

IMPACT OF THE GENTLEMEN'S CLUB ON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE,
BEHAVIOR, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALE
PARTICIPANTS IN FIVE U.S. SCHOOL DISTRICTS

by

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(Under the direction of Dr. Casimir Kowalski)

Abstract

School districts are grappling with the problem of an alarming number of African-American males who are underperforming in our nation’s schools. “On all indicators of academic achievement, educational attainment, and school success, African-American males are noticeably distinguished from other segments of the American population by their consistent clustering at the bottom and do not realize their full potential (Schott, 2010).” A number of reports and studies, including the Council of the Great City Schools’ report—*A Call for Change: The Social and Educational Factors Contributing to the Outcomes of Black Males in Urban Schools* (Aug. 2012), indicate that “too often our schools have not served these students well.” With few exceptions, these dismal patterns exist in urban, suburban, and rural school districts throughout the United States (Peters, 2006).

The Gentlemen’s Club (GC) program integrates Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Model (1979) of child development with a culturally responsive design to engage African-American males with culturally sensitive pedagogical strategies to meet their holistic needs. Using a single-gender platform, the afterschool program focuses on issues facing this targeted population with the intention of addressing educational issues of African-American males by taking a cognitive-based approach to changing thinking through a field- tested GC curriculum, in order to change behavior and improve low academic achievement, poor attendance, and behavioral issues. The underlying premise of GC is that “you cannot teach students you don’t know” (Peters, 2010).

The study’s target population included 250 student participants in grades three through twelve from five GC school sites located in New York, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, between 2010-2013. A descriptive study examined attendance, behavior and grade point average of students at the elementary, middle and high school level, at the time of entering the GC program and 3 years after participating in the program. A *t*-test of dependent means was used to examine mean differences in student’s attendance, behavior and grades. This study sought to answer, is there a trend in average attendance, grade point average, and discipline incidences (office referrals) for GC participants (elementary, middle, high)? The researcher sought to determine:

- (1) Is there improvement in attendance for GC participants?
- (2) Is there improvement in behavioral offenses (i.e. office referrals) for GC participants?

(3) Is there improvement in academic achievement for GC participants?

This study contributed to the body of knowledge of single-gender, after school programming targeting African-American males and student outcomes. Through the use of the GC curriculum and process, school districts/schools may find this program beneficial as an effective prevention/intervention tool to combat the increasing challenges encountered in our schools.

(Gentlemen's Club, Bronfenbrenner Systems, Single-gender, After School Program)

Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the "GC" on school attendance, behavior and academic achievement of African-American male participants in five U.S. school districts. The population consisted of 250 African-American male participants (grades 3-12), from five "GC" school sites located in New York, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. The study revealed the impact of the "GC" on attendance of "GC" participants before and after implementation of the program. The study also examined and revealed the impact of the "GC" on behavior and student achievement and revealed there is a significant difference in the attendance of elementary "GC" participants. The results further yielded significant differences in elementary behavioral offenses (office referrals), and grade point averages (GPA's). The study revealed significant differences in the attendance, behavior and academic achievement (GPA), of middle school "GC" participants. The results further yielded significant differences in the attendance, behavior, and academic achievement (GPA), of high school "GC" participants. The overall results were significant at every level, therefore, the null hypothesis were rejected.

Key Terms: African-American males, After School Program, Attendance, Behavior, Academic achievement

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

A considerable amount of research has been published regarding the crisis currently facing young African-American males in the U.S., particularly in inner city and rural areas (Holzman, 2010). It is indeed a national crisis that merits intervention. African-American males are at the top of almost every assessment of school and social failure: absenteeism and truancy, suspension and expulsion, low academic performance (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009); special education (Reed, 1988); classified as mentally retarded, suffering from a learning disability (Noguera, 2010) and of course incarceration (U.S. Department of Justice, 1999, 2007). African-American males have a high probability of death by their first birthday (National Research Council, 1989) and a drastic decline in life expectancy (Spivak et al., 1988). Not to mention, they are least likely to be hired (Couch & Fairlie, 2005) and five times more likely to be hyperactive (Kunjufu, 1998). Cosby and Poussaint (2007) found that African-American males have high school dropout rates of more than 50% in some cities. Suicide rates among young African-American males have increased more than 100% over several decades (Cosby & Pouissant, 2007). Research compiled by the Justice Policy Institute has shown that within a ten year period there were nearly a third more African American men in prison than were enrolled in college (Shiraldi, 2002).

Student success in and outside of school is driven by environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic factors (Carter, 2008; Noguera, 2003). For many children, schools are not

only a place for instruction and socialization, schools are also places where they learn their identity, develop their character and formulate views about different cultures and races (Peshkin, 1991). Many African-American students respond to social pressures and school experiences by succumbing to stereotypical behaviors in fear they will be ostracized by peers (Fordham, 1996; Ogbu, 1987; Peters, 2006).

There are many reasons cited for the disengagement and academic decline of the African-American male (Carter, 2008; Cook & Ludwig, 1998; Fordham, 1996). Most of these theories focus on three central themes: (a) attitudes, (b) social outlets in school, and (c) gender identity issues, i.e. masculinity. Peer and teacher influence, positive role models and school climate are of particular importance in the success or failure of the African-American male (Dutro, Kazemi, Balf, & Lin, 2008; Epstein & MacIver, 1992). If this is true, the interaction between African-American male students and their teachers is critical to the development of a successful student. African-American males must have access to positive role-models and support systems (Boykin, 1983; Dutro et al., 2008) to understand and identify their place in society. Programs of prominence must be in place that utilize positive and negative experiences of African-American males to elevate their aspirations and academic performance (Peters, 2001).

The primary goal of the Gentlemen's Club (GC) is to provide opportunities, experiences, options, and hope for African-American males to assume greater responsibility for their actions, choices and decisions so that they do not become victims of labeling, stereotypes, and disparaging statistics. To solve the crisis of African-

American males, school districts/schools, and communities, must devote greater attention not only to what is happening in schools, but also targeting what is happening outside of school hours is warranted.

Statement of the Problem

The need for improvement of the engagement and achievement of African-American males in our schools has been the focus of campaigns for many years. Educational leaders, administrators, school boards, teachers, communities, and experts have sought to improve ways to educate and create better conditions for the teaching and learning of African-American males. These efforts were made in hope of improving behavior, attendance, and academic achievement (Hale, 2001).

The Nation's K-12 schools are faced with critical challenges, especially in educating African-American male students (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2010). Whether presented by the United States Department of Education (DOE), educational researchers, or school districts across the U.S., know that school engagement and academic achievement of African-American males are disturbing.

As a group, African -American males face several pervasive challenges when seeking to find identification with our current educational pedagogy and practices (Lee, 1996; Noguera, 2011). On nearly all levels of academic achievement, African-American males underperform in comparison to the rest of their peers and across the nation (Noguera, 2008). Based upon the idea that this inability to identify with traditional educational practices of schooling exist, public education must find proactive ways to

engage and motivate this population of students to eradicate the crisis and negative trends in student outcomes. On nearly all levels of academic achievement, African-American males underperform in comparison to the rest of their peers and across the nation (Noguera, 2008).

Purpose of the Study

This study has contributed to the body of knowledge needed on educating African-American males. This study has determined that the single-gender based afterschool program “GC” has improved the following: student engagement as evidenced by increased school attendance, better behavior, and increased academic achievement of African-American males.

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact the GC had on African-American male participants in five urban school districts from September 2010-December 2013 on measures of achievement, attendance, and behavior. A control group was identified for each of the five urban school districts in the study from New York, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. The following research questions guided the study: “What was the impact of the GC model on student outcomes for program participants?”

1. Is there improvement in attendance for GC participants?
2. Is there improvement in behavioral offenses (i.e. office referrals) for GC participants?
3. Is there improvement in academic achievement for GC participants?

Working with the principals from the schools participating in the study, data was collected on student attendance, behavior and achievement using GC data collection forms. Student attendance was measured by average daily attendance. Number of office referrals was collected as indicators of student behavior. Grade point average was used as a measure of academic achievement because all schools utilized the same grading scale system.

The researcher used a quantitative design to capture student outcome data for GC participation. For this descriptive study, a *t*-test of dependent means was used to examine mean differences in student's attendance, behavior and grades. This study sought to answer, is there a trend in average attendance, grade point average, and discipline incidences (office referrals) for GC participants (elementary, middle, high)?

Significance of the Study

The challenges facing our public schools are escalated by the inability of parents, school leaders, teachers and communities to consistently and effectively address the dismal patterns of decline of our African-American male students (Peters, 2006). These negative patterns of African-American male outcomes have become the norm in many of our traditional school settings. It is alarming that many educators and school leaders have begun to accept these outcomes without proper intervention. The challenge we face is to create a new set of conditions for success in our schools for the African-American male population.

In 1954, the decision in *Brown v Board of Education*, ended racial segregation of

schools finding that “separate was not equal” or constitutional. This landmark decision ushered in the precepts of equality in access, opportunity and excellence for African-American children. Factors influencing African-American male achievement can be grouped as individual, parental or school (White, 2009, p. 3). The “GC” program utilizes a scope and sequence of opportunities to empower and enhance opportunities and experiences for participants. This study contributes to the body of knowledge needed on educating African-American males.

Scope of the Study

With research supporting a strong correlation between behavior during out-of-school hours and academic outcomes, if reform strategies want to address the crisis of such high numbers of African-American male high school dropouts, there must be attention not only to what is happening in schools, but also what is happening outside of school hours (Martin & Jefferson, 2011, p. 9). This study aims to add to the body of research by showing an afterschool program can effectively serve the identified needs of African-American males and serve as an entryway to opportunities that are typically limited or denied.

Theoretical Framework

Introduced as a conceptual model in the 1970s, formalized as a theory in the 1980s, and continually revised by Bronfenbrenner until his death in 2005, Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) *Ecological Framework for Human Development*, applies socio-ecological models to human development. In his initial model, Bronfenbrenner

postulated that in order to understand human development, the entire ecological system in which growth occurs needs to be taken into account. The model in its simplest form consists of four major spheres of influence on a child's development (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). The first sphere represents the child. The second sphere deals with the child's immediate environment. The third sphere addresses social and economic factors influencing growth and development; and the last sphere addresses the role of culture.

Figure 1.

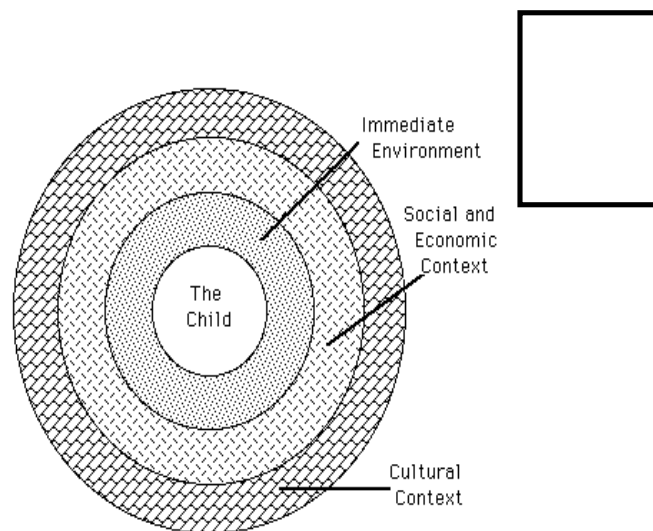


Figure 1. Four spheres of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. Adapted from Paquette and Ryan (2001).

While Havighurst (1953), identified the stages of growth and development and task associated with each stage "from birth to death," Bronfenbrenner (1979) highlighted the factors that influence one's development.

In subsequent revisions, Bronfenbrenner acknowledged the relevance of

biological and genetic aspects of the child in human development. The child's own biology may be considered part of the first sphere; thus the model has sometimes been called "Bio-Ecological Model".

Model to Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner expanded the model by applying a systems theory approach to explain how everything in a child and the child's environment impacts how a child develops. The four spheres as systems of development are: (a) microsystems, (b) mesosystems, (c) exosystems, and (d) macrosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) (see Figure 2).

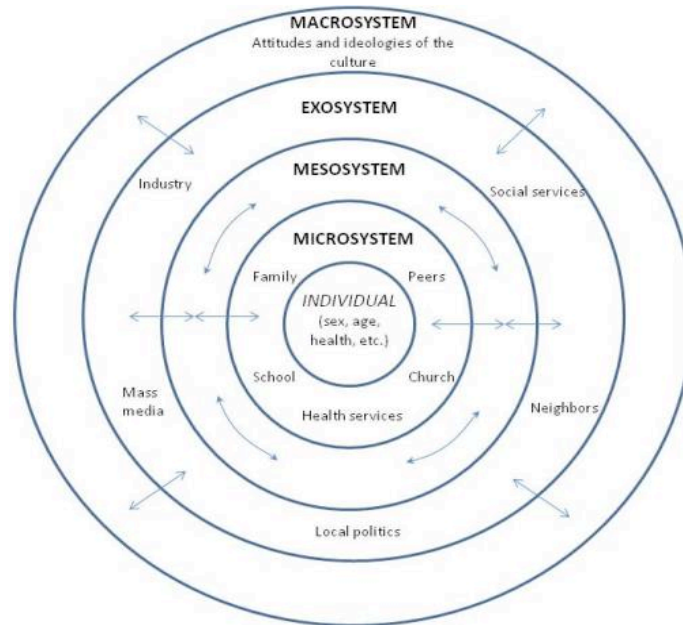


Figure 2. Model of Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework for human development. Adapted from "The Ecology of Cognitive Development: Research Models and Fugitive Findings," by U. Bronfenbrenner (1993), in R. Wozniak and K. Fischer (Eds.),

Development in Context: Acting and Thinking in Specific Environments (pp. 3–44)

(Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum). Copyright 1993 by Erlbaum.

The microsystem represents the various elements of the child's immediate home environment such as their family and neighborhood. The microsystem encompasses any relationship interaction with individuals or organizations like daycare. How the child interacts will determine how the child grows, suggesting the more nurturing the relationship, the better the child will develop. Each child's temperament, (special genetic and biologically influences personality traits) and affect the quality of treatment.

The mesosystem reflects how the various parts of a child's microsystem work together for the sake of the child. This includes the relationships and connections between these elements and how they relate to each other. For example, the level of parental involvement and engagement in a child's schooling influences growth and development positively or negatively. The third level is called the exosystem and often exerts influence over the child in an environment that he/she typically has no control over (i.e. mass media or parent work environments). This level focuses on other people and places the child may not directly interact with often, but still may have a large effect on them.

For example, a child in a household where a parent loses a job may be impacted because utilities are cut off, groceries are not purchased, or they get evicted because the parent cannot pay the rent. A promotion on the other hand or becoming gainfully employed would have the opposite effect providing for food, clothing and shelter or moving into a better neighborhood. Finally, the macrosystem is the largest and most distant set of

variables which still has a great influence over the child. Nested as the outermost layer of the child's developmental environment, it is defined by the socio-cultural context of where the child is raised and how these social conditions, economic circumstances, and historical lessons are passed down from generation to generation. The fourth layer may be considered the outermost layer in the child's environment and may be illustrated through cultural values, customs, and laws (Berk, 2000). Each layer of the system contains roles, norms and rules which may shape psychological development.

Latter revisions to the theory added the chronosystem introducing the element of time as a catalyst for change caused by events as patterns over time. Events in time may occur externally meaning outside of the physical body (i.e. death of a parent) or internally (physiological changes occurring as a part aging). The integration of the first four systems can be further contextualized by considering the impact of a series of chronological events and influences on a child's development as a pattern of environmental and socio-historical circumstances. For example, researchers have examined the impact of divorce on children. While the divorce is a single event, the process of reaching that ending can take place over a long period of time. Researchers have found that the negative effects of divorce on children often peak in the first year after the divorce. Typically, after two years have elapsed, the impact of divorce on the individual and resulting family interaction is less chaotic and more stable (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2010; Santrock, 2007).

Conceptual Framework: Gentlemen's Club and PPCT Model

In order to understand the phenomenon of African- American male underachievement, it would be helpful to apply a systems approach to the analysis of the problem. By understanding the parts that contributed to the issue of African- American male underachievement as a whole, one must also understand the factors influencing the phenomenon at all levels. The GC by design relied upon an ecological perspective whose curriculum's structure formed interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements that created a different set of conditions for African-American male participants. Moreover, a socio-ecological model is required to examine African-American male behavior in the environment of public education. The American public education system can best be viewed as a community situated within an environment that changes over time due to political, social, economic conditions.

Taking its cues from the biological approach used to examine natural ecosystems which are a complex network of interactions among and between organisms and their environment, social ecology's theoretical principles seek to understand the dynamic interrelations among various personal and environmental factors. Social ecology pays explicit attention to the social, institutional, and cultural contexts of people-environment relations. This perspective emphasizes the multiple dimensions (example: physical environment, social and cultural environment, personal attributes), multiple levels (example: individuals, groups, organizations), and complexity of human situations (example: cumulative impact of events over time). Social ecology also incorporates concepts such as interdependence and homeostasis from systems theory to characterize

reciprocal and dynamic person-environment transactions. Scholars may choose to use an earlier version of Bronfenbrenner's theory as the foundation of their research; or they may also choose to base their study on only some of the major concepts of the developed version. While some researchers use research taken from the 1970s or 1980s and others from the 1990s, the full theory in its developed form deals with the interrelations among the following four PPCT concepts; therefore, the researcher is using the PPCT model to avoid conceptual incongruence by explicitly defining which version of Bronfenbrenner's model guides the study.

Relationships, learning and teaching processes are influenced by the environment and in turn influence it. It can be argued that this is how children's learning is socially constructed: not as a mechanism that adults enforce on children, but by each potentially influencing experience on another (Fabian & Dunlop, 2002). Erikson (1968) proposed that a healthy identity was linked to a positive racial identity, suggesting that a positive racial identity was essential not only for the overall health of the individual but, also for learning and perhaps academic success (Erikson, 1968).

The researcher adapted Bronfenbrenner's Ecological PPCT model as the conceptual framework of the study (see Figure 3). Bronfenbrenner's theory deals with the interaction among processes, person, context, and time. The inclusion of human development processes to the model is the significant difference between the original ecological and PPCT models (Bronfenbrenner, 1988). The adaptive conceptual

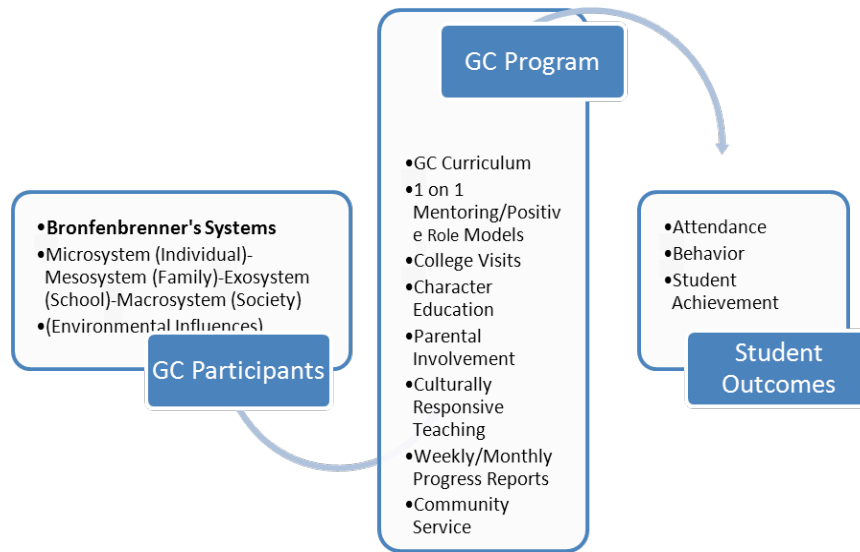


Figure 3. GC adaptive conceptual model from Bronfenbrenner’s PPCT ecological model.

framework situates the *student* as the center point of the figure with a matrix of interconnecting arrows displaying dual overlapping relationships among and between systems as opposed to one-directional relationships posed by Bronfenbrenner’s original model. This supports the importance of the “person” and demographic of gender and race, specifically African-American and male giving deference to PPCT model.

Hypotheses

The following primary research questions guided the study. What was the impact of the GC model on student outcomes for participants regardless of their grade levels?

The objective of this study is to investigate the following:

1. Is there improvement in attendance in the Club participants?

2. Is there improvement in behavioral offenses (i.e. office referrals) in the Club participants?

3. Is there improvement in academic achievement in the Club participants?

The following hypotheses were tested in this study:

HO1: There is no significant difference in the school attendance of elementary GC participants.

HO2: There is no significant difference in the school attendance of middle school GC participants.

HO3: There is no significant difference in the school attendance of high school GC participants.

HO4: There is no significant difference in the behavior (office referrals), of elementary GC participants.

HO5: There is no significant difference in the behavior (office referrals), of middle school GC participants.

HO6: There is no significant difference in the behavior (office referrals), of high school GC participants.

HO7: There is no significant difference in the student achievement (grades), of elementary school GC participants.

HO8: There is no significant difference in the student achievement (grades), of middle school GC participants.

HO9: There is no significant difference in the student achievement (grades), of high school GC participants.

Limitations of the Study

In order to narrow the scope of this study, the participants were limited to 250 in five school districts. The participants in the GC program were studied from 2010- 2013. Although the GC Program has been in existence for 15 years, no longitudinal data from program inception is available for all measures consistently.

There are limitations in this research. The reliability of the sample selection and data for the control group affected the empirical results. As only GC participants were studied, this should be noted as one of the limitations of this study. Principals were asked to identify students for the control group across all five states and schools. Representative, convenient sampling methodology was deployed to establish the control group may limit generalizability of the findings across grade or school levels. Acknowledging that in quantitative research it is always more reliable to draw conclusions from data when there are a larger number of respondents, the distribution of GC participants in a single subject, time series design allows for smaller sample sizes (Bray & Maxwell, 1985).

Definition of Terms

In this study, the following definitions of terms are presented to help define and clarify key concepts.

Achievement- Overall Grade Point Average on a four-point scale (Au, 2006).

African-American (African-American Male)-Males that inherently recognize

themselves as having genetic ties to an African descent. Additionally, the males in question are not only recognized demographically in secondary education as being of primarily African descent, but also view themselves as being a part of or closest to their African-American heritage (Aronson, 2001).

At-Risk- A student who is not performing academically or behaviorally to levels of expectations (Skiba, 2006).

Achievement- A measure of academic performance using Grade Point Average (GPA) on a four-point scale (Carter, 2008).

Attendance- A measure of the numbers of days absent from school (Balfanz, 2004).

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Framework for Human Development-The bioecological model is a theoretical model of gene-environment interactions in human development. This model, first proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner and Stephen J. Ceci in 1994 is an extension of Bronfenbrenner’s original theoretical model of human development, called ecological systems theory. Bronfenbrenner developed the bioecological model after recognizing that the individual was overlooked in other theories of human development, which were largely focused on the context of development (e.g., the environment), (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)- The CCSS summarize the projected skills and knowledge required for students to become ‘college and career ready’ as they move through their K–12 education (Drew, 2013).

Critical Race Theory- An academic discipline focused upon the application of critical theory, a critical examination of society and culture, to the intersection of race, law and power (Delgado, 1995).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. Pedagogical practice that not only addresses student achievement, but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequalities that schools and other institutions perpetuate (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Discipline. A measure of the number of referrals a student gets as a result of being accused of expected behavior and established Student Conduct Code (Adams, 2000).

Effective schools research- Providing schools with proven scientifically based research to school climate and student achievement (Gay, 2003).

Gentlemen's Club Participants- Male students who are members of the Gentlemen's Club Program (Peters, 2001).

Gentlemen's Club Program- A single-gender afterschool program for African-American males featuring: Mentoring, Leadership, Team Building, Customer Service, College Visits, Character Education, Weekly Lessons and GC Meetings, Weekly progress reports, Etiquette Lessons, Dress for Success, Monthly Culminating Activities, and Parental Involvement (Peters, 2001).

No Child Left Behind- A United States Act of Congress that is a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which included Title I, the government's flagship aid program for disadvantaged students (U.S. Department

of Education, 2008).

Out-of-School Time- OST encompasses both the traditional programs operating during afternoon hours and more comprehensive efforts that respond to the needs of children, youth , and parents during evening, weekends, summers, and holidays by offering activities that help youth grow, learn, and develop (National Institute on Out-of-school-time, 2004).

Summary

This study examined the impact of a single-gender, out-of-school time intervention strategy that acknowledges the systematic social, economic, social and educational limitations that have been faced by African-Americans males in the United States and subsequently, the issues facing contemporary educational leaders in the context of current educational policies and practices in urban schools that perpetuate academic and institutional inequality. Understanding the cultural dissonance between African-American males versus the traditional Anglo-American cultural precepts in today's classrooms and creating programs that effectively bridge that gap in classrooms, provides hope for those challenged to meet the needs of African-American males.

Findings from the study helped inform policy makers and provides a comprehensive intervention model to improve African-American male performance. There is an African proverb which indicates that it “takes a whole village to raise a child.” Persons interested in eradicating the systems set against African-American males will find the results of this study to be informative and timely. Specifically, as schools and communities begin to

strategize how to structure an afterschool program that helps address the needs of African-American males that is researched based and empirically studied, the Gentlemen's Club may serve as an example of what works.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I, Introduction, presents the statement of the problem, significance of the study, purpose of the study, conceptual framework, hypotheses, definition of terms, and the limitations of the study. Chapter II presents the review of related literature. This chapter provides historical perspective on the issues pertaining to African-American male achievement.

Chapter III, Methodology, presents the research design, data collection, sample, instrumentation, and the statistical analysis.

Chapter IV, Results, presents the major findings of the study.

Chapter V, Summary: findings, conclusions, and recommendations are presented.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Nationally, African-American males are more likely than any other group to be suspended and expelled from school (Fergus & Noguera, 2010). In most American cities, dropout rates for African-American males are well above 50%, and they're less likely to enroll or graduate from college than any other group (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2010). Further, they're more likely to be absent from gifted and talented programs, Advanced Placement and honors courses, and international baccalaureate programs (Noguera, 2008). When compared to their white peers, even middle-class African-American males lag significantly in grade-point average and on standardized tests (Noguera, 2008).

African-American males are in danger of failing to complete their formal education because they are either unable to respond to the demands of school or the school is unable to respond adequately to their needs (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2010). Without intervention, African-American males are disproportionately dropping out of school, being expelled from school, or graduating as functionally illiterate upon graduation, given rise to alarm and recognition of the problem as a national crisis according to the Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males (Holzman, 2010). Students of any age and social or economic background may be at risk, and students not at risk at any given age may, often quite suddenly, become at-risk students because of environmental or developmental factors in and out of school.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) was used as a lens through which a review of literature was conducted to help explain how race impacts the phenomenon of under educating African-American males and what strategies show promise in eradicating the consequences, or eliminating the factors contributing to it (Carter, 2008).

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory formulates the framework of the review by showing the relationship among factors causing the problem and between solutions seeking to address those causes such as out-of-time schooling or afterschool programs. Aligning itself to CRT, Bronfenbrenner's (1993) model supports examining the in-school factors impacting achievement and the use of out-of-school time as an opportunity to improve academic performance of African-American males.

Human Growth and Development

Ecological Systems Theory

In order to understand the phenomenon of the African-American male underachievement, it would be helpful to apply a systems approach to the analysis of the problem. By understanding the parts that contributed to the issue of African American male underachievement as a whole, we must also understand the factors or variables influencing the issue itself. This approach to investigation forms the basis for an ecological model. An ecological system can therefore, be defined as a comparatively bounded structure consisting of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements that form a whole.

Ecological systems theory, also called development in context or human ecology theory, specifies four types of nested environmental systems, with bi-directional influences within and between the systems. Socio-ecological models expand the understanding of the dynamic interrelations among various personal and environmental factors. A socio-ecological model is required to examine African-American male behavior in the environment of public education. The American public education system can best be viewed as a community situated within an environment that changes over time due to political, social, and economic conditions.

Taking its cues from the biological approach used to examine natural ecosystems which are a complex network of interactions among organisms and between organisms and their environment, social ecology's theoretical principles seek to understand the dynamic interrelations among various personal and environmental factors. Social ecology pays explicit attention to the social, institutional, and cultural contexts of people-environment relations. This perspective emphasizes the multiple dimensions (example: physical environment, social and cultural environment, personal attributes), multiple levels (example: individuals, groups, organizations), and complexity of human situations (example: cumulative impact of events over time). Social ecology also incorporates concepts such as interdependence and homeostasis from systems theory to characterize reciprocal and dynamic person-environment transactions.

Robert J. Havighurst was the first educational researcher to be concerned with how children developed and its relationship to education. His highly influential theory of

human development and education was written in Havighurst's (1953) *Human Development and Education*. Havighurst identified six major stages in human life covering birth to old age and three sources for developmental tasks stemming from physical maturation, personal values, and societal expectations. Havighurst's biological, psychological, and sociological approach to human development laid the foundation for future educational researchers such as Bronfenbrenner.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model

Introduced as a conceptual model in the 1970s, formalized as a theory in the 1980s, and continually revised by Bronfenbrenner until his death in 2005, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Framework for Human Development applies socioecological models to human development. In his initial theory, Bronfenbrenner postulated that in order to understand human development, the entire ecological system in which growth occurs needs to be taken into account. In subsequent revisions, Bronfenbrenner acknowledged the relevance of biological and genetic aspects of the person in human development. The person's own biology may be considered part of the microsystem; thus the theory has recently sometimes been called "Bio-Ecological Systems Theory." Since its publication in 1979, Bronfenbrenner's major statement of this theory, *The Ecology of Human Development*, has had widespread influence on the way psychologists and others approach the study of human beings and their environments. As a result of his pioneering work in "human ecology", these environments — from the family to economic and political structures — have come to be viewed as part of the life course from childhood

through adulthood.

Bronfenbrenner (1979-2005) utilized a systems theory approach to explain how everything in a child and the child's environment impacts how a child develops. The original ecological model identified four levels of environment as spheres of development influencing a child's growth as: (a) microsystems, (b) mesosystems, (c) exosystems, and (d) macrosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The microsystem represents the various elements of the child's immediate home environment such as their family and neighborhood. The microsystem encompasses any relationship interaction with individuals or organizations like daycare. How the child interacts will determine how the child grows, suggesting the more nurturing the relationship, the better the child will develop. Each child's temperament, (special genetic and biologically influences personality traits), affect the quality of treatment.

The mesosystem reflects how the various parts of a child's microsystem work together for the sake of the child. This includes the relationships and connections between these elements and how they relate to each other. For example, the level of parental involvement and engagement in a child's schooling influences growth and development positively or negatively.

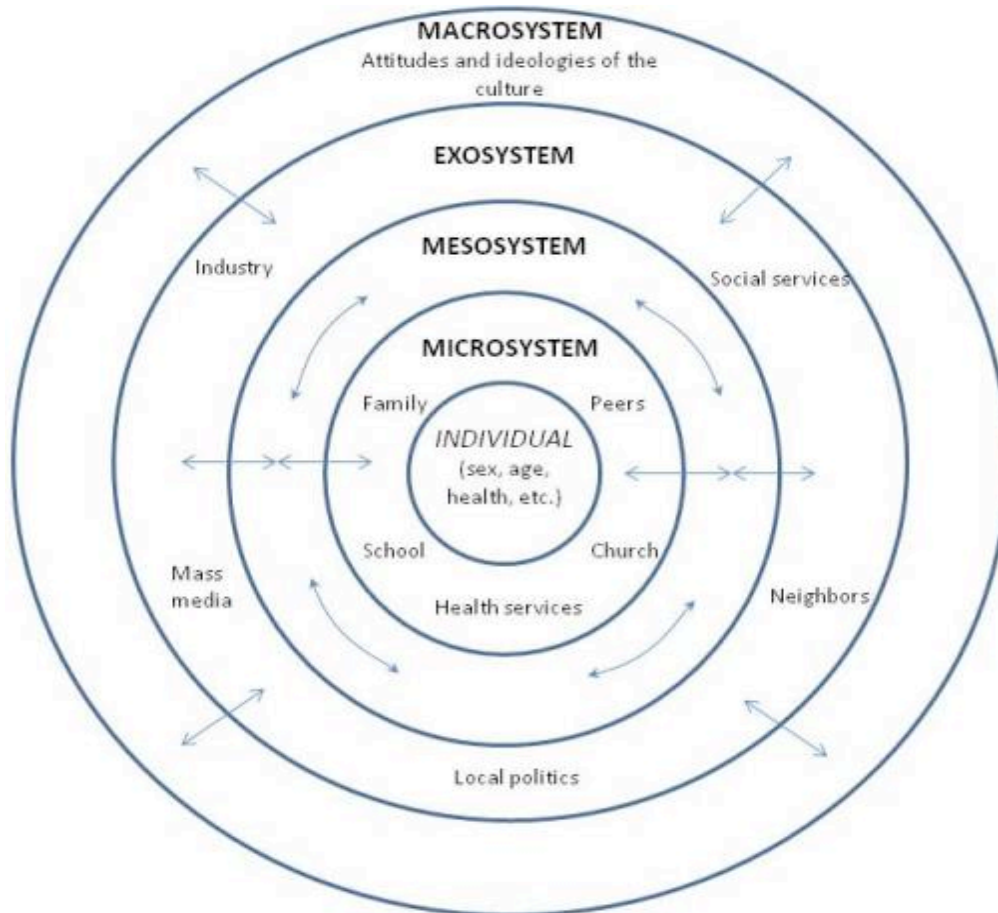


Figure 4. Model of Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework for human development.

Adapted from “The Ecology of Cognitive Development: Research Models and Fugitive Findings,” by U. Bronfenbrenner (1993), in R. Wozniak and K. Fischer (Eds.), *Development in Context: Acting and Thinking in Specific Environments* (pp. 3–44) (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum). Copyright 1993 by Erlbaum.

The third level is called the exosystem and often exerts influence over the child in an environment that he/she typically has no control over (i.e. mass media or parent work environments). This level focuses on other people and places the child may not directly interact with often, but still may have a large effect on them. For example, a child in a household where a parent loses a job may be impacted because utilities are cut off, groceries are not purchased, or they get evicted because the parent cannot pay the rent. A promotion on the other hand or becoming gainfully employed would have the opposite effect i.e. providing for food, clothing and shelter or moving into a better neighborhood.

Finally, the macrosystem is the largest and most distant set of variables which still has a great influence over the child. Nested as the outermost layer of the child's developmental environment it is defined by the socio-cultural context of where the child is raised and how these social conditions, economic circumstances, and historical lessons are passed down from generation to generation. The fourth layer may be considered the outermost layer in the child's environment and may be illustrated through cultural values, customs, and laws (Berk, 2000). Each layer of the system contains roles, norms and rules which may shape psychological development.

Latter revisions discussed a system referred to as the chronosystem introducing the element of time. Events as patterns over time, may be categorized as external, (death of a parent) or internal (physiological changes occurring as a part of aging). The integration of the first four systems is further contextualized by considering the impact of a series of chronological events and influences on a child's development as a pattern of

environmental events and transitions over the life course, as well as socio-historical circumstances. For example, researchers have examined the impact of divorce on children. While the divorce is a single event, the process of reaching that ending can take place over a long period of time. Researchers have found that the negative effects of divorce on children often peak in the first year after the divorce. By two years after the divorce, family interaction is less chaotic and more stable (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2010; Santrock, 2007).

Process Person Context Time (PPCT) Model

Bronfenbrenner's most significant departure from his original theory is the inclusion of processes of human development. Processes, per Bronfenbrenner, explain the connection between some aspect of the context or some aspect of the individual and an outcome of interest. The full, revised theory deals with the interaction among processes, person, context and time, and is labeled the Process–Person–Context–Time model (PPCT). The inclusion of human development processes to the model is the significant difference between the original and PPCT models (Bronfenbrenner, 1988). Process could explain the connection between some aspect of the context culture or social class, or some aspect of the individual (e.g., gender or race) and an outcome of interest, in the case of this achievement study.

Process

Proximal Processes “constitute the engines of development because it is by engaging in these activities and interactions that individuals come to make sense of their

world, understand their place in it, and both play their part in changing the prevailing order while fitting into the existing one” (Tudge, Mokrova, Karnik, & Hatfield, 2011).

Human development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving bio-psychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate external environment. To be effective, the interaction must occur on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of *time*. Such enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment are referred to as *proximal processes*. (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 996)

The nature of proximal processes varies according to aspects of the individual and of the context—both spatially and temporally. The second of the two central propositions varies according to aspects of the individual and of the context—both spatial and temporal. As he explained in the second of the two central propositions:

The form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes effecting development vary systematically as a joint function of the characteristics of the *developing person*; of the *environment*—both immediate and more remote—in which the processes are taking place; the nature of the *developmental outcomes* under consideration; and the social continuities and changes occurring over *time* through the life course and the historical period during which the person has lived. (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 996)

Bronfenbrenner and Morris stated that these two propositions “are theoretically interdependent and subject to empirical test. An operational research design that permits their simultaneous investigation is referred to as a *Process-Person-Context-Time model*” (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 996).

Person

Bronfenbrenner acknowledged the relevance of biological and genetic aspects of the person (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). However, he devoted more attention to the personal

characteristics that individuals bring with them into any social situation (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). He divided these characteristics into three types, which he termed *demand*, *resource*, and *force* characteristics.

Demand characteristics are those to which he referred in earlier writings as “personal stimulus” characteristics, those that act as an immediate stimulus to another person, such as age gender, skin color, and physical appearance. These types of characteristics may influence initial interactions because of the expectations formed immediately. Resource characteristics, by contrast, are not immediately apparent, though sometimes they are induced, with differing degrees of accuracy, from the demand characteristics that are seen. These are characteristics that relate partly to mental and emotional resources such as past experiences, skills, and intelligence, and also to social and material resources (access to good food, housing, caring parents, educational opportunities appropriate to the needs of the particular society, and so on). Finally, force characteristics are those that have to do with differences of temperament, motivation, persistence, and the like. (Tudge et al., 2011, pp. 5–6)

Applying this dynamic to the influence of race and gender in the educational system, according to Bronfenbrenner, these characteristics can help to explain why two children with identical resources can have two different developmental trajectories when one child is motivated to succeed and persists in tasks, while another is not motivated and does not persist. In other words, Bronfenbrenner’s PPCT model takes into consideration “the extent that others react to him or her differently based on demand characteristics such as (age, gender, and skin color), to more active (the ways in which the person changes the environment are linked to his or her resource characteristics, whether physical, mental, or emotional), to most active (the extent to which the person changes the environment it is linked, in part, to the desire and drive to do so, or force characteristics)” (Tudge et al., 2011, p. 6). Bronfenbrenner acknowledged the relevance of biological and genetic

aspects of the person. However, he devoted more attention to the personal characteristics that individuals bring with them into any social situation.

Context

Context still refers to the environmental systems previously described in the original model which are microsystems, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystems. The first of the four interrelated systems focuses on any environment, such as home, school, peer group, in which the person spends a good deal of time engaging in activities and interactions. When individuals spend more time in more than one microsystem, Bronfenbrenner discussed the interrelations among them as part of the mesosystem. There are also important environments in which the person whose development is being considered is not actually situated, but which have important indirect influences on their development is called the exosystem. For example, an African-American male, often a latch key child, may face the wrath of an extremely tired single-mother who is agitated by the stresses of work compounded by sleep deprivations. The mother's working conditions is an exosystem for her son when she returns home. While the child does not go to work with his mother directly, it nonetheless indirectly influences the quality of opportunity for parental involvement. Finally, Bronfenbrenner defined the macrosystem as a context encompassing any group (culture, subculture, or other extended social structure) whose members share value or belief systems, "resources, hazards, lifestyles, opportunity structures, life course options and patterns of social interchange" (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, p. 25).

Time

The final element of the PPCT model is *time*. Time plays a crucial role in human development. In the same way that both context and individual factors are divided into sub-factors or sub-systems, Bronfenbrenner and Morris wrote about time as constituting micro-time (what is occurring during the course of some specific activity or interaction), meso-time (the extent to which activities and interactions occur with some consistency in the developing person's environment), and macro-time (the chronosystem). Time and timing are equally important because all aspects of the PPCT model can be thought of in terms of relative constancy and change.

Conceptual Framework: Gentlemen's Club and PPCT Model

Scholars may choose to use an earlier version of Bronfenbrenner's theory as the foundation of their research; or they may also choose to base their study on only some of the major concepts of the developed version. To avoid conceptual incongruence the study's researcher choose to explicitly define which version of the model guides the study. While some ideas may be taken from the 1970s or 1980s and others from the 1990s, the full theory in its developed form deals with the interrelations among the four PPCT concepts.

Relationships, learning, and teaching processes are influenced by the environment and in turn influence it. It can be argued that this is how children's learning is socially constructed: not as a mechanism that adults enforce on children, but by each potentially influencing experience in another (Fabian & Dunlop, 2002). Erikson (1968) proposed

that a healthy identity was linked to a positive racial identity, suggesting that a positive racial identity was essential not only for the overall health of the individual but also for learning and perhaps academic success (Erikson, 1968).

The researcher adapted Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological PPCT model as the conceptual framework of the study in Figure 5. The adaptive conceptual framework situates the *student* as the center point of the figure with a matrix of interconnecting arrows displaying dual overlapping relationships among and between systems as opposed to one-directional relationships posed by Bronfenbrenner’s original model. This supports the importance of the “person” – and demographic of gender and race, specifically African-American and male giving deference to PPCT model.

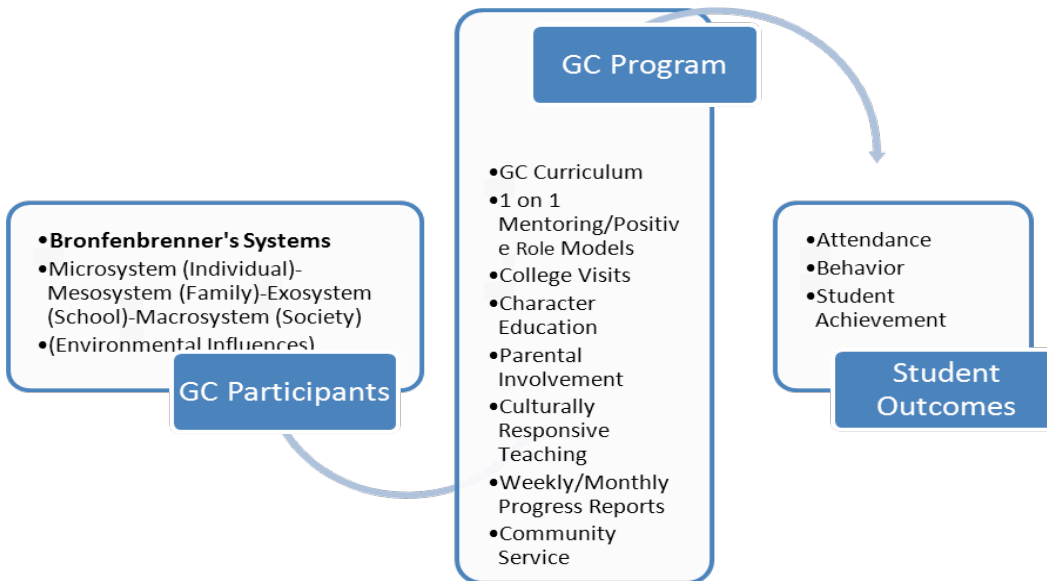


Figure 5. GC adaptive conceptual model from Bronfenbrenner’s PPCT ecological model.

Historical Perspectives: Cultural Deprivation and Educational Opportunity

Cultural deprivation theorists argue that the "cultural resources" possessed by lower class children are insufficient to ensure educational success, whereas the cultural resources of their middle and upper class counterparts go some way towards ensuring their relative success. Culture capital is what helps the middle class succeed in the capitalist system of society; the norms and values the middle class learn help their educational achievement and employability. In this respect, researchers working within this type of theoretical tradition are basically arguing that one culture is, in a number of ways, "*deprived*" when it comes to preparing children for the demands of educational life and achievement. Cultural Deprivation therefore, is a term referring to a social class structure reflecting the absence of certain expected and acceptable cultural phenomena in the environment which results in the failure of the individual to communicate and respond in the most appropriate manner within the context of society.

Cultural deprivation theorists, therefore, take it for granted that the "school system" cannot be significantly changed mainly because of the various ways schools are tied-into the social and economic structure of the society in which they develop (Morais, Neves, Davies, & Daniels, 2001). If school practices and cultural assumptions cannot be significantly changed, what must change are the cultural attitudes and practices of lower class families and their children. Morais et al., (2001) further suggests that middle class children's culture capital allows them to communicate with their middle class teachers

more effectively than the working class children which contributes to the inequality between social classes.

In 1849 Horace Mann explained, “Education beyond all other devices of human origin, is the greatest equalizer of the conditions of men – the balance-wheel of the social machinery” (Mann, 1868, p. 669). In the 1940’s and 50’s Melvin Kohn began investigating families in Washington DC comparing class differences in culture. He described middle class parents as desiring independence of mind and working class parents as valuing obedience (Kohn, 1977).

Oscar Lewis in the late 1950’s introduced the idea of the culture of poverty. He claimed that poor people developed distinct sub-cultural values to enable them to survive poverty, which disadvantaged children in school. Due to feelings of helplessness and disempowered to change their circumstances, by the age of six or seven, children have absorbed the values of their culture and cannot take advantage of opportunities that may occur (Lewis, 1969). In 1954, the decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, ended racial segregation of schools finding that “separate was not equal” or constitutional. This landmark decision ushered in the precepts of equality in access, opportunity and excellence for African-American children.

The idea of a culture of poverty as a self-fulfilling prophecy would soon be rejected by researcher and theorist Pierre Bordieu who coined the term called cultural capital, the cultural knowledge reflecting the interests and concerns of the dominant classes. He explained that the dominant class embodied a preferred mode of thinking,

acting and perceiving, and those collection of behaviors or habitus were what schools recognized as “capital” and were supported by their teachers who possess the same cultural background (Bordieu, Emirbayer, & William 2005). This understanding illuminated the socialization role that schools play regarding achievement and maintenance and indoctrination of a dominant cultures norms and values on another culture.

Bordieu et al., (2005) refers to possession of the dominant culture as cultural capital because combined with the education system it can be translated into wealth and power. Cultural capital is not evenly distributed throughout the class structure, and this largely accounts for class differences in educational attainment. People who have upper class backgrounds have a built in advantage because they have already been socialized in that dominant culture. Bordieu et al., (2005) found that the education attainment of social groups is therefore directly related to the amount of cultural capital they possess. Thus middle-class students have higher success rates than working-class students because middle class subcultures are closer to the dominant culture. Pierre Bourdieu argues that the working class failure is the fault of the education system, not working class culture.

In the 1960s, President Johnson launched the ‘War on Poverty’ because people were shocked to discover that 50% of men called for military service were educationally or physically unfit as a result of poverty. The underlying philosophy of his policy was

that poverty could be cured through education in the correct attitudes and values for success. The major role of the education system shifted to cultural reproduction of the culture of the dominant class. Since 1964, the federal government has sponsored a wide variety of compensatory education programs aimed at easing cultural deprivation in the United States. In the United States, culture deprivation is associated with poverty, family break-up, poor health and hygiene, lack of English language skills, substandard housing and life in neighborhoods with high rates of crime, drug and alcohol abuse and other antisocial behavior. Students most at risk are those with one or more of a host of emotional, intellectual or physical disabilities due to deep-seated emotional problems; economic, social, cultural or emotional deprivation; physical or sexual abuse; disease; substance abuse; premature sexual activity; teenage pregnancy; racial, religious, ethnic or gender discrimination or harassment; lack of fluency in the English language; prior educational deprivation; deficiency in basic skills, especially language and mathematics; poor teaching and uninteresting curricula; inadequate school facilities; learning disabilities; physical and neurological handicaps; and mild mental retardation (Leathwood & Archer, 2004; Webb, Schiaro, & Danaher, 2002).

Structural Factors

The Coleman Report

Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 called for an examination of issues "concerning the lack of availability of equal educational opportunity by reason of race, color, religion, or national origin in public educational institutions at all levels." The

Equality of Educational Opportunity Study (EEOS), also known as the "Coleman Study," was commissioned by the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1966, as was conducted by James Coleman. The 1966 Coleman Report, the landmark study Equality of Educational Opportunity led by James S. Coleman, was instrumental in promoting racial balance between schools. Coleman studied 600,000 children at 4,000 schools and found that most children attended schools where they were the majority race. Findings indicated that schooling between white and minority schools were similar. Teachers' training, teachers' salaries, and curriculum were relatively equal. The results, however, found that minority children were a few years behind that of the whites when they entered school, and that the gap widened by the high school years. Coleman concluded that gap in academic achievement was related to family background in the early years and ignored the school's role in widening the gap in achievement of minority students as a result of matriculation.

A year later, the Civil Rights Commission conducted another study *entitled Racial Isolation in the Public Schools*, which confirmed the Coleman report findings. Together, the two studies changed federal government policy on race and education. From a policy of eliminating de jure, or legal segregation as a result of *Brown v. Board of Education*, Congress now embarked on a policy of affirmative action to integrate schools and end de facto segregation produced by income level and neighborhood racial or ethnic composition. The new policy established special compensatory education that focused on the creation of instructional programs designed to overcome the cultural deprivation –the

effects of poor education readiness associated with poverty and racial segregation, and not necessarily the effects of a student's home or neighborhood environment as a cultural unit. The most notable compensatory program was Head Start, co-founded by Urie Bronfenbrenner and Jule Sugarman, in 1965. Head start, a government-sponsored early childhood program that has helped provide millions of socially disadvantaged preschoolers with learning skills associated with "school-readiness", is a program of the United States Department of Health and Human Services that provides comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. The program's services and resources are designed to foster stable family relationships, enhance children's physical and emotional well-being, and establish an environment to develop strong cognitive skills. The transition from preschool to kindergarten imposes diverse developmental challenges that include requiring the children to engage successfully with their peers outside of the family network, adjust to the space of a classroom, and meet the expectations the school setting provides (McWayne, Cheung, Wright, Hahs-Vaughn, & Thomas, 2012).

Effective Schools Research

Compensatory education programs that dominated school improvement by addressing cultural deprivation supported by *Coleman* and *Racial Isolation* reports, suggested that schools themselves could not be responsible for gaps in achievement between whites and African-Americans. There was a body of researchers who thought differently about the impact schools could have on student achievement. Led by Ron

Edmonds, then Director of the Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University, many researchers refused to accept Coleman's report as conclusive, although they acknowledged that family background does make a difference. They set out to find schools where kids from low income families were highly successful, and thereby prove that schools can make a difference.

The Effective Schools Movement supported the premise that all children can learn and that the school controls the factors necessary to assure student mastery of the core curriculum, without discounting the importance of family on student learning. In 1982, Ron Edmonds published a paper entitled *Programs of School Improvement: An Overview*, which he indicated that while schools may be primarily responsible for whether or not students function adequately in school, the family is probably critical in determining whether or not students flourish in school.

While the early definition of effective schools rested on the concept of equity between children from differing socioeconomic classes, as educators became concerned about equity among other subsets of the population such as gender, ethnicity, disabilities, and family structure, the research disaggregated accordingly. Furthermore, the early definition was cast in terms of mastery of essential curriculum, i.e., reading and arithmetic and basic skills. Over time, other curricular outcomes were added such as problem-solving ability, higher-order thinking skills, creativity, and communicative ability giving rise to the standards and eventual accountability movements. Effective Schools Movement emphasized the individual school as the unit of change. Over time,

researchers believed that school improvement resulting in increased student achievement could only be sustained with strong district support for wider impact.

The landmark U.S. Department of Education report, *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), found that about 13 percent of 17-year-olds were functionally illiterate, SAT scores were dropping, and students needed an increased array of remedial courses in college. Our system of education was not keeping pace with the progress of other nations threatening our economic stability and children's future. "If we were "at risk" in 1983, we are at even greater risk now. The rising demands of our global economy, together with demographic shifts, require that we educate more students to higher levels than ever before. Yet, our education system is not keeping pace with these growing demands" (DOE, 2008, p. 1).

All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual power of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself. (DOE, 2008, p. 9)

No Child Left Behind

We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do that. Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far.

Ron Edmonds

Schools varied in their quality and changes in the government's perspective with regards to how to spend money to address the achievement gap. The criticism was that

there were few obvious changes as a result of the money that was spent in poor areas. The new philosophy was not ‘throw money at it’ but, to obtain better value from that money. Market forces should be used in the provision of education services to make the poorer schools come up to the standards of the best schools. Compensatory education was no longer viewed as a relevant strategy.

The standards and accountability movement reached its apex with the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*. Its provisions are weighted toward the elementary and middle school grades, but expanded data collection to high schools. Graduation rates data highlighted how much work still needs to be done, as anticipated by the report *A Nation at Risk*. Schooling deficiencies were confirmed and this legislation has generated data that, unfortunately, confirm the continued threat of a failing public education system. As a result of *NCLB*, we now have annual test score data on students in reading and math from the third grade through the eighth grade and once in high school. We are able to see how well each of the approximately 96,000 public schools in our country is performing, not just overall but also for each group of students a school serves, such as minority students, students with disabilities, and English language learners.

Four years after the implementation of *NCLB*, the graduating Class of 2006 produced alarming and sobering information regarding high school performance. High school level performance is as alarming as it was at the time of *A Nation at Risk*, if not worse. The percentage of students who graduated in 2006 after starting ninth grade four years earlier was only 74.3 percent according to The National Center for Education

Statistics (NCES, 2007). Equally sobering to realize is that in 2006, nearly 60 percent of high school dropouts over the age of 25 were either unemployed or not participating in the workforce at all. The situation is even more troubling for minority students.

The Urgency of Now: The 2012 Schott 50 State Report on Public Education indicates nationally the gap between the African-American and White male graduation rates has only decreased three percentage points in the last 10 years. At this rate of progress, with no “large scale” systemic intervention, it would take another 50 years to close the graduation gap between African-American males and their White male counterparts. Since 2004, the Schott Foundation for Public Education’s biennial reports on African-American males in public education have documented that of all racial/ethnic and gender groups, African-American males have been the least likely to secure a regular diploma four years after beginning high school. The researcher contends that we are no longer a “Nation at Risk” we are a “Nation in Crisis.”

Structural roles and personal experiences of race and racism shape the nature of inequity in education. Unlike traditional scholarly research that investigates and/or explains how race and racism are organized and operate, Critical Race Theory (CRT) seeks to address and redress social inequalities like the achievement gap for African-American males (Carter, 2008). This is what makes CRT “critical.” Foundational to CRT is the argument that racism is *endemic* to American society (Delgado, 1995), which implies that racism consists of common and ingrained patterns of interaction that afford power and privilege to some social groups at the expense of others.

While cultural deprivation relies on economic status to explain issues in achievement, CRT tenets suggest that “Whiteness” provides certain benefits, while “Blackness” results in certain deficits, in education. Critical race theory also recognizes that race and racism work with and through gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality and/or nation as systems of power. Contemporary use of critical race theory often relies upon and/or investigates intersections among these factors to find solutions to social injustices.

Often researchers have found that African-American males are viewed as being physically aggressive and confrontational in language when compared to Caucasian males who are often viewed as vocal, articulate, and proven leaders (Ford, Grantham, & Bailey, 1999). Such competing views of boys in schools suggest a bifurcated system of inequity. This phenomenon and its implications support the significance of race in the evaluation of the discipline and achievement gaps.

Personal Factors

School discipline is generally understood as the myriad of ways that schools attempt to manage student behavior in relation to worthwhile educational ends (Adams, 2000). It is further assumed that students should conform to the presumably objective, “effective and equitable” systems of school culture and discipline (Yosso, 2005, p. 75). Failure to conform to these systems has previously been regarded as a problem with individual students, or with students’ familial structures or cultural backgrounds (Carter, 2008; Yosso, 2005).

The disproportionate discipline of African-American students has been called the *discipline gap* (Gregory & Mosley, 2004; Monroe, 2005). In articulating the implications of the discipline gap, researchers point to a variety of academic, social, and moral costs, including the loss of instructional time, effects on African-American students' performance and persistence, and a speculated relationship with the school-to-prison pipeline (Fenning & Rose, 2007; Skiba, Simmons, Staudinger, Rausch, Dow, & Feggins, 2003).

School-to-Prison Pipeline

African-American males have been referenced to as an “endangered species” (Noguera, 2008, p. 432). Depriving children and youth of meaningful opportunities for education, and subsequently future employment, and participation in our democracy as a result of school policies and practices is a perpetual cycle referred to as the “School-to-Prison-Pipeline.” While comprising 12.4% of the general population in America, African-Americans accounted for 38.2% of the prison population in 2009. Moreover, African-American non-Hispanic males had an imprisonment rate (3,119 per 100,000 U.S. residents) that was more than 6 times higher than white non-Hispanic males (487 per 100,000), and almost 3 times higher than Hispanic males (1,193 per 100,000) (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009). Considerable focus has been afforded to the effect of this phenomenon on the educational outcomes of African-American children.

The American Academy of Pediatrics found that suspension and expulsion jeopardize children's health and safety and may exacerbate academic failure. The

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention found that out-of-school youth are more likely to be retained a grade, drop out of school, become teen parents, and engage in delinquent behavior (Cregor & Hewitt, 2011). Robert Balfanz (2003) found that school suspension is a top predictor for those students incarcerated by ninth grade. Students cannot learn, and teachers cannot teach, in unsafe schools. But suspension, expulsion, and arrest do not make schools safer. The American Psychological Association (APA) found that zero tolerance policies fail to make schools safer and schools with high suspension rates score worse on standardized tests. Instead, these practices harm academic achievement for all students while increasing the chances that those excluded will be held back, drop out, and become involved with the juvenile and criminal justice systems. The overrepresentation of African-American males in suspension centers, alternative schools, juvenile and adult prisons increases the probability of criminalization at the expense of receipt of an education under the auspices of maintaining a safe and orderly environment (Skiba, 2000). Rather than address the systematic problems that lead to poor educational performance, harsh discipline policies provide schools with a convenient method to remove certain students and in theory mask educational deficiencies (Legal Defense Fund, 2005, p. 5).

Aspects of NCLB have been found to be punitive and had the effect of encouraging low-performing schools to meet benchmarks by narrowing curriculum and instruction and de-prioritizing the educational opportunities of many students. Indeed, NCLB's "get-tough" approach to accountability has led to more students being left even

further behind, thus feeding the dropout crisis and the School-to-Prison Pipeline. There has been a spike in suspension and expulsion rates since the law's enactment. Recognizing that placing sanctions on struggling schools without providing enough tools to actually improve their performance, and failing to address significant funding and resource disparities among our nation's schools the Advancement Project Education Law Center – PA, Fair Test, The Forum for Education and Democracy, Juvenile Law Center, and NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., sought to address these punitive issues by suggesting changes to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). A joint paper written by the aforementioned sought to influence the reauthorization of ESEA by addressing how NCLB has negatively contributed to the pipeline phenomenon. The pending reauthorization of the (ESEA) presents an opportunity to broaden and strengthen the law's accountability structure – “not in ways that punish students and schools, but in ways that safeguard all students' opportunities to learn by more accurately assessing schools' strengths and weaknesses better targeting funding for school improvement” (ESEA, 2011, p. 1).

Although NCLB notably shed light on achievement disparities mandating that states disaggregate student outcomes based upon the demographic factors of ethnicity/race, language, disabilities, and socio-economic factors, the consequences of such a narrow focus have resulted in questionable tactics by schools to meet expectations. Pressed by high-stakes testing and inadequate resources the temptation to get rid of those students who present challenges has never been greater.

Academic Factors

Achievement Gap/Parental Involvement

Factors influencing African-American male achievement can be grouped as individual, parental or school (White, 2009, p. 3). Toldson, Harrison, Perine, Carreiro, and Caldwell (2006) found that parent-child interactions were the most robust predictor of African American adolescent success. Mandara's (2006) indicated that when African American parents are actively involved in their sons' academic efforts by monitoring homework as well as other academic pursuits, limiting nonproductive and destructive activities (e.g., television, radio, and video games), and creating a constant and positive dialogue with the teachers and school officials, they increased the odds of their son succeeding in school (Mandara, 2006).

Much evidence found in the literature regarding in-school-related factors include teacher expectations/perceptions, teacher quality, lack of culturally responsive instruction, and limited school resources impact the academic achievement of African-American males (White, 2009, p. 4). In-school-factors are within the control of staff and therefore warrant greater discussion.

Teacher Expectations and Perceptions/GC Weekly Progress Reports

CRT indicated that the racial stereotypes play a major role in the achievement gap. The phenomenon known as the "stereotype threat," which impacts the way teachers view students and the way students view themselves. Stereotype threat influenced teachers' low-achievement expectations for poor and minority students. Teachers' lower

expectations for minority students were based on their perceptions of the students' current performance rather than the students' potential to perform (Kober, 2001). African American males are affected by the negative stereotypes and perceptions about them. African American male youth "are often described using disparaging terms such as dysfunctional, lazy, uneducable, or dangerous" (Gibbs, 1998; Kunjufu, 2001; Mincy, 1994; Strayhorn, 2008). Stereotype threat is stress caused by fear that a person's own behavior may confirm a negative stereotype about a specific group or race (Cohen, Garcia, Apfel, & Master, 2006; Ferguson, 1998). Cohen et al., (2006) further postulated that African-American students are aware of the negative stereotypes about their intellectual ability because of their race. African-American students would rather be seen as cool or even lazy for failing to complete school assignments than to be labeled unintelligent for completing assignments incorrectly (Cohen et al., 2006).

Feeling sorry for students because of their environment, and subsequently lowering demands, does a disservice to the students (Diffily & Perkins, 2002). In schools that succeeded, teachers consistently maintain "expectations for all students" and believe that all students could and would learn (Chenoweth, 2006; Moore, 2005).

The GC Program utilizes weekly progress reports for all participants. Teachers willingly participated in completing these reports to ensure up to date academic and behavioral information.

Teacher Quality

Some of the most vulnerable students are often left to be taught by the least experienced individuals (Case & Katz, 1991; Strayhorn, 2008). Teacher quality has a “huge effect on how well students fare in school” (National Black Caucus of State Legislators [NBCSL], 2001, p. 9). High-quality teachers exhibit characteristics of commitment to students and learning, knowledge about the subjects they teach and how to teach them, responsibility for student learning, systematic thought, and advocacy for students and the teaching profession (Hopkins, 2004). Good teachers make lasting imprints on student achievement and those imprints (either good or bad) can last for at least three years (Stronge, 2002; Tucker & Stronge, 2005; Viadero & Johnston, 2000). Teacher quality is essential to raising student achievement; therefore, students need high-quality teachers (Emerick, Hirsch, & Berry, 2004; Kober, 2001).

Research shows that students of color, regardless of their socioeconomic level, were more likely to be taught by teachers with lower test scores and less academic preparation than white students. According to Sanders and Rivers (1996) students who are assigned to several ineffective teachers in a row have significantly lower achievement and gains in achievement than those who are assigned to several highly effective teachers in sequence, and are twice as likely to be assigned to the most ineffective teachers (Sanders & Rivers, 1996). African-American males are significantly more likely to attend high schools that employ a greater proportion of teachers on provisional licenses, the majority of whom teach outside of the subject in which they earned a college degree.

What teachers teach (curriculum) and how teachers teach (instruction) represent interrelated factors that impact achievement. The curriculum shapes classroom instruction. Instruction is assessed with tests that measure how well students learned the standards (student achievement). A litany of research has focused on the lack of culturally responsive instruction found in the classroom. Culturally responsive instruction pertains to classroom practices that draw meaningfully on the culture, languages, and experiences that students bring to the classrooms in order to increase engagement and academic achievement for students of color (Au, 2006).

Research has shown that a mismatch between teachers and students, or the ability of teachers to misunderstand the behavior of African-American students, which could severely impact the process of over-identification for special education referrals and the underachievement of students (Howard, 2001; Neal, McCray, Webb-Johnson, & Bridgest, 2003). This mismatch places tension between school culture and home culture in the classroom. African-American parents, especially those rearing African-American males, tends to maintain a firm, no nonsense parental-controlled environment, which conflicts with the permissive, nonassertive, authoritative style found in many classrooms run by Caucasian female teachers, “who have been socialized to speak softly, to be no direct, and nonassertive....thereby being perceived to lack authority by African-American youth” (Bondy, Ross, Galligane, & Hambacher, 2007, p. 345; Mandara, 2006).

In addition, the school culture tended to be centered on communicative, instructional, and curriculum-related material that may not be aligned with Afrocentric

culture elements. One study investigated how teachers' misunderstandings of students' cultural behavior impacted placement and referrals to the special education program.

Neal et al., (2003) noted in their seminal work on cultural misunderstanding and teachers' perceptions, stylized movement are one of the dimensions of African-American culture. They studied how teachers' misunderstandings of students' cultural behavior impacted placement and referrals to the special education program based on a stylized movement is a certain walking style called a "stroll." The stroll used by some African-American males was characterized as "a deliberately swaggered or bent posture, with the head held slightly tilted to the side, one foot dragging, and an exaggerated knee bend" (Neal et al., 2003, p. 50). Neal et al., initiated a study to determine if the stroll walking style of African American males influenced teachers' perceptions of the students' academic capabilities, their propensity for aggression, and their need for special education assistance. Results indicated that teachers perceived students who walked in a stroll manner as "lower in achievement, higher in aggression, and more likely to need special education services" (Neal et al., 2003, p. 49).

As our schools continue to become more diverse, understanding cultural-identified behavior, by teachers and administrators will be critical. Individuals who are unfamiliar or inexperienced with student diversity may do more harm than good for some African-American students due to overreaction, misinterpretation and the subsequent application of rules and policies prematurely and inappropriately. Cultural influence on the learning styles of particular groups of students and the necessity of implementing a

combination of alternative and mainstream methods of teaching and learning were also documented within the culturally responsive instruction literature (Dutro et al., 2008). While the literature offers numerous theories regarding why culturally responsive instruction should be implemented, there is far less scholarship about how to effectively motivate students in explorations of cultural and racial differences and define processes that acknowledge students of color but also engages them in substantive work that improves student outcomes, specifically behavior and achievement.

Per-pupil expenditures as measure of school funding have been shown to impact student achievement (Grissmer, Flanagan, Kawata, & Williamson, 2000). This study found that the state with lower per-pupil expenditures had lower achievement results, even though the states had similar characteristics. Funding also regulates the resources that are available to principals, teachers, and students (Barton, 2004). When funds are not available, instructional materials such as science equipment or computers can be limited (Barton, 2004). The amount of funding can also limit access to technology or the internet-resources that aid instruction and learning (Perkins-Gough, 2004). African-American and Latino students are consistently overrepresented in school districts that lack adequate funding for education (Harmon & Jones, 2005; Jewell, 2003).

Having an understanding of factors that contribute to the academic achievement gap provides the foundation for building and developing strategies to address those factors. To be effective, the work must involve efforts to counter and transform cultural patterns that undermine the importance of education to African-American males, a goal

that can only be achieved if it is possible to provide alternative influences that offer a credible, realistic, and attractive source of hope and change (Noguera, 2003).

The lived experiences and material consequences of race transcend disciplinary boundaries. Within the context of CRT, African-American males are bombarded with negative experiences in society and school, which later stunts their developmental potential. Early school failure breeds the feeling of disconnectedness from an African-American male's environment, uncertainty about his cognitive ability, and causes him to feel maladjusted (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). According to Day-Vines and Day-Hairston (2005), "fifty-two percent of African-American males who [dropped-out] prematurely from school had prison records by their thirties" (p. 237).

Hale (2001) suggested that schools operate from the assumption that students begin school with the academic skill-set necessary to be successful. This misconception is problematic when most African-American males begin school without the readiness to learn or with cultural capital deficits. Achievement level research suggests that approximately 16.5% of African-American males are two or more grade levels behind in school (Watson & Smitherman, 1996). Kunjufu (1986) stated that many African-American males begin to lose their zeal for education in the 3rd and 4th grade. Kunjufu (1986) also suggested that low expectations, low self-concepts, and early negative school experiences begin to thwart African-American male's interest in schooling. In other words, "it can be hard for boys who witness acts of violence or have friends or relatives who fall victim to violence to see long-term investment in school as anything other than

trivial” (p. 34). According to Balfanz and Legters (2004), “every high school with weak promoting power is fed by one or more low-performing middle grades schools. The major reason students repeat the ninth grade and enter the dropout track is that they fail too many ninth grade courses. Ninth grade course failure in turn, is in good part driven by student’s lack of intermediate academic skills, weak reading comprehension and fluency abilities” (p. 23). In other words, one of the key facets of addressing African-American male achievement gaps is directly related to adolescent literacy and the engagement of students at the middle school level. Further, in a study conducted by the Civil Rights Project at Harvard, the authors outlined that “Black public school students are three times more likely to be categorized as needing special education services than Whites... making them subject to less demanding schoolwork, more restrictive classrooms and isolation from their peers” (Skiba et al., 2003).

The achievement gap is an enduring problem teachers have difficulty addressing. Teachers' ability to intersect race and culture into their instructional approach is extremely important. Culture is central to learning. It plays a role not only in communicating and receiving information, but also in shaping the thinking process of groups and individuals. Culture can be defined as a group’s individual and collective ways of thinking, believing and knowing which includes their shared experiences, consciousness, skills, and values, forms of expression, social institutions and behaviors. This definition does not presuppose a singular view of African-American culture rather it implies a shared cultural knowledge. This then means the concept of culture can exist

along many dimensions and considers the commonalities as well as the differences among African-Americans.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

A pedagogy that acknowledges, responds to, and celebrates fundamental cultures offers full, equitable access to education for students from all cultures. Culturally Responsive Teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Ladson-Billings (1995) notes that a key criterion for culturally relevant teaching is nurturing and supporting competence in both home and school cultures. Teachers should use the students' home cultural experiences as a foundation upon which to develop knowledge and skills.

Culturally responsive teaching is defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively. Stairs (2007) explained in her study that culturally responsive teaching is an “approach particularly suited to urban schools where educating linguistically, culturally, and racially diverse students is a reality that some teachers find challenging and are ill prepared to address” (p. 38). In addition to utilizing diversity to enrich the learning experiences of all students, Stairs postulates that teachers should be “responsive to their students by incorporating elements of the students’ culture in their teaching...*Responsive* simply means reacting appropriately in the instructional context” (p. 38).

A culturally responsive classroom of the 21st century according to Ford, Howard, Harris, and Tyson (2000) uses: (1) student centered teaching and learning that provides a sense of membership and ownership; (2) multicultural awareness as a learning tool; (3) incorporation of real-world issues as a part of instruction; and (4) teacher responsibility for student cognitive, emotional, and social well-being. Such instructional practices seek to engage African-American students in the learning process in order to address the importance of academic achievement. Given that a majority of teachers hail from a middle class European-American ancestry, the biggest obstacle to successful culturally responsive instruction for most educators is disposing of their own cultural and racial biases. Given that African-American student's makeup 17 percent of the nation's public school enrollment, and African-American teachers represent 6 percent of the U.S. teaching population, it is unlikely that African-American students will come into contact with many African-American teachers who may have an understanding of the cultural values and characteristics of African-American students. As a result, the potential for cultural incongruence, cultural mismatch, or dissonance between African-American students and teachers is amplified.

Howard (2001) assessed three major culturally responsive strategies used by highly qualified African-American teachers who taught mainly African-American students. Holistic, culturally communicative, and skill-building were the three strategies discussed in his study. Holistic strategies are geared toward "developing all the faculties of learners so that students are intellectually capable (able to master cognitive and

academic tasks), socially adaptable (able to coexist with peers and adults in a respectable manner), and morally sound (able to adhere to teacher and societal norms)” (pp.186–187). Character education, teaching, honesty, responsibility, respect, cooperation, sympathy towards others, and behaving in ways that are consistent with the social norms of the classroom and society are the essential goal.

Academic self-efficacy, the belief that smart is not something you are, smart is something you can get is the cornerstone of skill-building activities. Teachers helping students develop skills in order to increase their academic achievement. One teacher explained in the study drawing a distinction between “you’re smarter at this” or “you’re better at that” is to use the word skills. That says to the children that skills are something acquired over time. Then, if someone is more skillful at something, then it simply means they’ve had more practice at it. And you can rise to that skill level if you practice. So it makes it attainable. But if you use the word smart, most children interpret that as either having it or not. The key is to stress that everyone can improve skills (Howard, 2001, p. 195). In essence, the report emphasized that culturally relevant teachers are personally warm toward and respectful of, as well as academically demanding of, all students.

According to Hurley, Boykin, and Allen (2005), studies show that African-American culture involves a deeper sense of community which has “a communal orientation...marked by the priority of social bonds, awareness of interconnectedness among people, and a sense of mutual responsibility” (Hurley et al., 2005, p. 516).

Watkins (2002) found the learning styles among young African-American children and

determined that children tended to gravitate toward a group learning environment because they were more likely to ask their peers than their teachers for academic assistance.

Cooperative learning among African-American male students was the focus of a study conducted by Wilson-Jones and Cashton (2004). The aim of the study was to investigate how cooperative learning promoted the academic success of elementary African-American males in grades 3 through 6 in a rural school in Mississippi. Results of the study revealed overall improvement in academic achievement, behavior and attendance, self-confidence, and school satisfaction, as a result of implementing cooperative instructional strategies (Wilson-Jones & Caston, 2004). Similar characteristics found that cooperative learning strategies can be utilized to improve academic achievement among African-American students already culturally familiar with its attributes.

Cohen et al., (2006) found that utilizing psychological interventions can provide major benefits and could be used simultaneously with other achievement gap strategies. The study involved an in-class writing assignment that “unlike other interventions”, benefited the targeted students while not adversely affecting non-targeted students and showed how affirmations could be used to address the stereotype threat concept and reduce the achievement gap between seventh grade African-American and Caucasian students (Cohen et al., 2006, p. 1309). African-Americans were in the experimental group and Caucasian students were in the control groups, with approximately the same

number of students in each group. Students in the experimental group were asked to choose one value that was important to them and write a paragraph describing why they cherished the values. The control group focused on values held by others. Students were not aware the assignment involved issues related to race and stereotype, but viewed the exercise as a normal classroom assignment. This self-affirmation exercise allowed students to reaffirm their beliefs and their own personal identity. The exercise did not focus on testing, resulting in stress associated with the negative stereotype threat phenomenon being limited. African-American students in the experimental group improved throughout the school year and had higher end-of-year grades compared to those in the control group.

This technique could provide major benefits and has essentially no cost associated with its use. Combining affirmation as a technique with other instructional strategies can dramatically impact the achievement gap. The sole belief is that resources must be added to give teachers more skills if they are lacking, which is important. However, we should not overlook the importance of removing the psychological and social barriers.

Motivation and Achievement

Mentoring Programs/Positive Role-Models

College Visits

Mentoring is yet another strategy that has been implemented to address the achievement gap. Mentoring programs can be used to build character, counteract the influence of peer pressure, as well as address the isolation and self-esteem issues

adolescent African-American males encounter. Research supported the connotation that students need to be associated with good role models who are committed to helping the student. Schools could work collaboratively with members of the African-American community such as the church, social, and civic organizations to coordinate mentoring programs (Day-Vines, Patton, & Baytops, 2003).

Noeth and Wimberly (2002) reported the value of an interested adult was a significant factor in the college planning of African-American students. Positive role models, mentors, and tutors can help students socially, emotionally, and academically. The nurturing relationship between the student and the mentor can be structured using activities that include individual discussions, tutoring, leisure activities, and cultural awareness sessions, all of which promote personal development (Lee, 1996). In addition, academic leaders can play an important role in reducing, if not eliminating, stereotypes by establishing school wide mentoring programs in which teachers are paired with students whose background differs from their own (Strayhorn, 2008).

Another nationally recognized mentoring program consists of men in various arenas, such as business, public affairs, and government, who share a common goal which is to improve the quality of life for African-Americans and other minorities. One component of the mentoring program is that it provides a support network and positive role models for young African-American males - elementary through high school (Cave & Quint, 1990). Another inspiring mentoring program was formed to mentor struggling

African-American students at a northeast Ohio high school. This program is housed at the high school that reported SAT scores at 110 points above the national average for African-American students. The number of African-American sixth graders scoring proficient on the state math test has nearly doubled in three years and was more than 20 percentage points above the Ohio average for African-American students at this high school (Winerip, 2005). Other mentoring programs geared toward African-American males focus on offering tutoring and encouragement for African-American males to stay in school, enroll in college preparatory classes, and continue into higher education (Bailey & Paisley, 2004). The GC utilizes college visits as a part of its mentoring component, giving mentors an opportunity to share the value of their college experience with each GC participant.

Single-Gender Policy

Education integration was believed to be an effective strategy for providing equal educational opportunities and decreasing harmful stereotypes and stigmatization which limit expectations and reinforce inequitable educational outcomes for minorities. Civil rights enforcement relating to race, ethnicity, and disability has focused on integration as the key strategy to advance equality since *Brown vs. Board of Education*. In 2006 the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) lifted the almost total ban on sex segregation in the 1975 Title IX regulation. Title IX is the federal law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. In 2008, the US government sponsored a study, *Early Implementation of Public Single-*

Sex Schools: Perceptions and Characteristics, which listed the benefits of single-sex schools: (a) Decreases distractions in learning, (b) Reduces student behavior problems, (c) Provides more leadership opportunities, (d) Promotes a sense of community among students and staff, (e) Improves student self-esteem, (f) Addresses unique learning styles and interests of boys or girls, (g) Decreases sex bias in teacher-student interactions, (h) Improves student achievement, (i) Decreases the academic problems of low achieving students, (j) Reduces sexual harassment among students, (k) Provides more positive student role models, (l) Allows for more opportunities to provide social and moral guidance, (m) Provides choice in public education.

Interest in single-sex education has been reinvigorated by those interested in its use to improve academic achievement for African-American males. Although research on the effects of K-12 single-sex education is inconclusive in general, some common themes emerge in the research literature. Very few studies have looked at a combination of variables that seek to research the connection of culturally relevant pedagogy and single-gender classes for adolescent middle school African-American males. There seems to be at least some level of association between student achievement and gender distribution of classrooms. However, this gap in research thus amplifies the significance and situation of additional research studies that take these elements into consideration (Lee, 2012, p. 33–34).

When schools provided additional instructional time, researchers found improved student achievement (Carter, 2000; Mathis, 2005). Instructional time can be gained by

extending the school day, school week, or school year. A report on high-performing, high-poverty schools indicated schools consistently found ways to provide additional instructional time for their students—or “time on task”—especially in reading and mathematics (Barth et al., 1999; Cawelti, 2000; Carter, S. 2000). Increasing school personnel by arranging for extra support by aides, parents, and even older students ensure that the time spent in school was “on task”—not wasted (Carter, S. 2000).

African-American males, on nearly every measure of academic achievement, underperform in comparison to the rest of their peers. High School completion as a measure of achievement indicates that African-American male graduation rates are disproportionately lower rates than their White counterparts. Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological model make plain the importance of paying attention not only to what is happening to African-American males in school, but what is happening outside of school hours. With research supporting a strong correlation between behavior during out-of-school hours and academic outcomes, if reform strategies want to address the crisis of such high numbers of African-American male high school dropouts, there must be attention not only to what is happening in schools, but also what is happening outside of school hours (Martin & Jefferson, 2011).

Although there is empirical evidence suggesting the effectiveness of after-school programs for youth in general, very little data solely focus on the educational and health outcomes for young African-American males who attend after-school programs (Fashola, 2003, 2005). First, many of the *extracurricular activities model* programs are effective.

These programs use sports, arts, homework assistance, tutoring, and other broad-ranging activities to supplement the lives of participating youth. Second, the *mentoring model*, connects youth with adults or older mentors who provide the children with additional support and attention. Finally, cultural rites of passage (ROP) programs have also led to successful social and academic outcomes for young African-American males. These programs use culture-based interventions to supplement and support the transition of African-American youth to adulthood (Woodland, 2008, p. 548).

Out-of-School Time: Quality afterschool programs

There are six guiding principles associated with a quality afterschool program according to a report commissioned by the Lucile Packard Foundation called “*Putting It All Together: Guiding Principles for Quality Afterschool programs Serving Pre Teens.*” The first principle is a “focused and intentional strategy”. Good programs will have clear goals and plan all activities to achieve those goals, while keeping a youth development framework in mind. The next four guiding principles (Exposure, Supportive relationships, Family engagement, and Cultural competence) are key ingredients that should all be designed to support the goals of the program. The final principle, “continuous program improvement,” is the process that helps to ensure that all the other guiding principles are put into practice. The six guiding principles are all interrelated, and, to be successful, programs should consider all of them in their program design, implementation and improvement (Metz, Goldsmith, & Arbreton, 2008). Additionally, other research indicated that after-school programs that were associated with positive

outcomes shared a clear mission, high expectations and positive social norms, a safe and healthy environment, a supportive emotional climate, small enrollment, stability, trained personnel, content and pedagogy related to children's needs, mission, integrated family, community partners, and frequent assessment (Bodilly & Beckett, 2005).

OST Empirical Studies

Participation in OST programs has been associated with positive outcomes for youth, including: healthier self-concepts and educational and occupational aspirations (Woodland, 2008). Documented benefits also include improved performance in core subjects, decreased behavior referrals, and increased attendance (McPartland & Nettles, 1991), as well as improved academic achievement, higher graduation rates, and more positive feelings towards school (Deschenes et al., 2010). After-school programs, mentoring, and single-gender classrooms, show promise as strategies to close the achievement gap. While is limited research regarding effective programs positively impacting African-American males and student outcome, "*Whatcha doin' after school? A review of the literature on the influence of after-school programs on young black males*" identified extracurricular, mentoring, and rites of passage models as the three types of programs shown to improve African-American male's performance in schools (Woodland, 2008). His report, to each provided core elements of effective after-school programs for African-American youth.

Research has emphasized the importance of after-school programs for African - American children. Toldson (2008) found in his research that youth enrichment

experiences or school-based activities had very strong associations with academic achievement among African-American males. Posner and Vandell (1994) concluded from their study that low-income African-American children who participated in after-school programs consistently performed better in reading, math, and other subjects than their counterparts.

Martin, Martin, Gibson, and Wilkins (2007) evaluated African-American males who participated in an after-school program in order to determine their level of academic improvement. Results indicated that the after-school intervention was effective in increasing academic achievement as well as decreasing negative behavior among adolescent African-American male students (Martin et al., 2007).

When Black Males Aren't at School: A Qualitative Study of Promising Out-of-School-Time (OST) Programs Serving Black Males, Martin and Jefferson (2011) highlighted four areas of need that promising programs must address to effectively serve African-American males: Support (aiding academic, family, or personal development needs); Access (entryway to opportunities that are typically limited or denied); Connection (intergenerational and peer relationships that foster healthy development); and Continuity (long-term, consistent guidance) [Martin & Jefferson, 2011, p. 10]. Using the four broad categories program characteristics were organized into a summary table (Table 1). The program components were selected because they were present in most of the programs that participated in their study; and although not exhaustive, the prevalence of each component across programs suggests that these components were

noteworthy (Martin & Jefferson, 2011, p. 10). Additionally, each program in the study approached the development of their intervention strategies on Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory for child development. According to Martin and Jefferson,

children’s lives are embedded in a series of direct (e.g. family, teachers) and indirect (e.g. laws, policies) relationships that influence their trajectories through life. These relationships can either bend trajectories towards a positive direction (e.g. college) or a negative direction (e.g. dropout) that can have a major impact on their quality of life. Surrounding these individual relationships are larger contextual realities that can contribute to risk of failure (e.g. poverty, discrimination) or to success (safe neighborhoods, good school). The programs are designed to mitigate against these negative influences, and to encourage positive development. (p. 10)

The GC curriculum includes lesson plans that are based on the learning styles of males (Dunn & Dunn, 1993; Peters, 2005), and the “Do You Know Enough about Me to Teach Me” model (Peters, 2006). Participants are led through the values, beliefs, strategies, and techniques needed to foster a school climate and culture that gives children hope so that they become engaged in the learning process. The GC process reinforces education, character building, leadership and motivation by focusing on the natural assets

Table 1

OST Program Attributes for Promising Out-of-School-Time

Need	Program Attribute	Example of Program Components
Support	Academic Preparation	1-1 Tutoring (*) Summer Academic Component Personally Responsive Approach (*) Study Skills Development (*) Rigorous Academic Enrichment Character Development (*)
Support	African-American Male Development	Racial and Cultural Pride (*) Critical Thinking Skills Development (*) Life Skills Training (*)
Support	Parent and Family Support	Responsive Parental Involvement (*) Family Guidance

Support	Reciprocal Partnerships	Advocating for Parents and Children in School School Partnerships (*) Other Strategic Partnerships (*) Experienced Leadership
Access	Highly Competent Adults	Employment of social workers who are MSW Certified Recruitment (*) High Retention
Access	College Pathway Knowledge	Ongoing Training Staff and Volunteers (*) Personal Counseling (*) Exam Preparation Navigating the Application Process Assistance with Forms and Making Deadlines College Visits and Experiences (*) Career Exploration (*)
Access	Labor Pathway Knowledge	Workplace Experience Job Application Techniques
Connection	Strong Peer Networks	Peer Single-Sex Cohorts (*) Collaborative Learning (*) Consensus Building (*) Long-term Relationships through Program Duration (*)
Connection	Positive African-American Males	African-American Male Mentors (*) African-American Male Staff “Slightly” Older African-American Male Staff and Volunteers
Continuity	Long Term Guidance and Monitoring	Program Entry before Puberty Managing School Transitions Collection and monitoring of school performance and attendance (*)
Continuity	Predictability	Highly structured programming (*) Year-round programming (*) Clear and consistent goals (*)

Note. Adapted from M. M. Martin and N. Jefferson (April 2011), paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA, p. 10.

and gifts that boys bring to the learning table such as: aggression, visual and kinesthetic learning styles, lack of focus, and spontaneity.

Weekly progress reports are completed by teachers and incorporated into a point system i.e. appropriate attire, academic performance, attendance and behavior. High points allow participation in extracurricular activities. Such activities include: professional sports games, visits to museums and art galleries, etiquette dinner at a five-

star restaurant, visits to local colleges and universities and social outings. Typically, the boys send letters to local businesses and to area professional sports players soliciting financial assistance, or tickets for these events.

Gentlemen's Club - OST Strategy for African American Males/Character

Education/Community Service

The GC Induction Ceremony involves school officials, parents, and community leaders. For every African-American male being inducted into GC, there is a positive role model by his side committed to seeing him through the process of becoming a gentleman. When participants do not have males available, they are provided mentors from the community. The GC program curriculum utilizes character education traits, such as the importance of honesty and integrity as its foundation. The mentor places the GC tie on the participant and agrees to be his role model. This ceremony marks the official induction of participants into the GC program.

In addition, GC participants are required to organize a community service project for the year. This project can be done at school or within the community.

This study examined the impact of GC on (a) attendance (b) behavior and (c) academic performance as they transitioned from African-American males to African-American gentlemen. GC contains 50 identified program attributes deemed essential in an effective OST or afterschool program, according to Martin and Jefferson (2011).

Research Question

This study examined the impact of a single-gender afterschool intervention strategy called the GC on African-American males in five urban school districts. Specifically, student achievement data and the antecedents of academic achievement, discipline and attendance data were collected and analyzed to determine if there was a significant difference in performance by GC participants. The researcher believes that this study will contribute to the body of knowledge needed on educating African-American males by expanding learning opportunities.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study examined the impact of the GC on the attendance, behavior, and academic achievement (grades) of 250 African-American males in two elementary schools, three middle schools, and five high schools, grades three through twelve, from five U. S. school districts located in Kentucky, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. This chapter describes the research methodology that was used to conduct this study. Information on the design of the study, a discussion of research methods and the analysis of the data that test the null research questions are included.

Research Design

The quantitative principle of this research is to test the null hypothesis. A descriptive study examined attendance, behavior and grade point average of students at the elementary, middle, and high school level, at the time of entering the “GC” program and three years after participating in the program. A *t*-test of dependent means was used to examine mean differences in students’ attendance, behavior and grades. It is important for the instrumentation to be reliable and data collection must be standardized. Consistency in measurement is a critical factor during the transition before and after treatment. The GC program designed a data collection instrument used by all participating GC sites. The same behaviors or student outcomes were measured and

reported quarterly to support examination of a clear pattern or consistency. This study utilized multiple measures on each GC participants at different times longitudinally on the same criterion measures of attendance, grade point average and discipline incidences (office referrals), at each designated time.

Gay and Airasin (2003) require a clear description of the conditions of measurement and the nature of the treatment to strengthen internal and external validity. The researcher used a multiple baseline design for each of the dependent variables in the study question, measuring attendance, achievement and discipline for club members during both phases and the results for the two phases of the experiment were compared. Typically, single-subject designs consider a single subject, one behavior, and a single setting. In this multiple-baseline design, African-American males and behavior, student outcomes of attendance, achievement and discipline remained constant.

Data Collection

Participants/Sample

Two hundred and fifty African-American males representing ten GC sites were used to examine the impact of GC on student outcomes. There were a total of ten clubs examined in this study. Distribution of GC groups included two elementary schools, three middle schools and five high schools across five urban schools districts; specifically Kentucky, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.

Table 2 provides a summary of GC participants by state. Table 3 shows distribution of GC participants by grade and school levels.

Populations

There are five districts and ten GC sites that were examined. School District D has six GC clubs, constituting sixty percent of the participants. Each remaining school district supports one GC site or ten percent of the participants (Table 4).

School District A

School District A is a large urban school district in Kentucky with an enrollment 97,500 students, making it the 28th largest school district in the United States. The district operates a \$990 million budget annually with 18,000 employees. The seven-member board is elected by general election to four-years.

Table 2

GC Club Participants

State	School district	School level	Club sample	School site
Kentucky	School District A	Middle	MS-A	A
New York	School District B	High	HS-A	B
North Carolina	School District C	High	HS-B	C
South Carolina	School District D	Elementary	ES-A	D
	School District D	Elementary	ES-B	D
	School District D	Middle	MS-B	D
	School District D	High	HS-C	D
	School District D	High	HS-D	D
	School District D	High	HS-E	D
Virginia	School District E	Middle	MS-C	E

Table 3

GC Participants Distribution by State and Grade

State	Club sample	School and grade level distributions										Total			
		<i>Elementary</i>			<i>Middle</i>			<i>High</i>							
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12				
KY	MS-A				10	10	5								25
NY	HS-A							10	10	3	2				25
NC	HS-B							10	10	3	2				25
SC	ES-A	10	10	5											25
SC	ES-B	10	10	5											25
SC	MS-B				10	10	5								25
SC	HS-C							10	10	3	2				25
SC	HS-D							10	10	3	2				25
SC	HS-E							10	10	3	2				25
VA	MS-C				10	10	5								25
		20	20	10	30	30	15	50	50	15	10				250

Table 4

Location of GC's States

States	Features/characteristics	Number of clubs	% of clubs
KY		1	10%
NY		1	10%
NC		1	10%
SC		6	60%
VA		1	10%

There are 89 elementary, 23 middle, and 19 high schools for a total of 131 schools. More than 60% of School District A students received free or reduced-price lunch. The

ethnic/racial student composition includes 36.3% African-American, 50.8% White , 2.8 %Asian , 5.4% Hispanic, and 4.3% Other.

There are ten clubs that participated in the study. There are two elementary schools, three middle schools and five high schools. Eighty percent of the population is distributed in secondary schools, with high school comprising fifty percent.

Elementary schools represent twenty percent of the total GC participants that were examined in the study (Table 5).

Table 5

GC's by School Level

School level	Features/characteristics	Number of clubs	% of clubs
Elementary		2	20%
Middle		3	30%
High		5	50%
			100%

Sample MS-A

MS-A is an urban middle school with an enrollment of 886 students, located in Kentucky. The ethnic/racial composition includes 38.0% African-American, 51.9% Caucasian, 5% Asian , and 5.1 % Hispanic. Fifty- four (54.4%) of the total student enrollment receive free or reduced-price lunch.

This school is designated Title 1 and implemented the GC in 2012.

School District B

School District B is the largest system of public schools in the United States, serving 1.1 million students, 75,000 teachers in over 1700 schools. The department covers all five boroughs and is run by the schools Chancellor. School District B is one of ten U.S. cities in which the education system is under the control of the mayor rather than an elected school board. The district operates under a 24 billion dollar annual budget and has overseen the addition of 654 new schools since 2002.

Sample HS-A

HS-A is a Title 1 high school representing grades 9-12 with an enrollment of 349 students. It is located in New York. There are 260 males (74%) enrolled. The ethnic/racial composition of students enrolled includes: Asian 6 (2%), African-American 123 (35%), Hispanic 215 (62%), and White 5 (1%). Seventy-eight (78 %) of the student population receives free or reduced-priced lunch. There are 99 ninth graders, 86 tenth graders, 91 eleventh graders, and 73 twelfth graders. There are 22 African –American males in the ninth (9th) grade, 27 African-American males in the tenth (10th) grade, 20 African-American males in the eleventh (11th) grade and 21 African-American males in the twelfth (12th) grade. This school implemented the GC in 2009.

School District C

School District C is a rural, medium- sized school district located in North Carolina with 27 schools and an enrollment of 20,418 students. The ethnic/racial composition includes five thousand one hundred forty five (5,145) or twenty five percent

(25 %) African-American, ten thousand three hundred seventy two (10,372) or fifty one percent (51 %) White, three thousand five hundred thirty two (3,532) or seventeen percent (17%) Hispanic and one thousand two hundred sixty six (1,266) classified as, Other, or six percent (6%). Fifty eight percent (58%) of the student population receive free or reduced-price lunch.

School District C's Board of Education consists of five members; each elected on a partisan ballot by the people for a four-year term.

Sample HS-B

HS-C is a Title 1 high school with an enrollment of seventy (70) students. There are thirty- eight (38) males, of which twenty- five (25) are African-American males representing fifty five percent (66%) of the total male enrollment. This school is an alternative school and students are assigned by the authority of the school board. It is located on the same grounds as its central office complex and implemented the GC in 2011. There are 10 ninth graders (40%), 10 tenth graders (40%), 2 eleventh graders (8%), and 3 twelfth graders (12%) participating in the GC program.

School District D

School District D is a rural, small-sized school district located in South Carolina with an enrollment of 20,000 students. Considered to be the second-fastest growing counties in South Carolina, School District D has 38 schools. There are 23 elementary, 8 middle, and 7 highs schools. Ethnic/racial composition includes 34% African-American, 44% Caucasian, percent 4% Asian, and 18% Hispanic. Sixty (60%) of the student

population receive free or reduced-price lunch. This school district houses six of the ten or 60% of the GC schools participating in this research study.

Sample ES-A

ES-A is a Title I elementary school with an enrollment of four hundred and thirty four (434) students. Ethnic/racial composition includes one hundred fifty five (155) or thirty six percent (36%) African-American, two hundred and six (206) or forty seven percent (47%) Caucasian, eleven (11) or two percent (2 %) Asian, forty (40) or nine percent (9%) Hispanic and twenty two (22) or five percent (5%) Other. Sixty five percent (65%) of the student population receive free or reduced-price lunch. There are eighty (80) third (3rd) graders, fifty eight (58) fourth (4th) graders, and seventy two (72) fifth (5th) graders. This school implemented the GC program in 2008.

Sample ES-B

ES-B is a Title I elementary school with an enrollment of four hundred and fifty eight (458) students. Ethnic/racial composition includes four hundred and twenty four or ninety three percent (93%) African-American, twenty -three (23) or five percent (5%) Hispanic, and eleven (11) or two percent (2%) Other. Ninety one percent (91%) of the student population receive free or reduced-price lunch. There are eighty- four (84) third (3rd) graders and seventy- nine (79) fourth (4th) graders. This school implemented GC in 2009.

Sample MS-B

MS-B is a Title I middle school with an enrollment of three hundred ninety one

(391) students. Ethnic/racial composition includes three hundred and fifteen (315) or eight one percent (81%) African-American, fifty three (53) or fourteen percent (14%) Caucasian, one (1) or two-tenths of a percent (0.2%) Asian, twelve (12) or three percent (3%) Hispanic and ten (10) or three tenths of a percent (0.3%) Other. Ninety one percent (91%) of the student population receive free or reduced-price lunch. There are ninety six (96) fifth (5th) graders, one hundred and eight (108) sixth (6th) graders, ninety (90) seventh (7th) graders, and ninety seven (97) eighth (8th) graders. This school implemented the GC program in 2010.

Sample HS-C

HS-C is a high school with an enrollment of one thousand eighty two (1,082) students. Ethnic/racial composition includes two hundred twenty five (225) or twenty one percent (21%) African-American, five hundred seventy four (574) or fifty three percent (53%) Caucasian, eleven (11) or one percent (1%) Asian, two hundred sixty six (266) or twenty five percent (25%) Hispanic and six (6) or one half of a percent (0.5%) Other. Forty three percent (43%) of the student population receive free or reduced-price lunch. There are four hundred and twenty eight (428) tenth (10th) graders, three hundred twenty eight (328) eleventh (11th) graders and three hundred twenty six (326) twelfth (12th) graders. This school implemented the GC program in 2010.

Sample HS-D

HS-D is a high school with an enrollment of 1,179 students. Ethnic/racial composition includes one hundred sixty seven (167) or fourteen percent (14%) African-

American, six hundred seventy seven (677) or fifty seven percent (57%) Caucasian, fourteen (14) or one percent (1 %) Asian, and three hundred and six (306) or twenty six percent (26%) Hispanic, and fifteen (15) or one percent (1%) other. Thirty two percent (32%) of the student population receive free or reduced-price lunch. There are three hundred nineteen (319) ninth (9th) graders, three hundred forty seven (347) tenth (10th) graders, two hundred fifty seven (257) eleventh (11th) graders and two hundred and fifty six (256) twelfth (12th) graders. This school implemented the GC program in 2010.

Sample HS-E

HS-E is a Title I high school with an enrollment of four hundred seventy eight (478) students. Ethnic/racial composition includes three hundred fifty four (354) or seventy four percent (74%) African-American, ninety- one (91) or nineteen percent (19%) Caucasian, one (1) or two-tenths of a percent (0.2%) Asian, eighteen or four percent (4%) Hispanic, and ten (10) or two percent (2%) Other. Seventy two percent (72%) of the student population receive free or reduced-price lunch. There are one hundred and forty (140) ninth (9th) graders, one hundred twenty six (126) tenth (10th) graders, one hundred twelve (112) eleventh (11th) graders and one hundred (100) twelfth (12th) graders. This school implemented the GC program in 2009.

School District E

School District E is a rural, small-sized school district located in Virginia with an enrollment of nine thousand three hundred eleven (9,311) students. There are ten (10) elementary, four (4) middle, and four (4) highs schools for a total of eighteen (18)

schools. There are four thousand seven hundred ninety one (4,791) males, of which one thousand ninety one (1,091) are African American males representing twenty three percent (23%) of the total male population. Ethnic/racial composition includes two thousand two hundred nineteen (2,219) or twenty four percent (24%) African-American, six thousand five hundred forty four (6,544) or seventy percent (70%) Caucasian, forty (40) or four-tenths percent (0.4 %) Asian, and three hundred forty four (344) or four percent (4%) Hispanic, and three (3) other. Fifty two percent of the student population received free or reduced-price lunch.

Sample MS-C

MS-C is a rural middle school with an enrollment of five hundred thirty five (535) students. There are two hundred and ninety six (296) males of which ninety eight (98) are African American males representing thirty three percent (33%) of the total male population. Ethnic/racial composition includes one hundred seventy one (171) or thirty two percent (32%) African-American, three hundred fifty two (352) or sixty six percent (66%) Caucasian, one (1) or hundredth of a percent (0.01%) Asian, and five (5) or nine tenths of a percent (0.9%) Hispanic. Sixty one percent (61%) of the total student enrollment receive free or reduced-price lunch. There are one hundred sixty six (166) sixth (6th) graders, one hundred eight four (184) seventh (7th) graders, and one hundred eight five (185) eighth (8th) graders. There are twenty five (25) African-American males in the sixth (6th) grade representing fifteen percent (15%) of the sixth grade population; thirty six African-American males in the seventh (7th) grade representing

twenty percent (20%) of the seventh grade population; and thirty seven (37) African-American males in the eight (8th) grade representing twenty percent (20%) of the eighth grade population. This school implemented the GC program in 2010.

Instrumentation

The data collection instrument for this study was designed by the researcher to support accountability and document trends in student achievement, attendance, and discipline. Appendix A contains a copy of the progress report and Appendix B contains a copy of the summative student outcomes data sheet.

Data Analysis/Statistical Analysis

A time series design enabled the researcher to collect data using data collection instruments that were pilot tested during the 2013 school year at HS-A. The repeated, quarterly measurements of student outcomes, (attendance, discipline, and grade point average) of an intact group of two-hundred fifty (250) African-American male GC students was conducted in two elementary, four middle, and five high schools GC club sites in Kentucky, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. Attendance, discipline incidents, grade point average, were organized into tables and depicted graphically when appropriate. A description of how each of these dependent variables was operationalized is provided below.

Average Attendance

The average attendance rate for each student was calculated by dividing the total number of days present by the number of days a student could have been present based

on when a student enrolled or started school. Attendance rates were adjusted by removing absences if there was related GC participation.

Discipline Incidences

Discipline incidents which resulted in a recorded referral on the GC's Student Information System database were eligible for review. The total number of recorded referrals was analyzed.

Grade Point Average

Grade Point Average (GPA) was computed by summing the final grades for each quarter in all subject areas. An "A" carries a numerical value of 4.0, a "B" has a value of 3.0, a "C" has a value of 2.0, a "D" has a value of 1.0, and an "E or F" has a value of 0.0.

Using SPSS Inc., a 3 x 3 or Type III Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance, (Type III RM ANOVA) was used to determine statistical significance with respect to independent variables of school level, (elementary, middle, and high) for the dependent variables of student outcomes: average attendance, discipline incidents, and grade point average over time.

Assumptions of the Study

The researcher assumed that each GC, regardless of setting, followed the recommended scope and sequence of activities quarterly. Unable to control for implementation differences, the researcher assumed all programs were identical with respect to fidelity and integrity of program expectations. The standard of "single-

variable rule” was established by the researcher as suggested by Wireman (1991) by controlling for other competing variables which could threaten the researcher's ability to attribute any differences among student outcomes to GC program, supporting a repeated measures design making the participants a control to themselves. This rule is important because it allowed the researcher to minimize the threats to internal validity that could stem from maturation. The GC curriculum differentiates content to be grade level specific and age appropriate. However, there is a distinct integration of lessons thematically to create a continuum of growth and development based upon student characteristics, needs and embedded principles of GC.

Data observations of GC participants were limited to students who remained in their respective schools and school district for a total of three years from 2010 through 2013. One year of student outcomes pre-GC was collected, and compared to two years of treatment outcomes 2011-2013. The researcher recognized that collecting control data for sixth and ninth graders required data from their previous elementary or middle school. The researcher treats the transition as normal negating the threat of transition from one school level to the next as a variable. However, the researcher deselected GC participants new to their school and district but allowed to join the GC. Longitudinal data was collected and reported throughout the entire school year.

Summary

This study examined the impact of a single-gender afterschool intervention strategy called the GC on African-American males in five urban school districts.

Specifically, student achievement data and the antecedents of academic achievement, discipline and attendance data were collected and analyzed to determine if there was a significant difference in performance by GC participants when compared to the control sample. The researcher believes that this study contributes to the body of knowledge needed on educating African-American males by creating conditions for success and expanding learning opportunities.

School leaders searching for strategies to meet the needs of African-American males require data-based models (Noguera, 2010). The organization, synthesis, and analysis of data points throughout this research study are essential to showing how an investment in a culturally responsive, single-gender afterschool program can be an effective strategy offering hope for changing the trend in at-risk African-American male performance in urban districts.

The researcher believes that this study contributes to the body of knowledge needed on educating African-American males by expanding the use of out-of-school time learning opportunities. The next chapter discusses the findings from the data collected during this study as well as provides a summary and recommendations for further research.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

The findings and statistical analysis are presented in this chapter. Data used in this study were subjected to a number of statistical procedures: Descriptive Statistics and *t*-test of dependent means. The results of this study will be discussed in two sections: Summary statistics and hypothesis testing.

Summary Statistics

Presented in Table 4.1 are the summary statistics for this study. There were a total of 250 students enrolled in 5 schools district across 5 different states.

Twenty percent (20%) of the study participants attended elementary school, thirty percent (30.0%) of the study participants attended middle school, and fifty percent (50.0%) of the study participants attended high school.

Table 4.1

Number and Percentage Of Students Enrolled By School.

Schools	Number of Schools	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
Elementary	2	50	20.0%
Middle	3	75	30.0%
High	5	125	50.0%
Total	10	250	100.0%

Attendance Results

The results presented in this section address the attendance data of students that participated in the project at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Table 4.2 provides the number and percentage of times that elementary school students missed days before and after implementation of the project. Before implementation of the project, 10.0% of elementary school students missed zero days, 20.0% missed one day, 20.0% missed two days, and 20.0% missed three days. Thirty percent of the elementary school students missed 4 or more days before implementation of the project (4.2).

After the project was implemented for three years, 74.0% of the elementary school students had zero absentees from school. Twenty percent of the elementary school students missed one (10.0%) or two (10.0%) days. Six percent of the elementary school students missed three days. The number of elementary school students that missed zero days from the time of implementation of the project over the three -year period changed 640%. The results indicated that as the number of absentees increased the percentage of absentees decreased for elementary school students during the third year period of the project implementation (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2

Number And Percentage Of Attendance Before And After Implementation Of The Project At The Elementary Level.

Attendance	Before Implementation		3 Years After Implementation		Percent Change
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	
0	5	10.0%	37	74.0%	640.0%
1	10	20.0%	5	10.0%	-50.0%
2	10	20.0%	5	10.0%	-50.0%
3	10	20.0%	3	6.0%	-70.0%
4	5	10.0%			
5	3	6.0%			
6	5	10.0%			
7	0	0.0%			
8	2	4.0%			

Table 4.3 provides the number and percentage of times that middle school students missed days before and after implementation of the project. Before implementation of the project, 38.7% of middle school students missed zero number of days, 9.3% missed one day, 16.0% missed two days, and 9.3% missed three days. Nearly 27 percent of middle school students missed 4 or more days before implementation of the project (4.3).

After the project was implemented for three years, 85.3% of the middle school students had zero absentees from school. Ten percent of the middle school students missed one (9.3%) or two (1.3%) days. Nearly three percent of the middle school students missed three days. The number of middle school students that missed zero days

from the time of implementation of the project over the three-year period changed 120.4%. The results indicated that the number of absentees increased and the percentage of absentees decreased for middle school students during the third year period of the project implementation (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Number And Percentage Of Absentees Before And After Implementation Of The Project At Middle School Level.

Attendance	Before Implementation		3 Years After Implementation		Percent Change
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	
0	29	38.7%	64	85.3%	120.4%
1	7	9.3%	7	9.3%	0.0%
2	12	16.0%	1	1.3%	-91.9%
3	7	9.3%	2	3.7%	-60.2%
4	5	6.7%	1	1.3%	-80.6%
5	4	5.3%			
6	7	9.3%			
7	1	1.3%			
8 or More	3	4.0%			

Table 4.4 provides the number and percentage of times that high school students missed days before and after implementation of the project. Before implementation of the project, 46.4% of high school students missed zero number of days, 11.2% missed one day, 12.8% missed two days, and 6.4% missed three days. Twenty-three percent of the high school students missed 4 or more days before implementation of the project (4.4).

After the project was implemented for three years, 94.0% of the high school students had zero absentees from school. Nearly five percent of the high school students missed one (4.0%) or two (0.8%) days. The number of high school students that missed zero days from the time of implementation of the project over the three-year period changed 120.6%. The results indicated that the number of absentees increased and the percentage of absentees decreased for high school students during the third year period of the project implementation (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

Number And Percentage Of Attendance Problems Before And After Implementation Of The Project At High School Level.

Attendance	Before Implementation		3 Years After Implementation		Diff
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	
0	58	46.4%	118	94.0%	102.6%
1	14	11.2%	6	4.0%	-64.3%
2	16	12.8%	1	0.8%	-93.8%
3	8	6.4%			
4	7	5.6%			
5	6	4.8%			
6	3	2.4%			
7	7	5.6%			
8	6	4.8%			

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the attendance rates of elementary school students before and after implementation of the project.

Table 4.5 provides the average attendance rates of elementary school students before and after implementation of the project. The average attendance rates of elementary school students before implementation of the project ($M = 2.84$) was higher than the average attendance rate of elementary school students after implementation of the project ($M = 0.48$). The t -test of paired means indicated a significant difference ($t = 11.51, p < 0.001$) in the average attendance rates of elementary school students before and after implementation of the project. The null hypothesis was rejected at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 4.5

Average Attendance Rates Of Elementary School Students Before And After Implementation Of The Project.

Implementation	Number of Students	Mean Rating	Std	Diff	t-value	Prob. Level
Before	50	2.84	2.05			
After	50	0.48	0.91	0.11	11.51	0.001

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the attendance rates of middle school students before and after implementation of the project.

Table 4.6 provides the average attendance rates of middle school students before and after the implementation of the project. The average attendance rates of middle school students before implementation of the project ($M = 2.22$) was higher than the average attendance rate of middle school students after implementation of the project (M

= 0.25). The *t*-test of paired means indicated a significant difference ($t = 8.32, p < 0.001$) in the average attendance rates of middle school students before and after implementation of the project. The null hypothesis was rejected at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 4.6

Average Attendance Rates Of Middle School Students Before And After Implementation Of The Project.

Implementation	Number of Students	Mean Rating	Std	Diff	t-value	Prob. Level
Before	75	2.22	2.48			
After	75	0.25	0.76	1.97	8.32	0.001

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the attendance rates of high school students before and after implementation of the project.

Table 4.7 provides the average attendance rates of high school students before and after implementation of the project. The average attendance rates of high school students before implementation of the project ($M = 1.98$) was higher than the average attendance rate of high school students after implementation of the project ($M = 0.06$). The *t*-test of paired means indicated a significant difference ($t = 8.44, p < 0.001$) in the average attendance rates of high school students before and after implementation of the project. The null hypothesis was rejected at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 4.7

Average Attendance Rates Of High School Students Before And After Implementation Of The Project.

Implementation	Number of Students	Mean Rating	Std	Diff	t-value	Prob. Level
Before	125	1.98	2.59			
After	125	0.06	0.28	1.92	8.44	0.001

Behavioral Results

The results presented in this section address the behavioral data of students that participated in the project at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Table 4.8 provides the number and percentage of times that elementary school students reported behavioral problems before and after implementation of the project. Before implementation of the project, 54.0% of elementary school students had zero behavior problems, 16.0% had 1 behavior problem, 12.0% had 2 behavior problems, and 10.0% had 3 behavior problems. Eight percent of the elementary school students had 4 or more behavioral problems before implementation of the project (4.8).

After the project was implemented for three years, 98.0% of the elementary school students had zero behavior problems. Two percent had 1 behavior problem. The number of zero behavioral problems changed 81.5% from the implementation of the project over the three year period (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8

Number And Percentage Of Behavioral Problems Before And After Implementation Of The Project At Elementary Level.

Behavioral Problems	Before Implementation		3 Years After Implementation		Percent Change
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	
0	27	10.0%	49	98.0%	81.5%
1	8	20.0%	1	2.0%	-87.5%
2	6	20.0%			
3	5	20.0%			
4	2	10.0%			
5	2	6.0%			

Table 4.9 provides the number and percentage of times that middle school students reported behavioral problems before and after implementation of the project. Before implementation of the project, 61.3% of middle school students had zero behavior problems, 9.3% had 1 behavior problem, 8.0% had 2 behavior problems, and 12.0% had 3 behavior problems. Nine percent of the middle school students had 4 or more behavioral problems before implementation of the project (4.9).

After the project was implemented for three years, 98.7% of the middle school students had zero behavior problems. Less than 2% of the middle school students had 1 behavior problem. The number of zero behavioral problems changed 61.0% from implementation of the project over the three year period (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9

Number And Percentage Of Behavioral Problems Before And After Implementation Of The Project At Middle School Level.

Behavioral Problems	Before Implementation		3 Years After Implementation		Percent Change
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	
0	46	61.3%	74	98.7%	61.0%
1	7	9.3%	1	1.3%	-86.0%
2	6	8.0%			
3	9	12.0%			
4	4	5.3%			
5	2	2.7%			
6	1	1.3%			

Table 4.10 provides the number and percentage of times that high school students reported behavioral problems before and after implementation of the project. Before implementation of the project, 68.8% of high school students had zero behavior problems, 6.4% had 1 behavior problem, 8.8% had 2 behavior problems, and 7.2% had 3 behavior problems. Nearly 9% of the high school students had 4 or more behavioral problems before implementation of the project (4.10).

After the project was implemented for three years, 100.0% of the high school students had zero behavior problems. The number of zero behavioral problems changed 45.3% from the implementation of the project over the three year period (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10

Number And Percentage Of Behavioral Problems Before And After Implementation Of The Project At High School Level.

Behavioral Problems	Before Implementation		3 Years After Implementation		Percent Change
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	
0	86	46.4%	125	100.0%	45.3%
1	9	11.2%			
2	12	12.8%			
3	9	6.4%			
4	9	5.6%			
5	2	4.8%			
6	1	2.4%			

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in the behavioral problems of elementary school students before and after implementation of the project.

Table 4.11 provides the mean ratings of elementary school students' numbers of behavioral violations before and after implementation of the project. The average number of behavioral problems for elementary students before implementation ($M = 1.06$) of the project was significantly higher than after implementation ($M = 0.02$) of the project. The t -test of paired means indicated a significant difference ($t = 5.15, p < 0.001$) in elementary school students behavioral problems before and after implementation of the project. The null hypothesis was rejected at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 4.11

Behavioral Problems Of Elementary Students Before And After Implementation Of The Project.

Implementation	Number of Students	Mean Rating	Std	Diff	t-value	Prob. Level
Before	50	1.06	1.44	1.04	5.15	0.001
After	50	0.02	0.14			

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant difference in the behavioral problems of middle school students before and after implementation of the project.

Table 4.12 provides the mean ratings of middle school students' numbers of behavioral violations before and after implementation of the project. Middle school students before implementation of the project had more behavioral problems than after implementation of the project. The average number of behavioral problems for middle school students before implementation ($M = 1.04$) of the project was significantly higher than after implementation ($M = 0.01$) of the project. The t -test of paired means indicated a significant difference ($t = 5.83, p < 0.001$) in middle school students behavioral problems before and after implementation of the project. The null hypothesis was rejected at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 4.12

Behavioral Problems Of Middle School Students Before And After Implementation Of The Project.

Implementation	Number of Students	Mean Rating	Std	Diff	t-value	Prob. Level
Before	75	1.04	1.56			
After	75	0.01	0.11	1.03	5.83	0.001

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant difference in the behavioral problems of high school students before and after implementation of the project.

Table 4.13 provides the mean ratings of high school students' numbers of behavioral violations before and after implementation of the project. High school students before implementation of the project had more behavioral problems than after implementation of the project. The average number of behavioral problems for high school students before implementation ($M = 2.59$) of the project was significantly higher than after implementation ($M = 0.28$) of the project. The t -test of paired means indicated a significant difference ($t = 8.44, p < 0.001$) in high school students behavior before and after implementation of the project. The null hypothesis was rejected at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 4.13

Behavioral Problems Of High School Students Before And After Implementation Of The Project.

Implementation	Number of Students	Mean Rating	Std	Diff	t-value	Prob. Level
Before	125	0.84	1.44			
After	125	0.0	0.0	1.44	6.50	0.001

Grade Point Averages Results

The results presented in this section address the grade point average data of students that participated in the project at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Table 4.14 represents the number and percentage of elementary school students' grade point average ranges before and after implementation of the project. Before implementation of the project, 18.0% of students at the elementary school level had an average grade point of 1.50 or lower. Eighteen percent of the students at the elementary school level had a grade point average between 1.51 and 2.00. Another 16.0% percent of the elementary school students had a grade point average between the range of 2.01 and 2.50. Twenty-six percent of elementary school students' grade point average ranged from 2.51 to 3.00. Twenty-two percent of the same students had grade point averages between the range of 3.01 and 3.50. None of the elementary school students had grade point averages above 3.50.

After the project was implemented for three years, none of the elementary school students had grade point averages below 1.50. Twenty-two percent of students at

the elementary school level had a grade point average between 1.51 and 2.00. Another 20.0% percent of elementary school students had a grade point average between the range of 2.01 and 2.50. Twenty percent of elementary school students' grade point averages ranged from 2.51 to 3.00. Thirty-eight percent of the same students, had grade point average between the range of 3.01 and 3.50, and 4.0% of them had grade point averages higher than 3.51 (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14

Number And Percentage Of Grade Point Averages Before And After Implementation Of The Project At Elementary School Level.

Grade Point Averages	Before Implementation		3 Years After Implementation		Percent Change
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	
0.01 – 1.50	9	18.0%			-100.0%
1.51 – 2.00	9	18.0%	8	16.0%	-11.1%
2.01 – 2.50	8	16.0%	11	22.0%	37.5%
2.51 – 3.00	13	26.0%	10	20.0%	23.1%
3.01 – 3.50	11	22.0%	19	38.4%	72.7%
3.51 and Higher			2	4.0%	

Table 4.15 represents the number and percentage of middle school students' grade point average ranges before and after implementation of the project. Before the implementation of the projects, 26.7% of the students at the middle level had an average grade point of 1.50 or lower. Four percent of the students at the middle school level had a grade point average between 1.51 and 2.00. Another 22.7% percent of the middle school students had a grade point average between the range of 2.01 and 2.50. Twenty-two

percent of the middle school students' grade point averages ranged from 2.51 to 3.00.

Twenty percent of the same students had grade point average between the range of 3.01 and 3.50 and 4.0% of the middle school students had grade point averages above 3.50.

After the project was implemented for three years, none of the middle school students had grade point averages below 1.50. Nearly 15.0% percent of the students at the middle school level had a grade point average between 1.51 and 2.00. Another 20.0% percent of the middle school students had a grade point average between the range of 2.01 and 2.50. Twenty percent of the middle school students' grade point averages ranged from 2.51 to 3.00. Thirty-two percent of the same students, had grade point average between the range of 3.01 and 3.50 and 13.3% of them had grade point averages higher than 3.51 (Table 4.15).

Table 4.15

Number And Percentage Of Grade Point Averages Before And After Implementation Of The Project At Middle School Level.

Grade Point Averages	Before Implementation		3 Years After Implementation		Percent Change
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	
0.01 – 1.50	20	26.6%			-100.0%
1.51 – 2.00	3	4.0%	11	14.7%	267.5%
2.01 – 2.50	17	22.7%	15	20.0%	-11.9%
2.51 – 3.00	17	22.7%	15	20.0%	11.9%
3.01 – 3.50	15	20.0%	24	32.0%	60.0%
3.51 and Higher	3	4.0%	10	13.3%	232.5%

Table 4.16 represents the number and percentage of high school students' grade point average ranges before and after implementation of the project. Before implementation of the projects, 21.6% of the students at the high school level had an average grade point of 1.50 or lower. Six percent of the students at the high school level had a grade point average between 1.51 and 2.00. Another 20.8% percent of the high students had a grade point average between the range of 2.01 and 2.50. Twenty-six percent of the high school students' grade point averages ranged from 2.51 to 3.00. Twenty percent of the same students had grade point averages between the range of 3.01 and 3.50 and 4.8% of the high school students had grade point averages above 3.50.

After the project was implemented for three years, none of the high school students had grade point averages below 1.50. Fifteen percent of the students at the high school level had a grade point average between 1.51 and 2.00. Nearly 30.0% of the high school students had a grade point average between the range of 2.01 and 2.50. Twenty-three percent of the high school students' grade point averages ranged from 2.51 to 3.00. Twenty-two percent of the same students, had grade point average between the range of 3.01 and 3.50, and 9.6% of them had grade point averages higher than 3.51 (Table 4.16).

Table 4.16

Number And Percentage Of Grade Point Average Before And After Implementation Of The Project At High School Level.

Grade Point Average	Before Implementation		3 Years After Implementation		Percent Change
	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	Number of Students	Percentage of Students	
0.01 – 1.50	27	21.6%			100.0%
1.51 – 2.00	8	6.4%	19	15.2%	37.0%
2.01 – 2.50	20	20.8%	37	29.6%	42.0%
2.51 – 3.00	33	26.4%	29	23.2%	-12.1%
3.01 – 3.50	35	20.0%	28	22.4%	12.0%
3.51 and Higher	6	4.8%	12	9.6%	100.0%

Hypothesis 7: There is no significant difference in the grade point averages of elementary school students before and after implementation of the project.

Table 4.17 represents the mean ratings of elementary school students' numbers of grade point averages before and after implementation of the project. Elementary school students before implementation of the project had a lower grade point average than after implementation of the project. The grade point average for elementary school students before implementation ($M = 2.36$) of the project was significantly lower than after implementation ($M = 2.78$) of the project. The t -test of paired means indicated a significant difference ($t = -10.96, p < 0.001$) in elementary school students' grade point averages before and after implementation of the project. The null hypothesis was rejected at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 4.17

Grade Point Averages Of Elementary School Students Before And After Implementation Of The Project.

Implementation	Number of Students	Mean Rating	Std	Diff	t-value	Prob. Level
Before	50	2.36	0.76			
After	50	2.78	0.60	-0.42	-10.96	0.001

Hypothesis 8: There is no significant difference in the grade point averages of middle school students before and after implementation of the project.

Table 4.18 provides the mean ratings of middle school students' numbers of grade point averages before and after implementation of the project. Middle school students before implementation of the project had a lower grade point average than after implementation of the project. The grade point averages for middle school students before implementation ($M = 2.39$) of the project was significantly lower than after implementation ($M = 2.89$) of the project. The t -test of paired means indicated a significant difference ($t = -11.34, p < 0.001$) in middle school students' grade point averages before and after implementation of the project. The null hypothesis was rejected at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 4.18

Grade Point Averages Of Middle School Students Before And After Implementation Of The Project.

Implementation	Number of Students	Mean Rating	Std	Diff	t-value	Prob. Level
Before	75	2.39	0.84			
After	75	2.89	0.59	-0.50	-11.34	0.001

Hypothesis 9: There is no significant difference in the grade point averages of high school students before and after implementation of the project.

Table 4.19 provides the mean ratings of high school students' numbers of grade point averages before and after implementation of the project. High school students before implementation of the project had a lower grade point average after implementation of the project. The grade point averages for high students before implementation ($M = 2.48$) of the project was significantly lower than after implementation ($M = 2.78$) of the project. The t -test of paired means indicated a significant difference ($t = -8.77$, $p < 0.001$) in high school students grade point averages' before and after implementation of the project. The null hypothesis was rejected at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

Table 4.19

Grade point averages Of High School Students Before And After Implementation Of The Project.

Implementation	Number of Students	Mean Rating	Std	Diff	t-value	Prob. Level
Before	125	2.48	0.81			
After	125	2.78	0.59	-0.30	-8.77	0.001

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The “GC” program was designed to empower and engage African-American male participants to meet their holistic needs. Using a single-gender platform, the after school program focused on issues facing this targeted population with the intention of addressing educational issues. Utilizing a cognitive-based approach to changing thinking, the “GC” curriculum targeted the areas of attendance, behavior and academic achievement of African-American male participants.

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the Gentlemen’s Club (GC) on school attendance, behavior, and academic achievement of African-American male participants in five U.S. school districts. The population of this study consisted of 250 student participants in grades three through twelve from five GC school sites located in New York, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Three years of the students’ attendance data, behavioral data, and grade point averages (G.P.A.’s) were compared and analyzed to determine the impact of the GC.

Findings

The study revealed the impact of the GC on attendance of GC participants before and after implementation of the program. The study also examined and revealed the impact of the GC on behavior and student achievement (G.P.A.).

The study revealed there is a significant difference in the attendance of elementary GC participants. The results further yielded significant differences in elementary behavioral offenses (office referrals), and grade point averages (G.P.A's).

The study revealed significant differences in the attendance, behavior, and academic achievement (G.P.A.) of middle school GC participants. The results further yielded significant differences in attendance, behavior, and academic achievement (G.P.A.) of high school "GC" participants.

The overall results were significant at every level; therefore, the null hypotheses were rejected. Based on the results of my study, the researcher will expand the "GC" program to higher education, more specifically, (HBCU's), Historical Black Colleges and Universities.

Conclusions

It is concluded that the attendance, behavior and student achievement (G.P.A.) levels of all participants in this study were impacted by the Gentlemen's Club (GC) program. Students who participated in the program over a three- year period had gains in all three areas of the study. It is further noted that the five school districts that participated in this study should consider expanding the number of schools with direct (GC) service to include more students. All students should be afforded the opportunity to improve their attendance, behavior, and academic achievement. The researcher will

expand the “GC” program to higher education, more specifically, to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU’s). In addition to expanding the “GC” program to higher education, the researcher will pursue interest in starting the process in grade 1 instead of grade 3. Based on the results of my study, the researcher concludes the impact of the program on participants should begin as early as possible.

It is further concluded through the results of this study that the GC program improved attendance, behavior, and academic achievement. Achievement was gained in all subgroups.

The American Academy of Pediatrics found that suspension and expulsion jeopardize children’s health and safety and may exacerbate academic failure. Therefore, as a result of my study, the researcher will expand the reach of the “GC” program to include, but not be limited to a percentage of school population, but to those in need of program offerings and services.

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention found that out-of-school youth are more likely to be retained a grade, drop out of school, become teen parents, and engage in delinquent behavior (Cregor & Hewitt, 2011). Robert Balfanz (2003) found that school suspension is a top predictor for those students incarcerated by ninth grade. Therefore, as a result of my study, schools and school districts have a viable option to combat the

issues some face when encountering the complex difficulty of educating African-American male students.

Factors influencing African-American male achievement can be grouped as individual, parent or school (White, 2009, p.3). Much evidence regarding in-school-related factors include teacher expectations/perceptions, teacher quality, lack of culturally relevant practices, and limited school resources impact the academic achievement of African- American males (White, 2009, p.4). The “GC” program provides experiences and guidance to its’ participants through a consistent, methodical process, facilitated by trained staff to accomplish the vision and mission of the program. In addition, parents are empowered to better themselves as they see the transformation of their children who are involved in the process. Many of our parents become involved as volunteers at their respective schools, some return to school themselves, and others begin to pursue better lives’ for themselves and other children in both the immediate and extended family. Teacher quality and facilitator quality serves as one of the major factors contributing to the high degree of success indicated by the data. The researcher will now team with highly successful facilitators of “GC” programs around the country to serve as mentors for developing programs as they implement clubs in their respective schools with fidelity.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made on the basis of this study:

- A similar study should be conducted with an increased sample size to expand from five school districts to a regional focus to include numerous systems.
- A similar study of this nature should be conducted to include a larger sample of elementary students.
- A similar study should be conducted to include a larger sample of middle school students.
- A similar study should be conducted that includes a comparison of non-participants.
- A similar study should be conducted that includes the impact of parental involvement.
- A similar study should be conducted that includes the impact of one on one mentoring.
- A similar study should be conducted that tracks the impact of the “GC” program on participants as they matriculate from elementary to middle to high school graduation.

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APPENDICES

- A. PROGRESS REPORT
- B. DATA SHEET

APPENDIX A
PROGRESS REPORT

GENTLEMEN'S CLUB PROGRESS REPORT

NAME:

-

GRADE: _____ **HOMEROOM:** _____

DATE: _____

Period	Subject	Grade	Behavior	Effort	Teacher's Initials

Teacher's Comments:

APPENDIX B
DATA SHEET

