were compared to graduated HEOP students in their responses to the survey using effect sizes (Cohen’s d and r). Comparison of frequencies and descriptive statistics were used.
Table 4.11

*Questions Used as Indicators for Research Question 3*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Question Wording</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Have you ever been a guest in a professor’s home during your college experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Please indicate the amount of time per week spent on the following activities during your college experience, exercising off-campus, volunteering off-campus or attending religious services/meetings off-campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Please indicate whether or not you were involved in the following activities a romantic relationship off-campus while in college, engaged prior to enrolling in college or married prior to enrolling in college.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Please indicate how often if ever, you engaged with your parent(s) or guardian in the following areas during your college experience telephone calls relative to classes, telephone calls relative to your activities, electronic communication (text, emails, etc.) or personal letters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Please indicate the number of hours, if any, you engaged in the following during your college experience, received career or vocational counseling, received personal or psychological counseling, use alcohol (beer, wine or liquor) or used recreational drugs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12 shows that current Black male students were guests in the home of a professor at a higher rate than the graduates during their first year. Current students reported being guests in a professor’s home earlier in their college experience than the graduates. When analyzing the amount of time spent in a professor’s home after the first year, the amount of time spent by currently enrolled students decreased as they progressed to their junior year and remained the same for their senior year. In comparison, the amount of time that the graduates spent in a professor’s home increased from their freshman year through their senior year (Table 4.12).
Table 4.12

*Frequency of Being a Guest in a Professor’s Home While Enrolled*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY</th>
<th>SO</th>
<th>JR</th>
<th>SR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.515</td>
<td>.333</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduates</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.463</td>
<td>.518</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td>.463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>0.347</td>
<td>-0.620</td>
<td>-1.321</td>
<td>-2.290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>-0.296</td>
<td>-0.551</td>
<td>-0.753</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents for the current students and the graduates reported that they were neither engaged nor married prior to college. However, 58.3% (7) of the current students reported being involved in an off-campus romance compared to 37.5% (3) of the graduates at some point during their college experience.

There were other areas of consistency for each group when examining this question. For example, exercising, volunteering, or attending religious services off-campus were not identified as promoting involvement for the current students or graduates at any time during their college experience.

During the first year of college, 66% (8) of the currently enrolled students reported having “frequently” or “occasionally” received telephone calls from parents relative to their classes, 8.3% (1) reported “rarely” talking with their parents about classes.
and 25% (3) reported receiving no telephone calls from their parents regarding their classes. A current student reported “frequently” receiving telephone calls for each year of enrollment (first year through senior year) which was different from the graduates who did not have frequent contact with a parent during the senior year. The current students reported that telephone calls from a parent relating to their activities decreased in each successive year during their college experience. Fifty-eight percent (7) students reported either “frequently” or “occasionally” speaking with their parents relative to their activities during the first year and only 16.7% (2) reported speaking to their parents by the senior year. The fifth year student did not report having any telephone contact with a parent about his activities. The current students received more telephone calls from parents relative to their classes and activities than the graduates. (See Table 4.13.)

Telephone conversations between the respondents and their parents relating to the status of their classes varied for each year the college experience. Fifty percent (4) of the graduates reported having talked frequently with their parents about the status of their classes. Also, in the first year 25% (2) graduates occasionally talked with parents on the telephone while 12.5% (1) rarely talked on the telephone with parents about their classes. One graduate did not answer this question. For the sophomore year, only 50% (4) of the graduates responded to the question. “Frequently” or “occasionally” was the response for 37.5% (3) of the graduates. During the junior year, 12.5% (1) graduate frequently, 12.5% (1) graduate occasionally, and 12.5% (1) graduate rarely were engaged in telephone conversations with parents relative to their classes. Only 25% (2) of the graduates reported on their senior year. These respondents reported that the telephone calls with their parents regarding the status of their classes as being either “rarely” 12.5% (1) or
“occasionally” 12.5% (1). The percentage of telephone calls from parents relative to activities of the graduates was identical to the telephone calls from parents relating to the classes (Table 4.13).

Electronic communication (texts, emails, etc.) between the currently enrolled students and parents decreased as the students progressed in their studies. Approximately 33.3% (4) of the respondents reported that they had either “frequently” or “occasionally” used electronic communication as a means of communicating with their parents during the first year of college attendance. Conversely only 8.3% (1) of the respondents reported that electronic communication was used “frequently or “occasionally” during the fourth and fifth years of college attendance. In summary, there was more frequent electronic communication between current students and their parents than graduates and their parents. In addition, the frequency of electronic communication decreased among both groups in each successive year during their college experience, with the current students having more “frequently” or “occasionally” responses for each year. The graduates had more “not applicable” or “never” responses for each year (Table 4.14).

Graduates who used electronic communication (texts, emails, etc.) to be in contact with their parents ranged from 62.5% (5) “not applicable” or “never” in the first year and 37.5% (3) for the sophomore year. “Frequently” 25% (2) per week was the second most common response during the first year with 12.5% (1) for the sophomore year. The missing percentages represent the participants in the study who chose not to respond to this question. During the junior year, 37.5% (3) and senior year 25% (2) responded either “not applicable” for parents or were never involved with parents through electronic means (Table 4.13).
Based on the results of this study, there did not appear to be a relationship between persistence and the receipt of personal letters by currently enrolled students or graduates from their parents. Both groups reported having “rarely” received letters from their parents during their college attendance. (See Tables 4.13 and 4.14.)

Table 4.15 shows approximately 16.7% (2) of the currently enrolled students received career or vocational counseling for 2 hours or less in the first year. The number of current students receiving 2 hours or less career or vocational counseling increased for the sophomore 25% (3) and junior 41.6% (5) years and decreased to 8.3% in the senior year. The graduates reported 37.5% (3) of them having received “one or two hours” of career or vocational counseling during their first year. Approximately, 8.3% (1) of the graduates reported receiving “one or two hours” of career or vocational counseling during their sophomore through senior years of college attendance. Some of the respondents chose not to respond to this question and only one graduate identified receiving more than two hours of career and vocational counseling during their college experience.
Table 4.13

*Current Students Interaction with Parents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone calls about classes</td>
<td>Phone calls about activities</td>
<td>Electronic communication</td>
<td>Personal letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone calls about classes</td>
<td>Phone calls about activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Parents

*Note.* The percentages do not equal 100% because some respondents omitted the question.
Table 4.14

*Graduates Interaction with Parents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone calls about classes</td>
<td>Phone calls about activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>41.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone calls about classes</td>
<td>Phone calls about activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Parents

*Note.* The percentages do not equal 100% because some respondents omitted the question.
### Hours of Use for Career and Personal Counseling While Enrolled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black Males</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Career Counseling</th>
<th>Personal Counseling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FY</td>
<td>SO</td>
<td>JR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the survey results for this study, currently enrolled students reported that they had received personal or psychological counseling at slightly higher percentages than the graduates (see Table 4.15). Currently enrolled students consistently reported that they had received personal or psychological counseling at least 1-2 hours during each year of their college attendance. Approximately 66.7% (8) of the currently enrolled students reported “never” having received personal or psychological counseling during their first year. Approximately 17% (2) of the currently enrolled students reported receiving 1-2 hours in their first year, and 16.7% (2) reported receiving 3-5 hours of personal or psychological counseling during their first year. Approximately 41.6% (5) students in their sophomore year reported never receiving personal or psychological counseling. Approximately 24.9% (3) sophomores reported the following: 8.3% (1) received 1-2 hours, 8.3% (1) received 3-5 hours, and 8.3% (1) received 6-8 hours. Currently enrolled students in their junior year reported the following: 50% (6) never receiving personal or psychological counseling, 8.3% (1) received 1-2 hours of personal or psychological counseling, and 8.3% (1) received 6-8 hours of personal and psychological counseling. Currently enrolled students in their senior year reported receiving personal or psychological counseling as follows: 16.7% (2) never received counseling, 8.3% (1) received 1-2 hours and 8.3% (1) received 3-5 hours. One fifth year student (8.3%) reported receiving counseling 1-2 hours per week.

The survey results for the graduates regarding the amount of time that they had received personal or psychological counseling during the college experience was reported as follows. The graduates participating in this study had an 87.5% (7) response rate. Approximately 62.5% (5) reported that they had never received personal or psychological
counseling, 12.5% (1) reported receiving 1-2 hours of counseling, and 12.5% (1) reported receiving 3-5 hours of counseling. Fifty percent (4) of the graduates reported on the counseling services they received during their sophomore year: 37.5% (3) of the graduates reported never receiving counseling, and 12.5% (1) reported receiving 1-2 hours. Approximately 38.5% of the graduates reported on the counseling services they received during their junior year: 25% (2) reported never receiving counseling, and 12.5% (1) reported receiving 1-2 hours of counseling. Approximately, 25% (2) of the graduates reported on the counseling services they received during their senior year: 12.5% (1) reported never receiving counseling, and 12.5% (1) reported receiving 1-2 hours of counseling. Only one graduate (12.5%) indicated that they received personal or psychological counseling for more than 2 hours during a given year. Among the currently enrolled students, at least one student reported receiving more than 3 hours of personal or psychological counseling from their freshman through the senior years, as shown in Table 4.15.

The results relating to the use of alcohol by currently enrolled students and graduates are depicted in Table 4.16. Current first year students: 58.3% (7) reported never using alcohol during their college experience, 8.3% (1) reported using alcohol 1-2 hours per week each year during their college experience, and 24.9% (3) reported using alcohol 3-5 hours per week each year during their college experience. Of the current sophomore students participating in this study, 24.9% (3) reported never using alcohol, 24.9% (3) reported using alcohol 1-2 hours per week each year during their college experience, and 16.7 % (2) reported using alcohol 3-5 hours per week each year during their college experience. Approximately 16.7% (2) of the currently enrolled students in their junior
year reported having never used alcohol. However, 33.3% (4) of the currently enrolled
students in their junior year reported having used alcohol 1-2 hours per week each year
during their college experience, 8.3% (1) reported having used alcohol 3-5 hours per
week during their college experience, and 8.3% (1) reported having used alcohol 6-8
hours per week during their college experience. Approximately 8.3% (1) of the currently
enrolled students in their senior year reported having never used alcohol during their
college experience, 8.3% (1) reported using alcohol 1-2 hours per week each year during
their college experience, 8.3% (1) reported having used alcohol 3-5 hours per week each
year during their college experience, and 8.3 % (1) reported using alcohol 9 or more
hours per week each year during their college experience.

Alcohol use for the graduates was described throughout their college experience
as detailed in Table 4.16. During their first year, 50% (4) graduates reported never using
alcohol during their college experience, 25% (2), reported using alcohol 1-2 hours per
week, and 25% (2) reported using alcohol 3-5 hours per week. During the sophomore
year, 25% (2) of the graduates reported never using alcohol during their college
experience, 12.5 % (1) reported using alcohol 3-5 hours per week, and 12.5% (1) reported
using alcohol 9 or more hours per week. During the junior year, 25% (2) of the graduates
reported never using alcohol, and 12.5% (1) reported using alcohol 9 or more hours per
week for the year. During their senior year, 12.5% (1) of the graduates reported never
using alcohol during their college experience. However, 12.5% (1) of the graduates
reported using alcohol 9 or more hours per week during the senior year. A higher
percentage (8.3%) of the graduates reported never using alcohol each year. However, the
graduates reported drinking more hours (approximately four as shown in Table 4.16) per
year earlier in their college careers than currently enrolled students. One graduate reported drinking more than 9 hours per week during the sophomore year. One senior among the currently enrolled students reported drinking more than 9 hours per week.

None of the currently enrolled students reported using recreational drugs as part of this study’s survey. However, the graduates consistently reported using recreational drugs each year during their college careers (Table 4.16).

Recreational drug use among the graduates during their first year was reported as follows: 62.5% (5) reported never using drugs during their college experience, 12.5% (1) reported using drugs 1-2 hours per week, and 12.5% (1) reported using drugs 9 or more hours per week. Recreational drug use among graduates during their sophomore year was reported as follows: 37.5% (3) reported never using drugs during their college experience, and 12.5% (1) reported using drugs for 9 or more hours per week during their sophomore year. Twenty-five percent (2) of the graduates reported never using drugs during their college experience. Only 12.5% (1) of the graduates reported using drugs 9 or more hours per week during the junior year, and 12.5% (1) reported used drugs 6-8 hours per week during the senior year. Some of the respondents opted not to respond to this question (Table 4.16).
Table 4.16

*Hours of Alcohol and Recreational Drugs Use Per Year While Enrolled*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours of Use</th>
<th>FY</th>
<th>SO</th>
<th>JR</th>
<th>SR</th>
<th>FY</th>
<th>SO</th>
<th>JR</th>
<th>SR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black Males</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduates</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher next examined SPSS correlations, using GPA as in indicator of likely persistence for current students. GPA did not correlate significantly with the variables measuring off campus activities for the current students. An examination of SPSS correlations using GPA as an indicator of likely persistence for the Black male
graduates was also conducted. GPA did not correlate significantly with the variables measuring off campus activities for the graduates. Examples of GPA not correlating significantly are: exercising off-campus ($r = -.12, p > .05$); telephone calls from parents relative to classes during the junior year ($r = .22, p > .05$) and using alcohol senior year ($r = .14, p > .05$). The Black males in the study involve themselves in off campus activities. They are persisting toward graduation but there is no statistically significant correlation.

**Research Question 4:** Which, if any, institution involvement initiatives facilitate persistence of Black males toward a college degree?

Table 4.17

*Questions Used as Indicators for Research Question 4*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Question Wording</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Please indicate whether or not you participated in any of the following campus activities during your college experience resident assistant or resident advisor served as an elected officer in student government or participated in the college work study program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Please indicate how often if ever you engaged with your parent(s) or guardian in the following areas during your college experience, campus visits to see you or attending campus activities with you (athletics, concerts, lectures, etc.).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.17 illustrates the indicators that were used to measure this research question. Given the low number of subjects, current HEOP students were compared to graduated HEOP students in their responses to the survey. To this end, a comparison of frequencies and descriptive statistics were used.
The current students participated in the Campus Activities Board at a higher percentage than the graduates. The results relating to participation in the campus sponsored activities on the survey are provided in Table 4.18. One graduate (12.5%) reported serving on the Campus Activities Board during their experience while approximately 33.3% (3) currently enrolled students were involved on the Campus Activities Board from 1-4 years during their college experience. Also, one current student (8.3%) reported serving as a Resident Assistant on their campus for two years during their college experience while none of the graduates reported as having served in this capacity. Two currently enrolled students (16.7%) served as Admissions Tour Guides compared to 1 (12.5%) of the graduates. Two currently enrolled students (16.7%) reported that they had never participated in campus sponsored lectures or performing arts events. In contrast, 50% (4) of the graduates reported that they had never participated in campus sponsored lectures or performing arts events. Of the currently enrolled students participating in this study, 25% (3) reported that they never attended athletic events on campus. However, 50% (4) of the graduates reported that they never attended athletic events on campus (Table 4.18).
Table 4.18

Participation in Campus Sponsored Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black Males</th>
<th>Campus Board</th>
<th>Resident Assistant</th>
<th>Tour Guide</th>
<th>Campus Lectures</th>
<th>Performing Arts</th>
<th>Athletic Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Students</td>
<td>9 (66.7%)</td>
<td>11 (91.7%)</td>
<td>11 (91.7%)</td>
<td>2 (16.7%)</td>
<td>2 (16.7%)</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
<td>4 (33.3%)</td>
<td>2 (16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (16.7%)</td>
<td>4 (33.3%)</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (16.7%)</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>2 (16.7%)</td>
<td>4 (33.3%)</td>
<td>1 (8.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL 12 (100%)</td>
<td>12 (100%)</td>
<td>12 (100%)</td>
<td>12-100%</td>
<td>12 (100%)</td>
<td>12 (100%)</td>
<td>12 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>7 (87.5%)</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
<td>7 (87.5%)</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>3 (37.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
<td>2 (25%)</td>
<td>1 (12.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL 8 (100%)</td>
<td>8 (100%)</td>
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The responses among current students and graduates regarding visits by parents or guardians to the campus are shared in Table 4.13 for current students and Table 4.14 for graduate students. There was one (8.3%) current student who had a parent or guardian visit campus to see him “frequently” from the first year through the senior year of his college experience. Also, only one graduate (12.5%) reported having a parent or guardian visit campus to see him “frequently” for the first year and sophomore year. There were no “frequent” campus visits identified by the graduates for the junior or senior years of their college experience (Table 4.14). The majority of the current students, 7 (58.3%), as identified in Table 4.13, responded to having a parent or guardian visit during the college experience either “never” or “rarely” for the sophomore and junior years. Five (67.5%) graduates reported “never” or “rarely” having visits by a parent or guardian during the
Higher percentages of currently enrolled students (58.3%) and graduates (72.5%) reported that their parents or guardians “rarely” or “never” visited them during their college experience.

The researcher examined SPSS correlations, using GPA as an indicator of likely persistence for current students. GPA did not correlate significantly with the variables measuring institutional involvement initiatives for the current students. An examination of SPSS correlations using GPA as an indicator of likely persistence for the Black male graduates was also conducted. GPA did not correlate significantly with the variables measuring institutional involvement initiatives for the graduates. Examples of the correlations are GPA and serving as an admissions tour guide ($r = .27, p > .05$) and campus visits with parents during the first year ($r = .53, p > .05$).

**Summary**

This quantitative research study was designed “to provide an explanation or prediction about the relationship among variables in the study” (Creswell, 2009, p.69). The dependent variables (currently enrolled, recently graduated, Black, male, HEOP students, and grade point average) and the independent variables (demographic factors, classification by academic year, participants’ involvement in academics, involvement with peers, work for pay, co-curricular activities, social activities, and parental involvement) provided the foundation for the study. The graduates spent more time attending classes, studying, doing homework, and using computers for academic purposes than the current students. Table 4.4 shows an increase each year in the amount of time graduates were involved in these academic activities. The graduates reported spending more time in academic activities than social activities as they progressed in
their college experience. In the aggregate, currently enrolled students spent more time socializing than the graduates. The majority of the currently enrolled students who participated in this study were in their first and second years of college. Therefore, the data and subsequent analysis is limited in predicting persistence or generalizing beyond the respondents who participated in this study. Nonetheless, the researcher notes that the currently enrolled juniors and seniors who participated in this study demonstrated continued progress toward completion of their degrees. Further, it is noted that results in the study relating to the persistence factors/predictors varied significantly between the currently enrolled students and graduates while other results demonstrated little or no variability between the two groups. The researcher will discuss the implications of these results in the next chapter.
Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The primary purpose of this study was to identify involvement factors that may promote the graduation of Black males participating in Higher Education Opportunity Programs (HEOP) at four higher education institutions in New York State. The problem that this study focused on related to the lower graduation rates found among Black males attending colleges and universities in New York State and the nation. Black men are graduating from colleges and universities at a lower number than Black women and White males, (Cokley & Moore, 2007; Garibaldi, 2007; Daire, LaMothe & Fuller, 2007; Flowers, 2004-2005). Garibaldi (2007) asserts, “… these young men are losing educational and economic ground to just about all other racial and gender groups” (p. 331).

In the remainder of this chapter, the researcher discusses the implications of the study’s findings within the context of its stated purpose and problem. The implications of the findings are discussed within the framework of the study’s research questions. The researcher also discusses the limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, and implications for professional practice, and provides a conclusion summarizing the highlights of the study.

The survey information regarding the habits and experiences as reported by the Black male participants in this study may be of use to institutions, administrators, and parents to assist students as they attempt to navigate the undergraduate experience.
through HEOP. This study adds to the research by providing insights to higher education institutions that are committed to improving graduation rates among Black males and increasing cultural diversity among their student body.

Students from economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds often create their personal identities in the midst of mixed cultural and political messages that are part of the higher education academic experience. The college campuses where many of these students enroll do not reflect their cultural experiences. “Black students are frequently stereotyped and spend an enormous amount of time establishing their academic credibility in the classroom” (Fries-Britt & Turner, 2001, p. 421). They are further pressured to give up their identities to survive or co-exist in this highly competitive and unfamiliar environment of academia. These students often experience cultural shock at PWIs which prompts them to question who they are and how much of themselves they are willing to compromise as they pursue a college degree. The HEOP is designed to assist this group of students in successfully navigating the higher education process while retaining their self-identity and becoming better world citizens. This study explored the responses and lived experiences of current and former HEOP Black males at four institutions of higher education in New York State.

Implications of Findings

This section discusses the implications of the findings in the context of the study’s research questions, other existing research, and the researcher’s extensive experience as an administrator in higher education. This section also discusses the implications of the findings for professional practice and future research.
Research Question 1: Which, if any curricular activities facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward graduation?

Finding: The graduated students appeared to have placed more emphasis on their academic activities than the currently enrolled students, yet the current students appeared to be progressing toward graduation. This may indicate a desire to be engaged in academics as well as being successful as students. For example, the current students reported spending more time with faculty outside of class than the graduates. Both groups self-reported grade point averages sufficient enough to remain enrolled, which is necessary for degree completion. It is possible that the graduates may not recall the amount of time actually spent on these activities during their four years of study. In other words, given the passage of time, their recollection of the actual time involved in these academic activities may not have been accurately reported. Based on the data collected, a limited number of current juniors and seniors (4) demonstrated persistence. However, the amount of time that these students spent engaged in academic activities is less than the amount of time the graduates reported spending on these same activities. The current juniors and seniors spent an hour less per week in class than the graduates; 30 minutes to an hour less per week studying than the graduates, 30 minutes to 2 hours less per week doing homework, and up to 2 hours less using a computer for academic purposes than the graduates.

The responses from the participants suggest that academic factors such as attending classes, completing assignments, being engaged with faculty, and participating in other various campus-based academic activities may support the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward graduation. It should be noted that the survey results
suggested that study abroad did not appear to be an important factor in promoting persistence for either the currently enrolled or graduated students.

Research Question 2: Which if any co-curricular activities facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward graduation?

Finding: The survey results indicated that both the graduated and currently enrolled students became less involved in intercollegiate athletics as they progressed in their studies. The participation in intercollegiate athletics diminished each year for the graduated and the current students. Cokley and Moore (2007) and Cuyjet (2006) suggest that Black male youth derive self-respect and a sense of identity from sports-related activities. It is possible that as the Black males in this study progressed in their studies, they were able to identify and substitute sports-related activities with non-sports related activities (e.g., academic activities) that reinforced their self-respect and sense of identity. The findings in this study suggest that certain Black males appear to change their focus from sports to academics as they progressed through the college experience. Research conducted by Garibaldi (2007) and Harper (2006 b) indicates that athletics play a significant role in various aspects of life for many Black males, from youth leagues up through their college experience. The results from this study suggest that Black males are able to persist toward graduation without necessarily being involved in collegiate athletics. For example, the graduates decreased the amount of time spent in out-of-class activities and increased the amount of time spent on academic activities as they progressed in their studies. This suggests that the persistence of Black males may increase as they become more actively involved in a major course of study and have a greater focus on academics. It is also possible the participants in this study
persisted toward graduation because their motivation to graduate increased with each successive year, and degree completion appeared to be more attainable. This assertion is based on New York State Education Department 2010 data on HEOP graduation rates, which indicate that HEOP students who persist beyond their second year are much more likely to complete an undergraduate program of study and graduate from college.

Both groups of Black males (current students and graduates) were involved in social activities, attended parties and participated in varying degrees in clubs and organizations. These activities provide a level of support and camaraderie for students. The challenges faced by students of color on campuses where they are underrepresented remain similar as noted in the Grier-Reid (2008) AFAM program study. Black students in that study viewed actions of the institution as promoting a cliquish culture and were divisive instead of welcoming. Harper (2009b) supports this idea and states that: “Their [Black males] inability to integrate into the campus because it is often so unlike their home environments is one of the main factors commonly used to explain Black attrition” (p. 700). The Black males in this study, especially the current students, were involved in co-curricular activities and progressing towards graduation. The findings of this study suggest that Black males who are involved in co-curricular activities are more likely to persist toward graduation.

Research Question 3: Which, if any, off campus activities facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward graduation?

Findings: The survey data suggest that involvement in certain off-campus activities may facilitate the persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward
graduation. The data showed that the males in each group spent time in their professors’ homes, which was one of the off-campus activities considered for this study. The study results suggest that the opportunity for Black males to engage in meaningful relationships with faculty outside of class may be an important factor in their persistence towards graduation. This study did not examine the relationship between the race of the professors and their interactions with Black males as a factor of their persistence toward graduation. However, based on recent research (Harper, 2009) related to this topic, this question might be considered in future studies.

Harper (2009), in his study of Black male academic achievers and student leaders who thrived inside and outside of the classroom, stated the following:

“…they often experience both racism and success, which calls for a multifaceted navigational strategy that includes engagement in student organizations, meaningful interactions with supportive same-race peers, and the strategic publicity of their educational achievements to White people who possess deficit views of Black men” (p.709).

The currently enrolled Black males in this study appeared to have assumed more leadership roles than graduated students as they persisted towards graduation. Harper (2009) asserted that the more Black male students are involved in leadership activities inside and outside of the classroom, the more likely they will achieve success in other aspects of their lives.

Based on this researcher’s experiences at predominately White institutions (PWIs) and Harper’s (2009) study, Black males are confronted with the “duality of emotional stresses” on PWI campuses. The duality of the emotional stresses of assimilating into a
different environment and being successful as a student are concerns that should be addressed as Black males enroll at PWIs. To this end, involvement in leadership activities on and off-campus may help Black males reduce and better manage these inevitable emotional stressors. This study’s findings suggest that certain off-campus activities may not have a significant impact on the persistence of Black males toward graduation. For example, based on the survey results, these non-significant off-campus activities included “exercising off campus,” “volunteering off campus” and “attending religious services off campus.” Most students have access to quality exercise and workout facilities on their respective campuses free of charge. However, off-campus facilities usually cost money and may be less accessible due to proximity and issues related to transportation. The survey did not ask whether or not the respondents had personal vehicles or access to a vehicle for personal use. However, given the location of certain campuses, transportation may be an obstacle when it comes to accessing certain off-campus activities, especially when the campus is located in more isolated suburban or rural settings. Through conversations with the HEOP directors, the researcher found that many of their students are from New York City or other urban cities in New York State where they have access to public transportation. Similarly, the colleges in this study provide volunteer opportunities and religious services on campus. Therefore, students do not need to travel off-campus to participate in volunteer activities or religious services.

Participants in this study were also asked about off-campus activities in relation to the involvement of their parents or guardians. The findings relating to parental involvement for the graduates and current students, suggest that electronic communication is used more frequently than traditional modes of communication such as
letter writing and telephone calls. For example, both current students and graduates reported that they rarely received personal letters from home. The move away from traditional modes of communication such as letter writing may be attributable to the increase use of various forms of technology in all aspects of our society such as e-mail, instant messaging, and other social networking methods. The data for this study did not provide enough information about the impact of parental involvement on persistence to draw more substantive conclusions. However, future studies might consider the impact of certain family and extra-familial factors that influence the enrollment and graduation of Black males in college. This direction would be consistent with the research conducted by Wilson-Sadberry, Winfield, and Royster (1991) who concluded that family and extra-familial influences are important resilience factors for Black males enrolling and persisting in college.

Research Question 4: Which if any, institution involvement initiatives facilitate persistence of Black males enrolled in HEOP toward a college degree?

Findings: The survey results for this question focused on the relationship between the persistence of Black males and their participation in institutional initiatives such as campus-wide forums, lectures, and athletic events. The data from this study suggested there was no significant relationship between involvement of Black males in campus-sponsored activities and their persistence towards graduation. Black males in this study reported very limited involvement in the institutional initiatives noted above. For example, only 20% (4) of all the respondents in this study indicated they had participated in institutional leadership initiatives during their college experience. The respondents in this study did not identify involvement in campus-sponsored forums, lectures, concerts,
or athletic events as significant factors in relation to their persistence. However, based on
the researcher’s experience, there is an implied value for students participating in these
types of campus experiences. These experiences, in this researcher’s judgment, could
allow students to connect with their institution and establish camaraderie with their peers
while being exposed to the various cultural and social nuances of campus life.

It is interesting to note that Harper (2009) indicated that Black females, when
compared to Black males, were more involved in campus-related activities, and held
more leadership positions on campus during their college experience. It is possible that
Black males chose not to involve themselves due to a perceived sense of not belonging or
an inability to connect with the institution. Black males have difficulties adjusting to the
PWI because it is so unlike their home environment (Harper, 2009). The Black males in
this study reported limited involvement in institution-sponsored activities. This study’s
finding was consistent with Harper’s (2009) finding which suggests that Black males
have limited involvement in certain institutional activities on predominantly White
campuses.

*Implications for Future Research*

The problem, findings, and limitations of this study, and potential societal
consequences if the problem persists, suggest that there is a critical need for ongoing
research. Ongoing research is needed to inform professional practice and mitigate the
circumstances that cause Black males to be less likely to graduate from college.
Specifically, there is a need for future research that examines involvement and other
factors that may promote or impede the retention and graduation of Black male students
in higher education institutions in general and HEOP programs in particular. Based on the
findings and limitations of this study, and potential societal consequences if the problem persists, the researcher suggests the following for future research.

This study used a quantitative research methodology. Future research on this topic should consider using a qualitative research methodology. To add to the findings of this study and expand the body of knowledge on this study’s topic, the researcher suggest a follow-up qualitative study using focus groups of selected Black males enrolled in HEOP in New York State colleges and universities. A qualitative methodological approach will allow for more in-depth questioning of the participants and follow-up questions through interviews to elicit more detailed information about their on- and off-campus experiences, and how these experiences did or did not contribute to their persistence toward graduation. For example, a follow-up study could examine the perceived indicators of persistence toward graduation as identified by Black males enrolled in HEOP. The perceived indicators would be derived from a set of interview questions that focused on the participants’ perceptions of the factors which influenced them to remain at an institution and eventually graduate.

Another potential area for future research is the role of college administrators, faculty, and student affairs and other campus personnel in promoting the retention and graduation of Black male students on predominantly White college campuses. On most college campuses, there is an inherent expectation that improving student retention and graduation is the responsibility of faculty, college administrators, and student affairs and other campus personnel. The primary question for this type of study might be: How are college administrators, faculty, student affairs and other campus personnel at various colleges and universities trained and expected to assist Black males? The findings from
such a study could expand the body of knowledge on this study’s topic, and provide valuable information on successful practices that promote the retention and graduation of Black males at predominantly White campuses.

An additional potential area for future research would be an examination of past and present institutional data relating to the retention and graduation of Black males at several higher education institutions to identify or isolate common factors that support their success. The analysis and application of such data could be used to develop, implement, and monitor programs and policies that lead to increased graduation rates for Black males on predominantly White campuses. Capturing and using data relevant to student success to inform decisions and improve professional practice is vital information for all institutions.

Another area for future research would be an examination of the HEOP Summer Institute and its impact on the retention and graduation of Black male students at predominantly White institutions. The HEOP Summer Institute (SI) is a required component for students participating HEOP. The HEOP Summer Institute is a pre-freshman academic and social residential experience designed to acclimate and prepare HEOP students for their first year in college.

The Summer Institute study could focus on the academic, social, and cultural experiences of Black male students in comparison to other racial/ethnic and gender groups participating in the HEOP Summer Institute. The relative impact of the institute’s experiences on each group’s progress toward graduation would be the focus. The findings from this type of research study could provide important information on research and evidenced based best practices that support the retention and graduation of certain
racial/ethnic and gender groups on predominately White campuses. This information also
could be shared throughout the state, and depending on the outcome of the study used to
inform public policy and professional practice relating to the efficacy of the required
summer experience for HEOP students.

Future research relating to this study’s topic might also consider examining
HEOP demographic and academic longitudinal data to identify factors that may
contribute to increasing the enrollment, retention, and graduation of Black males at
institutions of higher education.

Future research could also focus on the positive aspects of the Black male student
experience on college campuses. There appears to be an overabundance of reports and
research that focuses on the negative experiences of Black male students in higher
education. This researcher believes that there should be a counterbalance of the popular
literature to include the positive dispositions and experiences of Black males graduating
from PWIs. This type of information could yield important findings that contribute to the
body of knowledge and inform professional practice. For example, a longitudinal study
chronicling the factors that support the persistence of a cohort of Black male students
from the pre-freshmen year through graduation. The recommendation to engage in
research that focuses on the positive aspects of Black male student experience at PWI’s
anti-deficit achievement framework for research on students of color in STEM (science,
technology, engineering, and mathematics). The framework was designed as a
“deliberately attempt to discover how some students of color have managed to succeed in
STEM” (p. 68). Many STEM students of color like HEOP students have been successful
in attaining a college degree. An anti-deficit model of research would examine the factors that contribute to the success of Black male students rather than the factors that impede the success of Black male students.

Based on the research from Harper’s (2010) work and this study, this researcher believes that a more positive methodological framework and approach could yield data and results that are conducive to achieving greater objectivity and more a neutral stance when it comes to research on Black males. The findings from such research could help scholars and practitioners identify new areas of research, and critical programs and services to increase graduation rates among Black male students at higher education institutions. In addition, preventative measures could be taken and modifications to programs and services could be made before Black male students choose to withdraw or are dismissed from a college.

Limitations of the Study

The small sample size based on the number of Black males participating in this study was a significant limitation. This limitation was reflective of the small number of Black males attending the institutions that were involved in this study. In addition, the time frame for this study, approximately one year, limited the researcher’s ability to collect and examine other potential data elements over an extended period of time. However, as noted previously, the findings from this study may provide opportunities for longitudinal research over an extended period of time.

This study used quantitative survey research design. While this research design was a reasonable and acceptable methodological approach for this study, such research has inherent limitations. In the case of this study, a sample of students identified as
currently enrolled and graduated HEOP students was utilized in obtaining information from each campus. The survey of recent graduates provided information on a relatively small group of HEOP students who had graduated from college. The small and finite sample size among the graduates was a limitation because it only allowed the researcher to survey one cohort of graduates at a specific point in time. This limitation prevented the researcher from making comparisons of various data sets for multiple years, and generalizing of the findings beyond the one cohort of graduates who participated in the study. The number of the graduates who actually responded to the survey and subsequent sample size was small, representing only 15.4% of the total population. Hackshaw (2008) supports small samples in research with the understanding that researchers being careful in making strong conclusions and asserting whether the results are positive or negative. The respondents in this study included freshmen and sophomore students. However, the data relating to the cumulative grade point averages and number of credit hours completed for certain respondents, especially freshmen and sophomores, who were just beginning their college experience were insufficient to project their persistence through graduation.

Glatthorn and Joyner (2005) and Hackshaw (2008) remind researchers to be careful as they interpret results of small studies. “There needs to be a careful balance between not dismissing outright what could be a real effect and also not making undue claims about the effect” (Hackshaw, 2008, p. 1142). A thorough examination of the data was undertaken to provide accurate information as reported by the study participants. The researcher acknowledges that a larger sample may have produced different and perhaps
more reliable results, and provided for a more in-depth analysis of this study’s research questions.

The participants in this study self-reported their feelings and perceptions about their experiences. Self-reporting may be seen as subjective and, therefore, a limitation. For example, self-reporting may be subjective if the respondents choose to offer a response that they think is a more acceptable answer rather than their honest assessment of their experience, thereby potentially skewing the results of the study. Self-reported data is a limitation because the respondents may not provide accurate information but may provide a response they think is socially desirable and not an accurate representation of themselves (Creswell, 2009; Patten, 2007).

The unplanned adaptation of the data analysis procedures data was also a limitation. During the data analysis phase of the study, the researcher found that the survey design included too many sub-categories that in certain cases required as many as 16 different responses for each individual question. This delayed the analysis of the data. The researcher, with the help of his committee, modified the data analysis procedures to promote a more coherent, consistent, and efficient data analysis system. These procedures were noted and explained in Chapter 4. Patten (2007) reminds quantitative researchers to “plan their research in detail in advance and follow the plan closely throughout the study because mid-stream deviations might be viewed as introducing subjectivity into the study” (p. 19). With this in mind, the researcher took steps, as noted in Chapter 4, to maintain the integrity of the data provided by the respondents, and retain objectivity in reporting the related findings.
The survey items relating to parental/guardian information were also a limitation of this study. The survey did not include enough items relating to parental/guardian influences that may have impacted the persistence of the participants in this study. The researcher believes that more or at least a different set of questions requiring respondents to reflect on these influences may have yielded important findings that would have enhanced the efficacy of this study.

**Recommendations for Professional Practice**

This section offers recommendations for those active in providing programs and services for HEOP students as well as other underrepresented populations on college campuses. The professional practice, policy, program, and student recommendations from this study will be made available to scholars and practitioners for future studies and improving professional practice. “Encouraging and promoting in-class and out-of-class student involvement is the cornerstone of student affairs practice” (Flowers, 2004-2005, p. 633). Student affairs practitioners (such as HEOP Directors) have a professional and moral responsibility to assist and support students as they transition into the campus environment and seek to achieve academic success. In this regard and given the past and current state of Black male persistence and success on college campuses, higher education professionals in general and HEOP Directors in particular are challenged to examine their institution’s readiness to promote policies and practices that support the retention and graduation of Black male students. For example, colleges and universities need to make concerted efforts to identify the institutional barriers that may prevent Black males from persisting to graduation and obtaining a college degree. It is also important for colleges and universities to identify and provide institutional opportunities
that will promote the retention and graduation of Black male students. This researcher agrees with Flowers (2004 a) research that suggests when certain opportunities are provided and Black males take advantage of these opportunities, they are more likely to be committed to the institution’s goals and mission, and complete their college degree. Based on Tinto’s (1987) research, Flowers (2004 b) states: “Students’ perceptions of social support may also facilitate an increased commitment to the institution and serve to help African American students feel their goals and interests are congruent with the university’s academic mission” (p.28). One inference that can be drawn from this statement is that educational institutions should make a concerted effort to develop opportunities, institutional practices, and relevant programs that are designed with the specific needs and interests of Black males in mind.

Policy Recommendation

This section discusses policy recommendations that are designed to improve educational outcomes for Black male students at higher education institutions. National, state, local, and institutional policies help set the stage for systemic changes that are designed to improve outcomes for the underserved. To this end, Lee and Ransom (2011) have called on policy makers to make improving the retention and graduation of young men of color a national priority.

State and federal policy makers have created a number of policy initiatives to address various issues that adversely or disproportionately impact Black males. For example, the Congressional Black Caucus under the leadership of Representative Danny Davis launched the State of the African American Male (SAAM) initiative in 2003. This initiative has focused on five areas of concern: health, education, economic
empowerment, criminal justice, and civic participation. The initiative was designed “to facilitate the economic and social well-being and the wellness of Black men in the United States” (Lee, Jr. & Ransom, 2011, p.71). The goal of the initiative was to inspire action that will dissolve barriers to success for African American males while empowering them to seek and obtain the resources needed to overcome obstacles that remain (Lee, Jr. & Ransom, 2011). This goal is consistent with the purpose of this study and serves as an impetus for assisting Black males to enroll in and graduate from college.

This researcher also encourages HEOP policy makers to consider implementing the policy recommendations proposed in 2004 by the City University of New York’s (CUNY) University Task Force on the Black Male Initiative. The CUNY Board of Trustees approved a comprehensive action-oriented document to help Black males: “overcome the inequalities that lead to poor academic performance in the K-12 system, the attendant weak enrollment, retention and graduation from institution of higher education, and the high rates of joblessness and incarceration” (Lee, Jr. & Ransom, 2011, p. 72). The task force presented nine recommendations which could be adopted by the New York State Education Department and higher education institutions with HEOP programs. The nine recommendations from the task force follow (Lee, Jr. and Ransom, 2011, p. 72):

1. Provide strong university leadership on the challenges facing black youth and men.

2. Strengthen the school-to college pipeline to enable many more black male students to move into higher education.

3. Increase admission and graduation rates at CUNY colleges.
4. Improve teacher education to prepare professionals for urban education.
5. Improvement employment prospects for black males.
6. Contribute to the reduction of the incarceration rate for black men.
7. Establish an Institute for the Achievement of Educational and Social Equity for Black males.
8. Involve experts in the implementation of the recommendations.
9. Establish benchmarks and hold colleges accountable for implementing these recommendations.

A proposal supporting the implementation of the above recommendations was funded by the New York City Council and has seen growth in funding support during the past three years. The proposal does not provide the specifics on how to accomplish the intended goals as inferred by the recommendations. The proposal was intended to provide a framework for policymakers and others to begin addressing the issues as noted above.

Similar to the CUNY initiative above, the University System of Georgia implemented the African American Male Initiative in 2004. This program is funded by the Georgia state legislature in a way that is similar to that of New York State’s HEOP program. The researcher recommends that the New York State central authorities (NYSED, CUNY, and SUNY) conduct a joint policy review of and visit to the program in Georgia to determine which aspects of the African Male Initiatives might inform and improve policies, practices, and services for Black males in EOP, HEOP, and SEEK programs.

The availability of financial resources to support college attendance is a legitimate concern for most middle-class college students. However, the availability of financial
resources is especially important for low income students and can impede or improve their chances of accessing higher education and obtaining a college degree. The HEOP program recognizes that certain students are especially affected by their economic circumstances and attempts to address such circumstances by providing enhanced financial aid to local income students. Therefore, it is important that the New York State Legislature continue existing and create new policies to insure that HEOP students receive adequate financial aid and have access to higher education. Equally important, the federal government and institutions of higher education, along with the State, must assume a greater share of the financial responsibility to support HEOP and other low-income students. To augment these efforts, it is recommended that HEOP Directors form partnerships with their Development and Academic Affairs Offices to conduct lobbying and fund raising efforts specifically targeted at soliciting additional and new resources from various funding sources to support HEOP programs.

Program Recommendations

The program recommendations that follow are based on the researcher’s professional experiences with Black males in higher education, the research literature, and the findings of this study. The recommendations are intended to inform potential policy initiatives and professional practice, and improve programs and services to HEOP students. A tenet of Astin’s (1999) Involvement Theory is “the effectiveness of any educational policy is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement” (p. 519). Consistent with Astin’s (1999) theory, it is recommended that HEOP students of all backgrounds, especially Black males, be provided with ongoing opportunities to be involved in various structured activities on-campus. For
example, during the pre-freshman summer program, HEOP students should be exposed and encouraged to participate in various student clubs and organizations. Based on Astin’s (1999) theory and my professional experiences with students on college campuses, it is important that HEOP take specific actions that will facilitate students’ transition into higher education and as members of the entire campus community. To this end, the HEOP directors and staff should develop specific strategies, within the context of the HEOP social experience, that consistently engage HEOP students in a wide range of structured involvement activities. For example, during the required counseling sessions, HEOP counselors could engage students in conversations that identify the students’ level of interest and involvement in campus-sponsored academic and social activities.

Another program recommendation is that HEOP collaborate with their campus-based student affairs and academic affairs departments to establish mentoring and other personal development opportunities for students. For example, the collaboration between HEOP and student affairs and academic affairs could focus on developing involvement and mentoring opportunities for HEOP students through work study jobs and research assistantships. This recommendation is consistent with Astin’s (1999) research on the relationship between student involvement and student persistence. Astin (1999) stated: “The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program” (p. 519). Astin’s (1999) research also suggests that students may develop a greater “sense of belonging” if they become involved in campus activities.
early in their college experience. The involvement activities can be academic or co-curricular, and may be an important determinant of college success for certain students.

The researcher also recommends that HEOP programs consider increasing the number of campus visits for prospective HEOP students prior to their enrolling at the college. Campus visits are important in giving prospective students a feel for the institutional atmosphere and developing an understanding of, and hopefully connection to a new and different environment. To achieve this objective, higher education institutions must demonstrate a commitment to diversity and offer a realistic view of the campus.

Institutions should forge partnerships with parents to build trust and minimize misunderstandings between the institution and the parents. Based on this researcher’s experience in student affairs at college campuses, it is important that there must be sincere and ongoing efforts on the part of higher education institutions to make parents and students aware of the campus’ resources, mission, goals, expectations, and opportunities for involvement throughout the students’ college experience. These types of efforts are especially important in the case of Black male students as they seek to adjust to a new and at times hostile environment. This recommendation is consistent with the research relating to Blacks/African-American students in higher education that was conducted by Tinto (1987), Astin (1999), and Flowers (2004).

_Institutional Recommendations_

The programs and services provided by an institution for HEOP students are often limited to one or two offices on a college campus. To address this problem, this researcher recommends that higher education institutions introduce practices and procedures in all academic, student, and financial affairs related offices that are designed
to more fully integrate HEOP students into the mainstream of college life and support their ongoing success. For example, colleges with HEOP programs could examine the mission and philosophy of their institution and insure that it is aligned with and embraces the mission and philosophy of HEOP. Another example of a possible effort to support HEOP students, especially Black males, would be for the HEOP program, and the academic and student affairs offices to sponsor a joint pre-freshman summer activity with the local community designed to connect Black males with other successful Black male role models from the campus and local community. This effort could be augmented by the institution during the academic year by developing community, business, and school partnerships that provide mentors and ongoing support for Black male students. There are documented successes of partnerships between business and community organizations and young men of color on college campuses throughout this country. Lee, Jr. & Ransom (2011) provide an example of a partnership initiative that may assist institutions by providing mentors and other support to Black males pursuing a college degree. This initiative, 100 Black Men of America, Inc., has as its mission “to improve the quality of life within our communities and enhance educational and economic opportunities for all African Americans” (Lee, Jr. & Ransom, 2011, p. 74). This organization mentors youth through a network of chapters in the United States and internationally. The Collegiate 100, an auxiliary organization of 100 Black Men, is comprised primarily of African American male college students on college campuses throughout the country. The Collegiate 100 serves as the development and implementation arm of 100 Black Men on college campuses, and provides mentoring and
tutoring programs to address the social, emotional, educational, and physical needs of students of color on college campuses.

Higher education institutions should consider partnering with organizations such as Collegiate 100 and 100 Black Men of America to help them focus on and address the needs of Black males as they attempt to navigate and successfully complete the college experience. The researcher also recommends that pre-service college programs and in-service professional development programs for all higher education personnel include cultural and gender responsive training. The research of Lee, Jr. & Ransom (2011) support this recommendation and offer examples of successful programs. They support student centered approaches and training for all college faculty and staff. To this end, it is recommended that higher education institutions with HEOP programs implement comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs designed to increase cultural awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness among all faculty and staff.

Finally, it is recommended that higher education institutions with HEOP program make special efforts to insure that their curricula, faculty, and staff reflect the diversity in society. To achieve this outcome, the researcher recommends that higher education institutions include action steps and appropriate resources in their strategic plans designed to review and revise their curricula to be culturally responsive, and target specific recruitment and hiring activities to increase the number of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups.

Conclusion

The findings of this study confirm that Black males enrolled in HEOP benefit from being involved in various collegiate experiences. Involvement incorporates both the
amount of time students are engaged and the value they place on the time spent being engaged (Astin, 1999). Black males who choose to matriculate at a predominantly White institution may experience academic, emotional, and cultural pressures while pursuing a college degree. While these pressures are not limited to Black males only, they are further compounded when considering the disparity between the number of Black males and other racial and ethnic groups attending and graduating from colleges and universities.

Unless concerted and prolonged efforts are taken by policy makers and higher education institutions, the number of Black males entering colleges and universities may continue to decline. Higher education institutions that enroll and are committed to educating Black males and other students of color must ensure that their campus is conducive to meeting the needs of this population. While HEOP programs and staff must continue to play a major role, they cannot be exclusively responsible for the success of Black males once they enroll on a college campus. The success of Black males on college campuses must be seen as the collectively responsibility of all faculty and staff. To achieve this outcome, the missions, policies, and practices at higher education institutions must embrace diversity, and promote inclusivity among and success for all of its students. The problem identified in this study relating to the persistence of Black male students in HEOP programs in New York State higher education institutions must be addressed through ongoing research, changes in public and institutional policy and procedures, and improvements in professional practice. However, in the judgment of this researcher, the persistence and success of Black male students in higher education can only occur if the colleges and universities in the State and nation have an unwavering commitment to improve conditions and outcomes for each student regardless of gender or race.
References


+new .


Appendix A

Higher Education Opportunity Program Involvement Questionnaire

Thank you for consenting to participate in this important study. The study is designed to explore involvement as a factor facilitating persistence toward graduation for students in the Higher Education Opportunity Program at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. The information collected in this survey will be valuable for this research. You should only answer questions for the number of years you have been enrolled in college. The data requested will be used in preparing a doctoral dissertation to be published in the Fall 2010. By completing this survey, you are granting me permission to use the data in this study. As such, you are advised of the following:
A. You have the right to decline answering any question you are uncomfortable with.
B. It should take approximately 30 minutes to complete the survey
C. There will be no physical discomfort
D. You may choose to participate in a random drawing for a $50 gift certificate by providing proof of completion with your campus HEOP director.
E. Your answers will remain confidential at all times and the data will be properly secured

Please circle the answer for following questions to the best of your ability.

1. What is your age? 18 19-20 21-22 23 or over
2. What is your gender? Female Male
3. What is your grade point average? <2.0 2.0-2.5 2.6-3.0 3.1-3.5 >3.5
4. What is your classification in college? Freshman/First Year Sophomore Junior Senior Fifth Year Graduate
5. Did you begin college here or did you transfer from another institution? Began here Transferred from another institution
6. How would you identify yourself given the following choices? (Circle One) Asian, Pacific Islander Black, Non-Hispanic Hispanic-Puerto Rican Hispanic-Other Native American White-Non-Hispanic Other
7. Where do or did you reside while in college?
First Year  Sophomore Year  Junior Year  Senior Year  Fifth Year

On Campus  Off Campus  Both

8. Please indicate the amount of time you spend or spent per week on the following activities during your college experience?

Attending classes  Sophomore Year  Junior Year  Senior Year  Fifth Year

Studying  
Doing homework  
Using a personal computer  

None  < than an hour  1-2 hours  3-5 hours  6-10 hours  11-15 hours  16-20 hours  >20 hours

9. How many undergraduate courses (not including the Summer Institute) have you taken that emphasized?

Writing skills  
Math  
Science  
History  
Business  
Health  
Technology  
Foreign language  

None  1-2  3-5  6-8  9 or more

10. How many courses have you taken that emphasized:

Ethnic studies course(s)  
Women’s studies course(s)  
Men’s studies course(s)  
Honors course(s)  
Interdisciplinary course(s)  
Study-abroad course(s)  
College internship program  
Basic skills course(s)  
Developmental course(s)  
Racial or cultural awareness course(s)  

None  1-2  3-5  6-8  9 or more

11. Please indicate how often, if ever, you engaged in the following during your college experience?

The drop down bar will present four options for you to choose an answer.

Frequently = 2 or more times per week  
Occasionally = 2 or more times per month
Rarely = once or twice per semester
Not at all = never

First Year    Sophomore Year    Junior Year    Senior Year    Fifth Year

- Worked on an independent research project
- Received tutoring in courses
- Tutored another student
- Given or gave a presentation in class
- Took a multiple-choice exam
- Took an essay exam

12. Please indicate the number of hours per week, spent talking with faculty outside of class during your college experience?

First Year    Sophomore Year    Junior Year    Senior Year    Fifth Year

- None
- < than an hour
- 1-2 hours
- 3-5 hours
- 6-10 hours
- 11- 15 hours
- 16- 20 hours
- > 20 hours

13. Have you assisted faculty in teaching a course?

First Year    Sophomore Year    Junior Year    Senior Year    Fifth Year

- Yes
- No

14. Have you worked on a professor’s research project?

First Year    Sophomore Year    Junior Year    Senior Year    Fifth Year

- Yes
- No

15. Have you ever been a guest in a professor’s home during your college experience?

First Year    Sophomore Year    Junior Year    Senior Year    Fifth Year

- Never
- Once or twice
- Three – five times
- Six – eight times
16. Have you had a paper critiqued by an instructor during your college experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or twice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three – five times</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six – eight times</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine or more</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Please indicate the number of hours per week spent doing the following activities during your college experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socializing with friends?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending parties?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in student clubs or organizations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| None | one to two | three to five | six to eight | nine or more |

18. Please indicate whether or not you participated in any of the following student groups or activities during your college experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joined or been a member of a fraternity or sorority</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in campus protest or demonstration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elected to a student office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in intercollegiate athletics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Played intercollegiate football or basketball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Yes | No |

19. Please indicate the number of hours per week spent on the following academic activities during your college experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working on a group project for class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring another student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being tutored by another student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing course content with students outside of class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving tutoring from another student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing racial or ethnic issues with someone from the same racial or ethnic group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing racial or ethnic issues with someone from a different racial or ethnic group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>None</th>
<th>one to two</th>
<th>three to five</th>
<th>six to eight</th>
<th>nine or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

20. Please indicate how often, if ever, you engaged in the following during your college experience? The drop down bar will present four options for you to choose an answer.

- Frequently = 2 or more times per week
- Occasionally = 2 or more times per month
- Rarely = once or twice per semester
- Not at all = never

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Participated in Intramural sports
| Participated as a member of a fraternity or sorority
| Elected to student office?
| Participated in student clubs or organizations
| Socialized with someone from another racial or ethnic group |

21. Please indicate the number of hours worked for pay and where it occurred during your college experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| None
| 1 - 10
| 11- 20
| 21- 29
| 30 or more

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On Campus</th>
<th>Off Campus</th>
<th>Both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

22. Please indicate whether or not you participated in any of the following campus activities during your college experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Campus Activities Planning Board
| Resident Assistant or Resident Advisor
| Served as an elected officer in student government
| Participated in campus sponsored activities such as lectures, forums, etc..
| Attended performing arts events on campus
| Attended athletic events on campus
| Served as an Admissions Tour Guide
| Participated in the College Work Study Program |

| Yes | No |
23. Please indicate the amount of time per week spent on the following activities during your college experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exercising on campus</td>
<td>Exercising off-campus</td>
<td>Playing sports for fun on campus</td>
<td>Playing sports for fun off-campus</td>
<td>Reading for pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering on campus</td>
<td>Volunteering off-campus</td>
<td>Watching television</td>
<td>Attending religious services/meetings on campus</td>
<td>Attending religious services/meetings off-campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in hobbies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None  one to two  three to five  six to eight  nine or more

24. Please indicate whether or not you were involved in the following activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involved in a romantic relationship on campus while in college</td>
<td>Involved in a romantic relationship off-campus while in college</td>
<td>Engaged prior to enrolling in college</td>
<td>Engaged while enrolled in college</td>
<td>Married prior to enrolling in college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married while enrolled in college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. Please indicate how often, if ever you engaged with your parent(s) or guardian in the following areas during your college experience. The drop down bar will present five options for you to choose an answer.

- Frequently = 2 or more times per week
- Occasionally = 2 or more times per month
- Rarely = once or twice per semester
- Not at all = never
- Not applicable = No parents or guardians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Sophomore Year</th>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
<th>Fifth Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus visits to see you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending campus activities with you (athletics, concerts, lectures, etc..)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone calls relative to classes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone calls relative to your activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic communication (text, emails, etc)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personal letters

26. Please indicate the number of hours, if any you engaged in the following during your

First Year   Sophomore Year   Junior Year   Senior Year   Fifth Year

Received career or vocational counseling
Received personal or psychological counseling
Use of alcohol (beer, wine or liquor)
Used recreational drugs

None    one to two    three to five    six to eight    nine or more

Campus Contacts

Mr. James Burrutto
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
315-781-3319
315-781-3888 Fax

Please print this page before clicking ‘Done’ at the bottom of this page. To Print using Firefox: Go to file in the Firefox window top tool bar and select ‘print’. To Print using Internet Explorer: Click on the printer icon in the top toolbar of the Internet Explorer window”

Sign your name and present to the HEOP director by October 6, 2010. Thank you for your participation.
**Appendix B**

**Survey Validation Form**

| Name __________________________________________________________ | Title ____________________________________________ |
| Organization _________________________________________________ | Date ____________________________________________ |

**Directions:** Please circle yes or no based on your response to the survey item. Please list any recommendations or suggestions in the last column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Valid, represents content, appropriate, and clearly written</th>
<th>Suggested Revisions and Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Survey Item Designated by question number</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>During your last year of college how much time did or do you spend during a typical week doing the following activities? Attending classes or lab, studying or doing homework, using a personal computer (Question 8)</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of undergraduate courses took that emphasized specific subjects such as writing skills, math or numerical data, science or scientific inquiry, history or historical analysis or foreign language skills. (Question 9).</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question 10 answered by yes or no further demonstrates examples of academic involvement in specialized programs; ethnic studies, women studies, men studies, honors, interdisciplinary courses, study abroad, internships, study skills, developmental or cultural awareness workshops.</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How often student engaged in independent research project, received tutoring, gave class presentation, took a multiple choice exam or essay exam. (Question 11)</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hours per week spent talking with faculty outside of class (Questions 12)</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assisted faculty in teaching a course or worked or a professor’s research project. (Questions 13 and 14)</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Item</td>
<td>Valid, represents content, appropriate, and clearly written</td>
<td>Suggested Revisions and Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest in a professor’s home or had a paper critiqued by a professor (Questions 15 and 16)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement with student peers- number of hours spent socializing with friends, partying or in student organizations (Question 17)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student participation in Greek letter organizations, campus protest, elected to a student office, intercollegiate athletics, intercollegiate football or basketball (Question 18)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of hours per week spent working on a group project, tutoring, participating in intramurals, discussing ethnic issues, socializing with someone of a another ethnic group (Question 19)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often engaged in discussions outside of class with students, worked on a group project for class, tutored another student, participated in intramural sports, member of Greek letter organization, elected to a student office or time spent attending clubs over the past year. (Question 20)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours per week spent working for pay, full-time work while attending college, part-time job off-campus or part-time job on campus. (Question 21)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus involvement on planning board, resident assistant, Orientation Leader, campus wide activities, campus performing arts events, attending athletic events, Admissions Tour Guide or College Work Study Program. (Question 22)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours per week spent exercising or playing sports for fun, reading for pleasure, volunteer work, watching television, commuting to campus, attending religious services or hobbies. (Question 23)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have student been involved in a serious relationship, had a life altering event during last year or gotten married while in college. (Question 24)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hours during past week receiving career counseling, personal counseling, using alcohol or recreational drugs. (Question 25)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

February 17, 2010
Appendix C

St John Fisher IRB Letter

July 23, 2010

File No: 1099-061710-02

Montrose Streeter
PO Box 1021
Geneva, NY 14456

Dear Mr. Streeter:

Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Institutional Review Board.

I am pleased to inform you that the Board has approved your Expedited Review project, “An Examination of Student Involvement as a Factor Impacting the Graduation of Black Males in Higher Education Opportunity Programs at Four Colleges in Western New York.”

Following federal guidelines, research related records should be maintained in a secure area for three years following the completion of the project at which time they may be destroyed.

Should you have any questions about this process or your responsibilities, please contact me at 385-5262 or by e-mail to emerges@sjfc.edu, or if unable to reach me, please contact the IRB Administrator, Jamie Mosca, at 385-8318, e-mail jmosca@sjfc.edu.

Sincerely,

Eileen M. Merges, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

EM:jlm

Copy QAA IRB
IRB: Approve expedited doc

3690 East Avenue • Rochester, NY 14618 • 585-385-8000 • www.sjfc.edu
Appendix D

Hobart and William Smith College IRB

Appendix D

Hobart and William Smith Colleges
- Colleges of the Seneca -
Form A
Application to Conduct Research with Human Subjects

Directions: This application is to be submitted to and approved in writing by the IRB prior to the initiation of any investigation involving human subjects. If you believe that your research project qualifies for exemption, please complete Form B: Application for Exemption from IRB Review for Research with Human Subjects. Please submit a signed, paper copy and an electronic version of your application with copies of all consent forms, surveys, questionnaires and/or interview protocols you plan to use to the Office of the Provost.

Principal Investigator  Name: Montrose A. Streeter

HWS Department Affiliation: Associate Dean of Student Conduct
Campus Address: 113 Smith Hall
Email Address: Streeter@hws.edu
Phone Number: 315-781-3900

If Principal Investigator is a student:

Name of Faculty/Staff Supervisor:
Supervisor’s Campus Address:
Supervisor’s Email Address:
Supervisor’s Phone Number:

Note: supervisor’s signature must appear at the end of this form.

Project  Title: An Examination of Student Involvement as A Factor Impacting the Graduation of Black Males at Four Western New York Colleges

Anticipated Starting Date: September 13, 2010
End Date (1 year maximum): October 7, 2010

Project Involves:  ☑ Faculty/Staff research
                  ☐ Independently conducted student research
                  ☐ Other: Doctoral dissertation research

Project Collaborators: Dr. Arthur Walton, Dr. Jon Iuzzini (HWS)
(Indicate institutional affiliation if non-HWS) Saint John Fisher College

For IRB use only:
☑ Approved  ☐ Not approved

Submission Date: 8/3/09
Revision Date: 9/30/09

Print Chair’s Name: [Signature]
Chair’s Signature: [Signature]
Date: 10/29/2010

Revised 6-22-2009
Appendix E

Nazareth College IRB

Appendix E

Nazareth

September 22, 2010

Mr. Montrose A. Streeter
P.O. Box 1021
Geneva, NY 14456

Dear Mr. Streeter:

This letter is sent at your request to confirm our approval of your doctoral work specifically using Nazareth College students in your survey. Having successfully obtained the IRB approval from Saint John Fisher College, your sponsoring institution, and the approval from the Nazareth College IRB chair, we support this endeavor.

We are happy to assist in your research, which may benefit our efforts here. Your topic, "An Examination of Student Involvement as a Factor Impacting the Graduation of Black Males at Four Western New York Institutions," will be a worthwhile project. If there is anything more needed from us, please let me know.

Much success with this endeavor!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Hansch H. Smith, Ph.D.
Student Support Services Associate Vice President
HEOP/Excel Director

[HEOP / Excel Director]
Appendix F

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board

MEMORANDUM

TO: Denise Trionfero
DATE: September 30, 2010
SUBJECT: Expedited Protocol Review - Approval of Human Participants
IRB #: 10-234
TITLE: An Examination of Student Involvement as a Factor Impacting the Graduation of Black Males at Four Western New York Colleges

The above referenced protocol, submitted for expedited review, has been evaluated by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the following:

1. the rights and welfare of the individual(s) under investigation;
2. appropriate methods to secure informed consent; and
3. risks and potential benefits of the investigation.

Through the University's expedited review process, your protocol was determined to be of no more than minimal risk and has been given expedited approval. It is my judgment that your proposal conforms to the University's human participants research policy and its assurance to the Department of Health and Human Services, available at: http://www.orip.syr.edu/humaresearch.html.

Your protocol is approved for implementation and operation from September 28, 2010 until September 27, 2011. If appropriate, attached is the protocol's approved informed consent document, date-stamped with the expiration date. This document is to be used in your informed consent process. If you are using written consent, Federal regulations require that each participant indicate their willingness to participate by signing the informed consent document and be provided with a copy of the signed consent form. Regulations also require that you keep a copy of this document for a minimum of three years.

CHANGES TO APPROVED PROTOCOL: Proposed changes to this protocol during the period for which IRB approval has already been given, cannot be initiated without IRB review and approval, except when such changes are essential to eliminate apparent immediate harm to the participants. Changes in approved research initiated without IRB review and approval to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the participant must be reported to the IRB within five days. Protocol changes are requested on an amendment application available on the IRB web site; please reference your IRB number and attach any documents that are being amended.

CONTINUATION BEYOND APPROVAL PERIOD: To continue this research project beyond September 27, 2011, you must submit a renewal application for review and approval. A renewal reminder will be sent to you approximately 60 days prior to the expiration date. (If the researcher will be traveling out of the country when the protocol is due to be renewed, please renew the protocol before leaving the country.)

UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS INVOLVING RISKS: You must report any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others within 10 working days of occurrence to the IRB at 315.443.3013 or orip@syr.edu.

Office of Research Integrity and Protections
121 Bowman Hall, Syracuse, New York 13244-1200
(Phone) 315.443.3013 * (Fax) 315.443.9889
orip@syr.edu * www.orip.syr.edu
STUDY COMPLETION: The completion of a study must be reported to the IRB within 14 days.

Thank you for your cooperation in our shared efforts to assure that the rights and welfare of people participating in research are protected.

Kathleen King, Ph.D.
IRB Chair

Note to Faculty Advisor: This notice is only mailed to faculty. If a student is conducting this study, please forward this information to the student researcher.

DEPT: HEOP - Student Support Services, 804 University Ave. - Rm. B01

STUDENT: Montrose Streeter
Appendix G-1

Dear Hobart and William Smith HEOP Student,

In addition to serving Hobart and William Smith Colleges as the Associate Dean of Student Conduct, I am a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College, in Rochester New York, conducting research about involvement as a factor promoting graduation for students in the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP). I am inviting you to participate in this study.

The purpose of this study is to identify involvement as a factor promoting graduation for Black males participating in New York State’s HEOP. However, all HEOP students are needed to participate in the survey.

Research Procedures
1. Complete the on-line survey questionnaire by following the directions. Some questions are general questions about you, and the others are about your involvement experiences in college.
2. Please complete the survey as soon as possible.

Risks and Benefits
There are no known anticipated risks to you participating in this study. The benefits of your participation in this study include assisting with further research in the field of student campus involvement and the opportunity to enter a drawing for a $50 gift card.

Confidentially
All information you provide will be considered confidential. All of the data will be summarized and no individual can be identified from these results. The website is programmed to collect responses on the questionnaire items alone. That means the site will not collect any information that could potentially identify you (such as computer identifiers). Your information will be kept confidential. The surveys will be submitted by email through SurveyMonkey.

Participation
**Participation in this survey is voluntary and anonymous.** Choosing to participate or not will in no manner affect your HEOP benefits. Consent for participation is given automatically by completing the survey. If you choose to participate in the drawing for the gift card you must provide proof of survey completion to your HEOP director. Neither the researcher nor the HEOP staff will know which answers you gave on the survey, only that you completed it. You may choose to complete the survey, but not participate in the drawing.

Contact
This study is being conducted by Montrose A. Streeter, a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College and supported by committee member Dr. Jon Iuzzini. If, at any time during the study you have any questions or concerns, please contact IRB Chairperson, Provost Office, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY 14456 315-781-3304 or myself as indicated below. This research has been approved by St. John Fisher College Human Subjects Review Board. You may access the survey link at the following: [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HEOP-HWSInvolvementSurvey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HEOP-HWSInvolvementSurvey)
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey.

Montrose A. Streeter
315-781-4450 Streeter@hws.edu
Appendix G-2

Dear Former HEOP Student,

I am a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College, in Rochester New York, conducting research about involvement as a factor promoting graduation for students in the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP). I am asking you to participate in this study.

The purpose of this study is to identify involvement as a factor promoting graduation for Black males participating in New York State’s HEOP. **However all HEOP students are needed to participate in the survey.**

**Research Procedures**
1. Complete the on-line survey questionnaire by following the directions. Some questions are general questions about you, and the others are about your college involvement experiences.
2. Please complete the survey as soon as possible.

**Risks and Benefits**
There are no known anticipated risks to you participating in this study. The benefits of your participation in this study include assisting with further research in the field of student campus involvement and the opportunity to enter a drawing for a $50 gift card.

**Confidentially**
All information you provide will be considered confidential. All of the data will be summarized and no individual can be identified from these results. The website is programmed to collect responses on the questionnaire items alone. That means the site will not collect any information that could potentially identify you (such as computer identifiers). Your information will be kept confidential. The surveys will be submitted by email through SurveyMonkey.

**Participation**
Participation in this survey is voluntary and anonymous. Consent for participation is given automatically by completing the survey. If you choose to participate in the drawing for the gift card you must provide proof of survey completion to your HEOP director. Neither the researcher nor the HEOP staff will know which answers you gave on the survey, only that you completed it. If you choose to participate in the drawing you may either fax your proof of completion or send via mail postmarked no later than September 28, 2010. You may choose to complete the survey, but not participate in the drawing.

**Contact**
This study is being conducted by Montrose A. Streeter, a doctoral student at St. John Fisher College and supported by committee chair Dr. Arthur Walton. If, at any time during the study you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Arthur Walton at 315-899-3852 or myself as indicated below. This research has been reviewed by St. John Fisher College Human Subjects Review Board. The link is [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HEOPInvolvementSurveyMAS](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HEOPInvolvementSurveyMAS)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey.

Montrose A. Streeter
315-781-4450
Streeter@hws.edu
REMINDER…..

If you have already completed the Higher Education Opportunity Program Involvement Survey thank you very much! Your participation will contribute to important research.

If you have not, there is still time. Please take a few minutes to visit the link below and complete the online survey.

The link is: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HEOP-HWSInvolvementSurvey

Your support is gratefully appreciated,

Montrose A. Streeter
Montrose A. Streeter
315-781-4450
Streeter@hws.edu
REMINDER…..

If you have already completed the Higher Education Opportunity Program Involvement Survey thank you very much! Your participation will contribute to important research.

If you have not, there is a great need to hear from you. Please take a few minutes to visit the link below and complete the online survey. The deadline has been extended to include your response.

The link is: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HEOP-HWSInvolvementSurvey

Your support is gratefully needed and appreciated,

Montrose A. Streeter

Montrose A. Streeter
315-781-4450
Streeter@hws.edu
Appendix J

Astin’s Approval

Appendix J

Streeter, Montrose

From: Streeter, Montrose
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2009 2:41 PM
To: Alexander Astin
Subject: Survey Instrument
Attachments: Involvement Questions from Astin.doc

Dr. Astin,

I emailed you in July regarding an article from 2000. Again, thanks for the information. Your “What Matters in College?” has been a valuable resource in my research. I would like to use portions of the survey instrument used in that text. Would you kindly allow me to do so? I have attached the questions I am interested in using in my research. The proposed topic has changed slightly to An Examination of Student Involvement as a Factor Impeding and Promoting the Graduation of Black Males in Higher Education Opportunity Programs at Four Colleges In Western New York.

I have reviewed the CSEQ but feel your instrument would be most useful. I appreciate your assistance in this worthwhile study.

Montrose A. Streeter

Montrose A. Streeter
Associate Dean of Students
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
300 Pulteney Street
Geneva, NY 14456
315-781-3900 office
315-781-4433 fax

Streeter, Montrose

From: Alexander Astin [aastin@gseis.ucla.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2009 4:44 PM
To: Streeter, Montrose
Subject: Re: Survey Instrument

Feel free to use the questions.

Good luck in your research!

Alexander W. Astin
Allan M. Carter Professor Emeritus &
Founding Director
Higher Education Research Institute
University of California, Los Angeles