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## "Mentor Me To Mister" A Case Study of Mentoring through the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League

Christopher Eugene Johnson

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“MENTOR ME TO MISTER”

A CASE STUDY OF MENTORING THROUGH THE  
KAPPA LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENTAL LEAGUE

by

CHRISTOPHER EUGENE JOHNSON

(Under The Direction of James Green)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the non-academic strategies the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League uses to mentor African American males and the impact it has on their academic and social achievement. The researcher used a collective case study design to identify the best practices of the Kappa League. Purposeful sampling was used to identify and invite Kappa League mentees, parents, advisors/mentors and school administrators as participants in the investigation.

Kappa League members, their mentors, school administrators, and parents alike perceived the Kappa Leadership and Development League as highly effective in providing both direction and support for African American adolescent males. The program was found to employ best practices that previous research has identified for youth mentoring programs. The findings from this study enabled the researcher to make several recommendations regarding the academic and social achievement of African American males.

INDEX WORDS: African-American males, Achievement gap, Kappa Leadership and Developmental League, Academic and social achievement, Mentors

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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2011

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## **DEDICATION**

For instilling in the me the desire to do and be my best always,

I hereby dedicate this dissertation to my mother

Wyzella Rhodes Williams

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“If it is meant to be, it is up to me” is a quote that I repeated throughout my formative years. Many of my waking hours during the past three years was devoted to successfully completing the requirements for the doctorate degree. My success in completing the program at the level of quality expected by Georgia Southern University and myself is largely attributed to a support network consisting of an outstanding group of individuals.

Initially, I would like to thank God for in whom I live, and move, and have my being. I am thankful for life, the strength to persevere, and wisdom to know that my life is not about me but about making a difference in the lives of others.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The achievement gap in education refers to the disparity in academic performance between groups of students. It is often used to describe the performance gap of African-American versus White students (Haycock, 2001). There are similar academic disparities between students from low socio-economic families versus high socio-economic families. The achievement gap shows up in grades, standardized-test scores, course selection, dropout rates, and college-completion rates. It has become a focal point of education reform efforts (Haycock). This information has not changed as an operational definition to describe the achievement gap.

*A Nation at Risk* (1983) outlined the growing inequities and lack of opportunities in the public education system. The achievement gap remains at high levels as evidenced by the 2009 NAEP long term trend data, which showed a 53-point gap in reading proficiency between Black and White 17-year-old students (Johnson, 2009). The Schott Foundation published a report in 2008, *Given Half a Chance: A 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males*, which revealed that only 47% of America's Black males were graduating from high school. The report went on to discuss large resource disparities which explained the large educational outcome disparities in public education. The achievement gap is the silhouette of a larger opportunity gap that is identifiable both by race and socio-economic status (Johnson).

Adolescence marks a decisively pivotal time in human development (Hall, 2006). Specifically for males of color, adolescence is burdened by such factors as hypermasculinity, racial awareness in a predominantly White society, negative imagery tied to minority status, and social labeling and mistreatment all of which serve as high hurdles in understanding the self. Consequently, the manifestation of these complexities can be seen in African American boys' low academic achievement, delinquency, substance abuse, premature sexual activity, alienation, and acts of aggression and violence toward others (Hall).

Academic failure and diminished self-efficacy for males of color is a consequence of three overarching factors (Hall, 2006). The first relates to present-day classroom curriculum. The second is the negative treatment that they encounter in schools and classrooms. The third is an obstacle that males of color construct themselves to the detriment of their own personal development and success. It is called the "Blame Game" (Hall).

People of color as well as Whites develop negative categorizations of other groups that form the basis of prejudice (Tatum, 1999). Even a member of the stereotyped group may internalize the stereotypical categories about his or her own group to some degree. In fact, this process happens so frequently that it has a name, internalized oppression (Tatum).

Ogbu (1990) suggested that Black students define their realities in ways that differ from their mainstream educators. Black student's general perception of academic achievement is "acting white." This is learned in the Black community. Black students tend to feel that the realities of their life that they place value on and the impact that these

realities have on their education are misunderstood by their educators. Educators assume that the problem is that the students are unengaged and do not value academic environment. Ogbu (1990) explained that African American students and educators have tended to arrive at different conclusions as to why students are underachieving. Neither conclusion has lead to increase academic achievement.

African American youth only make up 15% of all young people in the nation, yet they occupy 65% of all bed space in detention facilities. Forty-nine percent of all juveniles arrested for violent offenses are African American, and 52% of all children who are transferred to stand trial as adults are African American (Hall, 2006). African American males require the same energy, attention, and resources for empowering and educating them as have been accorded to the problem of reprimanding or incarcerating them (Hall). Implementing more preventive measures, such as alternative approaches like school and community based mentoring, may hold the key to connecting with young males of color in more effective and sensitive ways (Hall). One such program is the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League, whose sponsors have claimed success in directing African American youth toward lives of purpose and accomplishment (Bryson, 1999). This investigation proposes to examine best practices that could be implemented by principals and educators to impact the academic and social achievement of African American males.

## **Background**

### **The Achievement Gap**

Historical, political, and social developments within the last half-century shaped the educational environment in the United States. The Supreme Court, in *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954), declared separate but equal schools unconstitutional. However, the consequences of effort to desegregate public education as a result of this case intensified the public's awareness of the persistent gap in academic achievement between African American and White students. While the African American-White gap is largely due to an achievement gap between lower-class students and that of middle-class students in all races, there remains an additional gap between African American students and White students even when household income is controlled (Rothstein, 2000).

In spite of our long-term preoccupation with educational equality since the passage of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954), there is still widespread unequal and unjust treatment of students of color in many educational institutions (Kuykendall, 2004). Some teachers' apparent disdain for diversity and their corresponding low tolerance of other's differences are reflected in their attitudes and behavior toward students. Additionally, the content of classroom instruction, the books being read, the policies and practices of schools and school districts, the role models most commonly presented to students, the way students are treated in classroom interactions, and the assignment of certain students to particular instructional programs all serve as evidence of continuing inequities in educational opportunity (Sadler, Sadler, & Long, 1989).



The American public, its political leaders, and professional educators have frequently vowed to close these gaps. Americans believe in equal opportunity, and they believe that the best way to ensure it is to enable all children, regardless of parental station or skin color, to leave school with skills that position them to compete fairly and productively in the nation's democratic governance and occupational structure (Rothstein, 2000). Since the mid-1980s, data have been repeatedly collected on the success in educating African American youth. However, data on suspension, expulsions, retentions, and dropout rates indicate higher percentages in all of these areas for African American students. As a consequence, African American youth continue to be outside mainstream America (Ravitch, 2000). The achievement gap between African American and White students is an area that educators continue to work on in order to ensure the success of the nation.

### **Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gap**

Dr. Douglas B. Reeves (2000), the President of the Center for Performance Assessment at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, found strategies to improve African American academic achievement in his 90/90/90 schools research. His research focused on schools that were identified because they had at least 90% combined ethnic minority population, at least 90% free or reduced lunch qualified students, and at least 90% success on district and state standardized assessments. Dr. Reeves' research sought to determine what these schools were doing to lead to a high level of student achievement under challenging circumstances.

The high achieving schools were found to have the following five commonalities. These included a focus on academic achievement, clear curricular choices, frequent

assessment and multiple opportunities for students to show improvement, strong emphasis on writing in all academic areas, and collaborative scoring of student work (Reeves, 2000).

The focus on achievement in these schools included a particular emphasis on improvement. The comprehensive accountability system in use by these schools forced every school to identify five areas in which they measured improvement. Although the school could choose the goal from a menu, the common requirement was to focus on a few indicators of improvement in contrast to the typical school improvement plan that contains a large number of unfocused efforts to improve (Reeves).

### **Opportunity Gap**

Johnson (2009) identified four core minimum resources that are necessary for students to have the opportunity to learn regardless of race, ethnicity, or socio-economic status. These core minimum resources included high-quality early childhood education, highly qualified teachers and instructors in grades K-12, college preparatory curricula that will prepare all youth for college, work and community, and equitable instructional resources. However, these minimum resources do not exist for many African American male students (Johnson). True human resources and structural reform is needed to close the opportunity gap.

### **Mentoring as a Strategy for Closing the Achievement Gap**

If Americans are serious about closing the achievement gaps, it must close the opportunity gap. And, the opportunity gap is more than the minimum resources identified by the Johnson (2009). It includes working relationships between the school, the family, and the community (Epstein, 2006). America's schools need to form

partnerships that include educators, concerned citizens, civil rights organizations, the business community, fraternal and service organization, and middle class Black professionals that will create support structures not just to close the gap in school outcomes, but to prepare all African American children for a leadership role in the 21st century (Hale, 2004).

Researchers agree that many youths have a need for positive role models (Buckley, & Zimmerman, 2003). The most compelling data describe changes to the American family structure: the number of single-parent homes has radically increased. More early intervention programs are needed, as are support networks to fill the void left by busy or absent parents. Students that do not have intervening role models fall victim to bad choices. The statistics are troubling: each day in the United States, 3,600 students drop out of high school, and 2,700 unwed teenage girls get pregnant (Petersmeyer, 1989).

In the classical model of mentoring, the older, more experienced mentor supports the younger, less experienced mentee by concentrating on such facets as personal responsibility, professional advancement, positive character development, and/or the induction of social and cultural values (Hall, 2006). The overall objective is to serve as a professional helper or role model, providing the mentee with the necessary information and skills needed for successful living (Hall).

The two types of mentoring are natural mentoring and planned mentoring. Natural mentoring occurs through friendship, collegiality, teaching, coaching, and counseling. In contrast, planned mentoring occurs through structured programs in which mentors and participants are selected and matched through formal

processes (Bordenkircher, 1991).

Mentoring is more than simple advising. Mentoring emerges from an extended relationship built on a foundation of both professional and personal knowledge (Hall, 2006). The relationship between each mentee and mentor must be based upon a common goal: advancement of academic, career, and personal growth of the mentee. However, this is not the only effect of good mentoring; both mentor and mentee may benefit greatly from this relationship. Mentoring extends beyond the school years of the mentee's life; often mentee-mentor relationships may continue throughout life (Hall).

Even if students lived in a perfect world with perfect, functional families and homes, no crime, no violence, perfect transitions from school to college to work for everyone, no job loss, no stress, and no discernable hopelessness, students would still need Merchants of Hope (Kuykendall, 2004 ). The intervening variables in an African American student's life shape his/her academic achievement. Data have shown that Black youth need good counselors and mentors at every stage of their development and not just in elementary and high school (Kuykendall).

### **Kappa League: Mentoring as Social Action**

At the 56<sup>th</sup> National Convention meeting held in Charlotte, North Carolina, on August 12-15, 1970, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., voted to study the inclusion of a social action project referred to as the Kappa League, into the National Community Service Guide Right Mentoring Program. The basic objectives of the Guide Right Program may be summarized as follows:

1. To inspire service in the public interest through the cultural enrichment and character development of African American males between the ages of 5 and 25.
2. To develop leadership skills while monitoring, encouraging, and rewarding outstanding academic performance.
3. To refine self-image, self esteem, social skills, and environmental awareness.
4. To assist parents in the handling of their children by giving them opportunities to talk over problems with those who know and successful in their chosen vocations.
5. To afford the less fortunate youths a respite from the drudgery of the streets, through sponsored entertainment and cultural enrichment.
6. To inform youth of the value of higher education, assistance available for continued educational pursuits, scholarships, loans, professional counseling, and fellowships.

In brief, the Kappa League is a national mentoring program that serves as an intervening factor in the lives of young African American males.

The Honorable John V. Tunney of California arose on the floor of the United States House of Representatives in 1970 and declared, “Mr. Speaker, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity has undertaken a most laudable task in its Guide Right service program” (Bryson, 1999, p. 168). He provided an overview of the objectives of the Guide Right program on the floor of Congress. The congressman congratulated the fraternity and mentors for having started the Kappa League and having adopted the idea as a national program. The congressman described the activities of the Kappa League to the entire House of Representatives and concluded: “Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity is to be

commended for its efforts to help young men make the most of the opportunities available to them in our society” (Bryson, p. 169).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The achievement gap between African American and White students is well documented. Many studies have focused on the teacher expectations, instructional practices, and environmentally related issues of low African American student academic achievement. However, the achievement gap is the silhouette of a larger opportunity gap that is identifiable both by race and socio-economic status (Johnson, 2009). Access to high quality academic opportunities, supported by strong partnerships between schools, families, and community resources, is a continuing problem.

While researchers have made considerable progress in identifying academic strategies for improving the education of African American males, there is very little literature on non-academic strategies that are designed to enhance African American male academic and social achievement. Principals and educators have to think past the traditional academic models to reach African American male students. This research proposal will examine one such non-academic strategy the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League and the impact it has on African American male students.

### **Research Questions**

A single overarching question emerges from an overview of the literature. How does the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League impact the academic and social success of African American adolescent males? In order to explore this question thoroughly, several sub-questions guided this research:

1. How do mentees in the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League perceive the program's effectiveness?
2. How do mentors in the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League perceive the program's effectiveness?
3. How do high school principals perceive the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League after the program has been implemented in their school communities?
4. How do parents (or legal guardians) perceive the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League?
5. What best practices does the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League employ that makes it an effective mentoring program for African American male adolescents?

### **Significance of the Study**

This research was significant because of the many principals who are seeking ways to improve the academic and success of African American students. This study is unique because it allows the reader to look at the research questions and align them with present situations in the principals' school. The principals who participated in the study will benefit from the collaborative nature of the qualitative interview sessions with the

researcher. The readers of the study will be able to make an informed decision on the usefulness of the non-instructional strategies highlighted in the study in their schools. The primary goal of the research is to improve the academic success of African American students.

This research provides a framework for practicing administrators to close the achievement gap between African American students and majority students. The achievement gap between African American students and majority students is well documented; however, there is very little documentation on non-instructional best practices. There are several works of literature that make reference to best practices, however, to this researcher's knowledge there is little qualitative research that answered the five questions that will be answered by this research.

This research provides documentation on mentoring. This is one of the non-instructional best practices that is used to close the achievement gap. The two types of mentoring are natural mentoring and planned mentoring. Natural mentoring occurs through friendship, collegiality, teaching, coaching, and counseling. In contrast, planned mentoring occurs through structured programs in which mentors and participants are selected and matched through formal processes (Bordenkircher, 1991).

This research provides a resource for school principals and the educational professionals to make adjustments to meet the needs of the student population. The researcher benefited from the study by adding to the body of research for other professionals to increase academic and social success of African American male students.



## Procedures

The researcher used a qualitative approach to this study. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and situational constraints that shade inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Such researchers emphasize the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln).

Specifically, the researcher used the collective case study as the type of qualitative ethnographic research design. A case study is an in depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., an activity, event, process or individuals) based on extensive data collection (Creswell, 2002). “Bounded” means that the case is separated out for research in terms of time, place, or some physical boundaries (Creswell). Case studies may include multiple cases, called a collective case study, in which multiple cases are described and compared to provide insight into an issue (Creswell).

To reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, the researcher employed various procedures, two of the most common being redundancy of data gathering and procedural challenges to explanations (Denzin, 2003). For qualitative casework, these procedures generally are called triangulation. Triangulation has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation. But, acknowledging that no observations or interpretations are perfectly repeatable, triangulation serves also to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen (Denzin). Triangulation was provided by talking with the different participants about the mentoring process. Further triangulation

was provided by interviewing the mentee, mentor, parent and school administrator to compare the data.

### **Participants**

The participants for this study were selected from members of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League from Atlanta, Georgia, metropolitan area. The researcher had a face-to-face interview with each of the students who are participants. The researcher interviewed three Kappa League members. Additionally, the students' parents, Kappa League mentors, and principals (or assistant principals who had knowledge of the student's school work and citizenship) were interviewed. Each interview unit created a separate case, with each case consisting of the mentor, mentee, mentee's parent or legal guardian and principal (or assistant principal). A minimum of three cases will be utilized; thus there was minimum of 10 interview participants.

The process of selecting students for the study involved three major areas of consideration. First, the students will have to been a member of the Kappa League for a minimum of one year prior to the study period. Second, the student population will have to be African American male. Third, the student population will have to have been actively engaged with the Kappa League for a minimum of one of the two years prior to the study. For purposes of this study, for a Kappa Leaguer was considered actively engaged by the Kappa League director. These benchmarks guided the selection process of the students considered for the study.

Purposeful sampling techniques were employed to select the students for the study. These sampling procedures were based on the assumption that the investigator wanted to discover, understand, gain insight and therefore select a sample from which the

most could be learned (Merriam, 1998). By using a purposeful sampling technique, the researcher invited three students who appeared to most appropriately and closely fit the objectives of the study as well as the criteria for participating. In compliance with the Instructional Review Board the selected Kappa Leaguers were given two informed consent forms and one informed assent form at the organizing meeting. Students and parents agreeing to participate in the study was each instructed to sign the informed consent form. Additionally the students signed the informed assent form. Finally, each Kappa League director, mentor and school administrator signed an informed consent letter to participate.

A purposeful sampling technique allows investigators to choose specific participants based on their potential to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

### **Procedure**

The researcher used interviews as procedures for data collection. These procedures allowed the researcher to obtain rich and descriptive information which is characteristic of a qualitative research design. The researcher used ethnographic interviewing techniques. Ethnographic interviewing elicits the cognitive structures guiding participants' worldviews. Described as "a particular kind of speech event" (Spradley, 1979), ethnographic questions are used by the ethnographer to gather cultural data.

The interview is the best way to collect data in this study for two reasons. One, the interview is useful when one cannot observe behavior, feelings and how people interact in the world. Two, the interview allows the researcher to directly obtain

information about past events that cannot be replicated (Merriam, 1998). The person-to-person format permits the researcher to obtain detailed information from participants, clarify area of confusion, and elicit elaboration and interesting responses.

Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and pseudonyms assigned. The interviews were recorded using a tape-recorder. Each student was assigned a pseudonym before each interview is transcribed. The pseudonym were used to refer to the student in all the data transcribed and all interviews will be transcribed verbatim. And, the lines on the transcriptions were numbered sequentially.

Interviews of the principals were conducted in the participants' respective schools. Interviews with mentee, mentors and parents were conducted at the Kappa Achievement center. An interview protocol guided the interviewing process. (See Appendix A-D.)

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis of this qualitative research study was a process of making sense of the data. Data responses were coded and analyzed for patterns and themes. The constant comparative method of Glaser and Strauss (1967) was used to analyze the data collected from interviews of secondary school principals, mentors, parents and mentees. The constant comparative method consists of comparing one segment of data with another to determine similarities and differences that exist. Comparisons were constantly made within and between cases until a theory can be formulated (Merriam, 1998).

### **Definition of Terms**

Achievement Gap – The achievement gap is a term that has been used to describe the academic achievement differences between ethnic groups. This study will concentrate on disparity between African American and Caucasian American students.

Mentoring – In most cases, any definition of mentoring includes the concept of a committed relationship between two people, one a young or inexperienced (mentee or protégé) and the other possessing knowledge or experience (mentor) (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003).

Kappa League – According to Bryson (1999), the Kappa Leadership and Development League is a program designed to aid young men of high school age grow and develop their leadership talents in every phase of human endeavor.

At-Risk – In danger of becoming involved with drugs, alcohol, teenage pregnancy, gangs, and/or dropping out of school. “Additionally, a variety of mentoring programs focus on young people at risk for certain problematic developmental outcomes, such as dropping out of school, school failure, substance abuse, delinquency, pregnancy, or violence” (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003).

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The review of literature begins with chronologic review of the historical events in education of African Americans. These events will begin prior to the Emancipation Proclamation and proceed through the era of school desegregation and forced integration. The achievement gap between African American and White students is discussed as well as strategies for closing the achievement gap. Additionally, mentoring is introduced as a non-instructional strategy for closing the achievement gap. Specifically, the Kappa Leadership Developmental League is introduced as a non-instructional strategy for closing the achievement gap.

#### **Search Process**

The processes which the researcher used to obtain the data for this literature review included both electronic databases and manual searches. The Georgia Southern University online library system provided access to ILLiad (Inter-Library Loan program) and GALILEO (Electronic data base search engine). Additionally, Google search was used to search for data. Educational conferences provided many resources on closing the achievement gap. Key descriptor used to conduct the search were “Achievement gap,” “Kappa League,” “Mentoring African American Males,” and “Mentoring.”

The majority of the sources used for this literature review were obtained from books and journals published during the last two decades. Many of these data sources were obtained from online searches of media outlets. Additional data sources were located through bibliographies provided from position papers, dissertations, and educational reports.

### **History of African American Education**

Former slaves were the first people in the south to look for a new ideology of education that differed from the former slave owner's ideology (Anderson, 1988). The idea of a state supported, universal public education for all was not the current system of educating the youth. Former slaves enlisted and actively pursued Republican politicians, the Freedom's Bureau, northern missionary societies, and the Union Army in their campaign for universal schooling. Former slave owners saw this movement as a central threat to current system of education. Additionally, it was in direct conflict with the conceptions of the proper roles of state, church, and family in the matters of education. The South's economic advantaged population tolerated the idea of educating the economic disadvantaged population as a form of charity (Anderson). The former slave owners did not believe that the state government had any business to intervene in the education of children, and by extension, the larger social arrangement. Active intervention in the social hierarchy through universal public education violated the natural evolution of society, threatened familial authority over children, upset the reciprocal relations and duties of owners to labors, and usurped the function of the church (Anderson). During the period 1860-1880 there was little inclination to challenge the current system of education (Anderson).

Even before President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Northern missionaries with strong antislavery views sought to educate illiterate African Americans in the South (Vaughn, 1974). There were no tax-supported schools for African Americans in the South before 1860; however, there were some tax-supported school for whites (Vaughn). By 1860 all of the Southern states but the state of South

Carolina had passed laws providing for public education of some White children. School attendance was optional rather than mandatory in some schools (Vaughn, 1974). The North Carolina state legislature passed an act in 1839 to provide for a state school system. Each county by law had the opportunity to establish local schools (Vaughn). From 1853 to 1866, the number of public in North Carolina grew from 2,500 to 3,000 while the number of White students increased from 95,000 to 195,000 (Vaughn). In the state of South Carolina, unlike in North Carolina, universal public schools did not predate the Emancipation Proclamation. The South Carolina Legislature did not pass legislation providing for public schooling until Reconstruction and adoption of a new state constitution in 1868 (Vaughn). The South Carolina Legislature had previously established free schools for whites in 1811. Because preference was given to orphans and children of economically disadvantaged parents in regard to enrollment, more affluent parents labeled them pauper schools and would not send their children to them (Vaughn).

African Americans did receive some education pre-civil war, usually in violation of state law (Vaughn, 1974). Every Southern State prohibited Whites from educating African Americans except Tennessee until the 1830s. Early supporters of African American education included slave owners who wanted more efficient laborers, and missionaries who insisted that slaves be able to read scriptures (Vaughn). Many conflicts and uprisings were fueled by Whites who became convinced that it was impossible to educate African Americans without arousing a spirit of self-assertion and rebellion (Vaughn).



School systems in the South deteriorated during the Civil War. School buildings were used as hospitals or destroyed and a large number of male teachers enlisted in the military (Vaughn, 1974). The time period from 1864-1866, the state of Louisiana had the most detailed provisions for universal public education for White children. The state law of Louisiana provided for free public education for all White children between the ages of six and eighteen years old (Vaughn). Universal free public education did not include African American students at that time. Texas and Florida were the only Southern states during the Reconstruction to provide for a system to educate African Americans, at least on paper (Vaughn). The Texas legislature passed a constitutional amendment in 1866 authorizing the establishment of a public school system for African Americans with the stipulation that only taxes collected from African Americans could be used to fund African American schools (Vaughn). During Congress' constitutional conventions, the issue of tax-supported public schools in the South was discussed, as well as the issue of segregated schools for Whites and African Americans (Vaughn). Southern Whites during this time had a belief that African Americans favored segregated schools (Vaughn). Many African Americans seemed more concerned with equal educational opportunities, especially at the elementary school level, than with integration. African Americans who had a preference for integrated over segregated schools did so for several reasons: the belief that any racial discrimination violated the Fourteenth Amendment and newly discovered principles of democracy. Additionally, they believed that separate facilities would result in less funding going to African American schools. Finally, they believed that segregated schools would be inferior in every respect to White schools (Vaughn).

African Americans emerged from slavery with a strong desire to learn to read and write (Anderson, 1988). The former slaves had a fundamental belief in the value of literate culture which was expressed in their efforts to secure schooling for themselves and their children. Many historians and contemporary observers have documented the ex-slaves' demand for universal public schooling.

The foundation of the freedmen's educational movement was one of the ex-slaves first attempts of self-reliance and deep-seated desire to control and sustain school for themselves and their children (Anderson, 1988). William Channing Gannet, a White American Missionary Association teacher from New England, stated that the ex-slaves have a natural praiseworthy pride in keeping their educational opportunities in their control (Anderson). The values of self-help and self-determination are the foundations of the ex-slaves educational movement. The ex-slaves accepted support from northern missionary societies, the Freedmen's Bureau, and some southern Whites; however their own action class self-activity informed by ethic of mutuality was the single most important guiding principle that aided in the formation of schools for freed slaves (Anderson). This guiding principle represented the culmination of a process of social class formation and development that started decades before the civil war (Anderson). "Emancipation," as stated by Herbert Gutman, transformed an established and developed subordinate class into a system allowing ex-slaves to act on a variety of class beliefs that had been previously constrained during several generations of enslavement (Anderson). The South's post-war universal public educational movement is best understood as an expression of ex-slaves beliefs and behavior (Anderson). W.E.B. Dubois stated that "Public education for all at public expense was, in the South, a Negro idea (Anderson)."

The first African American school, according to current historiography, opened at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, in September 1861, under the leadership of Mary Peake, a African American teacher (Anderson, 1988). Additionally, evidence suggests that person of color started schools even before the Fortress Monroe venture. The Pioneer School of Freedom was established in New Orleans 1860, according to the New Orleans Union from 1864. These African American schools pre-date the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, and the Freedman and Abandoned Lands (Freemen's Bureau) in 1865 (Anderson). These early African American schools were established and supported mainly by the efforts of African American citizens (Anderson).

This type of interracial support for education institutions as the majority White society opposed the integration of schools. For example, the majority of White citizens, who paid the majority of property taxes collected, would not support the integration of schools (Vaughn, 1974). The White citizens had a belief that integrated schools would be inferior and, therefore, White children would not attend integrated tax-supported public schools (Vaughn). Louisiana was the only state in the South to tackle the issue of integration during Reconstruction (Vaughn). The constitutional convention of Louisiana in 1868, by a vote of 71-6, passed legislation which provided for tax-supported schooling for children between the ages of six and twenty-one regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude (Vaughn).

From 1870 to 1874, New Orleans Whites tolerated mixed schools however; many Whites in rural Louisiana avoided or ignored public schools choosing to remain uneducated or attending private schools where possible (Vaughn, 1974). In 1877, the New Orleans Board of Education voted to establish separate schools for each race despite

legal injunctions being sought by African American citizens (Vaughn). African American citizens went on to lose three court cases challenging the establishment of segregated schools, thus effectively ending the only serious effort at public school integration in the post war South (Vaughn). Segregated schools were the law of the land for many years to come (Vaughn).

One of the greatest ironies of African American history is the ideological and programmatic challenge to the ex-slaves' universal public school movement (Anderson, 1988). In 1868, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, a Yankee, and former slave Booker T. Washington conceived the Hampton Model and ultimately developed the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Hampton, Virginia (Anderson). The Hampton model was the conjuncture of educational pedagogy and social ideology of different origins and character (Anderson). Armstrong represented a social class, ideology, and world outlook that was totally different from and in opposition to the interest of the freedmen (Anderson).

Newly freed slaves struggled to develop a social and educational ideology singularly appropriate to their defense of emancipation and one that challenged the social power of the planter regime (Anderson, 1988). Armstrong created a pedagogy and ideology designed to avoid a collision of the South's social consensus of wealth and power and the newly freed slaves desire for social progress (Anderson). This education concept emphasized a vocation approach. Early African American educational advocates sought out a much more comprehensive approach, an approach that was later supported and given voice by founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Color People (NAACP), W.E.B. DuBois. However, in time these two ideologies and programs

did collide, and Armstrong's prize pupil, Booker T. Washington founded the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in 1881 (Anderson). By the 1900, the "Hampton-Tuskegee Idea" represented the ideological antithesis of the educational and social movement begun by ex-slaves (Anderson).

Robert C. Ogden is the man chiefly responsible for bringing the southern White reformers and the northern philanthropist together to shape the Southern Education Board and General Education Board (Anderson, 1988). Ogden helped establish the Hampton Institute. He was a very active trustee of the Institute from 1874 to 1894 (Anderson). By 1901, Ogden was generally recognized by northern philanthropists as the leading reformer in the development of the southern educational movement. He soon gained the respect and confidence of the southern White educational reformers (Anderson).

By the dawn of the twentieth century, various elements of universal elementary education for African American southerners, irrespective of their individual educational and social ideology, recognized a common problem: the infrastructure necessary for a viable African American public school system was not available (Anderson, 1988). There was a shortage of African American teachers. Additionally, two-thirds of all African American children were not enrolled in school because there were not enough classrooms for the overwhelming numbers of students (Anderson). Northern White teachers that contributed significantly to the educational movement in the south during the post war period were significantly diminished in number by 1900 (Anderson). Therefore, the proper training of adequate supply of African American teachers was a necessary first step toward the successful expansion of universal schooling for African American children (Anderson). There was little support for increased African American teacher

training because there was little support for universal public schooling of African American students (Anderson).

By the end of the 1930's only 19% of 14 to 17 year old African American children were enrolled in high school due to the lack of available classrooms and teachers (Lowe, 2004). Additionally, in the 1930's the NAACP began to litigate and win a number of small victories regarding issues such as salary equalization for African American teachers in the segregated South (Lowe). Even with the minor victories, the NAACP leaders decided that segregation created intangible inequalities regardless of resources (Lowe).

In 1950, the NAACP began an all out assault on school segregation (Lowe, 2004). One of the chief factors that led to the NAACP choosing to fiercely attack school segregation was the fact that as late 1954 African American schools were funded at 60% of what White school were funded (Lowe, 2004). Racial segregation within the nation's educational institutions and within the larger society received a huge blow when the Supreme Court, in *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), declared separate but equal school was unconstitutional. The Brown decision laid the groundwork for the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s (Lowe). By 1970, due in large part to the enforcement of the Civil Rights acts of 1964 by the Johnson Administration and the state and Federal courts, the South had become the nation's most integrated region for African Americans and Whites (Orfield & Yun, 1999). However, many schools did not fully integrate until forced in the early 1970's (Orfield & Yun).

Historical, political, and social developments within the last half-century have shaped the educational environment in the United States. The Supreme Court, in *Brown*

v. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas (1954), declared separate but equal schools unconstitutional. However, this case intensified the public awareness of the persistent gap in academic achievement between African American and White students.

### **The Achievement Gap**

The achievement gap in education refers to the disparity in academic performance between groups of students. It is often used to describe the performance gap of African-American versus White students (Haycock, 2001). There are similar academic disparities between students from low socio-economic family's versus high socio-economic families. The achievement gap shows up in grades, standardized-test scores, course selection, dropout rates, and college-completion rates. It has become a focal point of education reform efforts (Haycock).

The National Urban League noted in 1992 that African American youth were being attacked by a series of forces that if allowed to go unchecked, a lost generation could be created. The problem of educating every generation must be addressed, or Americans will all share the consequences (Kuykendall, 2004).

In principle, the public is behind closing the achievement gap. In a 2003 national opinion poll on Americans' attitudes toward public education conducted by Phi Delta Kappan and Gallup, 90% of those polled believed closing the achievement gap between White and African American and Hispanic students was somewhat or very important. Although most think the gap is a result of factors unrelated to the quality of schooling, a 2001 poll revealed that more than half thought it was the responsibility of public schools and educators to close the gap (Rose & Gallup, 2001, 2003).

Investigating the achievement gap is an essential step in the march toward educational equality. Positive steps by educational reformers have included identifying the issues related to educational equality, discussing them in public forums, and implementing programs and practices that create greater educational equality for groups on society's margins (Brandt, 2000). A discussion of closing the achievement gap should focus on equalizing learning outcomes as well as equalizing learning opportunities. To achieve that goal, United States citizens need to take a look at what is going wrong with the education of African American children, especially low-income children (Hale, 2004).

In the fifties and sixties, African American students' difficulties in school were often viewed from a cultural deficit theoretical lens. Cultural deficit Theories state socialization practices of culture that African American students are raised in are substandard to mainstream experiences of their peers (Ford, 1996). Educators may perceive different behavior by African American students as substandard and convince themselves that this accounts for students' low achievement (Ford). It was believed that these deficits were motivational, cognitive, and linguistic. Additionally, the deficits were linked to disorganization in family life and lack of socialization which in turn were attributable to racial discrimination, social injustice, or economic deprivation (Ford).

Cultural deficit theory began to consider differences in culture as an explanation for African American students' difficulties in school (Herskovitz, 1958). Herskovitz (1958) was the first to identify the value and acknowledge the uniqueness of the African American culture. Some researchers began to consider the cultural deficit explanation as an alternative to the cultural deficit model during this decade. Ogbu (1974) stated that



the issues in achievement of African American students are related to their differences in culture and language.

During the 1970s and 1980s, researchers noted that African American students frequently function bi-culturally. During the 1970's, African American culture resisted efforts taken to eliminate or diminish their cultural practices. Valentine (1971) noted that African Americans could acquire competence in both their own culture and the mainstream culture. African American students desire to maintain the value in their own culture while succeeding academically in the mainstream culture (Valentine, 1971). The author stated that bi-cultural practices were most important in meeting the educational needs of African American students.

Much of the research conducted in the 1970s concerning the achievement of African American students centered on environmental and family influences. Herbert's (1998) literature analysis revealed that research focusing on African American student achievement in the 1970's emphasized theories on family stability and parenting styles of African American parents. Additionally, his research showed high achieving African American students had parents who engaged in academically supportive behaviors. Finally, the less congruence there is between home and school, the more challenging it is for students to transition culturally and perform well academically (Herbert,1998).

Culture may impact the way students perceive and respond to their own environment. Barsdate (1991) reported that culture can shape the way children process and organize information, communicate verbally and nonverbally, and perceive their physical and social environments. According to Barsdate (1991), each of these factors in turn shapes a student's learning patterns and school experiences. Culture does not

determine a child's ability or intelligence. It instead can provide many different perspectives on knowing or be misinterpreted in the educational environment. This may depend on the receptivity of the environment to cultural differences and diverse ways of learning.

### **The African American Male Achievement Gap**

In spite of the many school desegregation efforts of the NAACP and the belief that the playing field would become leveled for all children, African American males in America continue to perform academically below their peers (Holzman, 2006). As evidence of this disparity, the Schott Foundation uses the School Education Index (SEII) to highlight differences in quality of education provided to African Americans by studying the graduation rates of African American and White non-Hispanic males each year (Holzman). The SEII is calculated by subtracting the graduation rate for African American males from 100%, yielding the drop out rate, which is added to the difference between the graduation rate of Whites and African American males (Holzman). The Schott Foundation believes that the SEII scores illustrate the effectiveness, or lack thereof, as well as difference between the success of schools in the education of African American boys (Holzman). States are ranked by comparing the graduation rates of African American and White non-Hispanic males.

Data collected by Johnson (2009) indicated that the graduation rate for African American males in the state of Georgia improved by two percentage points between the 2001-02 and the 2003-04 school years. The graduation rate for African American males in the state of Georgia during the 2003-04 school year as reported by the Schott Foundation was 39% while the graduation rate for non-Hispanic White males was 54%.

This represents a 15% gap between the graduation rate of African American non-Hispanic and White non-Hispanic males in the state of Georgia at the end of the 2003-04 school year (Holzman, 2006).

The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), which is administered to selected states and districts each year, is used to measure academic achievement in various subject areas (Holzman, 2006). In fourth grade, the percentage of White, non-Hispanic male students in the state of Georgia scoring at or above the basic level in reading increased from 67% in 1992 to 68% in 2005. The percentage of African American, non-Hispanic male students in the state of Georgia scoring at or above the basic level in fourth grade reading increased from 32% to 33% during the same time period (Holzman). According to the Schott Foundation SEII nationally, the gap between the achievement levels of African American and White, non-Hispanic students narrowed from 42% to 33% from 1992 to 1998. By the year 2005, the gap had begun to widen and had increased from 33 to 36% (Holzman). NAEP scores for eighth grade reading indicate that the national percentage of White non-Hispanic male students scoring at or above the Basic level increased from 69% to 76% by 2005 (Holzman). In contrast, the percentage of African American non-Hispanic male students scoring at or above the basic level increased from 35% to 43% from 1992 to 2005 (Holzman). The gap decreased from 34% to 33% during the same time period (Holzman). Serving as the benchmark, in 2005, 49% of fourth grade African American males from the state of Massachusetts scored at or above basic level on the reading section of the NAEP. In contrast, serving as the benchmark, in 2005, 63% of eighth grade African American males scored at or above the basic level on the NAEP in the area of reading (Holzman). According the Schott

Foundation the graduation rate for African American males in the state of Georgia during the 2005 school year was 40% compared to 58% for White males.

In addition to looking at graduation rates and achievement data as measured by the NAEP, in compiling the State Report Card. Holzman (2006) also looked at inequities in suspensions, expulsions, special education classification, and referrals to gifted and talented program for African American males. Based on a report of the National Research Council, 7.47% of White non-Hispanic students, 9.9% of Asian, 3.04% of African American non-Hispanic, and 3.57% of Hispanic students are placed in gifted/talented programs (Holzman). In most districts, African American non-Hispanic students are placed in gifted/talented programs at a rate half that as would be expected based on the percentage of African American students enrolled in school (Holzman). A higher percentage of African American females are placed in gifted/talented programs than African American males (Holzman). If African American students were enrolled in gifted/talented programs in proportion to their school enrollment nationwide there would be at least an additional 140,000 African American females and 200,000 African American males in these programs (Holzman). Data collected by the Schott foundation indicated that during the 2001-02 school year, 7.27% of the students enrolled in gifted and talented programs in the state of Georgia were African American non-Hispanic males. The percentage of White non-Hispanic males enrolled in Gifted/Talented programs in the state of Georgia during the 2001-02 school year was 37.12%, more than five times the participation rate of African American non-Hispanic males (Holzman).

As previously stated, the 2006 State Report Card analyzes results from the

National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) which measures achievement levels for various subject areas. Results from the NAEP 2005 administration revealed that the percentage of White, non-Hispanic males in the state of Georgia scoring at or above basic level in grade four reading increased from 67% to 68%. The percentage of non-Hispanic African American male students in the state of Georgia scoring at or above the basic fourth grade reading level increased from 32% to 33% (Holzman). However, a 35% gap remained between non-Hispanic African Americans and non-Hispanic Whites, as measured by the NAEP (Holzman). Two thirds of African American male students in Georgia do not reach the basic reading level in grade four (Holzman). In Georgia, the percentage of non-Hispanic White male students scoring at or above the basic reading level in grade 8 decreased from 76% in 1998 to 75% in 2005 (Holzman). During this same time period, the percentage of non-Hispanic African American male students scoring at or above basic in grade eight reading as measured by the NAEP decreased from 41% to 40% (Holzman). The gap between non-Hispanic African American and White males in Georgia remained unchanged at 35% (Holzman).

The National Center for Education Statistics, a division of the United States Department of Education, is the primary federal entity for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data related to education in the United States and other nations as well. On behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics, Hoffman, Llagas, and Snyder (2003) published the report entitled *Status and Trends in the Education of African Americans*. This report provided data regarding the academic achievement of African American children. The section titled *Persistence* focused on indicators of student effort and persistence (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder, 2003). Persistence indicators include

student absenteeism rates, student retention rates, suspension rates, expulsion rates, drop-out rates, and high school completion rates (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder). Hoffman, Llagas, and Snyder (2003) asserted that an examination of persistence factors is important as problems early in a child's school career, such as behavior that leads to suspension and expulsion, may increase the chances of a student dropping out of school.

Hoffman, Llagas, and Snyder (2003) stated based on attendance data from the year 2000, there were no significant differences in the level of days absent from school between African American students, White students, and Hispanic students at the eighth and twelfth grade levels. The total percentage of eighth grade students missing three or more days from school in 2000 was 20%. The percentage of White, non-Hispanic students missing more than three days was 19%, while the percentage of African American students missing three or more days from school in 2000 was 22%. The total percentage of twelfth grade students absent three or more days was 28% while the percentage of White students was 27% and the percentage of African American twelfth grade students stood at 29% (Hoffman, Llagas, and Snyder).

During the year 2000, African American students were retained, suspended, and expelled at higher rates than their White counterparts (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder, 2003). In 1999, 18% of African American students in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade had repeated at least one grade. In contrast, only 9% of White students had been retained at least one grade. In regard to suspensions and expulsions, higher rates were observed among African American students as well. In 1999, 35% of African American students in grades seven through twelve had been suspended at some time during their school career. In contrast, only 15% of White students in grades 7 to 12 had

been suspended or expelled at some time in their school career (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder).

Hoffman, Llagas, and Snyder (2003) have defined dropouts as 16 to 24 year-olds who are out of school and who have not yet earned a high school diploma or General Equivalency Development Degree (GED). In the year 2000, of African Americans aged 16 to 24, 16% had not earned a high school diploma or GED. In contrast, only 7% of Whites aged 16 to 24 had not earned a high school diploma or GED. These numbers were significantly higher than the graduation rate for all African American students and specifically African American males in America as reported by other sources. Hoffman, Llagas, and Snyder (2003) have reported data for African American females and African American males who receive their GED post high school, including while in prison. The graduation rate for African American males as reported throughout this study included only African American males who graduated from high school with a high school diploma. African American males who received a GED were not included in the statistics. While the drop out rate for African Americans was more than double the drop out rate for Whites, it was far less than the drop out rate for Hispanics, which stood at 28% in the year 2000 (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder). When comparing data from 1972 to the year 2000, Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder (2003) found that the drop out rates for African Americans, Whites, and Hispanics declined during this period. The drop out rate for African Americans declined by 8%, the drop out rate for Whites declined by 5%, and the drop out rate for Hispanics declined by 6% (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder).

While the high school completion rate for African Americans rose by 8% from 1972 to 2000, the gap between African Americans and Whites has not narrowed since the

early 1980's (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder, 2003). The high school completion rate as defined by Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder (2003) represents the percentage of 18 to 24 year-olds who have received a high school diploma or GED. The higher drop out rate for African American students manifests itself in the high school completion gap between African Americans and Whites (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder). In the year 2000, African Americans aged 18 to 24 had a high school completion rate of 84% while Whites aged 18 to 24 had a high school completion rate of 92% (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder). Hoffman, Llagas, and Snyder (2003) found the increase in the high school completion rates for African Americans aged 18 to 24 to be statistically significantly higher than all completion rates for African Americans aged 18 to 24 years old before 1982. The changes in the high school completion rate for African Americans aged 18 to 24 years old have generally not been statistically significant since 1982 however (Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder).

Many studies have been done to account for these differences in the achievement level and school completion rate of White, non-Hispanic and African American, non-Hispanic students, specifically African American males. There are several factors that attempt to explain the Achievement Gap between African American and White males.

### **Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gap**

The National Urban League noted in 1992 that African American youth were being attacked by a series of forces that if allowed to go unchecked, could create a "lost generation (Kuykendall, 2004, p.3)." The problem of educating every generation must be addressed, or Americans will all share the consequences (Kuykendall). The strategies used in these very challenging schools are important in the effort to level the playing field



for African American male students. Reeves (2000) investigated the historical aspect of the impact of concentrated techniques used in targeted at-risk schools. His research was on schools that were identified because they had at least 90% combined ethnic minority population, at least 90% free or reduced lunch qualified students, and at least 90% successful on district and state standardized assessments. Reeves' research was to determine what these schools were doing to lead to a high level of student achievement under challenging circumstances. He found that the high achieving schools were found to have the following five commonalities: (1) a focus on academic achievement, (2) clear curricular choices, (3) frequent assessment and multiple opportunities for students to show improvement, (4) strong emphasis on writing in all academic areas, and (5) collaborative scoring of student work.

The focus on achievement in these schools included a particular emphasis on improvement. The comprehensive accountability system in use by these schools forced every school to identify five areas in which they measured improvement. Although the school could choose the goal from a menu, the common requirement was to focus on a few indicators of improvement in contrast to the typical school improvement plan that contains a large number of unfocused efforts to improve. The focus on improvement is especially important in an environment where many students come to school with academic skills that are substantially below grade level. Improvements of more than one grade level in a single year were common, and teachers and administrators paid particular attention to students whose deficiencies in reading and writing would have a profound impact on their success in other subjects. Some students spent as many as three hours per day in literacy interventions designed to get students to desired achievement levels. There

did not appear to be any consistency with regard to the intervention programs in use by these schools. Some used Success for All (Reeves, 2000), others used Reading Recovery (Reeves), while others used the Efficacy Model (Reeves). Others had no specified program at all, but consistently applied focused intervention for students in need using their own teaching staff (Reeves).

A focus on achievement leads to curriculum choices, spending more time on the core subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics and less time on other subjects. It is possible, for example, that many of the teachers in these schools did not “cover the curriculum” in the strict sense of checking off objectives from a wide variety of curricular areas. They chose wisely, to emphasize the core skills of reading, writing, and mathematics in order to improve student opportunities for success in a wide variety of other academic endeavors later. It is interesting to note parenthetically that, despite their disproportionate emphasis on language arts and mathematics, these schools also significantly out-performed their peer schools on science tests as well. This makes an important point that eludes those who remain committed to a “coverage” model: tests of science, social studies, study skills, and virtually every other subject area are, in fact, tests of reading and writing (Reeves, 2000).

In the schools that Reeves (2000) studied, frequent assessments were given to students. When they do poorly on an assessment, they are given multiple opportunities to succeed. They are not failures; they just need more time to reach the level of success. Student learning is the goal, not student grading. Weekly student assessment of progress is made by the teacher, and the child is encouraged to show improvement in the next week. Reeves (2000) further found that there needs to be an alignment of the standards,

curriculum, objectives, assessments, and available resources for a school to function at the highest possible level. In order to reach success, Dr. Reeves has proposed the STAR Model for success, which includes the following elements: (1) ongoing and focused professional development, (2) modeling of effective teaching and assessment practices, (3) ongoing professional collaboration, (4) effective communication between school staff, parents, and students, and (5) visible tracking of student progress on a frequent and regular basis (Reeves, 2000, p187). The lessons from the “90/90/90 schools” are consistently clear. There is no secret ingredient; it is a plan to follow the steps outlined that work, a focus on the goals, and a commitment to improved performance (Anderson, 2004).

Healthy and sound school cultures correlate strongly with increased student achievement and motivation, and with teacher productivity and satisfaction (Anderson). Students learn more in schools where their peers and teachers make academics the number one priority and hold high expectations for all students, and when the climate supports adult as well as student learning (Hale, 2004). School culture also correlates with teachers’ attitudes towards their work. In a study that profiled effective and ineffective organizational cultures, Yin Cheong Cheng (1993) found stronger school cultures had better-motivated teachers. In an environment with strong organizational ideology, shared participation, charismatic leadership, and intimacy, teachers experienced higher job satisfaction and increased productivity.

In addition to school culture, school climate is equally important to a successful school. Evidence shows a strong connection between parent and family involvement in schools and children’s academic achievement, attendance, attitude, and continued

education (Viadero, 2004). But families may not become involved if they do not feel that the school climate--the social and educational atmosphere of a school is one that makes families feel welcomed, respected, trusted, heard, and needed (Viadero). The relationship between school climate and family involvement is reciprocal. Each one feeds the other in cyclical pattern. In a positive school climate that encourages family involvement, the parents' perceptions of the school improve (Viadero).

Frequent and positive school-to-home communication (in the form of phone calls, progress reports, conferences, personal notes, newsletters, and home visits) help parents feel more self-confident, more comfortable with the school, and more likely to become involved (Barton, 2004). The school culture and school climate are important areas of concern in developing a positive school environment.

Students need to have multiple opportunities to feel success at school. Teachers need to be able to work with culturally different students (Diller & Moule, 2005). Teachers need to be culturally competent (Diller & Moule). Cultural competence is the ability to successfully teach students who come from cultures other than your own. It entails mastering complex awarenesses and sensitivities, various bodies of knowledge, and a set of skills that, taken together, underlie effective cross-cultural teaching (Diller & Moule). As the proportions and numbers of children of color in the nations' schools increase, the need for teachers who know how to function in multicultural classrooms and sensitively relate to culturally diverse students heights dramatically (Diller & Moule).

Although we can commend the No Child Left Behind initiative for the fact that the federal government is trying to "do something," this reform provides no national,

visionary leadership that show schools how to improve student achievement (Hale, 2004). Most of its agenda is outside in or top-down (Hale). Its methods generally consist of public policy designed to pressure, threaten, or punish school districts. In this climate of hysteria over high-stakes testing, school districts are responding with hysterical solutions (Hale).

If Americans are serious about closing the achievement gaps, America needs to form a coalition that includes educators, concerned citizens, civil rights organizations, the business community, fraternal and service organization, and middle class African American professional to create support structures not just to close the gap in school outcomes, but to prepare all African American children for a leadership role in the 21st century (Hale, 2004).

Data clearly show many youths have a desperate need for positive role models (Petersmeyer, 1989). The most compelling data describe changes to the American family structure: the number of single-parent homes has radically increased, as have two-parent working families (Petersmeyer, 1989). More preventive care is needed, as are support networks to fill the void left by busy or absent parents (Petersmeyer). Other statistics are equally troubling: each day in the United States, 3,600 students drop out of high school, and 2,700 unwed teenage girls get pregnant (Petersmeyer).

Anyone who enriches the life of another on a short or long-term basis is a “merchant of hope” (Kuykendall, 2004). All concerned citizens, not just those employed by schools, have meaningful roles they can play as “merchant of hope” (Kuykendall). In interviews with over 200 mentors, counselors, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, tutors, and Buddies, 100% of respondents indicated that their outreach endeavors made coping with

their own life challenges much easier. All felt that the rewards of counseling and mentoring were priceless (Kuykendall).

Mentorship is used to define a sustained relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person aids a less experienced or more knowledgeable person (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007). Through continued involvement, the adult offers support, guidance, and assistance as the younger person goes through a difficult period, faces new challenges, or works to correct earlier problems. In particular, where parents are either unavailable or unable to provide responsible guidance for their children, mentors can play a critical role (Bordenkircher, 1991).

According to Bordenkircher (1991), the two types of mentoring are natural mentoring and planned mentoring. Natural mentoring occurs through friendship, collegiality, teaching, coaching, and counseling. In contrast, planned mentoring occurs through structured programs in which mentors and participants are selected and matched through formal processes..

Research on the effects of mentoring is scarce, some studies and program evaluations do support positive claims (Flaxman, 1992). In an evaluation of Project RAISE, a Baltimore-based mentoring project, McPartland and Nettles (1991) found mentoring had positive effects on school attendance and grades in English but not on promotion rates or standardized test scores. They concluded that positive effects are much more likely when one-on-one mentoring has been strongly implemented. Another evaluation (Cave & Quint, 1990) found participants in various mentoring programs had higher levels of college enrollment and higher educational aspirations than nonparticipants receiving comparable amounts of education and job-related services.

Mentoring, by its nature, depends upon the activities and experience of both mentee and mentor (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007). Mentoring is more than simple advising (Bozeman & Feeney). Mentoring emerges from an extended relationship built on a foundation of both professional and personal knowledge. The relationship between each mentee and mentor must be based upon a common goal: advancement of academic, career, and personal growth of the mentee. However, this is not the only effect of good mentoring; both mentor and mentee may benefit greatly from this relationship (Bozeman & Feeney). Mentoring extends beyond the school years of the mentee's life, often mentee-mentor relationships may continue throughout life.

In a perfect world with perfect, functional families and homes, no crime, no violence, perfect transitions from school to college to work for everyone, no job loss, no stress, and no discernable hopelessness, we would still need "merchants of hope" (Kuykendall, 2004). The intervening variables in an African American student's life shape their academic achievement. Data show that African American youth need good counselors and mentors at every stage of their development and not just in elementary and high school (Kuykendall).

Educators need to address the changing needs of the students that they serve on a daily basis. The achievement gap between African American and majority students has been well documented. Educators need to move beyond the statistics and overcome some of the school-related obstacles to long-term student success (Kuykendall, 2004).

Additionally, Dr. Reeves in his research has provided a blue print for educators at schools with high African American student populations to increase academic achievement.

However, school-related obstacles are not always the only factors that cause an African American student to have lower academic achievement.

Reeves' (2000) research provided much need instructional strategies to close the achievement gap between African American and White youth. However, there is little data on the non-instructional strategies that are in used to address the increasing disparity in academic achievement between African American and White students. However, there are several leadership programs that have been very successful in providing much need resources to aid the issue of elevating the academic goal attainment of African American male students. Two programs that have been very successful are Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) and the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995).

Big Brothers of America was founded in 1904, when a young New York City court clerk named Ernest Coulter was seeing more and more boys come through his courtroom (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995). He recognized a need for caring adults in the lives of these youth could help many of these adolescents stay out of trouble, and he set out to find volunteers. That marked the beginning of the Big Brothers movement. By 1916, Big Brothers had spread to 96 cities across the country (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch).

Additionally, around the same time, the members of a group called Ladies of Charity were befriending girls who had come through the New York Children's Court (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995). These ladies saw a need for caring adult females could make a difference in the lives of the young ladies that were in their care. That group would later become Catholic Big Sisters ( Tierney, Grossman, & Resch,).



Big Brothers of America and Big Sisters International joined forces in 1977 (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995). The new organization became known as Big Brothers Big Sisters of America Program (BBBS). The BBBS is the oldest, largest and most effective youth mentoring organization in the United States. The BBBS have been the leader in one-to-one youth service for more than one hundred years, developing positive relationships that have a direct and lasting impact on the lives of young people. The BBBS mentors children, ages 6 through 18, in communities across the country (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch).

The BBBS' mission is to help children reach their potential through professionally supported, one-to-one relationships with mentors that have a measurable impact on youth (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995). Additionally, the BBBS vision is successful mentoring relationships for all children who need and want them, contributing to brighter futures, better schools, and stronger communities for all.

Research on the Big Brothers Big Sisters' one-to-one youth mentoring has been shown to have a significant and positive impact on the lives of children, according to the first-ever nationwide impact study of a mentoring organization (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995). Public/Private Ventures, a Philadelphia-based national research organization, sponsored the study in 1992. It targeted 959 boys and girls, ages 10 to 16, through Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies in Phoenix, Arizona.; Wichita, Kansas.; Minneapolis, Minnesota.; Rochester, New York, New York.; Columbus, Ohio; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.; and Houston and San Antonio, Texas. The agencies were selected for their large size and geographic diversity.

The youth selected for the sample were between 10 and 16 years old (with 93% between 10 and 14). All of the youth were eligible for the BBBS program. Just over 60 % were boys, and more than half were minority group members (of those, about 70 % were African American). Almost 100 % lived with one parent (the mother, in most cases), the rest with a guardian or relatives. Many were from low-income households, and a significant number came from households with a prior history of either family violence or substance abuse (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995).

Tierney, Grossman, and Resch (1995) compared youth who participated in BBBS programs with those who did not. Baseline interviews were conducted with all youth at the time to determine if they were found eligible for the program, then each youth was randomly assigned to either the treatment group, who were immediately eligible to be matched with adult volunteers, or to the control group, who remained on a waiting list for 18 months. It is common for there to be a waiting period among BBBS applicants (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch).

The two groups were interviewed again in 18 months. A total of 959 (84.3%) of the 1,138 youth originally randomized completed both baseline and follow-up interviews thus becoming the sample on which findings are based. Of the 487 youth in the treatment group, 378 were matched with a Big Brother or Big Sister, and received the agency support and supervision that would typically be provided. The matched Little Brothers and Little Sisters met with their Big Brother or Big Sister for an average of almost 12 months, with meetings about three times per month lasting about four hours each time (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch).

The aim of the study was to determine whether a one-to-one mentoring experience made a tangible difference in the lives of these young people. The researchers chose six broad areas in which they hypothesized that the mentor-mentee experience might have effects, identified in large part through discussions with local program staff, and a review of the guidelines and other materials produced by the national BBBSA office. The six areas were antisocial activities; academic performance, attitudes and behaviors; relationships with family; relationships with friends; self-concept; and, social and cultural enrichment (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995).

All findings reported were derived from self-reported data, obtained from baseline and follow-up interviews or from forms completed by agency staff. Analysis of these data involved multivariate techniques that compared the follow-up survey results for treatment and control youth, controlling for baseline characteristics (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995). The research findings were overall positive. The most noteworthy results are listed here:

- Little Brothers and Little Sisters were 46 % less likely than controls to initiate drug use during the study period. Our results indicate that for every 100 youth in this age group who start to use drugs, only 54 similar youth who have a Big Brother or Big Sister will start using drugs. An even stronger effect was found for minority Little Brothers and Little Sisters, who were 70 % less likely to initiate drug use than other similar minority youth.
- Little Brothers and Little Sisters were 27 % less likely than controls to initiate alcohol use during the study period, and minority Little Sisters were only about one-half as likely to initiate alcohol use.

- Little Brothers and Little Sisters were almost one-third less likely than controls to hit someone.
- Little Brothers and Little Sisters skipped half as many days of school as did control youth, felt more competent about doing schoolwork, skipped fewer classes and showed modest gains in their grade point averages. These gains were strongest among Little Sisters, particularly minority Little Sisters.
- The quality of relationships with parents was better for Little Brothers and Little Sisters than for controls at the end of the study period, due primarily to a higher level of trust in the parent. This effect was strongest for white Little Brothers.
- There were improvements in Little Brothers' and Little Sisters' relationships with their peers relative to their control counterparts, an effect most strongly evidenced among minority Little Brothers (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995, p. 75 ).

The BBBS' one-to-one mentoring strategies have provided empirical evidence of the effect that non-instructional techniques can have on a youth's goal attainment. The lack of an adult caregiver can create a barrier for the adolescent that is without that resource. The introduction of that caring mentor can and will provide positive motivation for the mentee (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995). Positive motivation and goal setting can provide a clear pathway for youth to follow, in and out of school (Tierney, Grossman, & Resch).

The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) provides similar non-instructional motivation for students. The JROTC is a Federal program sponsored by the United States Armed Forces in high schools across the United States. The JROTC is a Federal program sponsored by the United States Armed Forces in high schools across the

United States. The program was originally created as part of the National Defense Act of 1916 and later expanded under the 1964 ROTC Vitalization Act. The focus of JROTC was on secondary schools. Under the provisions of the 1916 act, high schools were authorized the loan of federal military equipment and the assignment of active or retired military personnel as instructors on the condition that they followed a prescribed course of training and maintained a minimum enrollment of 100 students over 14 years of age. The first JROTC battalion in the nation was at Leavenworth High School in Leavenworth, Kansas in 1916 (U.S. Army, 1985).

The purpose of JROTC is “to instill in students in United States secondary educational institutions the values of citizenship, service to the United States, and personal responsibility and a sense of accomplishment (U.S. Army, 1985, p. 24). Cadet objectives are developing: good citizenship and patriotism, self-reliance, leadership, knowledge of team building, responsiveness to constituted authority, and an appreciation of the importance of physical fitness. Additionally, students improve their ability to communicate well both orally and in writing. If cadets finish the 2 to 4 years of course work, they instantly rank higher if they pursue a military career (U. S Army, 1985).

The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps provides meaningful leadership instruction for students. The benefit to the student and value to the Armed Forces are great. Youth will acquire: (1) An understanding of the fundamental concept of leadership, military art and science, (2) An introduction to related professional knowledge, and (3) An appreciation of requirements for national security. The dual roles of citizen/soldier and soldier/citizen are studied. These programs will enable cadets to better serve their

country as leaders, as citizens, and in military service should they enter it (U. S Army, 1985).

The JROTC provides instructional and non-instructional strategies to motivate young people. The key is that the young people have an adult that provides guidance toward goal attainment. The program not only provides mentors but additionally it provides leadership training. This is an important element for young people to be exposed to as they reach adolescence.

### **The Role of Identity for Closing the Achievement Gap**

Literature suggests that African-American adolescents' sense of self can facilitate positive educational change. Although psychological factors such as self are critical to academic achievement, there is a dearth of literature emphasizing the factors in the academic achievement of African American students. Some researchers have noted the fundamental importance of self factors (i.e., self-concept) as critical in high academic achievement (Feldhusen, 1986). These authors' research have documented that children with positive self-concepts have greater academic gains. However, these authors did not focus on those academic achievers who are African Americans. Glaser and Ross (1970) examined the self in successful persons from seriously disadvantaged backgrounds and minority cultures. They found that having a strong sense of self was characteristic of successful individuals. According to these authors, the self encompasses forming a perception of self that is not locked into one negative identity. These authors found that these individuals had a strong sense of self, worth, and pride in themselves. They were also able to form a new sense of self based on their success. They did not lock themselves into a fixed identity. These individuals were also able to identify models or other

individuals who symbolized identities other than those who were disadvantageded, some of whom came from a similar cultural background. More specifically, African-American adolescents' views of themselves may impact whether or not they feel empowered to reach their academic potential. This research suggests that self is mediated by cultural and ethnic influences. It is important to examine self as a critical factor in the lives of African American students and to look at the role that family in these young peoples' lives. These students' internal events, personal control of the internal environment, personal control of the external environment, and external support received all contribute to students' creation of "The Self" of African American students. This process of growth of the self may be nurtured, encouraged, or reinforced by the family system.

According to United States Census data (2005), African American children are less likely than any other group of children in American under the age of 18 to live with two married parents. In 2005, only 35 % of African American children under the age of 18 lived with two married parents. The percentage of African American children under 18 living with two married parents is in stark contrast to 84 % of Asian, 76 % of non-Hispanic, and 65 % of Hispanic children (Child Trends Data Bank, 2006). Additionally, in 2005, 10 % of all African American children did not live with either parent, compared to 5 % of Hispanic children, 3 % of Asian children, and 3 % of non-Hispanic children (Child Trends Data Bank, 2006).

There have been many studies on the effect of parental involvement on educational outcomes of African American students. In a study of 175 third grade inner city students in Chicago, Illinois, Hara, & Burke (1998) examined the effects of a broad-based parental involvement program. Significant student achievement gains were made in

reading among students participating in the parent involvement program when compared to those who were not (Hara & Burke). The number of parents involved in the program grew by 43 % over a two year period with parents reporting observed improvement in their children's interest in and attitude toward school (Hara & Burke, 1998). In a study titled, Effects of parental involvement on eighth-grade achievement, Sui-Chi & Willms (1996) studied a representative sample of 25,000 middle school students throughout the United States. Factors studied included parent-teacher communication, parent involvement at school, and home supervision. Su-Chi & Willms found that regular discussion of school-related activities at home in conjunction with helping children plan their educational program had the most significant impact on student achievement. Findings of the study indicated that parents discussed school issues more with boys than with girls but tended to have more contact with school officials regarding boys (Su-Chi & Willms). The study showed that parents of children with learning and behavioral issues were less likely to participate in school and discussed school issues less with their children (Su-Chi & Willms).

### **Mentoring Adolescents**

The concept of adolescent mentoring embraces ideals that serve the development of all youth, but particularly those growing up in challenging (at-risk) circumstances. The term "mentoring" is thought to have its origin in Homer's *Odyssey*. In the story, the king had an older friend named Mentor who cared for King Odysseus' son, Telemachus, while the king fought the Trojan Wars (Buckley & Zimmermann). The king entrusted his child, Telemachus, in the care of Mentor who provided safety, but also aided in his physical, emotional, and educational development.



The term mentoring has been variously defined and implemented. The historical model of a mentoring relationship emphasizes the following points:

- achievement, such as in the encouragement and facilitation of the development of a career or vocation,
- nurturance, which typically conveys caring and support while imparting elements of positive character development, and
- generativity, which reflects the concept of intergenerational responsibility, and the idea that elders/mentors transmit knowledge, values, and culture to the younger generation (Freedman, 2003, p. 37).

The concept of recruiting a wise, trusted, non-familial adult to contribute to the education and nurturance of an adolescent continues to this day (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003). Mentoring has experienced a reawakening over the past several decades as a vehicle for promoting healthy development in young people. Programs like BBBS call for the mobilization of caring adults as critical tools in the effort to promote the building of character and competence in the nation's young people. As a consequence, mentoring programs have emerged in corporations, government agencies, and school districts, as well as in higher education (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003).

In most cases, any definition of mentoring includes the concept of a committed relationship between two people, one a young or inexperienced (mentee or protégé) and the other possessing knowledge or experience (mentor) (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003). The mentor, by definition, possesses something that the protégé lacks. Thus, role modeling, socializing, and teaching are central aspects of the mentoring relationship. However, mentoring goes well beyond the imparting of knowledge and skills. Unlike

teaching or role modeling, which may occur without an emotional engagement or direct contact, mentoring requires an emotional connection (Buckley & Zimmermann).

Mentors and mentees possess a unique bond, created in large part by the mentor's willingness to listen, empathize, and to validate the young person's experience. The mentor's friendship, support and guidance of the protégé widen the worldview of the young person's sense of life roles and opportunities (Buckley & Zimmermann).

The relationship between the mentor and mentee is not always without complications but, it is important to suggest that the mentor-mentee relationship requires an emotional investment by both parties in order to be effective (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003). Mentor-protégé (mentor) relationships that do not have a strong emotional intensity prohibit the development of the attachment and support that are typically essential to the mentoring process. In fact, it is likely that the benefits associated with mentoring depend on the creation of an emotional connection (Rhodes, 2002).

The mentoring process resembles many aspects of a friendship; however, the mentor-mentee relationship is not merely about companionship or camaraderie as is commonly the case between friends. Mentoring differs from a traditional friendship because the mentor relationship has a pre-stated purpose and focuses on goals and challenges (Lee & Crammond, 1999). One of the crucial differences is the expectation that, through the mentoring process, the protégé will master certain goals. Correspondingly, in order to assist the mentee in this process, the mentor must simultaneously provide both challenge and support (Rhodes & Davis, 1996). Many times the security and encouragement of the mentor allows the protégé to take risk and explore new territory,

thus enabling him to reach those preset mentoring goals (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003).

The value of the mentoring process resides in the central role that positive adult-child relationships play in the healthy development of the mentee. Human growth and development occurs through social experiences (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003).

Research on fostering resiliency in at-risk children and adolescents repeatedly focuses on the importance of adult-child relationships, including the important role of non parent adults and extra-familial sources of support. Our relationships with people who are important to us help determine our understanding of the world around us and what to expect from it (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003). As adolescents interact with adults, they experience the sharing of knowledge, values, and culture of the adult. Children raised with responsible, loving caregivers develop a sense of the world as a safe place in which they are acknowledged and their needs are supplied. Additionally, as the children mature into adolescents they need the adults in their lives to provide protection and care (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003). Adolescents that do not experience responsive care-giving adults may come to believe that they are not valued and cannot count on others to provide support. When young people lack the protection that comes from relationships with supportive, nurturing adults who give them clear expectations regarding behavior, they may turn to other less supportive sources of influences, such as peers, the media, or gangs.

Positive relationships with people who care about them allow youth to create a new, more positive understanding of their social world, and provide them with resources to pull from to combat developmental and environmental challenges (Buckley &

Zimmermann, 2003). Research has indicated the youth who encounter and successfully overcome adverse situations possess the skills to make use of positive relationships, while maintain an abiding belief that they are loved and valued (Garbarino, 1999). Adolescents with the ability to engage in effective adult-child relationships as well as effective peer relationships is a crucial aspect of his or her overall well being (Buckley & Zimmermann). Mentors provide many important support structures and strategies for their mentees. Several are discussed here.

### **Spiritual, Psychological, and Social Support**

Environmental protective factors that aid at-risk youth overcome adversity include a secure emotional connection with a caregiver and social support from individuals in the wider community and extended family systems. These supplemental persons provide support and nurturing while confirming the child's efforts to achieve (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003). Additionally, a strong mentoring bond may provide adolescents with needed spiritual, psychological and social anchors (Garbarino, 1999). Good mentors naturally engage in many actions that go a long way toward helping mentees feel better about themselves. These best practices include listening, offering friendship and support, and developing a trusting relationship (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003).

### **Supportive Connections with the World**

The evolution of youth to adulthood in the United States may be more difficult now than ever before. There is violence in our schools. Gangs are in every major city and suburban neighborhood. In today's society, there are major differences in youth and adult roles. Youth still seek role models to emulate but may confuse a celebrity's status

with that of a role model. Additionally, so-called role models of today's youth, such as sports figures, many times do not provide meaningful examples of roles young people will play in the adult world (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003). The omission of relevant role models, along with the isolation from relationships with caring adults in their communities, means that young people reach adulthood with deficits in relationship skills and a lack of knowledge concerning adult occupations. Additionally, the at-risk youth in particular, early learning in social relationships may limit their sense of social roles (Buckley & Zimmermann). Minority youth, who grow up with an acute awareness of societal barriers to opportunities, may begin to view certain pathways as blocked (Buckley & Zimmermann).

Mentoring relationships that include strong interpersonal bonds allows the mentee or protégé to identify with the mentor and may help to fill a void created by a lack of positive role models. Setting long-range goals helps determine life success for the mentee (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003). The presence of meaningful adult relationships provides mentees with credible role models that may significantly alter their beliefs about available opportunities. Mentors also serve as models for how difficulties may be overcome in life. Many individuals who faced a difficult or challenging childhood report that a mentor played a significant role in their ultimate success.

### **Transitional Support**

Mentors also play an important role in helping young people make the sometimes difficult transition to adulthood. Once a young person reaches adolescence they are charged with developing a sense of self apart from their families. While increasing their autonomy, they at the same time are look for where they fit in the world around them.

They are trying to answer the question: where is their place in the world? This task requires the adolescent to revisit the developmental issues, including establishing trust and autonomy, taking initiative, and accepting responsibility for their goals and behavior. This “rite of passage” is eased when adult mentors provide incremental advances that socialize youth into roles and responsibilities of adulthood (Larson, 2000).

The mentor-mentee relationship will sometimes grow into a friendship as the mentee reaches adult developmental stages in his life. At the very least, it is desirable that, when the mentoring relationship is finished, lasting memories will endure of the special and helpful times that were spent during the stages of development (Buckley & Zimmermann, 2003).

### **Historical Influences of African Americans**

Ogbu (1990) suggested that African American students define their realities in ways that differ from their mainstream teachers. That is, they may feel that the realities they place value on and the impact that they have on their education is misunderstood by their teachers. Teachers, however, may assume that these students’ approaches to learning do not fit with educational values in the school environment. Furthermore, Ogbu explained that both teachers and students arrive at different conclusions as to why students are failing. Neither conclusion leads to adequate solutions.

Educators, regardless of their cultural background, do not appear to consider the “voices” of these students in the very important educational decisions they make for them. At a national forum on minority and disadvantaged gifted and talented students held in the 1970’s, Chisholm (1978) emphasized that educational system have failed to nurture the talents of gifted African American students. She asserted that the educational

needs of talented African American and other minority children were not being met due to inadequate methods of recognizing talent in these students. Educators might encourage academic achievement in African American students if they would allow these students outlets to share their realities as well concerns about their education. Even now, Epstein (2000) has noted that as scholars continue to debate about the education of academically talented African American students without acknowledging that these young people may have their own ideas about their educational values and goals and the meaning of academic success for them (Epstein). Shaped by their experiences as both as minority and as an academic achiever, these students' perspectives may influence personal interpretations of how certain factors influence their academic success.

The importance of the individual "voice" of academically talented African American students should be taken into consideration by the educators who teach them. Tucker (1999) asserted that when educators talk to one another and live through each other's eyes, consciousness becomes transitive. When educators go to others to communicate with them and listen to what they have to say, educators are likely to hear from their perspective what has meaning for them. By listening to the "voices" of academically achieving African American students, educators are likely to hear what has meaning and significance for them about their education.

Like all youth, African American students also want to be successful in school. Research provides evidence that African American students desire to be academically successful. Garibaldi (1992) surveyed 2,250 African American students in schools in New Orleans and found that 95 % reported that being successful in school was important to them and felt that teachers needed to push them harder to succeed. His research

suggested that African American students desire to be challenged academically and hold values that pertain to being successful in school. When these students do not experience academic success, they may use coping mechanisms to deal with their feelings about school failure (Garibaldi). Their feelings of disappointment may be exhibited through them telling themselves and others that succeeding is not important to them (Garibaldi).

The lack of academic success that African American students have may be influenced by their school environment and teacher expectations (Tucker, 1999). In cases where students are not encouraged to be successful or educators do not expect them to be academic achievers, they may feel less motivated to achieve. Educators may lower their expectations, and water down instruction which in turn may have a negative impact on these students' motivation and academic achievement goals (Tucker, 1999). In a survey of 500 teachers, Tucker found that 60 % of the educators did not expect that the African American students would attend college. These teachers' response to their student's ability to learn and to become successful may have influenced students' decision of whether or not to attain higher learning and their belief that they could be academically successful. Rarely does one see the terms competent, resourceful, aspiring, or motivated used to describe the academic and school performance of African American students (Barbarin, 1993). As a result, educators and teachers may begin to believe that failure is the norm for these students; their expectations for the academic achievement of these students, thus, may be lowered (Floyd, 1997).

### **Mentoring African American Males**

According to Hall (2006), African American males need a forum to communicate and express their thoughts in a safe environment. The mentor-mentee relationship



provides out-of-school forums for youth to communicate their lives as well as provides them with public access and agency that affords them a chance to develop deeper relationships with mentors. Young males need other adult figures in their lives to talk to besides a parent or guardian. Parents are sometimes unaware of, or have very little time to notice, the personal issues faced by boys. In the absence of someone to speak to or help guide them, young African American males can lose their way in the uncertainty of daily dilemmas and challenges (Hall).

Mentors provide support for mentees by acting as surrogate uncles or big brothers, supplementing the role of parents. This additional support for these boys gives them a greater chance of staying on the right track and developing and achieving life goals (Hall, 2006). Goal setting and attainment are important traits that adolescent males must develop. In the case of many African American males there are very few adults that can expose and provide guidance in this needed element for successful.

For African American males, the importance of having an adult to talk to about day to day affairs cannot be expressed enough (Hall, 2006). Conversations with youth can sometimes be one way, where the mentor functions merely as a soundboard for them to voice their thoughts, problems, and emotions. At other times, they require feedback. However in some cases their problem is urgent and they need immediate advice and viable alternatives to their situation (Hall).

Youth need someone to take notice of their lives and assist them with problems that they are facing, and a mentor can act as a soundboard or a trusted adviser, sometimes both (Hall, 2006). Youth need to feel that they can trust the mentor with very sensitive subjects that are effect their lives. Issues of confrontations with peers that leave the youth

with questions of bravado versus self-preservation are often brought to the mentor. By first receiving a safe moment in which to vent, the mentee will feel free to release sensitive thought and feeling surrounding his experience (Hall). After the youth has given his thoughts, the mentor can discuss, in a logical manner, the options (e.g., physical confrontation or retaliation) as well as the potentially harmful consequences of not walking away.

Young people should have a wise and objective adult in their lives to listen to them, guide them, counsel them, and provide them with, among other things, emotional and psychological support (Hall, 2006). African American males are saturated with a mixture of social messages (examples like television, magazines, movies, parental/peer influences, school curriculum, etc.). Children and adolescents need someone to help them understand these varying perspectives within the delicate framework of their own evolving identities (Hall).

When African American young men are mentored in and outside of the school environment, they find support in navigating the ever changing world, as well as making the sometimes difficult transition into adulthood. Mentoring relationships based on friendship, trust, and mutual respect place adolescent males in a favorable position of being able to open up, reveal who they are, and express the kind of person that they wish to be (Hall, 2006). The mentor-mentee relationship provides the mentee with the freedom to share what they know and to communicate what they feel affords them a social experience that is conducive to healthy human development and overall well-being (Hall).

### **Kappa Leadership and Developmental League**

To address the shortcomings within the current educational system in regard to the academic advancement of African American males, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc created the Kappa Leadership and Development League. According to Bryson (1999), the Kappa Leadership and Development League is a program designed to aid young men of high school age grow and develop their leadership talents in every phase of human endeavor. Kappa League provides both challenging and rewarding experiences to enhance their lives. Since the fundamental purpose of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity is achievement, it is therefore the fraternity's primary purpose to help these young men achieve worthy goals for themselves, and make constructive contributions to their community when they assume leadership roles. The training, experience, and friendly interest of successful men is placed at the disposal of youth needing inspiration and counsel regarding their choice of a life's career, while the community is made aware of the problems that may be encountered as these youth seek to realize lives of usefulness.

The Kappa League is an outreach of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity's Guide Right program. Guide Right is a program for the educational and occupational guidance of youth, primarily inspirational and informational in character. Its reach extends to high schools and colleges alike. Conceived in 1922 by Leon W. Stewart, and suggested at the twelfth national meeting, Grand Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi, Guide Right became the fraternity's national service program. Jesse Jerome Peters, later to become the eighth Grand Polemarch, national president, was chairman of the committee during the administration of W. Ellis Stewart as Grand Polemarch. That insured adoption of the Program as the Fraternity's National Service Project (Bryson, 1999).

Since 1992, the purpose of the Guide Right service program has been to place the training, experience, and friendly interest of successful men at the disposal of youth needing inspiration and counsel regarding the choice of a life's career, and to arouse the interest of the entire community in the problems of youth as they seek to realize lives of usefulness. The basic objectives of Guide Right are summarized as follows:

- (1) To help youth, especially those of high school age, in their selection of courses leading to vocations compatible with their aptitude and personalities;
- (2) To assist students, while they are in training, to get started in employment, and to progress successfully in their chosen fields;
- (3) To assist parents in the handling of their children by giving them opportunity to talk over their problems with those who know and are successful in their chosen vocations;
- (4) To afford youth a respite from the drudgery of the street, through sponsored entertainment and culture enriched;
- (5) To inform youth of the values of higher education, of assistance available for continued educational pursuits, scholarship, loan, professional counseling and fellowship; of various occupational and professional opportunities and of current labor market and requirements for obtaining employment (Bryson, 1999 , p. 25).

The Kappa League is an organization oriented toward helping students in grades 9-12 develop their talents and potential in every field of human endeavor. It provides both challenging and rewarding experiences through oriented activities. The members are exposed to planning, executing and reporting ideas, simulating good leadership characteristics, designed to raise their aspiration level (Bryson, 1999).

The Guide Right Program is funded by the fraternity, as well as by donations and contributions from the general public. The Kappa League is designed to demonstrate the results of the experiences received by the participants. The Kappa League is not revenue generating activity. The fraternity is encouraging a cross-section of audience attendance with those who might share the concerns of the fraternity in the obligation to share life's challenges and assist in the development of today's youth (Bryson, 1999).

The Kappa Leadership and Development League has become a widely adopted non-instructional resource for African American male students across the United States of America since the creation in 1922; however, there has never been a study to provide empirical evidence of the impact on the students that are mentored as perceived by the students, their parents, their mentors, and their principals. The mentors and mentees are paired up at one of the first organizing meetings. There are many anecdotal reports of success of individual students, but there has never been research on how the non-instructional techniques used by the mentors aid in the academic achievement of the mentees. This study will seek to document how the strategies used by the mentors in the Kappa Leadership Developmental League impact the mentees, principals, parents and mentors.

### **Chapter Summary**

The history of African American education predates the age of slavery in the United States. The confrontation regarding equal access to education for African American males in America began with the introduction of slaves into the New World. Several events shaped the African American educational evolution. The signing of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and the institution of court ordered school

desegregation as mandated by the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision. Until these events African American males were educated in segregated schools with limited resources and often inadequate facilities. Despite the hope and expectation of a brighter future as represented by school integration African American males continue to graduate at much lower rates than other students nationwide. African American males continue to perform well below their White and Asian counterparts on nationally norm referenced tests such as the National Assessment of Education Progress in reading and math. African American males are disproportionately represented in the number of students enrolled in special education classes for the emotionally behavior disordered and mentally retarded nationwide.

The “achievement gap” between African American males and White males is used to describe the performance gap of African American males verses White males. The achievement gap is seen in all areas of the educational spectrum, in grades, standardized-test scores, course selection, dropout rates, and college-completion rates. Investigating non-instructional strategies to close the achievement gap is an essential step in the march toward educational equality.

The achievement gap shows that African American males are in many cases performing at a below average rate. There are many studies on the instructional strategies that can be employed to increase student achievement in below average students; however, there are vertically no studies on the many non-instructional programs impact on the academic achievement of students.

Mentoring is one of the many non-instructional strategies that can be used to set goals for African American males. The concept of mentoring is defined as a committed

relationship between two people, one a young or inexperienced (mentee or protégé) and the other possessing knowledge or experience (mentor). The mentor, by definition, possesses something that the protégé lacks. Thus, role modeling, socializing, and teaching are central aspects of the mentoring relationship. However, mentoring goes well beyond the imparting of knowledge and skills. Unlike teaching or role modeling, which may occur without an emotional engagement or direct contact, mentoring requires an emotional connection. Mentors and mentees possess a unique bond, created in large part by the mentor's willingness to listen, empathize, and to validate the young person's experience.

The Kappa Leadership and Developmental League is a national mentoring program that serves as an intervening factor in the lives of young African American males. The Kappa League has graduated many African American male from high school and on to college; however, there has been no empirical evidence on the impact that the Kappa League is having on the academic success of the students.

The educational researchers have studied the achievement gap for many years. There are many instructional strategies for educators to use to close the achievement gap and educate the African American males. The purpose of this research will be to answer the question can the use of the Kappa League's non-instructional strategies aid in closing the achievement gap between African American and White males?

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

The disparity in academic achievement between African American and White students is well documented. According to the *Given Half a Chance: A 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males*, (Johnson, 2009) in 2005-2006, only 47% of African American males graduated from high school compared to 75% of White males. The picture in Georgia is more dismal where only 40% of African American males graduated from high school in the same year. Prior studies have focused on teacher expectations and instructional styles, academic and social opportunities, and the social and economic environments of the neighborhoods in which adolescents (high schools students) live. Important questions remain, however, regarding the academic achievement gap between African Americans and Whites. Research should not focus on equalizing learning outcomes, but rather on opportunities that equalize learning and improve academic achievement. Therefore, gaining a better understanding of the opportunities by which this achievement gap can be closed is an essential step in reducing this disparity and achieving educational equality.

The Kappa Leadership and Development League, a component of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc's National Community Service Guide Right Mentoring Program, is a mentoring program that serves as an intervening factor in the lives of young African American males. The basic objective of the Kappa Leadership and Development League is to develop the leadership skills, to refine the self-image and social skills, and to promote the academic achievement of African American adolescent males through leadership and social integration programs. Since little is known about how non-



academic strategies contribute to the academic and social successes of African American male high school students, this study will investigate the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Development League on the academic performance of African American male high school students in metro Atlanta, Georgia.

This chapter highlights the research questions that guide this study, details the research design, including the research site and study population, participant selection, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis procedure, the role of the researcher, control for research bias, and ethical considerations.

### **Research Questions**

In this study, the lived experiences related to the impact of the Kappa Leadership and Development League on the academic successes of African American adolescent male high school students was explored. A single overarching question emerged from an overview of the literature. How does the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League impact the academic and social success of African American adolescent males? In order to explore this question thoroughly, several sub-questions were used to guide this research:

1. How do mentees in the Kappa Leadership and Development League perceive the program's effectiveness?
2. How do mentors in the Kappa Leadership and Development League perceive the program's effectiveness?
3. How do high school principals perceive the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Development League after the program has been implemented in their school communities?

4. How do parents (or legal guardians) perceive the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Development League?
5. What best practices does the Kappa Leadership and Development League employ that makes it an effective mentoring program for African American male adolescents?

### **Research Design**

Qualitative research methods provide an opportunity to examine a phenomenon in which relatively little is known (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Further, a qualitative research design allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon, which may be best described through detailed examples or narratives (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). There are several types of inquiry methods that can be used in qualitative studies. However, this study used a collective case study design to investigate the impact of the Kappa Leadership and Development League on African American male students in the Atlanta, Georgia, metropolitan area.

A collective case study is an in depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., an activity, event, process or individuals) based on extensive data collection using a variety of data sources (Creswell, 2002). This type of methodology allows for the investigation of individuals or organizations, programs, or simple and complex interactions (Yin, 2003). Specifically, this type of design ensured that the Kappa Leadership and Development League was explored from multiple perspectives, namely from the students' perspective as well as the perspectives from the mentors, parents, and school administrators. According to Yin (2003), a collective case study design should be used when (1) the focus of the study is to examine "how" and "why" questions, (2) the

behavior of those involved in the study cannot be manipulated, (3) contextual conditions are of interest because they are relevant to the phenomenon under investigation, and (4) the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clear. Therefore, the participants are able to describe their views and perceptions of reality and the researcher is able to gain a better understanding of the participants' actions (Lather, 1992; Robottom & Hart, 1993).

The case study should be used when the researcher is investigating certain phenomena in a society (Yin, 2009). Case studies also are appropriate when the researcher lacks experimental control over events (Yin, 1994). A case study involves the information related to a person or group of people by way of observing, interviewing, and using other evidence. In addition, case studies offer a way to learn about a complicated circumstance by using description and contextual analysis (Yin). The information that comes out of such case studies can tell the researcher why the phenomenon occurred, and what can be learned from similar occurrences (Yin).

### **Site Selection**

This study was conducted in the Atlanta, Georgia, metropolitan area. This metropolitan area is the most populous region in the state of Georgia and serves host to five Kappa Leadership and Development League programs located at seven high schools. Participants will be identified from the Stockbridge-Jonesboro and Stone Mountain-Lithonia Kappa Leadership and Development Leagues in the Atlanta, Georgia, metropolitan area. The researcher has served as previous advisor to the Stockbridge-Jonesboro Kappa Leadership and Development League and is in close communications with the advisor of the Stone Mountain-Lithonia Kappa Leadership and Development League.

### **Selection of Participants**

It was essential to the design of the study that the participants are African American males who meet the following criteria: first, the students were members of the Kappa League for a minimum of one year prior to the study period. Second, the student population was African American males. Third, the student population was actively engaged with the Kappa League for a minimum of one of the two years prior to the study.

The participants were recruited via purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling strategy that samples subjects based on some characteristic or that fit a particular profile in a non-random, non-probability manner (Patton, 1990). Purposive sampling is popular in qualitative research especially when the desired target population is difficult to locate and recruit for the study. Purposive sampling has many of the same weaknesses as convenience sampling such as limited quantitative inferences. Individuals who agreed to participate in the study were interviewed in person. Data regarding the non-academic strategies that impact the academic achievement of African American males was collected from additional sources. Specifically, parents or legal guardians, Kappa League advisors, and school administrators of Kappa League participants were interviewed. Similar rationale for interviews and data collections, as described below, were used. There were 10 participants in the study: three Kappa Leaguers, a parent or legal guardian for each, two Kappa League advisor/mentors, and two school administrators.

In cooperation with the Stockbridge-Jonesboro Chapter and the Stone Mountain-Lithonia Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc., where the Kappa League members are active, the Kappa League Advisors invited all Kappa League mentees who met the

selection criteria, their parents (or legal guardians), and mentors to a meeting at the Kappa Achievement Center in Decatur, Georgia, for the purpose of explaining the investigation and inviting participation. Following a presentation by the researcher who explained the investigation, Kappa League mentees, their mentors, and the mentees' parents (or legal guardians) were invited to participate in the investigation by volunteering. Mentees who volunteered were asked to sign a letter of assent and mentors and mentees' parents (or legal guardians) were asked to sign a letter of consent. In addition, the school administrators of the schools where the mentees are enrolled were invited to participate by being interviewed; and, the two school administrators that accepted were asked to sign a letter of consent.

### **Data Collection**

Data for this qualitative study were collected via a researcher-designed interview questions. The instrument was developed after a literature review and review of various research instruments, and tailored according to the researcher's experiences as an administrator and advisor of the Kappa Leadership and Development League program. A pilot of the interview questions was conducted prior to implementation to establish the face validity of the questions and to possibly improve the interview questions and format. Following a critique by a research methodologist, the interview questions were field tested by Kappa Leadership and Development League members in the Stockbridge-Jonesboro Georgia and Stone Mountain-Lithonia Georgia Kappa Leadership and Development League programs who were not part of the study. The Kappa League advisor/mentor's interview questions were field tested by a focus group of two Kappa League advisors who were not part of the study. Similarly, the parent's interview

questions were field tested by a focus group of three Kappa League parents who were not part of the study. Finally, school administrator's interview questions were field tested by two school administrators who were not part of the study.

### **The Interview**

The interview process is the best way to collect data in this study because it allows the researcher to directly obtain information about past events that cannot be replicated through other methodological approaches (Merriam, 1998). The person-to-person format permitted the researcher to obtain detailed information from participants, clarify areas of confusion, and elicit elaboration and interesting responses. The interviews allowed the research to reflect in-depth knowledge about how the non-instructional strategies of the Kappa Leadership and Development League affected academic and social achievement for the participants. The interviews also allowed the study to achieve a richer description of how this program had impacted the total school population.

### **Procedure**

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval forms from Georgia Southern University were submitted on February 24, 2011. IRB approval was granted March 2, 2011, and interviews with the Kappa Leadership and Development League members agreeing to participate in this study were arranged at the organizing meeting. Interviews were scheduled at a time convenient for the participant. Interviews with mentees, parents and Kappa League advisors were conducted at the Kappa Achievement center. School administrators were interviewed in their school offices.

At the beginning of each interview the researcher explained to the participants the role of the researcher and the participant in the data collection process. Any questions posed by the participants were answered by the researcher prior to and during the

interview process. As suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1998), the researcher did explain to each participant what he is actually going to do, inform the participant as to what will be done with the findings, explain why each individual has been chosen to participate, and what they might gain from participating. In addition, the researcher reinforced to the participant that they had the right to not answer any of the questions and could withdraw from the study at any point during the interview.

Each interview was tape-recorded for later transcription. Creswell (1994) has recommended audio taping the interview and transcribing the interview later. The researcher labeled and overwrite protected each audio tape, carried a backup recorder, and extra batteries. As an extra precaution, the researcher took hand-written notes in the event that the recording equipment failed. Use of an audio recording device such as a tape recorder would provide many advantages as it reduced the potential for the researcher to reflect a bias in recording the data (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). The researcher understood the limitations associated with the use of tape recording during the interview could give rise to the possibility of a participant being reluctant to express his true feelings freely (Gall, et al.). Accordingly, every attempt was made to insure that the participant felt comfortable and to ensure confidentiality.

After the data were recorded for each interview, the information was transcribed by the researcher. The researcher replayed the data recording several times to check for accuracy and then compared the data recording scripts to notes taken during the interview. The participants were not be asked for editorial comments or additional thoughts. This preserved the spontaneity and richness of information collected (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Each participant was mailed a cover letter and copy of their

transcribed interview the next week following the interviews. The cover letter stated that the participants could call the researcher by March 18, 2011, to let him know if correction to the transcript had to be made. If no corrections were necessary no further action was needed. This provided the participants with an opportunity to perform member checks.

### **Data Analysis**

Marshall and Rossman (1999) defined data analysis as “the process of bringing order, structure, and interpretation to the mass of collected data” (p. 150). Further clarifying the process of data analysis, Patton (1987) added that data analysis is also organizing available data into patterns, categories, and basic description units. He further stated the interpretation is a separate process from analysis and defined it as “attaching meaning and significance to the analysis, explaining descriptive patterns and looking for relationships and linkages among descriptive dimensions” (p. 144).

There is no consensus that exists for the analysis of the forms of qualitative data (Creswell, 1998). Several authors (e.g., Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 2008) have recommended several strategies. Miles and Huberman (1994) described the process for working with interview transcripts as “interpretivism” (p. 8). According to Neal (2006), the underlying assumption of interpretivism is that the whole needs to be examined in order to understand particular phenomena. Interpretivism proposes that rather than single realities of phenomena, multiple realities exist and that these realities can differ across time and space (Neil).

Data analysis requires that the researcher be comfortable with developing various categories and making comparisons and contrasts (Creswell, 1994). Due to the complex



nature of qualitative data, it is necessary to identify themes and categories rather than attempt to convert data to standard units of measure (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Patton (1987) further explained that in organizing the analysis of the data, the qualitative researcher must draw from two primary sources: research questions generated during the development of the study and, analytic insights and interpretations that emerged during data collection.

Responses were analyzed for themes, patterns, and categories in order to document the key non-instructional strategies that aid in academic achievement of the Kappa Leaguers interviewed in this study. Wolcott (1994) has stated that the researcher should single out some things as worthy or not and dismisses other data simply from the act of obtaining data out of experience. Marshall and Rossman (1999) stated, “All research will respond to canons of quality criteria against which the trustworthiness of a project can be evaluated” (p. 191). The researcher understands that the nature of this qualitative study lends itself to being replicated by future researchers interested in the surveying the key non-instructional strategies that aid in academic achievement of the African-American males. The researcher’s background and experience of having served as a Kappa League Director and assistant principal for six years and the method of inquiry were utilized to establish credibility (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Anecdotal information from the questions asked was presented in descriptive narrative text form. Data were analyzed through multiple interactions within each case. First, open coding was performed in order to find recurring patterns. The researcher used a preliminary coding list for the first iteration of the data analysis. Then, a second iteration of analysis was conducted to explore the relationships between and among these

patterns. Finally, a third iteration of analysis was performed to further reduce the findings into categories for the strategies utilized to impact the academic and social achievement of African-American males. Since this investigation was comparing two Kappa Leagues, these three levels of analysis were conducted within each case. Thus, cross case analysis was conducted (Yin, 2009).

The findings of study were presented in a rich, thick narrative form with frequent use of direct quotations from the participants.

### **Role of the Researcher**

The role of the researcher was to conduct a meaningful and ethical study. The researcher must understand his strengths, be alert in the assessments of situations and competent in his abilities to choose and apply appropriate techniques. The researcher must also be sensitive to both overt and hidden assumptions associated with their chosen research process. Finally, the researcher must be aware that he have much to learn about doing research, but never lose sight of the fact that research is conducted by individuals who bring both commitment and enjoyment to the process (Creswell, 2005).

### **Control for Researcher Bias**

There is potential for researcher bias for several reasons. The researcher is a African American man who has had interest in achievement issues concerning himself, as well as sharing cultural characteristics with participants. Additionally, the researcher is a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated. Finally, the researcher has a background with the participants as an award winning mentor/advisor.

In order to control for potential researcher bias as well as to increase dependability, the researcher employed member checks involved participants providing feedback on the accuracy of interview transcripts. According to Lincoln and Guba

(1985), member checks provide the participants the opportunity to verify that the investigator has constructed accurate records of the participant's experiences. The researcher gave the participants the opportunity to examine the information that they provided and to provide additional information if they felt the interpretation was inaccurate. Allowing for members checking in this fashion strengthened the trustworthiness of the investigation, which Lincoln and Guba (1985) has postulated as a prime consideration for qualitative research. Additionally, the use of direct quotes provides further strength.

In addition, the first level of data analysis was conducted utilizing a list of codes drawn from professional literature on effective mentoring of adolescent African American males. These codes were drawn from the professional literature of (Lee, 2008).

### **Ethical Considerations**

In an effort to reinforce ethical treatment of the Kappa League members, certain steps were taken during the research process of this study. Each Kappa League member and his parent was provided an informed assent form. Additionally, the Kappa League mentors and principals signed informed consent forms verifying their voluntary participation in the study and indicating their understanding that they could terminate their participation at any point if they chose to do so. Further, the informed consent form outlined each aspect of the participants' participation as well as their option to withdraw from the study during any phase of the process. Interview data was kept confidential at all times. Interview tapes, transcripts of the tapes, and interview notes have been secured in a locked file in the researcher's residence, with only the researcher having access. The

transcriptions were coded with pseudonyms, and the actual names of the participants were not be used in any form. Participants also were given the opportunity to review transcripts in order to verify accuracy of the record of the transcript. Changes in the data were made according to participants' confirmations of their dialogue.

### **Limitations and Assumptions of the Study**

The population in this research is limited to current Kappa Leadership and Development League members enrolled into high schools in two areas of the Atlanta, Georgia, metropolitan area. As a result, the transferability of findings to other African American males attending other secondary academic institutions may be limited.

An assumption will be made that all participants that participated in the study answered the questions posed to them in a truthful manner and that the information they provided is their own attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and perceptions.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS**

Included in this chapter is a brief introduction to the study as well the purpose of the study and a summary of the research methodology. Included as a part of this chapter are the research questions to be answered, factual interview responses from the data gathered, and analysis and interpretation of this data.

#### **Introduction**

While researchers have made considerable progress in identifying academic strategies for improving the education of African American males, there was very little literature on non-academic strategies that are designed to enhance African American male academic and social achievement. The purpose of this study was to examine one such non-academic strategy, the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League, and the impact it has on African American male students. The intent of the study was to identify non-academic strategies used by the Kappa League which impact the academic and social achievement of African American males. In addition, the study sought to identify best practices that could be implemented by principals and educators to impact the academic and social achievement of African American males.

#### **Research Questions**

A single overarching question emerged from an overview of the literature: How does the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League impact the academic and social success of African American adolescent males? In order to explore this question thoroughly, several sub-questions were used to guide this research:

1. How do mentees in the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League perceive the program's effectiveness?
2. How do mentors in the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League perceive the program's effectiveness?
3. How do high school principals perceive the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League after the program has been implemented in their school communities?
4. How do parents (or legal guardians) perceive the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League?
5. What best practices does the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League employ that makes it a unique mentoring program for African American male adolescents?

The research design was qualitative in nature. The researcher interviewed the individuals who participated in the study by using face-to-face structured interviews. The participants were recruited via purposive sampling. This study used a collective case study design to investigate the impact of the Kappa Leadership and Development League on African American male students in the Atlanta, Georgia, metropolitan area. There were three cases studied. Each case included one current Kappa League member, his parent, his Kappa League director and an administrator from his school that was similar with the student and the Kappa League. The Kappa Leaguers were from the Stockbridge-Jonesboro and Stone Mountain Lithonia Georgia Kappa League chapters. Each participant was assigned a number to protect his identity and maintain confidentiality.

Table 1 shows the interview schedule. The interviews took place over a period of approximately one week. The interviews were recorded using a tape recorder and were transcribed by the researcher within twenty-four hours of the interview and checked for accuracy against written notes. The interview responses were reviewed and read numerous times to identify major patterns and themes. The transcribed data were then analyzed through multiple iterations within each case. First, open coding was performed in order to find recurring patterns within each case as an independent data set. Comparing results from the two independent cases did not reveal any substantive differences in the patterns, so data were consolidated into a single set of data for the second and third iterations of data analysis. A preliminary coding list was used for the first iteration of the data analysis (Lee, 2008). Thus, the second iteration of analysis was conducted to explore the relationships between and among these patterns. Finally, a third iteration of analysis was performed to further reduce the findings into conclusions within the context of the research questions.

Table 1

*Interview Dates of Participants*

Interview Dates for Kappa League Members	Day, Date/2011
Kappa League Member Number One	Wednesday, March 9
Kappa League Member Number Two	Thursday, March 10
Kappa League Member Number Three	Sunday, March 13
<hr/>	
Interview Dates for Kappa League Parent	Day, Date/2011
Kappa League Parent Number One	Wednesday, March 9
Kappa League Parent Number Two	Thursday, March 10
Kappa League Parent Number Three	Sunday, March 13
<hr/>	
Interview Dates for Kappa League Advisors	Day, Date/2011
Kappa League Advisor Number One	Thursday, March 10
Kappa League Advisor Number Two	Saturday, March 12
<hr/>	
Interview Dates for School Administrators	Day, Date/2011
School Administrator Number One	Monday, March 7
School Administrator Number Two	Saturday, March 12

**Findings**

The results of this study were used to answer each of the research questions. This section was organized through the use of research questions by providing the first question, the findings, and a discussion of these findings at the end of this section. The same process was utilized for questions two, three, four and five. The overarching research question was then discussed and included in the summary at the end of this chapter. For the purpose of reporting results, each participant has been identified as



Kappa League Member One, Kappa League Parent One, Kappa League Advisor One, and School Administrator One, etc. Kappa League Member background factors data were reported first.

**Participants:**

Kappa League Member **One**. Kappa League Member One is a 17 years old African-American male senior at Henry County High School in Stockbridge, Georgia. He has been a member of the Stockbridge-Jonesboro Kappa League for 3 years. He has served as president of the Kappa League for 2 years. Additionally, he is a major in the JROTC program in at Henry County High School.

Kappa League Member **Two**. Kappa League Member Two is an 18 years old African-American male senior at Morrow High School in Morrow, Georgia. He has been a member of the Stockbridge-Jonesboro Kappa League for three years. He has served as vice-president of the Kappa League for one year. Additionally, he is the choir director for his church youth choir.

Kappa League Member **Three**. Kappa League Member Three is a 17 years old African-American male senior at Jonesboro High School in Jonesboro, Georgia. He has been a member of the Stone Mountain –Lithonia Kappa League for three years. He has served as president of the Kappa League for one year. Additionally, he is a first sergeant in the JROTC program in at Morrow High School.

Kappa League Parent **One**. Kappa League Parent One is a 37 years old single mother of two. She is a customer service representative with Comcast.

Kappa League Parent **Two**. Kappa League Parent Two is a 40 years old single mother. Her son is an only child. She has been in law enforcement for 10 years.

Kappa League Parent **Three**. Kappa League Parent Three is a 38 years old single mother of three. She is a schoolteacher with Clayton County Schools.

Kappa League Mentor/Advisor **One**. Kappa League Mentor/Advisor One has been a mentor for 10 years. He is 47 years old. He serves as the chief of probations in DeKalb county Georgia. He is married with two children.

Kappa League Mentor/Advisor **Two**. Kappa League Mentor/Advisor Two has been a mentor for 8 years. He is 41 years old. He is an assistant principal in Clayton County Schools. He is single.

School Administrator Number **One**. School Administrator Number One is 40 years old. He is an assistant principal in Clayton County Schools. He is married with two children.

School Administrator Number **Two**. School Administrator Number Two is 50 years old. She is an assistant principal in Henry County Schools. She is married with two children.

### **Research Question 1: Mentee's Perceptions of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League's Effectiveness**

Kappa League Member One stated that the Kappa League had provided him life skills that he would not have been exposed to without a strong male role model. Additionally, he stated that he has learned many leadership skills. He said this during our interview:

Well, in the Kappa League, I've learned a lot, leadership being one. Also, I've learned how to get along better with -- better with others. Because at first -- because a lot of the community service that we do, that I used to didn't do a lot of community service. But now, I've learned how to help a lot of people without,

you know, using money but giving back. That was a big thing, giving back.

Additionally, he discussed the effect the non-instructional activities had on his academic performance. When the question was asked, "Does the experiences of the Kappa League affect your academic performance in school?" he stated,

Academic performance? Well, I know sometimes we have speakers that come and tell us how like things that we have to do to prepare for college. Since I'm a senior, I've gotten a lot of tips from the speakers about college and time management, study habits, just different techniques that -- that they say we should use to get -- keep our grades up and not to -- like the biggest thing they always talk about is not to rely on sports, which I think is true because sports won't always last and you have to have the academic grades to get where you want to be and be successful.

Additionally, he continued to explain the effects of the Kappa League program on his academic performance.

I mean, I took those words to heart. And like, I use the tips that they give us from the study habits and things. I took those like I remember one time, they told us to do whatever our teacher says in class or whatever we feel is important, write it down. Ever since that, I always keep a notepad with me. All right. Matter of fact, I have it right now with me because since I'm fixing to go to this meeting, I keep a notepad with me all the time and I take notes every single time I hear something important. Or even if it's not important, I still write it down just in case.

Kappa League Member Two stated that his experience with the African American men of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity who served as mentors had a great effect on him. The

expectations of the Kappa League program served as an external factor that impacted his academic achievement.

Well, my experience in the Kappa League, I really can say that I like it and with that being said, I think all the Kappa mentors themselves are great men. They know how to prepare you for the life which is called adulthood. They know how to prepare you to be a good young man, how to respect woman, how to just go out and be able to, you know, show your skills as a Kappa Leaguer.

Additionally, he stated that his leadership position requires him to hold himself to a higher standard than the rest of the students. He stated it this way:

As far as in my position that I hold in Kappa League, I can really say that to me holding such a high -- well, the second high position, I can really say it requires to me to not only show my respect to adults, but also to keep my grades up and keep my GPA up because I can't have a 1.2 and be the vice president of Kappa League. So I think if you are holding a high position, then you should have all the qualities necessary to meet that, you know, requirement.

Kappa League Member Three talked about the Kappa League helping him set goals and an emphasis on academic excellence. The Kappa League advisors check on the members in and out of school.

Well, with me, I can say it like this. I know a lot of people in the Kappa League and I know they look at me as being that type of person -- well, being that I am vice president because I was promoted within a year. So with that being said, I think they look at me as being that I have to do my work and they check on you. They check on you at school. They check and see if the grades are, you know, up to par. But with me, I can really say it gives me motivation because when I think

about the rank that I hold, then I'm like yeah I've got to do it, I've got to keep my grades up. So yeah, if -- yeah, it influenced me to keep on doing what I've got to do.

Additionally, he talked about the community service that Kappa League members conducted with their mentors. He stated that the community service made him understand how blessed he was. He stated it this way:

Oh. When we do the highway clean up, we go up and down the highway and pick up trash. And then the winterization, when we go and patch up people's houses who -- like the windows and stuff. Also, the can food drive, we go and bring cans to -- to the needy people. And the nursing homes, we do nursing home visits.

When we do the community service events it makes me feel proud about being a member of the Kappa League. It is nice to be able to help people in need.

**Summary.** For research question number one, the Kappa League members identified multiple factors as evidence of the effectiveness of the Kappa League program. The members believed that these factors impacted the academic and social success of African American males. Table 2 summarizes the patterns that emerged:

Table 2

*First Iteration of Code Mapping: Initial Patterns*

	Kappa League Members		
	1	2	3
1a. Lack of Positive Role Models	X	X	X
2a. Need for Mentors	X	X	X
3a. School and Kappa League Connection	X	X	X
4a. Mentee Goal Setting	X	X	X
5a. Peer Relations	X	X	X
6a. Leadership Traits	X	X	X
7a. Community Service	X	X	X
8a. Emphasis on Academic Success	X	X	X
9a. Mentee Study Habits	X	X	X
10a. Public Speaking Skills	X	X	X
11a. Providing Resources	X	X	
12a. Setting Expectation Levels	X	X	
13a. Establishing Supportive Relationships	X	X	
14a. Character Building	X	X	
15a. Life Skills Training	X	X	X
16a. Good Family Structure			
17a. Good Morals, Good Values			
18a. Good Organizational skills	X	X	
19a. Extra Curricular Activities	X	X	X
20a. Peer Pressure	X	X	
21a. Black Males' Self Perceptions	X	X	
22a. Single Parent Household	X	X	X
23a. Shortage of Black Teachers (Male)			
24a. Absent Fathers	X	X	
25a. Time Management Training	X	X	
26a. Setting High Expectation Levels	X	X	X
27a. Providing Tutorial and Remediation			
28a. Job Opportunities			
29a. Grant/Monetary Incentives			
30a. Individual Student Advisement/Counseling	X	X	
31a. Highlighting the Historical Contributions Of Blacks in America			

## **Research Question 2: Mentors' Perception of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League's Effectiveness**

Kappa League Mentor/Advisor One stated that the Kappa League program has been a model program to transform the lives of African-American male students. He stated that the Kappa League members look to the mentors of Kappa Alpha Fraternity to mold them into great young men. He stated it this way:

The Kappa League program, my experience, I have been the Kappa League director for Stockbridge-Jonesboro for approximately three years. I've had the opportunity to be and watch individuals that's gone before me, i.e. as yourself, Christopher Johnson, and Jeffrey Dinkins, and realize the importance and commitment that it takes to insure that our kids is in programs that they can benefit from to be better individuals in the community and better individuals at home.

More experience is I've learned that kids pretty much are like clay on the wheel. You have to mold those individuals and get the best out of those individuals, motivate them to become the people that they are and the people that can pretty much be leaders in our community. I have witnessed this as the Kappa League Director.

Additionally, he stated that he felt that the Kappa League program had a positive effect on the Kappa League members peer relations in and out of school. He stated it this way:

Yes. One, what it does it established individual commitment to be the best that they can be in all aspects of life, have the respect for others, dress for success that leads to other students in the community to dress up and follow their leadership and they stand out from the rest. They do the things that are necessary to better themselves in all aspects, academically, socially, and spiritually.

Furthermore, he went on to say that the Kappa League mentors have to provide the members with life skills training. He stated that peer pressure is a major barrier to the academic and social success of African-American males. He said it this way:

One major barrier is that all students today are faced with more -- more peer pressure than it has been in the past. We have to insure that we give every aspect to these kids to insure that they have the best avenues to become better individuals for one. We have to be listeners. We have to insure that they are accountable for their actions. We also must insure that every opportunity is given to these individuals that are in the Kappa League program to insure that they become better individuals and to be the leaders that they will be to as the future entails these individuals.

Kappa League Mentor/Advisor Two stated that the non-instructional strategies used by the Kappa League program caused the African American male students to become role models for their peers. Furthermore, the expectations of the Kappa League program served as an external factor that impacted the members academic achievement. He stated it this way:

To be a member of the Kappa League program, one of our requirements is that those individual students perform very well in the academic field. They'll learn that they have organizational skills, to behave in the classroom, to make sure that they set the example for other students. Also, it enhances the balancing of social and academic skills.

Additionally, he stated that the Kappa League members must follow all of the rules at school. He explained:

One criterion is the individual cannot be a troubled student. He has to attend



school on a regular basis. He cannot have any in-school suspensions. He must report to his school on time. He must have no disciplinary actions governed against him within any classroom. He must also make sure that he turns in all assignments when asked to do so.

Finally, he stated that a barrier to the academic and social success of African-American males was in the area of financial help and scholarships. As he noted,

A huge barrier is -- it goes back to the financial realm. The way times are now, assistance in teaching and governing these kids on how to reach out and get the best resources that's out in the community that benefit them and to insure that they have every opportunity to be the best student that they can be academically.

**Summary.** For research question number two, the Kappa League Mentor/Advisor identified multiple factors as evidence of the effectiveness of the Kappa League program. The members believed that these factors impacted the academic and social success of African American males. Table 2 (see page 90) summarizes the patterns observed in the analysis of the data.

### **Research Question 3: Principals' Perception of the Effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League**

School Administrator One stated that strong mentoring programs and community partnerships have been very effective in transforming the lives of African-American male students. He stated that the Kappa League members look to the mentors of Kappa Alpha Fraternity to mold them into great young men. The lack of positive role models and a need for mentors was initial codes provided by the review literature during the first iteration analysis of the data. He stated it this way:

Well, actually that's one thing that we've been working on primarily with our

counselors. There's several different strategies that we've had. One being a strong mentoring program. The other is community partnerships where we have several community partners come in to address our students, not only the African-American males but any at-risk student, which the African-American males are our highest average student at our school right now.

Additionally, he stated that he felt that the Kappa League program had a positive effect on the Kappa League members peer relations. The Kappa League members had become role models for the entire student body. The program was transforming the lives of its members. He stated it this way:

I just want to say it's been a very, very dynamic experience. I've actually had the opportunity to witness young men evolve in a short amount of time. I've seen some of them who I've known prior to with the sagging of the pants now are dressed in bow ties, white shirts, black pants, a belt to match the shoes as well.

I've seen, you know, the ones who used to lag and be late to class or, you know, playing around in the hallways, not serious about school, they have actually turned, you know, and did a 180 and now they're the first students in the class. They're the well behaved, the well dressed students in the building.

Furthermore, he went on to explain that the Kappa League members have provided great community service to the school. The sense of community and helping out the environment is a trait that is not common to *at-risk* African-American males. Providing a school to Kappa League connection and community service was an element of success mentoring programs provided in the literature (Lee, 2008). Finally, he stated that the growth that he has seen in these students is in a word, remarkable. He said it this way:

I do know specific projects that the Kappa League students are doing in the community and right around our school. They did a school beautification project where they planted flowers out in the front of the courtyard. They put down new pine straw. They painted the benches. I know they've also adopted the highway that's right in front of our school so once a month I see them out in their orange jackets and they're out picking up trash from the front of the streets and leaving the orange bags to get picked up.

School Administrator Two stated that an emphasis on academic achievement is a requirement of the Kappa League program. The Kappa League has been very effective in providing the African-American male students that are members with external motivation for academic and social success. She stated it this way:

Let me say as far as the academics is concerned, I know in order to even be in the program in our school, they have to maintain at least a 2.6 GPA, just a little above a C average. That's the first thing.

I also know that they're on point cards where teachers have to sign off each week stating that they've completed all their assignments, that they were attentive in class, that they've actually given feedback and participated during the class. So I do know that academics is a strong portion of their program. And so I do believe that they are affecting their grades. Once again, they have to maintain a certain GPA so I think that speaks, you know, to that in volumes.

Additionally, she stated that she measures the effectiveness of the Kappa League program by the same yard stick as other educational programs. It is all in the data. Schools are data driven. Setting high expectations is important to any mentoring program. The Kappa League members are making positive trends in academics and social

success. She went as far as to state that Kappa League members are role models. She stated it this way:

In the world of education, there's only one thing we hold true to, the disaggregation of data. We make every decision that concerns the instructional or the social programs in our school based on data. This data is usually quantifiable where we're collecting test scores, whether it be writing, graduation tests, common probes, weekly assessments, those types of things and we look for trends.

And I was particularly interested in finding out, you know, was this program actually making a difference. I saw once again, you know, their appearance changing. I know that the requirements for the GPA were there, but I wanted to see did anyone exceed those expectations. I do know from looking at the playing cards because I also look at them and sign them that the kids are participating at great lengths. That they know that they have to in order to maintain their position within the organization.

Furthermore, she went on to say that the Kappa League mentors have bridged the academic and social gap for African-American students. Establishing supportive relationships while providing an emphasis on academic success are two themes that were provided in the reading of the literature (Lee, 2008). The barriers to success for the Kappa League members were being aided by the mentors of Kappa Alpha Psi.

Additionally, Kappa League members have provided community service to the school.

She said it this way:

I will also say in some cases, you have to be very careful because the family life is quite different from that which we're putting before the kids as far as the

leadership and the morals and values and things. It's a little different so it's kind of hard to say your mom is wrong when you know she's doing this, this and this and your mentor is telling you that this, this and this is wrong.

So actually bridging the gap between, you know, the value systems of the family and the programs. And I can -- I believe that every principal will always say, you know, parental involvement and the lack thereof is still an issue even, you know, in this organization, the parental support. They'll let them participate, but they won't actively participate with them. So you have a child growing and being changed, but going back and seeing some of the same things because the parents aren't realizing what's being taught. The Kappa League mentors provide the extra adult involvement that is need to keep the students on tract

**Summary.** For research question number three, the school administrators identified multiple factors as evidence of the effectiveness of the Kappa League program. The members believed that these factors impacted the academic and social success of African American males. Table 2 (see page 90) summarizes the patterns that were identified in the first level of data analysis.

#### **Research Question 4: Parents' Perception of the Effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League**

Kappa League Parent One stated that the requirement that the Kappa League members maintain a 2.5 GPA was a great strategy to motivate her son to strive for academic excellence. In addition to her telling her son that grades were important, the Kappa mentors and the Kappa League program was an addition resource to aid in the academic and social success of her son. The emphasis on academic success was a theme that was provides in the literature (Lee, 2008). She stated it this way:

Well, one of the strategies that they used was that in order to get in the program, they do have a process where they look for a certain GPA. So they request that all the Kappa Leaguers at least have a 2.5. And on top of that, the Kappa League director as well as his assistant checks on the students at school, check on their grades, check on how they're doing by not only getting with the parents, but also the school administrators, especially if they foresee that there's any issues.

Additionally, she stated that she felt that the Kappa League mentors were great role models for her son. She stated that her saw the men of Kappa Alpha Psi as father figures. She was a single parent that could not provide her son with the leadership skills that a male could provide. The lack of positive role models and absent fathers was themes that were provided in the literature (Lee, 2008). She further explained:

And so I watch him after the first year, he did grow but he also told me one day, mom if I ever had to have anybody for a dad, I sure wish it was my Kappa League Advisor. And so that told me hey he's seen, you know, a lot of -- he found someone that he could look up to and believe it or not, he came to me mom I need a new pair of glasses and guess what, we wanted a pair of glasses like his Kappa League advisor.

Furthermore, she went on to say that here son's experience with the Kappa League had taught him leadership skills that he could apply to other areas of his life. She said it this way:

I do believe that the experience has helped him a lot because in conjunction with ROTC that he's in in school, ROTC gave him one style of leadership. But by his junior year when Mr. Hopkins them appointing him president of Kappa League, then it forced him to stand up in front of the group, speak more, practice on what

he was going to say, you know, learn about hey as a leader preparing, you know, a schedule or having an agenda ready, just getting up and being able to articulate and talk and not be nervous and practice on his public speaking skills.

Kappa League Parent two stated that an emphasis on academic achievement worked well with her already established requirements of above average academic success for her son. The emphasis on academic success was a theme that was provided in the literature (Lee, 2008). The Kappa League has been effective in providing her son with external motivation for academic and social success. She stated it this way:

So I do think, you know, academically it has helped a little bit because he realizes that guess what this is not just for me or because my momma's making me do it, but I've got to remember all the people that support me and that's, you know, depending on me to do well. Because like I tell him all the time, you're a leader no matter where you stand. So it's others looking at you, not just the people that support you, but what about the kids that are under you like in ROTC or the young kids in Kappa League that watch you.

Additionally, she stated that she measures the effectiveness of the Kappa League program by the parental involvement that allowed. She appreciated the Kappa League directors welcoming her input to work hand in hand to provide the Kappa League members with a mentoring program that was inclusive of all stakeholders in the mentees life. Establishing supportive relationships with the all the persons in the mentees life is one of the themes that was provided in from the literature (Lee, 2008). Finally, she stated that the barriers to success for African American male are being aided by the members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. She stated it this way:

Actually, the strategy slash criteria I use is that, you know, I ask the Kappa

League director to let me see what programs y'all have planned for them.

Because to me, it's important that they not waste the kid's time. And so my thing is I participate heavily in assisting them in coming up with the various different workshops that they present to the kids as well as, you know, who their incoming speakers are to be public service events that they -- that they attend.

Kappa League Parent Three stated that the Kappa League program had help build her son's self confidence and self esteem. Establishing good peer relationships with the all the persons in the mentees life is another theme that was provided in from the literature (Lee). Additionally, the program had helped her son develop leadership qualities or skills. She explained it this way:

The Kappa League has been very instrumental in providing leadership skills and mentoring, community exposure. Additionally, it's been an excellent experience for my family. I've had two children actually involved with Kappa League and introduced it to several family friends as well. It's been an excellent experience. I've watched the children grow, build a lot of self confidence, self esteem, develop leadership qualities or skills.

Additionally, she stated that the Kappa League mentors and the program helped her build his ability to be outspoken. He was once a quite student and now he has the confidence to speak on any subject.

Oh, yes. Again, my son has really blossomed. He was a more reserved child, not as outspoken. He seemed to lack some confidence. And I would have to say that being a part of the Kappa League program has really helped him develop into manhood. He's a lot more outspoken, a lot more confident, has a lot more direction.



Furthermore, she stated that the Kappa League had aided her son with the motivation to work very hard at his academic achievement in school. When asked if the Kappa League had effected her son academically, she said it this way:

Absolutely. Again, he has developed a lot of leadership and social skills through Kappa League. This past fall, he was one of the announcers during the homecoming festivities at his high school. And I don't think he would have been able to do that if he had not had the exposure through the Kappa League program.

**Summary.** For research question number four, the Kappa League parents identified multiple factors as evidence of the effectiveness of the Kappa League program. The Kappa League parents believed that these factors impacted the academic and social success of African American males. Table 2 (see page 90), summarizes the patterns that emerged from analysis of the interview data.

#### **Research Question 5: Best Practices Employed by the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League**

Kappa League Member One stated that the Kappa League had provided him life skills that he would not have been exposed to with a strong male role model. Additionally, he stated that he has learned many leadership skills. He said this during our interview,

Well, in the Kappa League, I've learned a lot, leadership being one. Also, I've learned how to get along better with -- better with others. Because at first -- because a lot of the community service that we do, that I used to didn't do a lot of community service. But now, I've learned how to help a lot of people without, you know, using money but giving back. That was a big thing, giving back.

Additionally, he discussed the effect the non-instructional activities had on his academic performance. When the question was asked, "Does the experiences of the Kappa League affect your academic performance in school?" He stated,

Academic performance? Well, I know sometimes we have speakers that come and tell us how like things that we have to do to prepare for college. Since I'm a senior, I've gotten a lot of tips from the speakers about college and time management, study habits, just different techniques that -- that they say we should use to get -- keep our grades up and not to -- like the biggest thing they always talk about is not to rely on sports, which I think is true because sports won't always last and you have to have the academic grades to get where you want to be and be successful.

Additionally, he went on to say this about the effects of the Kappa League program on his academic performance:

I mean, I took those words to heart. And like, I use the tips that they give us from the study habits and things. I took those like I remember one time, they told us to do whatever our teacher says in class or whatever we feel is important, write it down. Ever since that, I always keep a notepad with me. All right. Matter of fact, I have it right now with me because since I'm fixing to go to this meeting, I keep a notepad with me all the time and I take notes every single time I hear something important. Or even if it's not important, I still write it down just in case.

Kappa League Member Two stated that his experience with the African American men of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity that served as mentors had a great effect on him. The

expectations of the Kappa League program served as an external factor that impacted his academic achievement.

Well, my experience in the Kappa League, I really can say that I like it and with that being said, I think all the Kappa mentors themselves are great men. They know how to prepare you for the life which is called adulthood. They know how to prepare you to be a good young man, how to respect woman, how to just go out and be able to, you know, show your skills as a Kappa Leaguer.

Additionally, he stated that his leadership position requires him to hold himself to a higher standard than the rest of the students. He stated it this way:

As far as in my position that I hold in Kappa League, I can really say that to me holding such a high -- well, the second high position, I can really say it requires to me to not only show my respect to adults, but also to keep my grades up and keep my GPA up because I can't have a 1.2 and be the vice president of Kappa League. So I think if you are holding a high position, then you should have all the qualities necessary to meet that, you know, requirement.

Kappa League Member Three talked about the Kappa League helping him set goals and an emphasis on academic excellence. The Kappa League advisors check on the members in and out of school.

Well, with me, I can say it like this. I know a lot of people in the Kappa League and I know they look at me as being that type of person -- well, being that I am vice president because I was promoted within a year. So with that being said, I think they look at me as being that I have to do my work and they check on you. They check on you at school. They check and see if the grades are, you know, up to par. But with me, I can really say it gives me motivation because when I think

about the rank that I hold, then I'm like yeah I've got to do it, I've got to keep my grades up. So yeah, if -- yeah, it influenced me to keep on doing what I've got to do.

Additionally, Kappa League Member Three talked about the community service that Kappa League members conducted with their mentors. He stated that the community service made him understand how blessed he was. He stated it this way:

Oh. When we do the highway clean up, we go up and down the highway and pick up trash. And then the winterization, when we go and patch up people's houses who like the windows and stuff. Also, the can food drive, we go and bring cans to the needy people. And the nursing homes, we do nursing home visits. When we do the community service events it makes me feels proud about being a member of the Kappa League. It is nice to be able to help people in need.

School Administrator One stated that the Kappa League members look to the mentors of Kappa Alpha Fraternity to mold them into great young men. Additionally, he stated that he felt that the Kappa League program had a positive effect on the Kappa League members peer relations. The Kappa League members had become role models for the entire student body. The program was transforming the lives of is members. He stated it this way:

I just want to say it's been a very, very dynamic experience. I've actually had the opportunity to witness young men evolve in a short amount of time. I've seen some of them who I've known prior to with the sagging of the pants now are dressed in bow ties, white shirts, black pants, a belt to match the shoes as well.

I've seen, you know, the ones who used to lag and be late to class or, you know, playing around in the hallways, not serious about school, they have

actually turned, you know, and did a 180 and now they're the first students in the class. They're the well behaved, the well dressed students in the building.

I've seen and know of one particular case where one student who primarily did not like school at all and actually, you know, in his words just a few days ago, he told me that he would not have been in school this long this year if it wasn't for Kappa League. He was thinking about quitting school. And so I've seen great success in a short amount of time with some children -- and I don't think no child is unreachable, but it has to take a special program or special person to encourage these students to want to have change so quickly.

Furthermore, he went on to say that the Kappa League members have provided great community service to the school. The sense of community and helping out the environment is a trait that is not common to *at-risk* African-American males. Finally, he stated that the growth that he has seen in these students is in a word, remarkable. He said it this way:

I do know specific projects that the Kappa League students are doing in the community and right around our school. They did a school beautification project where they planted flowers out in the front of the courtyard. They put down new pine straw. They painted the benches. I know they've also adopted the highway that's right in front of our school so once a month I see them out in their orange jackets and they're out picking up trash from the front of the streets and leaving the orange bags to get picked up.

I see the effect that they're having on their peers. Because like once again, some of those students weren't typically quote-unquote the good students or the strong academic students. But now, since the inception of this program, they're

seen in a different light so it's affecting their peers to know that, you know, change is possible.

And you know, not all of them have, you know, a bad story or a bad background. You know, some, you know, more so than others, but all of them have proven to have grown and like I said in such a short amount of time that it's absolutely remarkable.

School Administrator Two stated that an emphasis on academic achievement is a requirement of the Kappa League program. The Kappa League has been very effective in providing the African-American male students that are members with external motivation for academic and social success. She stated it this way:

Let me say as far as the academics is concerned, I know in order to even be in the program in our school, they have to maintain at least a 2.6 GPA, just a little above a C average. That's the first thing.

I also know that they're on point cards where teachers have to sign off each week stating that they've completed all their assignments, that they were attentive in class, that they've actually given feedback and participated during the class. So I do know that academics is a strong portion of their program. And so I do believe that they are affecting their grades. Once again, they have to maintain a certain GPA so I think that speaks, you know, to that in volumes.

Kappa League Parent One stated that the requirement that the Kappa League members maintain a 2.5 GPA was a great strategy to motivate her son to strive for academic excellence. In addition to her telling her son that grade were important the Kappa mentors and the Kappa League program was an addition resource to aid in the academic and social success of her son. She stated it this way:

Well, one of the strategies that they used was that in order to get in the program, they do have a process where they look for a certain GPA. So they request that all the Kappa Leaguers at least have a 2.5. And on top of that, the Kappa League director as well as his assistant checks on the students at school, check on their grades, check on how they're doing by not only getting with the parents, but also the school administrators, especially if they foresee that there's any issues.

And the Kappa League directors are very clear with the Kappa Leaguers that one of their main focuses is academics. They stress academic success and that if they do not maintain their grades that it's a possibility that they will get kicked off the program.

Kappa League Mentor/Advisor Two. Kappa League Mentor/Advisor Two stated that the non-instructional strategies used by the Kappa League program caused the African American male students to become role models fro their peers. Furthermore, the expectations of the Kappa League program served as an external factor that impacted the members academic achievement. He stated it this way:

To be a member of the Kappa League program, one of our requirements is that those individual students perform very well in the academic field. They'll learn that they have organizational skills, to behave in the classroom, to make sure that they set the example for other students. Also, it enhances the academic and in balancing social skills and academic skills.

Additionally, he stated that the Kappa League members must follow all of the rules at school. He stated it this way:

One criterion is the individual cannot be a troubled student. He has to attend school on a regular basis. He cannot have any in-school suspensions. He must report to his school on time. He must have no disciplinary actions governed

against him within any classroom. He must also make sure that he turns in all assignments when asked to do so.

For research question number five, the Kappa League, members, advisors, parents, and school administrators identified multiple best practices used to make the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League an effective mentoring program. They believed that these practices impacted the academic and social success of African American males. Tables 2 (see page 90) depicts patterns from the data analysis, many which point toward “best practices” for youth mentoring programs.

### **Impact of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League impact the Academic and Social Success of African American Adolescent Males**

The central question in this investigation focused on whether the Kappa Leadership and Development League is having a positive impact on the academic and social success of African American adolescent males. The voices of the Kappa Leaguer themselves add further evidence for the patterns that emerge from the data.

Kappa League Mentor/Advisor One stated that the Kappa League program has been a model program to transform the lives of African-American male students. He stated that the Kappa League members look to the mentors of Kappa Alpha Fraternity to mold them into great young men. The strategies used by the Kappa League were stated by him during our interview in this way:

One, we try to have an overall consensus of good leadership skills. Two, organizational skills. Three, participate in extracurricular activities to make that individual or individuals well-rounded. These are the areas that we concentrate on with the Kappa League members. Outside of the education system, we try to accomplish social activities to balance the program itself. I.E. Kappa League



conference end of the year or one of those students that participate and do well in the academic field. Participate in different parades to give back to the community. Field trips, college tours to be well-balanced students.

Kappa League Mentor/Advisor Two stated that the non-instructional strategies used by the Kappa League program caused the African American male students to become role models for their peers. Furthermore, the expectations of the Kappa League program served as an external factor that impacted the members academic achievement. He stated it this way:

To be a member of the Kappa League program, one of our requirements is that those individual students perform very well in the academic field. They'll learn that they have organizational skills, to behave in the classroom, to make sure that they set the example for other students. Also, it enhances the academic and in balancing social skills and academic skills.

Additionally, he stated that the Kappa League members must follow all of the rules at school. He stated it this way:

One criterion is the individual cannot be a troubled student. He has to attend school on a regular basis. He cannot have any in-school suspensions. He must report to his school on time. He must have no disciplinary actions governed against him within any classroom. He must also make sure that he turns in all assignments when asked to do so.

Kappa League Member One stated that the Kappa League had provided him leadership training and skills that he would not have been exposed to without a strong male role model. He said this during our interview:

As a Kappa Leaguer, I am -- well, first of all, president. I was supposed to be on

step team, but drill team kind of got in the way of that so I don't know if that really count. I participate in all the community service. I do all the -- oh, I go to the conference, the Kappa League conference, participate in that. I go to many meetings and community service events. And that's about it.

Additionally, he discussed the effect the non-instructional activities had on his academic performance. When the question was asked, "Does the experiences of the Kappa League affect your academic performance in school?" He stated,

Academic performance? Well, I know sometimes we have speakers that come and tell us how like things that we have to do to prepare for college. Since I'm a senior, I've gotten a lot of tips from the speakers about college and time management, study habits, just different techniques that -- that they say we should use to get -- keep our grades up and not to -- like the biggest thing they always talk about is not to rely on sports, which I think is true because sports won't always last and you have to have the academic grades to get where you want to be and be successful.

Additionally, he went on to say this about the effects of the Kappa League program on his academic performance:

I mean, I took those words to heart. And like, I use the tips that they give us from the study habits and things. I took those like I remember one time, they told us to whatever our teacher says in class or whatever we feel is important, write it down. Ever since that, I always keep a notepad with me. All right. Matter of fact, I have it right now with me because since I'm fixing to go to this meeting, I keep a notepad with me all the time and I take notes every single time I hear something important. Or even if it's not important, I still write it down just in case.

Kappa League Member Two stated that his experience with the African American men of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity that served as mentors had a great effect on him. The expectations of the Kappa League program served as an external factor that impacted his academic achievement.

Well, my experience in the Kappa League, I really can say that I like it and with that being said, I think all the Kappa mentors themselves are great men. They know how to prepare you for the life which is called adulthood. They know how to prepare you to be a good young man, how to respect woman, how to just go out and be able to, you know, show your skills as a Kappa Leaguer.

Additionally, he stated that his leadership position requires him to hold himself to a higher standard than the rest of the students. He stated it this way:

As far as in my position that I hold in Kappa League, I can really say that to me holding such a high -- well, the second high position, I can really say it requires me to not only show my respect to adults, but also to keep my grades up and keep my GPA up because I can't have a 1.2 and be the vice president of Kappa League. So I think if you are holding a high position, then you should have all the qualities necessary to meet that, you know, requirement.

Kappa League Member Three talked about the Kappa League helping him set goals and an emphasis on academic excellence. The Kappa League advisors check on the members in and out of school.

Well, with me, I can say it like this. I know a lot of people in the Kappa League and I know they look at me as being that type of person -- well, being that I am vice president because I was promoted within a year. So with that being said, I think they look at me as being that I have to do my work and they check on you.

They check on you at school. They check and see if the grades are, you know, up to par. But with me, I can really say it gives me motivation because when I think about the rank that I hold, then I'm like yeah I've got to do it, I've got to keep my grades up. So yeah, if -- yeah, it influenced me to keep on doing what I've got to do.

Additionally, he talked about the community service that Kappa League members conducted with their mentors. He stated that the community service made him understand how blessed he was. He stated it this way:

Oh. When we do the highway clean up, we go up and down the highway and pick up trash. And then the winterization, when we go and patch up people's houses who -- like the windows and stuff. Also, the canned food drive, we go and bring cans to -- to the needy people. And the nursing homes, we do nursing home visits. When we do the community service events it makes me feels proud about being a member of the Kappa League. It is nice to be able to help people in need.

School Administrator One stated that the Kappa League members look to the mentors of Kappa Alpha Fraternity to mold them into great young men. Additionally, he stated that he felt that the Kappa League program had a positive effect on the Kappa League members peer relations. The Kappa League members had become role models for the entire student body. The program was transforming the lives of is members. He stated it this way:

I've seen and know of one particular case where one student who primarily did not like school at all and actually, you know, in his words just a few days ago, he told me that he would not have been in school this long this year if it wasn't for Kappa League. He was thinking about quitting school.

Furthermore, he went on to say that the Kappa League members have provided great community service to the school. The sense of community and helping out the environment is a trait that is not common to *at-risk* African-American males. Finally, he stated that the growth that he has seen in these students is in a word, remarkable. He said it this way:

I do know specific projects that the Kappa League students are doing in the community and right around our school. They did a school beautification project where they planted flowers out in the front of the courtyard. They put down new pine straw. They painted the benches. I know they've also adopted the highway that's right in front of our school so once a month I see them out in their orange jackets and they're out picking up trash from the front of the streets and leaving the orange bags to get picked up.

School Administrator Two stated that an emphasis on academic achievement is a requirement of the Kappa League program. The Kappa League has been very effective in providing the African-American male students that are members with external motivation for academic and social success. She stated it this way:

Let me say as far as the academics is concerned, I know in order to even be in the program in our school, they have to maintain at least a 2.6 GPA, just a little above a C average. That's the first thing.

I also know that they're on point cards where teachers have to sign off each week stating that they've completed all their assignments, that they were attentive in class, that they've actually given feedback and participated during the class. So I do know that academics is a strong portion of their program. And so I do believe that they are affecting their grades. Once again, they have to maintain

a certain GPA so I think that speaks, you know, to that in volumes.

Kappa League Parent One stated that the requirement that the Kappa League members maintain a 2.5 GPA was a great strategy to motivate her son to strive for academic excellence. In addition to her telling her son that grade were important the Kappa mentors and the Kappa League program was an addition resource to aid in the academic and social success of her son. She stated it this way:

Well, one of the strategies that they used was that in order to get in the program, they do have a process where they look for a certain GPA. So they request that all the Kappa Leaguers at least have a 2.5. And on top of that, the Kappa League director as well as his assistant checks on the students at school, check on their grades, check on how they're doing by not only getting with the parents, but also the school administrators, especially if they foresee that there's any issues.

And they also let it be known to the Kappa Leaguers that one of the main focuses is academics. They stress academics and academic success and that if they do not maintain their grades that it's a possibility that they will get kicked off the program.

Kappa League Mentor/Advisor Two stated that the non-instructional strategies used by the Kappa League program caused the African American male students to become role models fro their peers. Furthermore, the expectations of the Kappa League program served as an external factor that impacted the members academic achievement. He stated it this way:

To be a member of the Kappa League program, one of our requirements is that those individual students perform very well in the academic field. They'll learn that they have organizational skills, to behave in the classroom, to make sure that

they set the example for other students. Also, it enhances the academic and in balancing social skills and academic skills.

Additionally, he stated that the Kappa League members must follow all of the rules at school. He stated it this way:

One criterion is the individual cannot be a troubled student. He has to attend school on a regular basis. He cannot have any in-school suspensions. He must report to his school on time. He must have no disciplinary actions governed against him within any classroom. He must also make sure that he turns in all assignments when asked to do so.

For the overarching research question, the Kappa League, members, advisors, parents, and school administrators identified multiple best practices used to make the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League an effective mentoring program to impact the academic and social success of the African-American male students. Table 2 (see page 90), depicts patterns that emerged from the interview data, which included best practices for mentoring adolescent males.

### **Emergent Themes**

The first iteration of analysis of the data compared the surface content from the participants' interviews with initial codes. This process included cross-case data analysis. A second iteration of analysis was conducted to explore the relationships between and among these patterns that were observed during the first iteration of analysis of the data. During this second stage of data analysis, the constant comparative method of Glaser and Strauss (1967) was used. As a consequence, seven themes emerged, as depicted in Table 3.

Table 3

*Second Iteration of Code Mapping: Major Themes*

	Kappa League Members		
	1	2	3
1b. Modeling Strong Achievement Values	X	X	X
2b. Achievement and goal-oriented behaviors	X	X	X
3b. Strong work ethic	X	X	X
4b. Emotional Support	X	X	X
5b. Support in school activities and encouragement in future aspirations	X	X	X
6b. Provided structure for them conducive to their learning and achieving	X	X	X
7b. Provided resources for them	X	X	X
8b. Served as educational resources for them by providing assistance	X	X	X

**Modeling Strong Achievement Values.** The first major theme that emerged from this second stage of analysis data was modeling strong achievement values. Kappa League members and parents in this study each reported that their Kappa mentors' attitudes, values, and behaviors concerning academic and social achievement had an impact on their own academic and social achievement. They indicated that they viewed their mentors and family members as achievers and that they had served as important models for their achievement values, goal-oriented behaviors, and work ethic. Kappa League members communicated that the values that their Kappa League mentors and family members held about achievement influenced their own academic and social achievement. Within the category of modeling achievement values, two sub-themes (a) achievement and goal-oriented behaviors; and (b) strong work ethic emerged from the data.



**Achievement and Goal-Oriented Behaviors.** Kappa League members in this study each identified their Kappa League mentors as models of success and achievement for them. The three reported that Kappa League mentors exhibited goal-oriented behaviors and served as models of achievement for them.

These students appeared to perceive that their Kappa League mentors attitudes and behaviors about academic and social achievement influenced their own academic and social success. In some cases participants described their Kappa League mentors as motivated individuals who's behaviors emphasized the importance of achievement for them.

Kappa League members indicated that their Kappa League mentors occupations, career choices, and the goals that they had achieved in their vocations provided a model of achievement for them. They identified their Kappa League mentors as achievers and as role models of achievement for them. Kappa League members made statements concerning their perceptions about how their Kappa League mentors goal-oriented behaviors, educational accomplishments, career choices, and professional success served as models of achievement for them. Several participants described how they perceived that their Kappa League mentors modeled achievement values for them.

As examples, Kappa League member one stated, "My Kappa League advisor is a supervisor on his job and he's an achiever too. Like some occupations, they take a long time to achieve, my Kappa League mentors gets them and then moves to something else bigger and better."

In the same manner, Kappa League member two stated, “I mean I am blessed to have a Kappa League advisor in my life. So, I think that’s really helped me to become successful as an African-American male.

**Strong Work Ethic.** In addition to goal-oriented behaviors identified by Kappa League mentors, Kappa League members, parents and school administrators each stated that modeling a strong work ethic as diligent workers who persevered to achieve success in their occupations was important theme for a mentoring program.

Kappa League parent one stated, “My son’s mentor is a superintendent. But, he was a teacher. He started as a teacher and built his way up to be successful. “ Also representative was the comment by Kappa League member three, who stated,

I admire my Kappa League mentor a lot because he is very successful. He is publicly retired, but he can’t stop working. He is always busy. When I was little, he worked at the University of Georgia and then he went and worked for Georgia Tech. He also worked at the Georgia Center for a little while. He was president of the Atlanta Chapter of a Hundred Black Men. He was in everything and I admire him so because he is so successful in everything and he has come a long way from where he started. He grew up on farm picking cotton.

**Encouragement and Support.** During the interview process, Kappa League members, parents, and school administrators frequently discussed how their Kappa League mentors provided emotional support and encouragement in educational pursuits, and school activities that influenced their achievement in school. Within the category of encouragement and support, two sub-themes emerged: (a) Emotional Support; and (b)

Support in school activities and encouragement in future aspirations. They indicated that their parent's support of them in various aspects of their lives contributed to their academic success.

***Emotional Support.*** Kappa League members often indicated that their Kappa League mentors were the most significant sources of emotional support for them. They appeared to perceive that the emotional support that they received from their Kappa League mentors indirectly impacted their being able to achieve academically and socially. The emotional support that they received from their Kappa League mentors gave them confidence in themselves to achieve, a sounding board, and gave them an outlet for emotional expression. These aspects of emotional support provided students with both direct and indirect encouragement for them in their pursuit of their goals, both academic and socially.

As Kappa League member one explained,

My Kappa League mentor, he's very nurturing, I mean, I listen to him and he is always talking to me constantly and you know, I pick up on the first time but he will telling me over again. He is very supportive of me. He is always telling me how proud he is of me, "I love you" and everything.

Kappa League members consistently reported that their mentors provided support for them seemed to send a message to them that they and their pursuits are important. They indicated that their Kappa League mentor provided consistent emotional support for them in every aspect of their lives.

*Support in School Activities.* Kappa League member described their Kappa League mentor as supporting and encouraging them in their extracurricular school activities as well as their academic pursuits. As Kappa League members three explained,

Anything that I am involved in, if there is an opportunity for him to be there, he will be there all the time. Like how I was telling you in ninth grade, when I wasn't even competing on the mock trial team, I was on the team, but not competing and he would come and watch the trial. So yeah, he come to everything related to school.

Parents also reported that Kappa League mentors provided support for league members participating in school activities.

Kappa League members, parents, and school administrators in this study reported that the Kappa League mentors influenced the academic and social achievement of the Kappa League members through their persistent tendency to monitor and support their achievement performance in school. They indicated that their Kappa League mentors' active involvement in their schooling process fostered their development as academic achievers. They communicated that their Kappa League mentors monitored and supported their achievement performance in several ways. They (a) provided structure for them conducive to their learning and achieving, (b) provided resources for them, and (c) served as educational resources for them by providing assistance.

School administrator one stated that the support that he had seen from the Kappa League mentors and program had helped many of the young men. He said explained it like this:

I've seen great success in a short amount of time with some children -- and I don't think no child is unreachable, but it has to take a special program or special

person to encourage these students to want to have change so quickly.

**Provided Structure for Learning.** In some cases, participants such as Kappa League member one stated that his Kappa League mentor provided structure and limits for him to do well in school by using the leverage of his involvement in extracurricular school activities such as basketball:

As the Kappa Leaguer stated, “If I pretty much make C’s, if I ever drop to a C, he has told me, he wouldn’t let me play basketball...that motivates me.”

**Educational assistance.** Kappa League members in this study also described their Kappa League mentors as educational resources for them. In some cases their Kappa League mentors would assist them with their school work. As Kappa League member one further explained, “My Kappa League mentor helps me proofread and stuff.”

**Educational resources.** In addition to Kappa League mentors providing educational assistance for Kappa League members in the study, Kappa League members perceived that their Kappa League mentors would readily provided any needed resources for them that would enhance their academic achievement in school. As Kappa League member two stated, “ My Kappa League mentor is always providing the resources that I may need to get a project done or a book that might be useful to me. Provides like a computer so I can look up stuff.”

## **Conclusions**

Following the second iteration of data analysis, a third and final iteration was performed in order to draw conclusions within the context of the research questions.

Table 4 depicts the results from this final stage.

Table 4

*Third Iteration Data Analysis: Conclusions*

### **Third Iteration: Best practices for youth mentoring**

<b>Relevant structures</b>	<b>Consistent guidance</b>	<b>Continuity of support</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided structure for them conducive to their learning and achieving</li> <li>• Provided resources for them</li> <li>• Served as educational resources for them by providing assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modeling Strong Achievement Values</li> <li>• Achievement and goal-oriented behaviors</li> <li>• Strong work ethic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support in school activities and encouragement in future aspirations</li> <li>• Emotional Support</li> </ul>

### **Second Iteration: Emergent Themes**

1. Modeling Strong Achievement Values
2. Achievement and goal-oriented behaviors
3. Strong work ethic
4. Emotional Support
5. Support in school activities and encouragement in future aspirations
6. Provided structure for them conducive to their learning and achieving
7. Provided resources for them
8. Served as educational resources for them by providing assistance

As previously evidenced, Kappa League members, their mentors, school administrators, and parents alike perceived the Kappa Leadership and Development League as highly effective in providing both direction and support for African American adolescent males. The program was found to employ best practices that previous research has identified for youth mentoring programs. But, beyond the perceived

effectiveness and reinforcement of best practices, the evidence points to members acquiring a greater sense self-worth. The themes derived from multiple stages of data analysis have a common thread the young men who are mentored through the Kappa League were seen as believing in their potential and as accepting the hard work that was needed to reach that potential.

### **Summary and Overview of Findings**

Results of this study have been organized in three major categories. First, open coding was performed in order to find recurring patterns. The researcher used a preliminary coding list for the first iteration of the data analysis. Then, a second iteration of analysis was conducted to explore the relationships between and among these patterns. Finally, a third iteration of analysis was performed to further reduce the findings into conclusions within the context of research questions. Since this investigation explored two separate Kappa Leagues, these three levels of analysis were conducted within each case. Then, the findings were consolidated into a single data set. The first iteration of data analysis found over thirty patterns. Then a second iteration of data analysis was performed, with eight themes emerging. These themes included, 1) modeling strong achievement values, 2) modeling achievement and goal-oriented behaviors, 3) modeling strong work ethic, 4) providing emotional support, 5) providing support in school activities and encouragement in future aspirations, 6) providing structure for them conducive to their learning and achieving, 7) providing resources for them, and 8) providing educational resources and assistance. Finally the, third iteration resulted in three best practices for youth mentoring. The best practices for youth mentoring are: 1) providing relevant structures, 2) providing consistent guidance, and 3) providing

continuity of support. The themes from the second iteration of the data was aligned with the best practices for youth mentoring as depicted in Table 4: Providing relevant structures was shown by mentors 1) providing structure for mentees conducive to their learning and achieving, 2) providing resources for them, and 3) providing educational resources and assistance. Providing consistent guidance was shown by mentors 1) modeling strong achievement values, 2) modeling achievement and goal-oriented behaviors, and 3) modeling strong work ethic. Finally, Providing continuity of support was shown by mentors 1) providing emotional support for mentees, and 2) providing support in school activities and encouragement in their future aspirations

The investigation began with a single overarching research question: How does the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League impact the academic and social success of African American adolescent males? In brief, mentoring by the Kappa League positively impacts the academic and social success of African American adolescent males by employing best practices associated with youth mentoring. These best practices for youth mentoring are: 1) providing relevant structures, 2) providing consistent guidance, and 3) providing continuity of support.



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes a brief summary of the study on, *Mentor Me to Mister, A Case Study of Mentoring through the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League*, and the impact the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League has on the academic and social success of African American males. It presents a brief summary, an analysis of the research findings, conclusions, and a discussion of the research findings, implications, and recommendations.

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to extend the field of research on the academic and social success of African American males by examining the non-academic strategies that the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League employs and the impact it has on African American male students. The primary goal of the research was to highlight non-instructional best practices for mentoring programs to improve the academic and social success of African American male students. This study looked at several issues. One was to determine what factors impacted African American male academic and social achievement as perceived by Kappa League members, parents, advisors/mentors and school administrators of Kappa League members. It also examined how those factors identified played a role in impacting the academic and social achievement of African American males.

The single overarching question for this study was: How does the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League impact the academic and social success of

African American adolescent males? In order to explore this question thoroughly, several sub-questions were used to guide this research:

1. How do mentees in the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League perceive the program's effectiveness?
2. How do mentors in the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League perceive the program's effectiveness?
3. How do high school principals perceive the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League after the program has been implemented in their school communities?
4. How do parents (or legal guardians) perceive the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League?
5. What best practices does the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League employ that makes it a unique mentoring program for African American male adolescents?

In order to answer the research questions, a qualitative design study was employed. The study consisted of a purposeful sampling of Kappa League members, their parents, their Kappa League advisors and one of their school administrators. Data were collected through the use of face-to-face interviews.

### **Analysis of the Research Findings**

#### **Mentee's Perceptions of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League's Effectiveness:**

Kappa Leadership and Developmental League mentees identified multiple strategies and related factors as evidence of the effectiveness of the Kappa League program. These factors indicate their understanding of the factors that impact the

academic achievement of African American males. A review of the literature on effective mentoring programs suggested several themes that a mentoring program might employ as strategies (Lee, 2008). The majority of the Kappa League members talked about these themes, which were as follows: the impact of a lack of positive role models, a need for mentors, the school and Kappa League connection, mentee goal setting, peer relations, leadership traits, community service, emphasis on academic success, mentee study habits, public speaking skills, providing resources, setting expectation levels, establishing supportive relationships, character building, life skills training, good organizational skills, extra curricular activities, peer pressure, black males' self perceptions, single parent household, absent fathers, and time management training. These strategies and related factors were identified by the Kappa League mentees as strong measures of the programs effectiveness. The factors aided in the academic and social achievement of African American males.

Reeves (2000) investigated the historical aspect of the impact of concentrated techniques used in targeted at-risk schools. A review of Reeves literature indicated that the high achieving schools were found to have five commonalities; the major one was a focus on academic achievement.

The majority of participants talked about the lack of positive role models in the Kappa League members lives, which they also indicated as having a negative impact on their academic achievement. Included in the discussion on the lack of positive role models was the identification of the absence of fathers in their lives (Hall, 2006). This observation coincides with the research regarding the possible impact of African American mentors in the lives of African American students, specifically African

American males. Literature further revealed a belief among some researchers in the field that for some African American children, African American mentors represent surrogate parent figures, disciplinarians, counselors, role models, and advocates. This cultural familiarity is believed by some to provide African American mentors greater ability to communicate with African American students about the personal value, the collective power and the political consequences of choosing academic achievement as opposed to failure. According to Hall (2006), African American mentors have personal experience and institutional knowledge that enables them to better help African American males navigate their way through society.

Some participants saw the establishing of stereotypes and stereotypical behavioral expectations for African American males as a factor impacting the academic achievement of African American males. Researchers have hypothesized that the psychic distress caused by negative stereotypes may be a factor in the underperformance of African American students (Steele & Aronson, 1998). Two participants reported incidents of being stereotyped and having stereotypical expectations set for them due to their being in the Kappa League. They reported that the Kappa League mentors and program provided them with the resources to navigate the peer pressure. A review of the literature revealed an awareness of the sentiments expressed by the participants regarding the impact of stereotypes and stereotypical behavioral expectations experienced imposed upon African American males (Steele & Aronson).

Two of three participants saw self-imposed low expectations among African American males as a factor impacting the academic achievement of African American males. The participants saw peer pressure from in school peers and well as neighborhood

peers who were not enrolled in school as a factor impacting the academic achievement of African American males. Some participants saw this negative peer pressure as a discouraging factor for African American males because succeeding academically is sometimes viewed by other African American males as not being cool. The participants' observations as stated coincide with a review of the literature as stated in research on the theory of cultural inversion (Ogbu, 2004). A review of the literature regarding the theory of cultural inversion indicated that African American students along with Hispanic students do appear to be members of a subculture that values academic achievement less than their White counterparts (Ogbu). The participants stated that the Kappa League helped them overcome the supposed subculture formed that was reported by Ogbu.

**Summary of mentees' perceptions.** An analysis of the findings indicates that Kappa League members are well aware of the factors that impact the academic and social achievement of African American males. Therefore, the researcher understands that the participants believe that multiple external and internal factors exist which impact the academic and social achievement of African American males. While participants identified factors as often residing within the family environment, school, community and within the child, the researcher understands that participants are acutely aware of these multiple factors and believe that once identified, factors must be addressed regardless of location or origin in order to impact the academic achievement of African American males.

The researcher's experiences as a African American male from a single parent household who was reared in a below middle class home and whose mother completed only high school understands the factors that African American males face on a daily

basis. Additionally, the researcher's father was incarcerated all of his adolescent years and had personal experience with the factors described by the participants surveyed. While the researcher understands that the factors described do have an impact, the researcher believes that African American males by virtue of being reared amidst the factors described by the participants are not automatically destined for a life of low academic achievement and school failure. Based on personal experience as a African American male and as a past Kappa League director, the researcher believes that while it is important that an awareness of the fact that the factors previously reported by the participants often do impact the academic and social achievement of some African American males, it is important that all stakeholders in African American males lives not develop a defeatist attitude regarding their ability to impact the academic and social achievement of African American males. Mentoring programs can impact the academic and social achievement of African American males by exposing to them to positive contributing factors. Just as with a virus or some other type of immune system invader, an effective mentoring program can allow some African American males to develop immunity to the reported negative factors and to flourish in spite of their presence.

### **Mentee's Perceptions of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League's Effectiveness**

The two Kappa League advisors/mentors saw the role of the advisor/mentor as being one who sets high academic and social expectation levels for mentees. The primary role of the advisor/mentor in impacting African American male achievement was to administer a model program to transform the lives of the participants.

The participants saw that providing the resources necessary to support the mentees academically and socially as an important role as a change agent in the mentees achievement. One advisor identified knowing mentees personally and establishing supportive relationships with them as being a necessary resource in impacting African American male achievement and a primary role of the mentor in impacting African American male achievement. Additionally the participants talked about collaboratively setting goals for the mentees to impact the academic achievement of African American males as another role of the mentor. A review of the literature reveals that research corroborates the participants' beliefs regarding the role of the mentor in setting goals and expectation levels. A review of the literature on the role of the mentor in impacting student achievement included as an objective of collaborative goal setting by the mentor as insuring that mentors reach acceptable levels of agreement regarding academic and social achievement (Lee, 2008). Additionally mentors talked about goal setting for mentees from the stand point of life skills training. A review of the literature indicates the importance of mentors establishing non-negotiable goals, which guide the establishment clear levels of acceptable behaviors for the mentees. These benchmarks led to the mentees following the rules at school and provided a road map for successful behaviors in society.

Mentor/advisors identified various roles that mentors play in impacting the academic and social achievement of African American males.

**Summary of mentor's perceptions.** An analysis of the findings indicate that Kappa League advisors/mentors are well aware of the role that mentors can play in impacting the academic and social achievement of African American males. Therefore,

the researcher understands that mentors believe that they can, do, and must play a decisive role in impacting the academic achievement of African American males.

The researcher, as a current mentor, understands the importance of mentoring programs being included in the strategic planning and establishing non-negotiable goals for African American males' academic and social achievement. The researcher understands that mentors in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be knowledgeable of curriculum and, be a capable negotiator and cheerleader for the providing of a quality education for African American males.

### **Administrators Perception of the Effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League**

The two administrative participants stated that strong mentoring programs and community partnerships have been very effective in transforming the lives of African-American male students. The administrator's primary role was to analyze the data to drive the setting of expectation levels for the programs in their schools. They stated that the Kappa League members look to the mentors of Kappa Alpha Fraternity to mold them into great young men.

Administrative participants identified a range of practices implemented by the Kappa League program to impact the academic and social achievement of African American males. The participants saw setting high expectation levels and mentor resources from the Kappa League program as key non-instructional practices implemented to impact the academic and social achievement of African American males. Evidence of this as reported by participants was the reduction of discipline referrals and increased focus on academic achievement for the Kappa League members. Requiring all



Kappa League members to maintain a 2.5 GPA or higher was great external motivation for the mentees. Additionally, the participants talked about the positive effects on peer relations that the Kappa League members had on the student body population. The Kappa League members were role models for the students. A review of the literature revealed that while mentors are not unique individuals they just have different life experiences and perspectives, mentors tend to have expectations for mentees that the mentees may not have had before the Kappa League intervention.

Participants identified that the implementation of individual student advisement and counseling to help African American males learn to deal with peer pressure and conflict as being a important non-instructional strategy provided by the Kappa League to impact African American male achievement. A review of the literature reveals the benefits of mentoring programs for African American males. An example cited was The Young Lions Program, which was designed for African American boys in grades 3-6 with the goal of the program being to help African American boys develop the motivation and skills necessary for academic success, positive and responsible social behavior, and an understanding and appreciation of African American culture and history. This is accomplished by providing opportunities for boys to spend quality educational time during the school day with an older African American male mentor. The mentor provides modeling of positive African American male attitudes, behaviors, and values (Lee, 2003).

**Summary of administrator's perceptions.** An analysis of the findings indicates that administrators of schools that have implemented the Kappa League program in their schools have seen evidence from the data that suggest that the program has had a positive impact on the academic and social achievement of African American males in their

schools. Therefore, the researcher understands that the practices identified by administrators are multifaceted and are implemented based on the administrators' identified beliefs about the current level of academic achievement among African American males in their schools. The practices identified by administrators are having a positive effect on the academic and social achievement of the African American males in their schools.

### **Parents' Perception of the Effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League**

The two Kappa League parent participants stated that the requirement that the Kappa League members maintain a 2.5 GPA was a great strategy to motivate their sons to strive for academic excellence. They felt that the Kappa mentors and the Kappa League program was an additional resource to aid in the academic and social success of their sons. The Kappa League's emphasis on academic and social success of all its members was a great motivation for the mentees.

The participants saw providing the resources necessary to support the mentees academically and socially as an important role of the mentors. One parent stated that the mentors establishing supportive relationships with the parents, school administrators and mentees was a necessary resource in impacting African American male achievement. She stated that she saw the men of Kappa Alpha Psi as father figures. She was a single parent who could not provide her son with the leadership skills that a male could provide. The lack of positive role models and absent fathers was a theme that were provided in the review of the literature (Lee, 2008). Additionally the participants talked about collaboratively setting goals for the mentees to impact the academic achievement of African American males as another role of the mentor. Kappa League Parent Three stated

that the Kappa League program had help build her son's self confidence and self esteem. A review of the literature on the role of the mentor in impacting student achievement included as an objective of collaborative goal setting by the mentor as insuring that mentors reach acceptable levels of agreement regarding academic and social achievement (Lee, 2008).

**Summary of parents' perceptions.** An analysis of the findings indicated that Kappa League parents were working hard to provide the necessary resources and strategies to impact the academic and social achievement of their African American male sons. Therefore, the researcher understands the participants believe that multiple external and internal factors exist which impact the academic and social achievement of African American males. The participants identified factors often residing within the family, school, or community environment and within the child. The researcher understands that the parent participants are acutely aware of these multiple factors and believe that once identified, the factors must be addressed regardless of location or origin in order to impact the academic and social achievement of African American males.

The researcher's experiences as an African American male from a single parent household with the mother as the head of the home allowed him to relate to the motivation of the parent mothers to provide resources for their sons to be successful. The parent participants felt that the Kappa League was a mentoring program that was having a profound impact on the academic and social achievement of their African American male sons by exposing to them to positive life experiences.

### **Best practices Employed by the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League**

An analysis of the findings indicates that the participants: Kappa League members, parents, advisors and administrators of schools that have implemented the Kappa League program in their schools have seen evidence from the data that suggest that the program has had a positive impact on the academic and social achievement of African American males in their schools.

The non-instructional strategies were delivered by one-on-one mentoring provided by the Kappa League mentors. The mentors were positive role models for the mentee by modeling strong achievement values, modeling achievement and goal-oriented behaviors, modeling a strong work ethic, providing emotional support, providing support in school activities and encouragement in future aspirations, providing structure for them conducive to their learning and achieving and providing educational resources for them by providing assistance when needed.

### **Impact of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League on the Academic and Social Success of African American Adolescent Males**

Kappa League members, their mentors, school administrators, and parents alike perceived the Kappa Leadership and Development League as highly effective in providing both direction and support for African American adolescent males. The program was found to employ best practices that previous research has identified for youth mentoring programs. However, beyond the perceived effectiveness and reinforcement of best practices, the evidence points to members acquiring a greater sense self-worth. The themes derived from multiple stages of data analysis have a common thread the young men who are mentored through the Kappa League were seen as

believing in their potential and as accepting the hard work that is need to reach that potential. Moreover, the young men were observed by the adult participants as respecting and valuing the interest that successful, adult men from their communities were taking in their futures.

### **Conclusions**

The researcher found that all the stakeholders involved in the lives of African American males are well aware of the factors that impact the academic achievement of African American males. The Kappa League is one of many great mentoring programs that has identified a range of multifaceted problems faced by African American males which impact the academic and social achievement of African American males. These factors identified were of an external as well as internal nature. The researcher further understands that, school administrators, being fully aware of the factors that impact the academic and social achievement of African American males, believe that they shoulder the responsibility of providing the leadership and resources necessary to address these factors if the lived experiences of African American males are to be positively impacted.

The researcher found that school administrators believe that they can play a vital role in the implementation of school level practices which impact the academic and social achievement of African American males in their schools. The researcher further understands fully that the Kappa League can play a role in the implementation of school level practices that impact the academic achievement of African American males.

The researcher found that administrators have implemented multiple school level practices to impact the academic achievement of African American males. There was no one set of practices identified that work for all. Additionally the researcher

found that while no one set of best practices exists, the participants surveyed have answered the clarion call to be about the business of impacting the lives of African American males by implementing what they believe to be effective practices. The Kappa Leadership and Developmental League mentors, rather than sit in judgment of African American males, the participants surveyed expressed belief in the realization that African American boys face obstacles, discouragements, and temptations to battle that are different from those of other students. Participants surveyed expressed a belief that African American males can succeed academically and socially; and that just as with other student populations, it should not be taken for granted that when African American males undertake academic tasks they will succeed. The researcher realizes that school administrators believe that while there are no easy answers to improving the lived experiences of African American males, the work must be begun and not end until no child is left behind.

### **Implications**

Based on the findings of this study, several implications are noted for using the study results. The implications are provided as follows:

1. Overall, respondents indicated a below average outlook for African American males raised in single parent homes without strong male role models.
2. The parents of African American males interviewed stated that they have low expectations for them and their future, without outside intervention.
3. When provided with strong adult male role models who take constant personal interest, African American adolescent males (at least those in this investigation)

responded with improved academic achievement and more socially appropriate behavior.

4. School administrators that partner with established African American male community groups can potentially see improved academic achievement and more socially appropriate behavior with their African American male populations.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study several recommendations are made.

Recommendations for implementing the results of the study and for further research are presented.

#### **Recommendations for Implementing the Results of the Study**

1. School Administrators seeking to meet the needs of the African American males in their schools who are not having academic and social success should utilize this study to identify the most recent, credible research available on the role of African American mentoring in the area of non-instructional strategies.
2. It is recommended that school administrators and school systems collaborate with established African American male community groups so that quality non-instructional strategies can be provided that meets the needs of all students, especially African American males.
3. It is recommended that school administrators provide parents with a list of African American male community groups that provide mentoring services in their geographic areas. The schools and school district offices should serve as a repository and distribution site for research based practices identified as being

effective in impacting the academic achievement of all students, specifically African American males.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

1. Given the limitations of this study, further research utilizing different research design should be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the Kappa Leadership and Developmental League.
2. Further research needs to be conducted on other mentoring programs for African American adolescent males.

### **Final Thoughts**

The researcher, as a African American male and veteran school administrator, understands and agrees that articulating the expectation that African American males can and are expected to achieve academic and social success is a key school district practice. The researcher, while appreciative of the many efforts made to provide remediation and credit recovery opportunities for African American males, believes that if appropriate teaching strategies and expectation levels are not meeting the needs of the African American males into the public school setting, the administration should look to start a mentoring program with community resources. The researcher is convinced that it is far better to engage in strategies that help insure that African American males succeed academically and socially than to continue to expect them to make it by themselves.



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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

As part of this interview, I must include a brief consent statement before we continue. The contents of this project will be analyzed as part of my doctoral dissertation at Georgia Southern University.

All information on your identity will be kept confidential unless otherwise required by law. If information about this interview is published, it will use pseudonyms or fake names. This project is for research and educational purposes only.

The research is not expected to cause any discomfort or stress. However, if you feel uncomfortable during the interviews, you may decline to answer and stop participating at any time without penalty. No risks are expected. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Do you have any questions?

During this interview, I will be taking written notes and this communication will be recorded for future transcription. At the conclusion and approval of this dissertation, all records will be destroyed. Do I have your permission to continue?

#### Kappa Leaguer (Mentee) Interview Questions

1. Describe yourself.
2. Tell me about the characteristics that you feel a person should have to be successful.
3. Tell me about your experience in the Kappa League.
4. What kind of activities do you participate in as a member of the Kappa League?
5. Do these experiences have any affect on your relationships with others? If so, how?
6. Do these experiences have any affect on your academic performance in school? If so, how?
7. Tell me about challenges, obstacles, or problems that you had to overcome in order to be successful. Did being a member of the Kappa League help you successfully overcome the challenge? If so, how?
8. Tell me about a memorable experience in the Kappa League. (What happened, who was involved? why is it memorable?)

## APPENDIX B

## INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

As part of this interview, I must include a brief consent statement before we continue. The contents of this project will be analyzed as part of my doctoral dissertation at Georgia Southern University.

All information on your identity will be kept confidential unless otherwise required by law. If information about this interview is published, it will use pseudonyms or fake names. This project is for research and educational purposes only.

The research is not expected to cause any discomfort or stress. However, if you feel uncomfortable during the interviews, you may decline to answer and stop participating at any time without penalty. No risks are expected. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Do you have any questions?

During this interview, I will be taking written notes and this communication will be recorded for future transcription. At the conclusion and approval of this dissertation, all records will be destroyed. Do I have your permission to continue?

## Principal/Administrator Interview Questions

1. What factors contribute to the academic and social success of African American male students in your school?
2. What programs or strategies have you utilized to impact academic and social success of African American male students in your school?
3. Tell me about your experience with the Kappa League program in your school.
4. Do you feel that these experiences have any affect on the Kappa Leaguers' relationships with others? Do they help the Kappa Leaguers' to be successful in school, in the community, or with their peers? If so, how?
5. Do you feel that these experiences have any affect on the Kappa Leaguers' academic performance in school? If so, how?
6. What criteria do you use to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and strategies implemented in your school to positively impact African American male students in your school?
7. What changes have you made or anticipate making after an analysis of the Kappa League program's effectiveness?
8. What are some of the barriers to improving African American male academic and social success?

## APPENDIX C

## INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

As part of this interview, I must include a brief consent statement before we continue. The contents of this project will be analyzed as part of my doctoral dissertation at Georgia Southern University.

All information on your identity will be kept confidential unless otherwise required by law. If information about this interview is published, it will use pseudonyms or fake names. This project is for research and educational purposes only.

The research is not expected to cause any discomfort or stress. However, if you feel uncomfortable during the interviews, you may decline to answer and stop participating at any time without penalty. No risks are expected. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Do you have any questions?

During this interview, I will be taking written notes and this communication will be recorded for future transcription. At the conclusion and approval of this dissertation, all records will be destroyed. Do I have your permission to continue?

## Kappa League Director/Advisor Interview Questions

1. What factors contribute to the academic and social success of African American male students?
2. What strategies are utilized by the Kappa League to impact academic and social success of African American male students in your program?
3. Tell me about your experience with the Kappa League program.
4. Do you feel that these experiences have any affect on the Kappa Leaguers' relationships with others? Do they help the Kappa Leaguers' to be successful in school, in the community, or with their peers? If so, how?
5. Do you feel that these experiences have any affect on the Kappa Leaguers' academic performance in school? If so, how?
6. What criteria do you use to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and strategies implemented by the Kappa League to positively impact African American male students?
7. What changes have you made or anticipate making after an analysis of the Kappa League program's effectiveness?
8. What are some of the barriers to improving African American male academic and social success?



## APPENDIX D

## INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

As part of this interview, I must include a brief consent statement before we continue. The contents of this project will be analyzed as part of my doctoral dissertation at Georgia Southern University.

All information on your identity will be kept confidential unless otherwise required by law. If information about this interview is published, it will use pseudonyms or fake names. This project is for research and educational purposes only.

The research is not expected to cause any discomfort or stress. However, if you feel uncomfortable during the interviews, you may decline to answer and stop participating at any time without penalty. No risks are expected. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Do you have any questions?

During this interview, I will be taking written notes and this communication will be recorded for future transcription. At the conclusion and approval of this dissertation, all records will be destroyed. Do I have your permission to continue?

## Parent or Guardian Interview Questions

1. What factors contribute to the academic and social success of African American male students?
2. What strategies are utilized by the Kappa League to impact academic and social success of your son in the program?
3. Tell me about your experience with the Kappa League program.
4. Do you feel that these experiences have any affect on your sons' relationships with others? Do they help your son to be successful in school, in the community, or with their peers? If so, how?
5. Do you feel that these experiences have any affect on your son's academic performance in school? If so, how?
6. What criteria do you use to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and strategies implemented by the Kappa League to positively impact your son?
7. What changes have you made or anticipate making after an analysis of the Kappa League program's effectiveness?
8. What are some of the barriers to improving African American male academic and social Success

APPENDIX E  
IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs		
<b>Institutional Review Board (IRB)</b>		
Phone: 912-478-0843		Veazey Hall 2021
		P.O. Box 8005
Fax: 912-478-0719	IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu	Statesboro, GA 30460

**To:** Christopher Eugene Johnson  
James E. Green  
Department of Educational Leadership

**CC:** Charles E. Patterson  
Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College

**From:** Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs  
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees  
(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

**Initial Approval Date:** March 2, 2011

**Expiration Date:** April 30, 2011

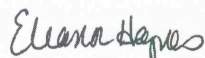
**Subject:** Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

After a review of your proposed research project numbered H11325 and titled "“Mentor me to Mister”, A Case study of Mentoring through the Kappa Leadership and Development League." it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable. You are authorized to enroll up to a maximum of 12 subjects.

*Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.*

If at the end of this approval period there have been no changes to the research protocol; you may request an extension of the approval period. Total project approval on this application may not exceed 36 months. If additional time is required, a new application may be submitted for continuing work. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, **whether or not it is believed to be related to the study**, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator prior to initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Haynes  
Compliance Officer