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How Well Does the New York State Higher Education Opportunity Program Work for Black Men? A Mixed Methods Study

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How Well Does the New York State Higher Education Opportunity Program Work

for Black Men? A Mixed Methods Study

A Dissertation Presented

by

MICHAEL ANGEL DEJESUS III

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DEDICATION

This dissertation and doctoral degree are dedicated to my mother the late Margaret

Priscilla DeJesus. You are the reason I am achieving my doctorate degree. You made

education a priority for me and my siblings. College was never an option. You

instilled in me the values, courage, wisdom, and knowledge that I hold sacred today.

You taught me that I should strive to be the best man that I could be, that I should

never settle, and that all I am given I should use to give back to others in need. You

did not only teach this, but you modeled this every day. You were a strong Black

woman who gave herself for us and I am forever grateful. You told me one day that I

will be a doctor. Well mama I made it! Thank you for your love! Thank you for

believing in me! You are gone but never forgotten.

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ABSTRACT

HOW WELL DOES THE NEW YORK STATE HIGHER EDUCATION

OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM WORK FOR BLACK MEN?

A MIXED METHODS STUDY

SEPTEMBER 2022

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Previous research trended towards a deficit-oriented approach to
understanding and explaining Black male underachievement. The past education
research has focused on discussing the underachievement of Black males in Higher
education. Finding solutions often were prescriptive in "fixing" behaviors in Black
males to improve academic achievement.

Additionally, there has been a trend towards race-neutrality in education
policies, programs, and admissions criteria. And there is a lack of research on whether
race-neutrality further exacerbates Black male underachievement by ignoring key race
and gender targeted supports services that could improve Black male academic
outcomes in higher education. While Black men have historically struggled to gain
full participation in the American education system; educational opportunity
programs have a long establish history of aiding historically disenfranchised groups
like Black males in gaining access to higher education. Government funded

opportunity programs tend not to target for race but rather use proxies for race like income.

There has not been much research on the success and academic outcomes for students who participate in educational opportunity programs. Furthermore, there is little to no research on the extent these educational opportunity programs assist Black males' entry, retention, and completion in college. This study uses panel data collected by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) on the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) between 2014-2019 to assess the extent to which services provided by HEOP impact Black male academic outcomes. Additionally, this study analyzes the perspectives of Black male students that participate in HEOP to find out whether a race-neutral opportunity program can meet their racial and gendered needs.

The findings of this study indicate that race-neutral programs that use income as a proxy for race can adequately support Black male students if there are purposeful support systems and services in place. Also, Black males feel supported if there are a critical mass of Black students participating in HEOP and HEOP staff are culturally sensitive and relatable. When students who participate in HEOP have the aforementioned characteristics, they are more likely to view the program as beneficial and feel supported. Findings show that academic support provided by HEOP does not have a significant impact on the academic outcomes of Black males in comparison to non-Black men and Black females enrolled in HEOP. However, Black males did find support services more helpful when the providers of those services were of the same race. Findings also show that Black males in HEOP did not find the gender of peers and staff within HEOP to be important to feeling that their needs were met. However, the race and relatability of the HEOP staff and peers were important to feeling connected and that needs were met.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

In 2012, Shaun Harper's study on Black male student success showed that

Black men make up only 4.3% of the entire population of enrolled students in higher

education. And those who are enrolled only had a 47% on-time graduation rate in

comparison to 78% of White male students. His study indicates these statistics have

not changed since the 1970s. The story in education literature for Black male

academic success has unfortunately and consistently been a sad tale of

underachievement (Harper, 2012).

It must be understood that Black men have struggled to gain full participation

in the American education system. Black men have endured a long history of slavery,

Jim Crow, the Civil Rights Movement, *Brown vs. Board of Education*, busing

boycotts, and present-day economic disparities. Arguably, to this day formal entry and

integration into the American education system has never been fully achieved. The

American education system has historically presented Black culture and the Black

experience negatively. The process of identity formation for Black male children is a

treacherous road of psychological hostility. Being Black therefore presents an undue

burden and challenge (Carnevale & Strohl, 2013; Caldwell & Stewart, 2001).

What early studies regarding Black male academic achievement do not tell us

is how racism has historically affected academic achievement. Also, there is little

information on how race-neutral policies, programs, and practices may have

perpetuated and reinforced underachievement for Black students. Since the 1990s,

there has been a push to develop more race-blind educational policies within higher education. As affirmative action has been attacked across the nation, more higher education policy makers, researchers, and practitioners look to implement education admissions policies and programs that focus on class instead of race (Kahlenberg, 2014; Gaertner & Hart, 2013). However, if these race-blind policies and programs continue to grow, this could leave Black men even further behind in the pursuit of higher education.

It is important to examine some of the existing opportunity programs and college access programs that have helped Black men gain access to college, keep them retained, help them to graduate, and enable them to grow during and after their college experience. While these programs are usually touted for their success to help historically disenfranchised groups gain access to higher education and graduate, there is little information on whether these programs perpetuate or combat racist ideas that may hinder Black male academic achievement. Most of the existing programs exist because of race-neutral policies that target socioeconomic status (SES) as its criteria to participate. Can such programs that exist this way be characterized as anti-racist?

This research aims to move away from the deficit framing of Black men's educational experiences. Instead of examining Black male deficiencies, this research will examine whether Black men are receiving the supportive services within opportunity programs necessary to combat racial battle fatigue and achieve academic success. Although a grim outlook has been painted for Black male achievement and access in higher education, there is a growing number of studies that focuses on the strengths and qualities Black males bring to the classroom. This new wave in education literature aims to focus on how best to utilize the experiences and strengths

Black men already have and how to build upon those attributes. It is in this vein that this dissertation is written. Using an anti-racist framework and Critical Race Theory, this paper will explore the experiences and outcomes of Black male participants in HEOP.

Theoretical Framework

Using an Anti-racist framework for this study leads to the question: Can a race-neutral education opportunity program serve Black men well? Using Kendi's (2019) framework of anti-racism, a person, program, or policy cannot be neutral against racism. Neutrality signifies that someone or something is not racist, but this is not the same as being against racism. The problem with neutrality as stated in Kendi's work is that "there is no neutrality in the racism struggle. The opposite of 'racist' isn't 'not racist.' It is 'anti-racist.' " (Kendi, 2019, p. 9). An anti-racist believes in the idea of equality, problems are rooted in in power and policies, and confronts racial inequalities. To be "not racist" or "race-neutral" is a mask for racism. As Kendi (2019) states, "there is no in-between safe space of 'not racist'" (p. 9). Using this framework, a person, place, or policy cannot be "race-neutral". They are either masking racism or must explicitly express and practice anti-racism.

Applying an anti-racist framework when examining education institutions, policies, practices, and programs means that the examiner is searching for neutral language in policies; practices and teaching methods that are not culturally relevant or that ignore the impact of race and racism; and examining the effectiveness of programs that use SES as a proxy for race. If an education institution, policy, practice, or program is not anti-racist then it is racist. There is no room for neutrality. Identifying policies, practices, and programs that are not anti-racist is essential for combating institutionalized racism. To overcome racism in education, the education

community must be able to confront it head on and not be afraid of the "racist" descriptor. As Kendi (2019) states, "[racist] is a descriptive, and the only way to undo racism is to consistently identify and describe it—and then dismantle it" (p. 9). Using an anti-racist framework is important to identify racist programs, policies, and practices within education and in turn develop anti-racist policies, practices, and programs that result in anti-racist education institutions.

Educational policies that ignore race and only focus on class disregard racial inequalities. Furthermore, they mask white privilege and encourage uncritical acceptance of meritocracy. "While meritocracy rewards the finish, affirmative action focuses measures of remediation aimed at a fair start" (Roche, 1994, p. 21). Proponents of economic based policies fail to realize that there is an inherent bias in accessing higher education that is unique to Black males. Ignoring that race is a barrier to higher education perpetuates inequities to accessing higher education (Bernal D. D., 2002; Davis, 2013; Roche, 1994).

The secondary framework being used for this study is Critical Race Theory (CRT). This theory is grounded in legal studies but has since been expanded to ethnic studies, gender studies, and sociology, to name a few fields. Critical Race Theory's primary tenets are the following: 1. The intersectionality of race and racism with other forms of discrimination; 2. Challenging dominant White cultural norms; 3. Social justice; 4. Valuing the experience of subordinate racial groups; and 5. An inter- and intra-disciplinary approach. CRT in education examines how race and racism are particularly impactful for students of color and real and present for student learning experiences (Harper, et al., 2009; Bernal D. D., 2002; Solórzano, et al., 2000).

Using CRT as a framework reveals that Black males are consistently reminded of their race and gender in our society, and this does not differ within their school experiences. From the time that Black males enter school in their formative years, they experience microaggressions from peers, school administrators, and faculty. Black male students are always made especially aware of their race while attending Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). This is because many students and faculty do not look like them; the content they learn in school does not reflect their culture or cultural ways of learning information; and/or they experience hostile microaggressions.

Microaggressions are an ever-present reminder of the negative impact race has on Black men's lives through White-centered course curriculum; negative interaction with students and staff (intentional and unintentional); interaction with campus security and/or police; the visual reminder of not seeing faculty and staff that look like them; and/or seeing that most employees of color at the university are the maintenance and custodial workers. These are the visual reminders that racial microaggressions over time can lead to undeserved mental stress, anxiety, disassociation with learning, negatively impact student academic achievement, and lead students to leave the education pipeline (Johnson & Arbona, 2006; Solórzano, et al., 2000).

Using CRT, this research examines whether the racial and gendered needs of Black men in the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) are valued. It also explores if Black men are experiencing culturally relevant supportive services and affirmation of their identities within HEOP. The CRT framework helps to ensure that there is a commitment to valuing the Black male experience. This means that educational policies should promote cultural awareness; create safe spaces; encourage

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Black males to seek and produce knowledge; and hire Black male faculty and staff who can relate to students and to whom Black male students can relate. Research shows that Black male students are most successful when they have relatable Black faculty and staff. Valuing Black male experiences means making sure that educational policies promote hiring Black males that can help create and foster the educational experiences for Black men (Will, 2017; McClain, 2016; Toldson, 2013).

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this mixed methods study is to explore the impact of the services provided to Black males in HEOP. There is not enough research on the college experiences of Black men in race-neutral college access and opportunity programs like HEOP. It is important to understand whether programs that target for SES instead of race and gender can meet the racial and gendered needs of Black men that contribute to academic success. Data from the NYSED shows that 90% of the students who participate in HEOP are students of color (NYSED, 2019). However, the program does not specifically recruit students because of their race or gender, nor does it explicitly provide racial and gendered support services. I am interested in learning how services provided by HEOP impact academic performance for Black male students and the extent to which the services provided meet the racial and gendered needs of these students. I sought to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent does HEOP academic support services impact Black male students' academic outcomes?

    a. What are types of tutoring and counseling services Black males in HEOP receive the most?

b. How many hours of tutoring and counseling hours do Black males in HEOP receive in comparison to their peers in HEOP?

c. How do these results compare to non-Black men and Black female students?

d. Are Black male students who receive more support services more likely to persist?

2. What are the Black male student perspectives about the services offered by HEOP and do those services meet their racial and gendered needs?

3. Can the interview data help to explain why Black men sought out these support services and the extent to which the services were helpful?

4. Does HEOP reduce stereotype threat by providing identity affirmation for Black male participants?

a. Does the "disadvantaged" label perpetuate stereotype threat for the Black male students involved?

Significance of the Study

The racial and gendered experiences of students within college opportunity programs are under-studied in the literature. This study will highlight any differences in performance between the various race and gender subgroups. It may provide an opening for further research on race and gender subgroups within race-neutral programs. This study will also add to the scholarly literature about understanding the racial and gendered needs of Black males in education opportunity programs. It will build upon current literature which emphasized the needs for anti-racist policies and programs while also contributing to literature that debates the necessity for race-centered programs.

This study is also significant in that it may add to policy and practice. Understanding the racial and gendered needs of Black males in programs that target for SES instead of race may help to necessitate the needs for more race-specific programming. From a CRT perspective, it is important to learn how race and racism impact student learning experiences. This study may also reveal that there are other previously unexplored needs that will intrinsically help Black males in addition to race and gendered specific programming. If we can better understand the racial and gendered needs of Black males within programs like HEOP, then perhaps race and gender specific policies can be developed on the campus, state, and federal levels.

Definition of Terms

The terms college access, college access programs, education opportunity programs (or opportunity programs), and HEOP are terms that will be used throughout this research. These terms are defined as follows:

College access is the ability to obtain and utilize information gathered about college information and options. It consists of an understanding of college requirements, admissions processes, financial obligations, testing requirements, college culture, academic expectations, and challenges. It also includes the students' ability to access resources that can help them make the best possible choice when choosing a college or university.

A college access program's central purpose is to provide students greater access into higher education. These programs are geared towards increasing the students' knowledge and awareness of college culture and typically target high school students to increase the percentage of enrollment of entering college students. These programs may provide resources to disadvantaged students who do not have the

cultural capital, or the resources that would allow them to obtain and utilize the information needed to attend college.

Education opportunity programs (or opportunity programs) are typically geared to historically disenfranchised groups (based on race, gender, disability, income, and/or to veterans); these programs may be a type of college access program but not always. There are education opportunity programs that provide academic services or socio-emotional support for students with no emphasis on college access. Education opportunity programs exist in both K-12 schools and in postsecondary institutions. Education opportunity programs that exist in postsecondary settings typically provide academic support services, financial support, and socio-emotional support to students that participate. Opportunity programs provide a chance for educational advancement or progress to disadvantaged students who otherwise would not be provided the necessary resources needed to succeed in an educational setting (Bethea, 2016; Perna et al., 2008; Swail & Perna, 2002).

The New York State Arthur O. Eve HEOP serves as both a college access and an education opportunity program. The program serves New York State residents that are determined to be economically and academically disadvantaged according to NYSED Law 6451. HEOP is administered through a grant made possible by NYSED. These grants are awarded to private postsecondary institutions throughout New York State. Interested applicants must apply through a competitive grant process to receive funding to be able to administer HEOP. Colleges and universities interested in administering HEOP must develop a proposal in response to NYSED's request for proposals (RFP). Institutions may apply for more than one HEOP grant. For example, Fordham University administers two separate HEOP programs at two separate campus locations. The proposals are scored and ranked using an internal process at

NYSED. Grant awards are given to the highest-ranking proposals until grant funds are exhausted. Only successful applications are awarded and afforded the ability to administer HEOP. Successful colleges and universities are awarded a HEOP grant for five years. After five years, colleges and universities must reapply to NYSED in a new competitive grant process. This process repeats every five years. HEOP's primary function is to provide access to college, retain students while in college, and provide the necessary support services to help HEOP students graduate.

Methods Overview

This research is designed as a two-phased mixed methods study. The quantitative phase of the study explored the relationship between Black male student academic outcomes and services provided to them in HEOP. To explore these outcomes, my study reused data collected from the New York State Education Department (NYSED) on HEOP. The second, qualitative phase included semi-structured interviews of Black male HEOP students to understand if services provided by HEOP meet their race and gender needs.

Organization of the Dissertation

The subsequent chapters of this dissertation are organized as follows: Chapter two provides an overview of the available research literature. The literature review is central to providing context for this study. The literature review is organized into five sections. The first section discusses the college achievement of Black males. The second section of the literature review is an overview of college access and opportunity programs. The third section discusses why policies that often shape college support programs tend to be race neutral. The fourth section of the literature review is an overview of education opportunity programs. The fifth section of this literature review is an overview of the New York State HEOP. The literature review

concludes with what is known and unknown about Black males in the Higher Education Opportunity Program. It also explains how the study fills in the gap in the available research literature.

Chapter three delineates the research methods and design for this study. This chapter explains why a two-phased mixed method design was chosen for this study. An overview of the quantitative analysis is provided in this chapter. This includes how data was collected and analyzed. This chapter also provides an in-depth look at the qualitative analysis and provides details as to the site selection, recruitment, and interviews. Delimitations and limitations of this study are also discussed. The final part of this chapter is an overview of the ethical considerations for both phases of the study.

Chapter four is the quantitative analysis results. This chapter is split into two sections. The first section is an analysis of pertinent tables using descriptive statistics. The tables presented provide an overview of the characteristics of HEOP participants within the data. The second part of the analysis is a series of regression results that seek to provide answers to research questions one and its sub-questions. The overall purpose of this chapter is to examine secondary data provided by NYSED on HEOP and explore the extent to which the services HEOP provides impacts Black male academic outcomes.

Chapter 5 is a summary of the qualitative analysis results. This chapter is an analysis of the interview data. The data from these interviews seek to answer research questions 2-4. The overall purpose of this chapter is to understand the perspectives of Black men in HEOP and the services that HEOP provides. This chapter also seeks to

gain a deeper understanding about the racial and gendered needs of Black men in HEOP. Twelve Black male HEOP students volunteered as participants for this study.

Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter and discusses the overall conclusions and the implications of this study. This chapter seeks to provide an overall contextual analysis of the data analyzed from both Chapters 4 and 5. This chapter presents findings related to the literature, surprises, implications for action, and recommendations for further research. It will conclude with final remarks and concluding thoughts.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Many studies show Black males have lower completion rates at colleges and universities in comparison to other racial and gender groups. Opportunity programs provide a chance for educational advancement for Black male students to succeed in college. By analyzing existing opportunity programs, what works, and what the missing needs are for Black men, these programs can be better understood and expanded to provide specific resources for Black men who pursue higher education.

This literature review is broken into five sections. The first section discusses the college achievement of Black males. It provides context to how the deficit model has been used in higher education to explain Black male academic achievement. It then discusses how the concept of "acting White" has been used to explain academic performance for Black students. Next, it highlights the lack of support for Black men in Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). It also illustrates how stereotype threat can impact Black male academic achievement. It concludes with a discussion on Black masculinity and college achievement.

The second section of the literature review is an overview of college access and opportunity programs. This section is broken into three parts. The first part describes opportunity programs funded on the federal level. The second part describes state funded opportunity programs. The third part describes some of the available privately funded support programs. While the programs discussed below are not exclusive to Black males, these programs tend to have a high percentage of Black students. It is important to get an overview of these programs and how they relate to Black male academic achievement.

The third section of this literature review discusses why policies that are in favor of race-neutrality tend to shape college support programs. This section is broken into two parts. The first part of this section discusses why college support programs tend to focus on socioeconomic status rather than race. The second part of this section discusses how color-blind education policies have been shaped in the U.S. It provides context to how race-neutral policies continue to impact Black male academic achievement.

The fourth section of this literature review discusses how opportunity programs meet student needs. This section is broken into four parts. The first part describes how opportunity programs meet students' academic needs. The second part describes how opportunity programs help to provide financial support to students. The third part describes how opportunity programs help support personal needs and foster social development. The section concludes with what is known about how opportunity programs help to transition students from college to career.

The fifth section of this literature review is an overview of the New York State Higher HEOP. This section gives a brief history of the program's existence, the eligibility criteria, and its current reported effectiveness as it relates to academic achievement for its participants. An overview of HEOP is important to provide context to this study. This section concludes with what is known and what more is needed to know about Black males in HEOP. It describes how the proposed study fills in a gap in the research literature as it relates to Black males enrolled in education opportunity programs. This study provides context for broader understanding about Black males enrolled in similar programs to HEOP.

College Achievement of Black Males

Deficit Model and Black Male Student Achievement

Scholars who have studied Black male academic achievement through a "deficit model" often focus on what Black males lack in comparison to other groups. They have used the deficit model to explain why Black male academic achievement is comparatively lower to other race and gender groups (Harper, 2009). The exhaustive literature on Black male achievement in higher education has been mostly focused on deficits. Deficit framing does not consider systemic and institutional inequalities that contribute to poor academic performance. The model is primarily used in K-12 research to explain the deficiencies in children of color and why they do not achieve the same levels of academic success as their White counterparts. As scholars began to focus on deficits, several research articles were published that discuss genetic IQ inheritance, the inability of children of color to understand the formal environment of educational institutions, student behavioral issues, the lack of ability to understand concrete methods, teacher respect, the lack of the use of standard English, inability to communicate effectively, and low-income parents' inability to develop relationships with their children's schools. The deficit-model scholars have a core belief that a culture of poverty was the root cause of academic failure. The literature ignores middle and upper-class Black children who are high achieving (Harper et al., 2009; Mandara, 2006; Villegas, 1991; Jensen, 1969). There is a widespread undertone in the research literature that being a person of color equated with living in poverty (Payne & Slocumb, 2011; Sato & Lensmire, 2009).

Deficit oriented researchers tend to examine Black males from a perspective of inherent deficiency. However, their research perspective typically does not highlight that the lack of preparedness experienced by Black males is not due to a

cultural deficiency but is most often due to the likelihood of being subjected to subpar standards in K-12 education. Black males are more likely to be in low-income urban school districts that do not have the same level of educational resources as their high-income counterparts (Jordan, 2014; Orfield et al., 2014). Consequently, Black males are less likely to meet the academic rigor and high standards in higher education. Additionally, low-income school districts often hold Black males to lesser standards. As a result, Black men are less likely to spend time studying, taking notes, participating in classroom activities, writing, and revising papers, and serving in campus leadership activities. The lack of preparedness and disengagement is a result of the lack of institutional support which, decreases the chance of accessing college and completing a college degree (Harper, 2012).

The deficit model eventually found its way into the higher education literature. Thus, there are numerous studies that focus on poverty, behavior, lack of motivation, and even intelligence (Andrews & Swinton, 2014; Harper, 2006; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). There are several studies that compare Black men to White men in higher education, Black men to Black women, and Black men to about any other racial or ethnic group. The common denominator between these studies is that they highlight how Black males do worse academically in comparison to other groups (Witherspoon Favors, 2011; McDaniel et al. 2009; Garibaldi, 2007).

The deficit models have led many scholars, policy makers, and programs to take prescriptive measures on how to compensate for deficits in Black male achievement. An example of such measures are Black males being thought of as being intellectually inferior and/or unable to be educated while ignoring the social, political, and economic circumstances that have historically contributed to disadvantage. Unfortunately, the prescriptive models arguably do not provide any solutions that

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empower Black males to have agency in their educational process. There are Black men whose backgrounds are diverse and who have achieved academic success in higher education despite research and statistics that indicate otherwise. The other issue with deficit models is that they often do not consider socio-political, economical, historical, and moral debts that have been incurred over the course of this nation's history. Compounding historical disenfranchisement creates an educational debt that has been growing because of racism, classism, and stereotypes. Black males unfortunately are affected by racism, classism, and racial stereotypes that impact academic achievement (Palmer & Maramba, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2006).

For many Black males, both low- and high-income, accessing higher education is a challenge. Internalizing beliefs about Black males' deficits may cause Black men not to consider college a viable option or choose colleges that are not competitive. The research literature highlights that there are high-achieving Black male students with the academic credentials to be in competitive and well-resourced colleges. Instead, many Black men are overrepresented in under-resourced colleges (Wood, Edward, Hicks, & Kambui, 2016).

Acting White

John Ogbu (1985), coined the term "acting White" in his study *Black Students' School Success: Coping with the "'Burden of Acting White'"*. Ogbu (1985) in his paper expands on his theoretical work, Cultural-Ecological Perspective (1978). This work posits that poor academic performance among Black students is related to the Black community being involuntarily incorporated into American society; being victimized by a persistent job ceiling. It suggests that the Black community views the lack of mobility within American society as reversible through collective action. He

further suggests that the poor academic performance among Black students is a result of the adaptation to limited socio-economic opportunities. As a result of the limited socio-economic opportunities, Black Americans have developed survival mechanism and strategies that are not compatible for being successful in school.

Ogbu (1985) admits that his Cultural Ecological Perspective (1978) focuses on the failure of Black children in schools and does not examine why some students are still successful. He goes on to state that Black people are often victimized in school by systemic and cultural differences. These differences can negatively impact school performance because it is reflective of the historical exploitive relationship between Black and White Americans. For Ogbu (1985), the importance of group membership among Black children takes precedence over academic performance. He states that because Black people are an exploited group, they have developed an alternative identity structure that is in direct opposition to White identity.

This alternative identity structure reflects a "fictive kinship" meaning a shared cultural experience as a direct result of oppression. He postulates that due to this fictive kinship Black Americans have created a distinct set of cultural rules that defines what it means to be Black beyond skin color. Black children learn early on what it means to be culturally Black and associate their academic success in relationship to their Black peers. As a result of the peer group pressure to meet the qualifications of being Black, performing well academically, or displaying behaviors that are not associated with the peer group is seen as something other than Black; it is most often associated with "acting White". According to Ogbu, students who embrace academic success must then develop the skills necessary to cope with being seen as "acting White" and take on the "burden of 'acting White'" (p. 51).

For high achieving Black males that have been characterized as "acting White", this label can have a negative impact and force Black students to devalue their academic success out of fear of being perceived as "acting White" to their same-race peers (Palmer et al., 2011). However, the slew of literature that examines this concept seems to undermine Black culture by normalizing White cultural values and subsequently devaluing Black culture. Rather than examining systemic issues to find reasons why Black males under-performed in classrooms, this theoretical approach places blame on the Black male students.

The "acting White" approach also minimizes research that shows Black students are likely to experience phenomena like microaggressions and racial battle fatigue (Pierce, 1970; Spencer et al., 2001). Contrary to the "acting White" narrative, there is research that shows Black students have high self-esteem and achievement when Black culture is valued. What is troubling about the "acting White" narrative is that the research literature has been so inundated by negative portrayals of Black men. This is the case such that a distinction between White cultural values with positive correlation and Black cultural values with negative correlations have been drawn. It is as if to just say "Black males" in the literature connotes low academic achievement (Spencer et al., 2001).

Black male students at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs)

Studies have shown that having adequate support structures in place is critical for Black male academic achievement. Unfortunately, despite this research, PWIs have not succeeded in providing a supportive environment. Because of the lack of institutional support, Black male students experience higher levels of feeling

disconnected, isolation, racial tension, and lower institutional satisfaction (Bradley, 2010; Harper, 2009).

Black males are more likely to undergo psychological stress associated with racism and difficulty adjusting to PWIs. A growing body of research has shown that racial discrimination can negatively affect both physical and mental health particularly for Black males. These studies have found a positive correlation of racial discrimination to cardiovascular disease, hypertension, depression, and decreased self-esteem (Sellers et al., 2009). There is also evidence that African Americans on college campuses tend to experience elevated levels of race related stress (Johnson & Arbona, 2006). It is reasonable to conclude that these factors would negatively impact academic achievement for Black males on college campuses.

Black males on college campuses are continuously subjected to negative stereotypes at PWIs. These stereotypes can lead to higher amounts of stress. There is "constant reinforcement of racist stereotypes that stigmatize them as dumb jocks, Black male criminals from the local community who do not belong on campus, affirmative action beneficiaries who were undeserving of admission, and underprepared 'at-risk' students who all emerged from low-income families and urban ghettos" (Harper, 2009, p. 700). Higher education institutions tend to treat Black men as a homogeneous group (Harper, 2015). The diversity of Black men is typically not taken into consideration when providing academic support services for Black men. PWIs do not consider that Black men come from a plethora of ethnicities, social classes, and academic abilities. Unfortunately, these stereotypes come from both peers and professors (Harper, 2014).

Black Males and Stereotype Threat

The literature has shown that stereotype threat has negative psychological and performance effects on Black students. Stereotype threat is when a "socially premised psychological threat … arises when one is in a situation or doing something for which a negative stereotype about one's group applies" (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Stereotype threat occurs when a person or persons from a particular group realize that there are stereotypes that exist about their group in a particular setting. Once the stereotype is acknowledged they are afraid of affirming the stereotype by taking part in activities that would confirm the stereotype. Particularly for Black male students being stereotyped can have adverse effects on scholastic performance. Stereotype threat has been found to reduce intellectual and cognitive ability particularly for standardized testing. Furthermore, stereotype threat over a prolonged period has been found to effectively have students identify with the stereotypes presented and less likely to identify with positive academic achievement. Internalizing negative stereotypes over the course of one's lifetime can cause "inferiority anxiety" which can be triggered by racist tropes and societal cues (Steele, 1995). Negative stereotypes have the unfortunate effect of having Black people think less of themselves and internalize the threat which unfortunately can become a self-fulfilling stereotype.

Stereotype threat also affects the racial achievement gap. While there is plenty of evidence that shows poor academic performance can be attributed to the lack of preparation and under-resourced schools, evidence also show that negative stereotypes can affect the achievement gap. Black students who are similarly prepared to White students have been shown to underperform in part due to stereotype threat. When negative stereotypes are presented to Black students, their awareness of the stereotype has been shown to undermine their academic performance. Students who were negatively stereotyped have been shown to spend more time doing tasks

inefficiently. What is more striking is that students who have been previously

negatively stereotyped have been shown to continue to underperform even when the

stereotyped has been removed (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995).

Research has shown that racial achievement gaps persist even in middle- to

high-SES groups. "Group differences in socioeconomic status (SES), then, cannot

fully explain group differences in academic performance" (Steele, 1997, p. 615). We

must examine the domain in which Black male students reside. Negative racial

stereotypes impact the performance of high-achieving and mid- to high-SES Black

male students. It is important to realize that there are social and cultural threats that do

exist in the domains where Black male students reside; these threats have both

psychological and academic performance effects. And, in the absence of race-

conscious policies, can race-neutral programs perpetuate or ignore the stereotype

threats that may hinder academic performance for Black male students?

Black Masculinity

Gender social constructs define what are the "right" and "wrong" ways to be a

man. Ideas about gender and manhood are taught and reinforced through societal

messages and interactions. "If manhood can be conceptualized as the thoughts and

ethos of what it means to be a man, masculinity are those ideas personified" (Danté L.

Pelzer, 2016, p. 17). Masculinity however is not fixed; its practices can be

demonstrated differently dependent upon the social context it is in (Connell &

Messerschmidt, 2005).

Black masculinity is a complex intersection of race and gender. First it should

be noted that the Black male experience is not monolithic. The intersection of race

and gender with geographic location, social-economic status, age, and sexual

orientation to name a few all generate unique experiences for Black men. However, historically, Black masculinity has been stereotyped and viewed through a straight White hegemonic masculine lens. The idea of hegemonic masculinity (which has been critiqued) emphasizes gendered cultural control of non-White male groups. Through this hegemonic masculine lens, the portrayal of Black males is construed as a threat to dominant White culture. Black men have been portrayed as being hyper-sexualized, criminals, lazy, effeminate, or hyper-masculine. Many hyper-masculine stereotypes are often related to animal or beastly behavior. The messages of gender stereotypes can be internalized, reinforced by peers, faculty, and staff; and they can be exacerbated by media messages. As a result, negative gender portrayals about Black men can affect academic performance (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Danté L. Pelzer, 2016).

How Black men internalize their maleness can have direct repercussions to the way they navigate their college experience. The research literature discusses how performance in college can be impacted when negative ideas of Black masculinity are internalized by Black men. The literature on Black masculinity discusses the concept of "intellectual sissy". This concept is when Black men are not willing to pay the price of professional or academic success if it means being seen as a "sell-out" to their Black manhood (Hill Collins, 2004).

More research is needed to attempt to explore the Black masculine lens in a way where agency is given to Black men. Black masculinity must be valued and researched through a Black male lens and not always through a White hegemonic masculine lens. It is also important for colleges and universities to explore supportive measures of Black masculinity through programs, services, and curricula offered.

College Access and Education Opportunity Programs

Across the country there are many different college access and opportunity programs that serve disadvantaged students in their college-going experience, from enrollment to persistence to graduation. Most opportunity programs include multiple forms of intervention techniques and involve multiple actors such as school counselors, parents, teachers, community organizations, and government (Perna, 2002). While many of these programs do not specifically target Black men, many are enrolled as participants. Studies show that these programs do increase their participants chances of persisting and graduating. However, it is currently not well known how many Black men participate in college access and opportunity programs and the ways in which they benefit from these programs. It is also unknown how many opportunity programs are currently in existence.

For opportunity programs that do not specifically focus on Black men, it is important to understand how these programs help with their academic success. While there is no "magic pill," these programs do provide structure and successful outcomes. It is as critical to analyze race-neutral opportunity programs and what makes them "work" as it is to understand the individual experiences of successful Black males in college that allows them to achieve.

There is a myriad of college support programs that exist to help Black men transition from high school and succeed in college. The following is a description of notable education opportunity programs that exist in both the private and public sectors where Black males participate. These programs are not exclusively designed for Black males. They typically, but not always, seek to provide supportive services to students who have been determined to have economic need and/or academic deficits. The programs provide comprehensive services that may include, but are not limited

to, financial support, academic support, and socio-emotional support. They go beyond just providing a scholarship or grant for college access. While these programs vary in how they are administered, most work directly with higher education institutions (New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, n.d.; New York State Education Department, n.d.; U.S. Department of Education, 2020; Perna, 2002).

Education opportunity programs often target low-income and students of color. They are more than just affirmative action programs and offer comprehensive support services such as rigorous pre-first-year-student intensive academic summer programs, tutoring, counseling, mentoring, and financial aid. There is currently no quantifiable number that exists as to how many programs are currently available.

However, there are notable programs that have a long history of providing access and opportunity for Black men. It is also important to note that publicly funded programs mentioned below are "aid to locality" programs. This means, a government entity provides funding in the form of grants which are given directly to the colleges to administer. These programs do not provide direct financial support to the student participants. Instead, institutions receiving the grants provide the financial support as well as other supportive services with the funding given to administer these education opportunity programs.

Federal Programs

The U.S. Department of Education has developed several comprehensive postsecondary pipeline grant programs which, while independent, all run under the banner title TRIO. TRIO programs were created to help low-socioeconomic status (low-SES), first-generation, disabled students, and veterans have better access to college by providing comprehensive supportive services. Two-thirds of the students

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TRIO serves come from families that are at income levels which are 150% or less of the federal poverty guidelines (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

Upward Bound, the first TRIO program started in 1964, was authorized as part of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Upward Bound is an intensive intervention program that prepares students through intensive enrichment courses. Additionally, students in Upward Bound receive assistance in preparing for college examinations, completing college admissions applications, academic tutoring, and counseling, and are provided with information on how to apply for financial aid. Colleges collaborate with local high schools to administer Upward Bound, and services may be provided at the colleges, in the high school, or a combination of both.

A year later, the second TRIO program, called Talent Search, was born under the Higher Education Act of 1965. Like Upward Bound, Talent Search encourages low-SES students to seek postsecondary education; the program provides a comprehensive approach to helping navigate the college application process. Talent Search targets students grades 6-12 and is deemed an early intervention program to help low-income families better understand and navigate the college application process.

TRIO was first used as a banner name when the third program (hence the name TRIO meaning three), Student Support Services (SSS) was added in 1968 when the Higher Education Act of 1965 was amended. SSS awards funds to postsecondary institutions through a competitive grant process. The goal of SSS is to increase college retention and graduation rates of low-income students through academic support services such as academic tutoring, course selection, and help with obtaining

financial aid assistance (Council for Opportunity in Education, n.d.; U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

As a national college access and retention program, TRIO seeks to establish a pipeline consisting of comprehensive supportive services such as academic tutoring, counseling, and assistance with obtaining financial aid for low-SES students to transition from secondary to postsecondary institutions. Several programs are now under the TRIO banner including Upward Bound, Talent Search, Student Support Services, the Educational Opportunity Centers, Veterans Upward Bound, the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, Upward Bound Math and Science, and TRIO Training. Each of these programs are administered through a competitive grant process where funds are granted to postsecondary institutions, community-based organizations, and private agencies across the United States (Council for Opportunity in Education, n.d.; U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

In 1998, Congress amended the Higher Education Act and included a new program called Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). The mission of GEAR UP is like TRIO, and it offers many of the same services. However, unlike TRIO, the goal for GEAR UP is to push for systematic reform in public schools. It was also supposed to fill in a perceived critical gap in TRIO related to the gap in intervention services for middle school. While these programs have slightly different goals and processes, the overarching aim is on helping low-SES and other disadvantaged students gain better access to college (Council for Opportunity in Education, n.d.; U.S. Department of Education, 2021).

State Programs

New York

There are also several state sponsored programs that have worked to prepare students and provide access to college. New York State alone offers several state funded programs that are not reliant on federal dollars that address college access and opportunity for low-SES and students of color. The Liberty Partnership Program (LPP) in NYS offers pre-collegiate programs and drop-out prevention services such as developmental college courses, tutoring and homework assistance, exam preparation, counseling for students and families, career preparation, parent engagement, and cultural enrichment. The services are provided through three models that include a school-based model where services are incorporated at public high schools, a campus-based model where services are offered on the weekends, after school, and as summer programs, and a community model where services are delivered through local community agencies such as churches, businesses, or not-for-profit agencies (New York State Education Department, n.d.; Friends of Liberty, n.d.).

Additionally, New York State also offers several collegiate level opportunity programs such as HEOP at private institutions, Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) at public institutions at the State University of New York campuses, and College Discovery (CD) and the Search for Education Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK) at the City University of New York campuses. These programs serve students who are identified as economically disadvantaged and academically inadmissible to the participating institutions under general admissions standards. The programs usually work with high schools to identify students who will be part of their incoming cohort of students. However, the types of relationships established with high schools may differ among institutions and they may or may not be a strong relationship. Students admitted under these programs are below the participating colleges' normal admissions standards and these students would not otherwise be admitted given their

academic profile (City University of New York, n.d.; New York State Education Department, n.d.; State University of New York, n.d.).

Students who accept admission into participating postsecondary institutions are offered a variety of services to ensure that they are successful in college. These services include structured pre-first-year summer programs, counseling, tutoring, and remedial coursework. In addition, students are offered financial assistance to minimize the financial burden for paying for college (New York State Education Department, n.d.).

California

California administers collegiate level opportunity programs that share many similarities with the programs in New York. The University of California System and the California State University system both offer an Education Opportunity Program (EOP) which started in 1969 with the passage of Senate Bill 1072 by the state's legislature (California State University, n.d.). California's EOP, like the education opportunity programs in New York State, is geared toward California residents who are low-income and educationally disadvantaged. The University of California offers EOP at its Berkeley, Davis, and Santa Barbara locations while California State University offers EOP at 23 of their campus locations (Allen, 1976; California State University, n.d.; University of California, n.d.).

EOP provides academic support services to students such as tutoring, counseling, and special testing to students who are enrolled in EOP programs at participating colleges and universities. The California State University system published data that shows that the 6-year graduation rate of EOP students is close to being equal to that of all graduating students within the system. EOP transfer students

from community colleges show a slightly higher graduation rate that all graduating transfer students at 84% and 79% respectively (California State University, n.d.).

New Jersey

The State of New Jersey has developed an education opportunity program called the New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF). EOF was started shortly after the 1967 summer riots in Newark, New Jersey. As a result of the unrest, violence, protests, and student demands, Ralph A. Dungan, the New Jersey Chancellor of Higher Education, outlined a program for all the state's colleges and universities. The program aided New Jersey residents who were educationally and economically disadvantaged. Colleges and universities that were already offering Upward Bound, were particularly receptive to the idea of helping students from disadvantaged backgrounds gain access to higher education. Richard Hughes, the governor of New Jersey at the time, also called for educational programs to be established to address the issues cited by the Lilly Commission which was convened in response to the Newark riots. A culmination of these events led to the establishment of the Educational Opportunity Fund (New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, 2020; Watson & Chen, 2019).

Like California and New York's education opportunity programs, the New Jersey EOF provides financial assistance and academic support services. At the time of this writing, forty-two colleges and universities participate in EOF. Public Research Universities, Community Colleges, Independent Colleges and Universities, as well as State Colleges and Universities all participate in offering EOF. Students who are EOF graduates are eligible to participate in the New Jersey's EOF Graduate Grants that provides financial assistance and support to a small number of graduate

programs within the state (New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, 2020; Watson & Chen, 2019).

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania's Higher Educational Equal Opportunity Act of 1971 (Act 101) was established in the 1970's by K. Leroy Irvis; at the time he was the majority leader of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. The program was established to help Pennsylvania residents "who were denied the opportunity to pursue higher education due to prevailing social conditions" (Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, n.d.). Like the programs in New York, California, and New Jersey, Act 101 targets potential students that are economically and educationally disadvantaged. Students in Act 101 are required to attend an academic bridge program which provides developmental and academic support services prior to matriculating in their first year of college. The program also provides academic support services and financial assistance to participating students during the academic school year (Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, n.d.).

Privately Funded Programs

College support programs have not just been developed in the public sector. Funders in the private sector have also sought to aid low-income students and students of color in higher education. Posse and the Gates Millennium Scholars are the two most well-known college access and opportunity programs in the U.S. The Gates Millennium Scholars Program (GMS) was established in 1999 as a 1.6-billion-dollar grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. GMS specifically provides financial resources to low-income students of color to help them overcome financial obstacles to access higher education. GMS's four main goals are to reduce financial barriers for

students of color, increase the number of students of color in STEM, help develop the leadership skills of students of color, and aid with the transition from undergraduate to completed graduate programs. GMS boasts an 82.2% five-year and 86.9% six-year graduation rate (Gates Millennium Scholars Program, 2017). About four thousand applicants apply to GMS yearly; about one thousand applicants are selected. The applicants must be Pell eligible and have at least a 3.3 GPA to be qualified. The typical award amount for GMS applicants is about $8,000. This is considered a "last dollar" award or one that is given after all other methods of financial aid are given out (Gates Millennium Scholars Program, 2017; DesJardins & McCall, 2014).

The Posse program began in 1989 under the leadership of Dr. Deborah Bial who is credited as the foundation's founder. Posse began with five students from New York City who attended Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. The program has since expanded to fifty-seven colleges and universities across the country and has ten chapters in major cities across the U.S. The goal of Posse is to target diverse students through a process referred to as the "Dynamic Assessment Process" whereby students are reviewed on a variety of criteria that expands beyond their GPA. The selection process looks at student strengths such as volunteerism, community involvement, and extracurricular activities. The program offers pre-collegiate training, support throughout the students' undergraduate career, and workforce preparation. Recent expansions in the program's offering have sought to give college access to veterans, increase the diversity in STEM fields, and provide support to students who are interested in civic engagement and public service. While Posse does not explicitly state an intended demographic of students of color or low-income students, it can be inferred from the foundation's literature that these are target populations (The Posse Foundation, Inc., 2017; Edwards, 2013).

College Support Programs and the Focus on Economic Status

Data reported from both public and private education opportunity programs show that student participants perform well academically and have high graduation and retention rates in opportunity programs (DesJardins & McCall, 2014; Edwards, 2013; Chaney, 2010; The Pell Institute, 2009). While we do not know how successful Black males are in comparison to other racial groups within these programs, it can be inferred from the literature that Black males who are participants of these programs benefit from the provided services. However, the focus on opportunity and access programs—particularly in the public sector— tends to be on social-economic status instead of race. A search on the TRIO home page at the U.S. Department of Education states "TRIO includes eight programs targeted to serve and assist low-income individuals, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs" (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). There is no explicit mention of race or ethnicity as a target population. Rather, it is coded in obscure language such as "first-generation college students". You can find similar statements on the state-based opportunity programs' websites. Race and ethnicity are missing from the language regarding the intended target population.

Colorblind Education Policy

It is important to look at how the shift to colorblind public policy has taken shape and has impacted access and admission to postsecondary institutions. In the U.S., race-based affirmative action has been met with many challenges in the States and has become a "dirty word" of sorts. It has faced political assaults on both sides of

the political aisle. Conservatives would like to do away with the concept of affirmative action completely; liberals see economic-based affirmative action as a better strategy. Admissions to colleges and universities in the U.S. have become a hotbed for the political discourse and legal recourse of race vs. class based-affirmative action programs.

Affirmative action has been challenged in the courts; several states have banned race-based affirmative action admissions. Current federal law allows for colleges and universities to consider a student's race as part of a holistic admissions process. However, race cannot be used to determine whether a student is admitted. There are studies that show negative consequences for limiting race as part of admissions reviews beyond what the Supreme Court has decided is acceptable (Orfield, 2017; Park, Denson, & Bowman, 2013; Gándara, 2012). However, several states have further limited race as a component of admissions reviews. By limiting race in admissions reviews, the racial diversity of colleges and universities is negatively impacted despite continuous efforts to increase racial diversity (Garces, 2016).

For example, in 1995 the Regents of the University of California (UC) passed a special resolution (SP-1) that eradicated affirmative action at UC. Following the passing of this proposition, the state of California passed proposition 209 which also had similar goals of eliminating affirmative action in university admissions and state employment. Immediately after the passing of this proposition, UC saw a drop in enrollment from students of color, particularly Black and Latino students. There was a 22% drop in enrollment for Black students between 1995 and 1998 even though the proposition did not go into effect until 1998. The passing of the proposition was seen by many as sending a message to these students that they were not welcome. By the

time the proposition went into effect in 1998, the UC flagship campus saw a 52%

decline in Black enrollment and a 43% decline in Latino enrollment. Since the passing

of this proposition, UC has not been able to obtain the pre-1995 enrollment levels for

Black and Latino students to date (Orfield, 2017; Gándara, 2012).

The American Council on Education, the Civil Rights Project, and Pearson

sent out a survey to colleges and universities to obtain information regarding the use

of affirmative action policies in college admissions. The survey shows that race-

neutral policies are not viewed as alternatives to race-conscious policies but instead

complementary policies. The survey also shows that colleges and universities with

race-conscious policies are more likely to also have policies that target low-SES

students.

The college and universities that do not have race-conscious policies are less

likely to target low-SES students. What the survey shows is that colleges and

universities that value racial diversity are more likely to also work to achieve SES

diversity. Additionally, the university is likely not to be able to achieve racial

diversity through SES-only efforts; it can end up costing the university more money

in supporting these SES-only policies. The survey points out that ending race-

conscious policies at colleges and universities would decrease SES diversity. The

survey trend shows that college and universities either work for achieving both racial

and SES diversity or neither. Eliminating race-based policies does not prompt

colleges to develop policies that target low-SES students. Hence, eliminating race-

conscious policies not only hurts racial diversity as in the case of the University of

California but also negatively impacts SES diversity as in the case of the survey

results given by the American Council on Education, the Civil Rights Project, and

Pearson (Orfield, 2017).

The argument for class-based affirmative action programs stems from the assertion that race-based affirmative action programs do nothing to help low-income White students (and Asian-American students in some cases). Proponents of class-based affirmative action claim using class instead of race offers both racial and economic diversity, still allows students of color access into college, and affords access to low-income White students that face similar economic and social mobility barriers. Kahlenberg (2015), an advocate of class-based affirmative action, has argued that "the Supreme Court gave an enormous push for class-based affirmative action in its 2013 decision in Fisher v. University of Texas" (p. 13). Since the Adarand Constructors v. Peña decision in 1995, laws that favor race- based affirmative action must undergo strict scrutiny making it harder for race-conscious policies to survive court review (Kahlenberg, 1996). Class-based affirmative action is also less politically and socially threatening and therefore less subject to attack or abolishment (Kahlenberg, 2014; Goldsmith, 2010).

Other arguments for economic class-based affirmative action policies include that the income achievement gap is now more than twice that of the racial achievement gap (Goldsmith, 2010). This has prompted many researchers and policy makers to conclude that there is a greater need for economic-based policies than for race-based policies. There are also researchers and policy makers that argue using class instead of race achieves greater levels of both racial and economic diversity.

This argument has caused some colleges and universities to use class instead of race as a method of achieving diversity. Since people of color, particularly Black people, and Latinos, are highly represented in the lower socio-economic class; they argue that by targeting class instead of race, economic based policies still reach a significant percentage of people of color (Wilson V., 2015; DeNavas-Walt & Proctor,

2015). Scholars like Wilson (1987 & 2012) have argued that Black Americans have achieved access into the middle-class; it is more important that class is a consideration to ensure that low-income Black Americans are given the resources they need through class-based affirmative action programs.

Colorblind policies that favor class over race are particularly sensitive topics in the discourse of access to higher education. Over the last two decades, we have seen court cases such as Fisher v. U of Texas (2013 & 2016), Gratz v. Bollinger (2003), and Grutter v. Bollinger (2003) challenge admissions policies that factor race. Most recently the U.S. Supreme Court will hear a case against Harvard University and University of North Carolina (UNC) about using race as a criterion in admissions. Interestingly the plaintiffs against Harvard claim that the university's admissions standards discriminate against Asian American applicants. Whereas the plaintiffs against UNC claim that the university discriminates against White and Asian applicants by giving preference to Black, Latino, and American Indian applicants. Both Harvard and UNC contend that their admissions policies are lawful under previous Supreme Court cases. The arguments will likely be heard in the Fall of 2022; a decision is expected in the spring of 2023 (Liptak & Hartocollis, 2022). These types of challenges will continue to contest whether race can be used as a criterion for college admissions. Colleges and universities have been caught in a battle between continuing to use race or transform their admissions policies favoring income-based affirmative action policies. Colleges tend to use college access and opportunity programs as a mechanism for achieving more racial diversity on campuses even though many of these programs do not use race as a criterion. And to an extent, this method of achieving diversity may work to contribute to more racial diversity with the added benefit of achieving economic diversity.

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While a large population of people of color (particularly Black and Latinos) are low-income, studies have shown that race and class are not highly correlated, nor are they good surrogates for one another (Bowen, 2011; Bernal et al., 2000; Bernal et al., 1999). It may be true that Black students are more likely to come from low-SES households. However, it is also true that White students still make up most of all college students, which includes all low-SES students (Bernal et al., 1999; Bok & Bowen, 1998).

Focusing on economic status alone does not neatly translate into policies that work to address the issues that people of color face. Stereotype threat and racial microaggressions impact the racial achievement gap for both low-income and high-achieving middle class Black children. Race very much still plays a significant role in discriminatory practices that often hinder children of color from reaching their full potential and can be a barrier to accessing higher education.

Proponents of race-neutral policies also ignore the wealth gap which is a major factor in why the argument is made that these policies cannot do a decent job at replacing race-conscious policies. While income can contribute to wealth, they are not synonymous; wealth— more than income— is a determinant for accessing quality education. On average, middle- and high-income Black families still do not have the same wealth accumulation as White families. White wealthy families enjoy a level of privilege that high- and middle-class Black families have not obtained *en masse*. Wealthy White families are still more likely to attend elite private schools, still have better access to housing, and can leverage a level of cultural capital that may not be achieved by even high-income Black families. The practice of wealthy White families using their cultural capital in early admissions exemplifies this. Completion of the early admissions process has a significant impact on the make-up of college classes

and can outweigh the impact of affirmative action. Wealthy White families can leverage resources to ensure their children have access to the best preparation for elite schools. Whereas even high-income Black families are more likely to need to apply for financial aid and use loans (which can perpetuate disadvantage), wealthy White families typically can pay for college outright. While middle- and high-income Black families may have achieved some access to elite schools, it is still far more likely that wealthy White families leverage resources to access elite schools and postsecondary institutions *en masse*. It is also far more likely that wealthy White students are the reason less admission spots are available to low-SES White students (Bowen, 2011).

Furthermore, race-neutral policies perpetuate the notion that we have achieved a post-racial society. This cannot be further from the truth. In fact, with the current climate of national politics, a resurgence of racial politics has ensued. And with this resurgence, it is even more important that colleges and universities play their role in ensuring they have more diverse populations. As previously mentioned, a lack of race-conscious policies tends to decrease both economic and racial diversity. With a lack of diversity in the classroom, it becomes possible for White students to not encounter Black males in educational settings and allows them to perpetuate Black male stereotypes. It also allows implicit and explicit biases to be unchecked and leads to surface progressiveness without self-reflecting on privilege and systemic barriers. Furthermore, for those Black males who are in postsecondary institutions, their experience becomes more isolated and are more likely to function within the domain with and take on the labels that the dominant group imposes (Bowen, 2011).

The second fallacy of colorblind policies are the way race is often pitted against class. There should not be a discussion on whether race or class is a better criterion; rather, the discussion should be how both race and class-based policies can

help achieve racial diversity, economic diversity, and work to overcome access barriers to higher education. By moving to race-neutral policies, educational institutions do a disservice to racial justice. Also, the very idea of post-racial, race-neutral, and anti- race-based affirmative action is an argument based on privilege. Being White comes with positive values and correlations that are not afforded by other groups. Thus, whiteness has little need for protection but has the multiple layers of capital to protect its resources, wealth, and institutions. Other racial groups do not have the capital to protect themselves from discrimination and cannot leverage the vast resources obtained over centuries of inequities. Hence, there is a need for policies and programs that are in place to ensure that access to education is equitable. And, while on an individual level one can argue that a high-income Black family has resources that a low-income White family may not have because of income, we cannot ignore the data that shows the accumulation of wealth for Whites as a group far surpasses those of any other racial group. We also cannot ignore that as a group, policies and programs that are race based have a profound impact on Black men as a group as opportunities for access to higher education are sought.

The complexities that race and racism bring to the educational experiences of Black males often go unchecked unless there are purposeful preventative measures or programmatic measures that seek to combat both overt racism and microaggressions that may be more covert in nature. Policies and programs that specifically target Black males have a unique opportunity to combat, discuss, and help alleviate some of the microaggressions that are present for Black males in their educational career. Additionally, race-targeted programs provide a safe space for Black males where they can find reprieve and solace. For this reason, race-neutral policies perpetuate racial subordination. What proponents of class-based only programs and policies fail to

realize is that what is considered normal and ideal is rooted in White cultural norms. "The impact of the American eugenics movement and white supremacy on theoretical and methodological approaches to research on communities of color is often overlooked" (Flennaugh, 2016, p. 70). The barriers created for Black males entering college from their pre-collegiate education experiences to the college application process are a result of dominant White cultural norms ignoring the cultural perspective of Black males.

In January 2020, the Education Trust put out a report that lays out three distinct arguments in favor of race-conscious policies in higher education. The first argument is that higher education has historically used racist policies to exclude students of color. Consequently, race-conscious policies are needed to achieve racial justice and equity in higher education. Secondly, racial inequalities in higher education have worsened because race-conscious policies were eliminated. Lastly, policies that substitute income as a proxy for race have not closed opportunity gaps for students of color. States that ban using race as a factor for college admissions and instead use income as a proxy for race, experienced a decline in Black student enrollment. Income-based policies do not produce effective racial diversity. Policies and practices designed for Black men have helped many of them succeed in higher education. The importance of keeping race in the foreground makes the assurance that Black males are active participants who are committed to their educational experiences; Black males are valued. Not only is their education valued, but it is a part of the social justice process that actively seeks change within their communities (Jones & Nichols, 2020).

Finally, race-based programs and policies are important because they often provide a basis for developing inter and intradisciplinary approaches to solving issues.

Particularly, for Black men the policies and programs that were first developed to address issues specifically for this subgroup have been generalized and used for other subgroups of students which include those who are low-income. There is a wealth of valuable research and policies that have been developed from research and programs created for policies that would not be in existence if the focus on race was absent. Therefore, it is important that the focus on race—specifically for Black males—stays in the foreground; programs and policies are developed to specifically address the issues of Black men. Unlike class, one cannot change their race. Dealing with issues of race within the education paradigm and particularly for developing policies that deal with race is important to overcoming racism that has been a dominant experience for Black men in education. It is for these reasons that there might exist the need for Black men to have distinct kinds of supports from other students that cater to their racial and gender identity.

The Extent to which Opportunity Programs Meet Student Needs

Since the advent of TRIO, many state, municipal, and private organizations have developed similar programs that seek to address the on-going achievement gap and issues of college access with historically disadvantaged and low socioeconomic groups. However, "[despite] the focus and resources devoted to early intervention programs by both the public and private sectors, only minimal data and information are available to describe these programs" (Swail & Perna, 2002). This makes it difficult to assess how effectively these programs currently work for low socioeconomic students and even less so for Black male students.

It is unknown how many opportunity programs are currently in existence, how many students they serve, or what are the current scopes of these programs. To begin gathering more information about these programs, the College Board collaborated

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with The Education Resource Institute to conduct a national study in 1999 to try to identify these programs nation-wide (Swail & Perna, 2002). Over the last decade since the publication of this study, researchers have sought to supplement this knowledge. However, the data currently present for many of these programs are scarce which presents issues for understanding and developing policies and best practices.

The research gathered on these programs seems to indicate that students who do participate in opportunity programs share at least the same level of academic success as non-participants in grade point averages, graduation rates, and retention rates of students. This is an impressive feat given that the state-based opportunity programs previously mentioned targets students who do not meet the standard academic requirements for admission. Moreover, most studies show that many participants share higher level of success than non-participants of similar income levels. "Studies conducted on [TRIO's] Upward Bound show that the program's participants are four times as likely to earn an undergraduate degree than those with similar backgrounds not in TRIO" (Gullatt & Jan, 2003). This success can be attributed to early academic intervention, counseling, assistance with finances, peer support, and the development of social capital. The extra assistance afforded to students who enroll in these programs appears to at least give program participants the tools and resources they need for equitable access to higher education.

Gullatt and Jan (2003) have identified ten key components from research on opportunity programs that help define their success. They are (1) high standards for program students and staff; (2) personalized attention for students; (3) adult role models; (4) peer support; (5) K-12 program integration; (6) strategically timed interventions; (7) long-term investment in students; (8) school/society bridge for

students; (9) scholarship assistance (in the form of financial support); and (10) evaluation designs that contribute results to interventions. However, little is known about which of these interventions work best or are the most impactful for students who participate in these programs.

What is known about education opportunity programs that primarily target low-income students is that they provide students with financial help and academic capital that were not previously afforded to them. "Academic capital refers to the social processes that underlie family knowledge of educational options, strategies to pursue them, and career goals that require a college education" (St. John, Hu, & Fisher, 2011, p. xiii). Academic capital formation gives low-income students the vital skills and tools that they need to survive in college.

St. John, Hu, & Fisher (2011) identify four ways that education opportunity programs can provide low-income students with academic capital. First, through family and community engagement, a network is built for low-income families that allows the students and their families to be fully vested in the college application process. Often this approach involves reaching families of low-income students a few years before the college application process begins so that families are prepared and aware of the steps necessary to navigate the process.

Second, academic preparation is a significant component of college access and opportunity programs. This preparation may consist of remedial coursework, college coursework, additional tutoring, and/or academic counseling. Academic preparation also involves allowing students to network, visit colleges, and seek information about college alternatives. Academic preparation builds on academic capital formation by allowing students to build a sense of self, developing their educational goals, and

giving them the ability to see that they do have the capability to be successful in higher education.

Third, engaged learning allows for low-income students to be fully vested in their educational experience. "The support of faculty, student affairs personnel and mentors all [play an] important role in the process of academic empowerment, as students [build] the college knowledge they [need] to navigate through educational barriers" (p. 168). Lastly, focusing on the successful transition from high school to college is key. The focus on college success for low-income students in opportunity programs treats the college admissions process as an opportunity to have multi-generational impact; this is not merely a means to an end whereas one achieves a college degree for gaining employment. College access and opportunity programs reframe postsecondary degree attainment as an opportunity to have a life altering and generational impact that can uplift oneself and future generations out of poverty (St. John, Hu, & Fisher, 2011; Schultz & Mueller, 2006; Perna, 2002).

Academic Needs

Opportunity programs prepare students academically in several ways. While programs may have niche models developed for a particular program, and/or institution, there are some overarching similarities that are standard to prepare students. Most frequently found in college access and opportunity programs is a summer bridge program that prepares incoming students prior to their entry in college. Summer bridge programs tend to offer academic workshops, remedial coursework, and college credit coursework (Lee & Barnes, 2015; Winograd et al., 2018). Research shows that students who participate in summer bridge programs are

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more likely to persist throughout their college experience (Cabrera et al., 2013; Lee & Barnes, 2015; Santa Rita & Bacote, 1996).

Opportunity programs also address academic needs by offering academic tutoring, mentorship programs, and skills-based workshops such as technology, time management, and study skills. The literature shows that students who are exposed to additional academic resources demonstrate higher levels of academic performance, are more likely to persist, are more likely to be retained, and have higher rates of graduation. Also, the literature reveals that opportunity program students show comparable or superior academic performance, as evidenced by GPA, persistence, retention, and post-testing, to that of non-opportunity students. It seems clear from the literature that the college access and opportunity programs not only act as a gateway to higher education but also as a means of boosting academic performance (Allen, 1976; Cabrera et al., 2013; Quinn et al., 2019; Watson & Chen, 2019).

Financial Support

Financial assistance is a common characteristic found in most college access and opportunity programs, in addition to academic support. Many programs target low-income students, providing a way to make college affordable for them. Tuition assistance, supplemental financial assistance such as money for books, travel, and housing, and funding for academic support services are typically found among programs.

The literature is filled with articles that discuss the impact of the rising cost of college and the national student debt crisis. There are studies that show how the national debt crisis and cost of college can affect college student retention, block access to higher education, can decrease home ownership, and even cause mental

health issues for parents of student borrowers (Decker, 2020; Mezza et al., 2020;

Sonya L. Britt et al., 2017; Walsemann et al., 2020). While these issues impact most

college student borrowers, it has even more of a negative impact for low-income

students and students of color, particularly Black students. Low-income students are

also more likely to have family financial responsibilities (Jones et al., 2020).

College access and opportunity programs that offer financial assistance help to

alleviate the cost burden and loan debt for students. Studies have shown that students

who benefit from the financial assistance of opportunity programs have better

academic outcomes and are more likely to persist (Watson & Chen, 2019; Winograd

et al., 2018). The likelihood is that students perform better academically when

financial stress is reduced.

Personal Support and Social Development

It is important to explore the effectiveness of resources provided to students

who are enrolled in opportunity programs for their personal support and social

development. While more research is needed, the available literature points to positive

outcomes. Quin et al. (2019) studied first generation students in a TRIO SSS program.

Their findings suggest that students enrolled in the program feel the support received

from the staff helped them better adjust and navigate college. A similar study on the

CUNY CD summer bridge program indicates that participants receive requisite help

to transition and adjust to college life and improve their persistence rates (Santa Rita

& Bacote, 1996).

Francis et al. (1993) describes CUNY SEEK as a tool that:

Assimilates poorer minority students into publicly funded higher education,

and at the same time it broadens the culture of the university environment,

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sensitizing it to the needs of those who cultures and "codes" [that] often differ from the middle-class-oriented values. (p. 437)

It appears that for Francis (1993), SEEK provides an opportunity for its participants to learn and gain the necessary skills to adapt to the dominant cultural norms of the institution. Perhaps given the era in which his study is conducted, the undertone of this argument is that the participants in SEEK would not have the cultural aptitude needed to succeed in the college environment. The emphasis of the study shows how SEEK effectively plays a vital role in integrating students into the dominant college culture. He argues that the degree that students can be integrated into the campus environment is directly correlated to the degree they will succeed academically in college. He theorizes that the services that the SEEK program provides can be successful because they increase the likelihood students would adapt to the college environment. There is no emphasis in his study as to whether success in SEEK is due to the program supporting the students' own cultural identity rather than assimilating them into the dominant culture of the college.

It seems that students who enroll in opportunity programs are given support services outside of the academic support that contribute to personal support and social development. What seems to be apparent in the literature is that students involved in these programs are well adjusted to the campus environment. There also appears to be a mutual benefit to the colleges who offer these programs, as they gain from students who are better adjusted to the campus life and rigor of academia.

Lee and Barnes (2015) find that similar academic transition programs at PWIs increased students' feelings of abilities, social integration, and development of supportive networks. Students involved in such programs have improved confidence

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and self-efficacy. Additionally, these programs increase student social and academic engagement which is a mutual benefit to the student and the college. Of particular interest to focus of this thesis, Lee and Barnes (2015) also find that while students enrolled in academic transition type programs experienced positive personal support and social development, there are arguably major gaps in how these programs address issues related to prejudice and discrimination. While college access and opportunity programs are not exclusively geared towards students of color, many of the students they enroll tend to be students of color. Negative racial and/or ethnic experiences at the college can have adverse effects and impact academic progress. There is a gap in the literature on whether these programs do enough to counteract racial and ethnic discrimination and provide the racial support students enrolled in these programs need.

Career Development

The research is also scarce on how opportunity programs transition students into careers. A possible reason for that is the financial and staffing limitations many of these programs' experience do not allow for adequate tracking of student careers beyond graduation. A dissertation published in 2020 finds that students enrolled in New Jersey's EOF have a limited understanding of career development; it was not a point of emphasis during their college experience. Furthermore, students prioritized academic, financial, and personal responsibilities over career placement. The study concludes that the EOF program does not provide students with adequate resources to help with transitioning into a career or help increase knowledge of career development opportunities upon graduation (Videla, 2020).

There is important work in this are for scholars to develop additional studies on career development resources that are available to participants in opportunity programs. It is worth noting that the State University of New York also administers the Educational Opportunity Centers which are non-traditional opportunity programs focused solely on workforce development. These programs, however, are not college access programs in the traditional sense; they and do not provide students a direct pathway to college. The majority of students are supported to primarily enter the workforce.

Overview of HEOP

History

The Arthur O. Eve HEOP is rooted in the history of New York State's opportunity programs that were started in the mid-1960s. The late Honorable Percy Ellis Sutton was an activist, civil rights lawyer, Freedom Rider, former Manhattan borough president, founder of the Apollo Theater and former New York State Assemblyman. He, along with several other members of the New York State Assembly, called for the creation of state-funded postsecondary programs that established access to CUNY for economically and educationally disadvantaged students. This group of legislators, led by Percy Sutton, took advantage of the political momentum of the 1960s that produced legislation to enforce civil rights at both the state and federal levels. The legislature called for programs that would be modeled after CUNY's CD program which was established in 1964 by a resolution passed by the CUNY Board of Trustees.

CD, which began as a five-year experiment, was developed to show that with proper support services, students who were previously being excluded from the

university system could prove to be academically successful. The Following year, in 1965, following the CD resolution, CUNY started the SEEK program at The City College of New York as a pre-baccalaureate program. In 1966, Assemblyman Sutton succeeded at providing legislation that expanded SEEK to the rest of CUNY's senior colleges. With pressure from Assemblyman Sutton and the New York State legislature, New York's Governor Rockefeller signed legislation that formalized access to the City University of New York for economically and educationally disadvantaged students. The goal for these programs were meant to reverse the cycle of poverty and promote equal access to higher education

In 1967, first-year Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve, drafted legislation that would expand CUNY's opportunity programs to the State University of New York and New York State's non-public colleges and universities. Assemblyman Eve's bill was signed into law in 1969 and established programs of higher education opportunity at public and non-public colleges throughout New York State. In 1970, Education Law 6451 was amended and formally separated the public and non-public higher education opportunity programs. The amendment created Education Law 6452 and established EOP at the State University of New York and formalized SEEK and CD programs at the City University of New York. HEOP was then formally recognized as being established in 1969 by Education Law 6451 and would allow for non-public institutions of higher education to apply for state funding to administer HEOP on their campuses (An Act to Amend the Education Law to Establish a Program of Higher Education Opportunity, 1969).

To date, HEOP continues to enroll students at non-public institutions who meet the economically disadvantaged criteria set forth by NYSED and the educationally disadvantaged criteria set by each participating institution. At the time

of this writing, fifty-three non-public institutions (around 37% of all New York State non-public higher education colleges and universities) are participating in HEOP. These include top tier universities such as Columbia University, Cornell University, and New York University; small liberal arts colleges like Sienna College, and mid-tier schools like Clarkson University (New York State Education Department, n.d.).

Eligibility Criteria

There are two sets of eligibility criteria for HEOP. The first is institutional eligibility. The New York State Education Department awards non-public institutions funds to administer HEOP. The grants are competitive and based on institutional eligibility and are awarded in a 5-year cycle. The non-public colleges and universities that apply for HEOP grant funding must be incorporated by the New York State legislature or chartered by the New York State Board of Regents and must offer two-year or four-year degree programs that are approved by the Board of Regents (New York State Education Department, n.d.).

The second set of eligibility is students' eligibility. Students can be considered for HEOP if they are New York State residents, and both economically and educationally disadvantaged as prescribed in NYSED Law 6451 and the Educational Commissioner's Rules and Regulations 27-1.1. NYSED states, "economically disadvantaged students are members of a household where the total annual income of such household is equal to or less than 185% of the amount under the annual United States Department of Health and Human Services Poverty guidelines" (New York State Education Department, n.d.) [See Appendix A]. Colleges and universities that administer HEOP establish their own educationally disadvantaged criteria. However, the students must be non-admissible under the college's normal admissions standards

(New York State Education Department, n.d.). It is not known whether students are aware of the admissions requirements at each of the participating colleges and universities.

Effectiveness

Students enrolled in HEOP are supported through academic services and financial assistance. HEOP at many campuses follow a cohort and peer support model that is found in similar education opportunity programs (Sorrentino, 2006). The support model that is provided to HEOP students appears to have favorable academic outcomes. Sources from NYSED report that the overall retention rates for all HEOP students between 2014-15 and 2017-18 is over 80%. The Bachelor's degree graduation rate for those same years is reported to be over 60% within five years [the six-year graduation rates are not reported] (New York State Education Department, 2019a; New York State Education Department, 2019b; Kline, 2017).

As a result of the financial assistance, students enrolled in HEOP graduate with very little loan debt. In its guidelines, NYSED has capped student loans at $25,000 for residential students and $20,000 for commuter students for all semesters supported through the program (New York State Education Department, n.d.). NYSED reports that the average student loan debt for students seeking a bachelor's degree is reported to be $7,415 (New York State Education Department, 2019a). Studies show that student loan debt is an inhibitor for personal economic growth after graduation for many students (Decker, 2020; Jones & Ramirez-Mendoza, 2020). Given the data reported, HEOP appears to be effective at graduating students from a non-public college or university with very little debt.

How HEOP Meets Black Male Student Needs

The available literature on HEOP is limited beyond what is published by NYSED. Given that this program has been in existence since the 1960s, it is peculiar that extensive research has not been published. However, the research that is available by NYSED and other research on opportunity programs point to the successful student persistence, academic outcomes, student retention, and acclimation of students to the campus environment (Allen, 1976; New York State Education Department, n.d.; Quinn et al., 2019; Swail & Perna, 2002; Watson & Chen, 2019; Winograd et al., 2018). However, there is a significant gap in the literature on how HEOP and other opportunity programs provide students of color with coping tools, support services, and guidance that specifically meet their racial, ethnic, and gendered needs (Lee & Barnes, 2015). As the literature suggests, students of color may in fact need targeted racial and gendered services. Moreover, the available literature does not explore how opportunity programs specifically meet the racial and gendered needs of Black males who are a part of the programs.

What is known from the available literature is that Black male students are faced with plenty of racial prejudices and stereotypes that inhibit success while in college (Brooms, 2017; Davis, 2013; Harper et al., 2009; Palmer & Maramba, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2006). In his book titled *Whistling Vivladi*, Claude Steele (2010) sited that he had the opportunity to speak to students at the University of Michigan who were a part of an academic support program for "minority" students. He found that Black students' grades were impacted by concerns of being seen as a small minority on campus. Students were worried about how faculty and fellow students perceived their academic abilities as less than other students; felt that Black culture is stigmatized and marginalized on campus; and noted the small number of faculty of

color at the university. He finds that the stereotype threat on campus has directly impacted academic performance.

While Steele (2010) makes no mention as to whether the program at the University of Michigan plays a role in reducing stereotype threat, he does mention studies later in his book that show that affirming identity for students faced with stereotype threat can slow and reduce achievement gaps for both college and K-12 students. It is evident that Black men need specific types of supportive services that affirms their racial and gendered identities as Black men. In 2020, the Education Trust released a report citing the need for more race-conscious policies in higher education and affirmed that income is not a good proxy for race in closing opportunity gaps for students of color (Jones & Nichols, 2020).

The research literature is clear that a key element in retaining Black male students is employing faculty and staff with which Black males can identify. Research shows that Black males tend to be most successful when there are Black male faculty and staff who can connect and relate to them. The bonding experience between Black male students and staff can create and foster a safe space for Black male students to thrive (Bonner II & Bailey, 2006). The cultural experiences for Black male students while in college can impact whether a student decides to continue in college. This is a key factor that is often ignored particularly at PWIs. Institutions that can commit to diversifying the faculty and staff enhance their success of retaining a more diverse student body. For Black male students this is particularly true. Black male faculty and staff should be encouraged and supported to participate and work with Black male students. Connections should be made and fostered as early as possible; these should be continuous.

Black male retention is most successful when schools invest in Black male students by connecting them with Black faculty and staff, creating diverse living and learning environments; training faculty and staff to be culturally responsive; and ensuring that financial stress does not burden Black male students. While there is no known quantifiable data showing how many Black men are needed on a campus to help retention, what is clear is that even a small cohesive community of Black students can help address these issues and helps to create a more successful living and learning environment for Black males (Wood et al., 2012).

It is not clear from the available literature whether opportunity programs in general include any of the characteristics described in the research that are necessary for Black males to succeed while in college and alleviate the undue burdens caused by racism, racial microaggressions, and stereotype threat. This study seeks to fill in this gap by examining how services provided by HEOP impacts the academic performance of Black male students and the extent to which the services provided by HEOP meet the racial and gendered needs of these students.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed methods study is to explore the impact of the services provided to Black males in the New York State Arthur O. Eve HEOP. The scope of this research is limited to students in New York State non-public (private) post-secondary institutions that have participated in HEOP as grant recipients. This study was done as a two-phased mixed methods study. This study used a convergent design. "In convergent design, the data collection involves gathering both quantitative and qualitative data roughly at the same time, analyzing the two databases separately, then merging or comparing the results from the two databases" (Creswell & Clark, 2018, p.197). Convergent designs allow for the triangulation of data to get an overall understanding of the topic.

The first phase of this study is the quantitative analysis which explores the relationship between student academic outcomes and services provided by HEOP. This data used for the analysis has been collected by NYSED between 2014 and 2019. The second phase of the study is a series of qualitative semi-structured interviews that is used to explore whether the services offered by HEOP meet the racial and gendered needs of Black male students and contribute to academic success.

Research Questions

I was particularly interested in how services provided by HEOP impact academic performance for Black male students and to the extent which the services provided meet the racial and gendered needs of these students. Restating the questions from the first chapter, I sought to answer the following:

1. To what extent does HEOP academic support services impact Black male students' academic outcomes?

    a. What are types of tutoring and counseling services Black males in HEOP receive the most?

    b. How many hours of tutoring and counseling hours do Black males in HEOP receive in comparison to their peers in HEOP?

    c. How do these results compare to non-Black men and Black female students?

    d. Are Black male students who receive more support services more likely to persist?

2. What are the Black male student perspectives about the services offered by HEOP and do those services meet their racial and gendered needs?

3. Can the interview data help to explain why Black men sought out these support services and the extent to which the services were helpful?

4. Does HEOP reduce stereotype threat by providing identity affirmation for Black male participants?

    a. Does the "disadvantaged" label perpetuate stereotype threat for the Black male students involved?

Assumptions

The general assumptions of this study are as follows:

1. Because of the academic support services Black male students receive in HEOP, students that are enrolled will show overall higher than average academic performance indicators (such as GPA) but lower academic performance indicators than their peers who are also enrolled in HEOP.

As reflected in most studies regarding the academic performance of Black

male students. Black male students typically do not have academic

performance outcomes that are as high as other race and gender groups. It

is assumed that the same sort of metrics will be displayed within HEOP.

2. Black male students enrolled in HEOP will feel academically supported

   but are likely to feel the need for support and affirmation of their race and

   gender identity.

3. There will be some variation in the level of support and performance

   depending upon the type of private institution in which Black males are

   enrolled. Ivy League, commuter institutions, and four-year liberal arts

   colleges will have varying levels of support and performance.

Quantitative Analysis

My quantitative analysis explored the relationship between Black male student

academic outcomes and services provided to them in HEOP. To explore these

outcomes, my study used raw data collected from NYSED on HEOP from the 2014-

2019 grant cycle (a HEOP grant cycle is 5 years long). The advantage of using

secondary data is that I was able to draw samples from all institutions that hosted

HEOP across New York State between 2014-2019, thereby creating greater

representation of the Black male participants and home in on the specific outcomes

for this subgroup of students.

This study used descriptive statistics and regression analysis to explore the

relationship between outcomes and services provided within these data. Regression

analysis is useful for predicting how each independent variable contributes to the

academic outcomes (Field et al., 2012). My dependent variables in the data set are

'GPA' representing student GPAs and 'GraduatedYN' which is a dummy variable

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that shows that a student graduated within a particular year within the dataset. A third dependent variable was created for the use of the analysis called 'PersistToGrad'. This variable was created using the 'StudentID' variable to track students across time and see in which year they graduated. This variable is essentially a completion variable tracking student persistence across time to graduation. It should be noted that effects of this variable are mostly relevant for students who started before 2016. As many students who started in 2016 and after may have graduated in subsequent years but would not be captured in the dataset unless they graduated with an associate degree. The graduation rate for students who started in 2019 would not be captured by this variable. These are the pertinent student academic outcomes recorded in the data for my analysis.

My independent variables are dummy variables that represent counseling and tutoring; these are services provided to students recorded in the data. These variables were created to identify whether a student has received one of the aforementioned services or not. These variables were created from continuous tutoring and counseling variables in the dataset that captured hours tutored or counseled. However, because of the unreliability of the hours inputted—due to data entry errors inherent in the subset— I decided to instead create dummy variables representing tutoring services. I used and re-coded the existing dummy variable for counseling services. These variables are represented by 'TutoredYN' which is a dummy variable capturing tutoring reported. 'CounselingYN' is a re-coded variable from the original data set. It is a dummy variable captured counseling reported. My other independent variables are the dummy variables 'Gender' representing gender, and 'Black' representing observations identified as Black or African American. Both variables are original to the dataset but were also re-coded.

There were several interaction variables created for the analysis. They are as follows: 'BlackM' representing Black Male observations, 'TutorGenderM' representing Males that have been identified as receiving tutoring, 'CounseledGenderM' representing males that have been identified as receiving counseling, 'TutorBlackM' representing Black males that have received tutoring, 'CounselBlackM' representing Black males that have received counseling.

Data

In the NYSED data, each HEOP program-year grant cycle contains about 5,000 unit-records of HEOP student data. NYSED collects HEOP student-level data via a spreadsheet which is submitted to each HEOP participating institution; this is to be completed each year during the grant cycle. Each observation records an individual student within an academic year between 2014-2019 and contains demographic information, academic outcomes, and HEOP services received. While there are more than a dozen variables collected by NYSED, I only used a subset of the variables available for the purposes of my study and created additional variables as described above. Several variables were cleaned for the analysis of the data. The final cleaned dataset contained 24,617 observations. A description of the variables used, and the observations reported in each variable are described below in this section.

The HEOP data for 2014-19 was collected using a spreadsheet; institutions were sent a template with variables to fill as part of their reporting requirements to NYSED. The spreadsheet would serve as a proxy for a roster of students as well as a tool to collect data about each student participant in HEOP. All information is self-reported and manually entered into the spreadsheet. Apparently due to the method of data collection by NYSED, the raw data contained lots of data entry errors. Some of

the types of errors included incomplete and missing data; mistyped data; duplicate data entries; copy and paste errors; inconsistent data; and misidentified data. This made this dataset challenging to work with, particularly when it was necessary to track students across years in the dataset. Recommendations for collecting cleaner and more accurate data are discussed in Chapter VI.

Dependent and Independent Variables

GraduatedYN Variable

GraduatedYN is a dummy variable that shows that students graduated in a particular program year in the dataset. This means that a student that is in Cohorts 2-5 with a bachelor's degree has future graduation dates and would not be captured by this variable. This variable is simply a count of all the observations (obs) that are marked as graduated in the entire dataset. As seen in Table 3.1, out of 24,617 observations 13.60% (3,348 obs) are reported as graduated and 23.52% (5,790 obs) are missing graduation data. In Table 11, 12.2% (415 obs) out the total observations identified as Black males (3,403 obs) are reported as graduated. Out of the 415 observations identified as Black male that report graduation data, 76.87% (319 obs) are reported as having obtained a bachelor's degree, and 3.61% (15 obs) report obtained an associate degree. 23.36% of observations identified as Black male have missing graduation information. 25.90% (795 obs) are missing both graduation data and degree information. As detailed in Chapter IV and seen in Table 4.1, the approximate number of students in the dataset are **11,014.**

Table 3. 1 Frequency of Observations Reported Graduated by GraduatedYN Variable by Program Year

	Program Year					
	2014- 2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	
GraduatedYN						
No						
Black Male						
No		3,255	3,465	3,441	3,082	13,243
Yes		**531**	**545**	**568**	**549**	2,193
.		40	1	1	1	43
Total		**3,826**	**4,011**	**4,010**	**3,632**	**15,479**
Yes						
Black Male						
No		677	726	736	786	2,925
Yes		**102**	**108**	**94**	**111**	**415**
.		8				8
Total		**787**	**834**	**830**	**897**	**3,348**
.						
Black Male						
No	4,117	349	92	167	270	4,995
Yes	**630**	**34**	**30**	**50**	**51**	**795**
Total	**4,747**	**383**	**122**	**217**	**321**	**5,790**
Total						
Black Male						
No	4,117	4,281	4,283	4,344	4,138	21,163
Yes	**630**	**667**	**683**	**712**	**711**	**3,403**
.		48	1	1	1	51
Total	**4,747**	**4,996**	**4,967**	**5,057**	**4,850**	**24,617**

GPA Variable

GPA is a continuous variable that contains the reported GPA for each

observation. Out of 24,617 observations 19,794 observations reported a GPA. The

GPAs were not reported for the 2013-14 program year. The mean GPA for all reporting observations is 2.81 on a 4.0 scale and a standard deviation of 0.61. The median GPA for all observations reporting is 2.88. The average GPA of all observations identified as female is 2.88 with a standard deviation of 0.59 and all observations identified as male is 2.69 with a standard deviation of 0.64.

TutoringYN Variable

'TutoredYN' was created as a dummy variable. The variable marks each observation with a '1' that has reported any type of tutoring. As seen in Table 3.2, a total of 13,519 observations (54.92%) are listed marked as receiving tutoring. Out of all observations reporting as Black and male 56.69% (1,929 obs) is marked as receiving tutoring.

Table 3. 2 Frequency of Observations Reporting Tutoring by TutoredYN Variable

	Black Male			
TutoredYN	**No**	**Yes**	**.**	**Total**
No	9,592	**1,474**	32	**11,098**
	45.32	**43.31**	62.75	**45.08**
Yes	11,571	1,929	19	**13,519**
	54.68	56.69	37.25	**54.92**
Total	**21,163**	**3,403**	**51**	**24,617**
	100	**100**	**100**	**100**

CounselingYN Variable

CounselingYN is a renamed and re-coded dummy variable that previously existed in the data set. The variable marks each observation with a '1' that reported any type

of counseling. As seen in Table 3.3, out of the 24,617 observations, 98.11% (24,152 obs) reported as receiving counseling and 1.07% (264 obs) are missing counseling information. In addition, 97.71% (3,325 obs) of the observations that are reported as Black, and male are reported as receiving counseling with observations 1.62% (55 obs) reported as Black and male are missing counseling data.

Table 3. 3 Frequency of Observations Reporting Counseling by CounselingYN Variable by Program Year

| CounselingYN | Black Male | | | Total |
	No	Yes	.	
No	178	23	0	201
	0.84	0.68	0	0.82
Yes	20,776	3,325	51	24,152
	98.17	97.71	100	98.11
.	209	55	0	264
	0.99	1.62	0	1.07
Total	21,163	3,403	51	24,617
	100	100	100	100

Cohort Variable

The Cohort variable created captures the year a student starts in HEOP. This means that regardless of how many times a student shows up in the data set between 2014-2019 they will be labeled with the same Cohort number. For example, A student John Doe who shows up for three consecutive years in the data set and started in 2014 would be labeled as Cohort 1 in each reporting year from 2014-2017. This means for

John Doe there would be three observations marked with Cohort 1 for the same student across different reporting years.

Observations of students were organized into Cohorts based on the year of entry between 2014-2019. There are six cohorts starting with Cohort 0 that includes observations of students whose year of entry is prior to the 2013-2014 academic year. Cohort 1 represents the observations of students whose entry year is 2013-14. Cohort 2 are the observations of students who started in 2014-15. Cohort 3 are the observations of students who entered in 2015-16. Cohort 4 are the observations of students who entered in 2016-17. Cohort 5 is the observations of students who started in 2018-19.

As seen in Table 3.4, Cohort 0 contains a total of 7,706 observations. Out of those observations 1,045 are reported as Black male. Twenty-five observations are missing data for a grand total of 7,731 observations. Cohort 1 has 4,696 observations. Out of those observations 646 are reported as Black male. Eleven of those observations are missing data for a grand total of 4707 observations. Cohort 2 has 4,817 observations. There are 621 observations reported as Black male. Twelve observations are missing data for a grand total of 4,829 observations. Cohort 3 has 3,677 observations; 518 observations are reported as Black male. Three observations are missing data for a grand total of 3,680 observations. Cohort 4 has a grand total of 2,488 observations; 377 observations are reported as Black male. Cohort 5 has grand total of 1,156 observations; 191 observations are reported as Black male. Twenty-six observations could not be identified by a cohort and is missing data.

Table 3. 4 Number of Observations in Cohort Variable by Black or African American
and Gender

	Black or African American							
	No		Yes			.		
	Gender		Gender			Gender		
	Female	Male	Female	**Male**	**Total**	All	**Grand Total**
Cohort							
0	3,181	1,879	1,601	**1,045**	**7,706**	25	**7731**
1	1,882	1,274	894	**646**	**4,696**	11	**4707**
2	2,050	1,189	957	**621**	**4,817**	12	**4829**
3	1,461	924	774	**518**	**3,677**	3	**3680**
4	967	600	544	**377**	**2488**		**2488**
5	443	276	246	**191**	**1156**		**1156**
.	4	5	12	**5**	**26**		**26**

Weights

The weights are the inverse ratio of the times that the students appear on the
dataset. A weight of .05 means that a student appears twice on the dataset. For
example, a weight of .3 means that a student appears three times on the dataset.

Table 3. 5 Table of Weights by Cohort

	Weights					
Cohort	0.2	0.25	0.33	0.5	1	**Total**
0	106	961	2,464	2,353	1,847	**7,731**
1	816	2,372	629	407	483	**4,707**
2	53	3,514	572	333	357	**4,829**
3	10	65	2,852	474	279	**3,680**
4	0	0	97	2,140	251	**2,488**
5	0	0	0	2	1,154	**1,156**
.	0	0	1	3	22	**26**
Total	**985**	**6,912**	**6,615**	**5,712**	**4,393**	**24,617**

Analysis

The data analyzed is raw cross-sectional data from NYSED on HEOP between 2014-2019 that has been cleaned for the purposes of this study. The cleaned data includes 24,617 total observations across 5 years. The panel data contains observations across a collection of individuals. It is important to note that because this is panel data, the set captures a snapshot of students across a 5-year period. Observations within this panel do not equate to students; reference to student data may be repeated in the panel data across several years. As a result, some of the tables seen in Chapter 4 have been weighted to approximate the number of students within the data being observed.

To achieve my results, I analyzed my quantitative data in two parts. The first part is a series of descriptive statistics to gain an overview on the pertinent data. The second part is a series of regression models that is pertinent to understanding the relationship between academic outcomes and services offered to Black males in HEOP in contrast to their peers within HEOP.

The first part of the analysis contains four descriptive statistic tables. The first table is a weighted table that shows an overview of how many Black male students are identified in the data as well as whether those students also identified by another race or ethnicity. The table also shows the frequency comparison between Black men and non-Black men in HEOP as well as Black women. The second weighted table is a comparison of the degree type that Black men in HEOP are seeking. The table compares Black men to non-Black men in HEOP and Black women. The third table shows the completion rates of Black male students in comparison to their peers. The

last descriptive table shows the average GPAs for Black men across the years that reported GPA in comparison to other race or ethnicities.

The second part of the analysis is a series of regressions that sought to answer the first research question and its sub-questions. Multiple instances of a Linear Probability Model (LPM) are presented to show the extent to which HEOP support services impact Black male academic outcomes. To evaluate the robustness of the results logit models were also used to examine the sensitivity of the results to the choice of analysis models obtaining the same conclusions; these are presented in the appendices. A second series of LMPs are shown to address sub-question 1a.; this sub-question compares regression models results between Black men to non-Black men and Black female students. Logit models were also used for these regressions to examine the sensitivity of the results and shown in the appendices. The third series of regression models addresses sub-question 1b. and examines whether Black male students who receive more support services are more likely to persist. Lastly, a series of descriptive tables are presented to show the types of tutoring and counseling services Black males in HEOP receive the most. A subsequent regression model is presented displaying results for academic counseling and the extent to which it impacts Black male academic outcomes.

Missing Data

It is inevitable to have some missing data when using large data sets. To manage missing data and determine the best approach to handle "missingness", I first needed to determine how much data is missing from the data set. After performing an exploratory analysis of the existing variables prior to cleaning, I determined the frequency of missingness in the data set. Different variables had different amounts of

missing data. I decided for the variables that contained missing data to not use listwise deletion. Instead, there was much time dedicated—through several rounds of data cleaning—to restore missing data. This also included making phone calls to HEOP directors and asking pointed questions regarding data that was missing from the data set. I decided that because individual records of student data appear several times throughout the 5-year period within the dataset it would not be beneficial to use listwise deletion; deleting a student observation in a single year could have implications for analyzing student outcomes across several years.

Performing Rubin and Little's (1987, 2002) Missing Completely at Random Test (MCAR) helped to determine whether the data is missing completely at random, meaning essentially that there is not a pattern to the missing data, and it cannot be explained why data is missing: "[D]ata can [also] be labeled as 'missing at random' (MAR) if 'the probability of missing data on a variable Y is related to some other measured variable (or variables) in the analysis model but not to the values of Y itself' " (Cox et al., 2014, p. 380). There were several reasons for missing data. The first includes that not all variables were collected in each year of the dataset. For example, GPA was not collected in 2014 but was subsequently collected in years 2015-2019. There were also cases in which tutoring hours were missing at random for some students in the dataset. It also turned out that there was data missing not at random (MNAR). This occurred if a particular institution did not report data for a series of observations. For example, it turned out that some institutions did not report tutoring for all their students for a particular program year. Based on the patterns of missingness, I determined that to restore the data missing I needed to use methods that were both monotone and arbitrary (McNeish, 2017). Monotone refers to data that is missing at a point in time and as a result is missing in all subsequent points in time for

a particular variable. Arbitrary refers to data that is missing at random with no set pattern. After examining patterns of missingness I determined the best course of action is to restore much of the data as possible. More advance methods such as multiple imputation to reduce the possibility of introducing bias into the overall analysis can be used. Nevertheless, there are still some observations that contain missing variable in each data set and as shown in the variable descriptions above.

After completing the quantitative analysis, much of the findings did not produce significant results. In fact, all the regressions for interaction between Black males and counseling are not significant. However, regarding the few significant findings, questions for future research and analysis have been identified.

Qualitative Analysis

Pairing findings from the quantitative analysis with the qualitative analysis allowed for a more robust understanding of the outcomes of Black male participants in HEOP. Participants in this study were interviewed to gain an understanding of whether services provided by HEOP meet Black males' race and gender needs. I interviewed twelve currently enrolled Black male HEOP students for this study. Guest et al.'s (2006) study on interview data and saturation determines that twelve interviews are enough to develop 92% of the codes from interview data. After twelve interviews, Guest et al. (2006) posits that new themes emerge infrequently and were variations on existing themes. Given the Guest et al. (2006) analysis on interview data saturation, it was determined that twelve interviews were appropriate for my study. Originally, four institutions offering HEOP were considered as recruitment sites to identify 3-4 students from each institution. However, the participation for the original for institutions was low. Therefore, I needed to expand my recruitment efforts; I

reached out to a dozen HEOP directors at several institutions to help me recruit Black

male HEOP students for my study. I also solicited the help of a recent Black male

HEOP alumni to help me recruit participants from his alma mater. All student

interviews were conducted remotely via Zoom.

Recruitment

Participants recruited for interviews had to complete an eligibility survey

online via Qualtrics. Using Qualtrics allowed me to screen students in a secure

manner. The questions from the screening tool used to identify students who were

eligible to participate in this study can be found in Appendix B. The survey screened

students so that only students that self-identify as a Black male and are currently

enrolled as a HEOP student in a participating HEOP institution were eligible to be

interviewed.

As stated previously, I reached out to HEOP directors at HEOP participating

colleges and universities as well as a Black male HEOP alumni to help me recruit

students as participants for my study (see Appendix D). However, HEOP directors did

not choose students for my study. It was requested that the information about my

study be shared with all their students to allow students to respond to my request for

participants. I requested that the HEOP directors introduce me as a graduate student

researcher at the University of Massachusetts Amherst when providing information to

their students about my study. I contacted those who were interested and eligible for

my study to schedule a time to be interviewed. Students were informed that the

interviews would be done remotely via Zoom. All participants had to complete a

consent form prior to being interviewed (see Appendix C). The consent forms were

completed electronically using DocuSign.

Site Selection

According to NYSED, there are currently over 50 colleges and universities that participate in HEOP (New York State Education Department, n.d.). To capture a wide variety of student participants, initially four colleges and universities that participate in HEOP were chosen as research sites for this study. However, due to the low participation from the original four sites chosen, I reached out to several HEOP directors at several colleges and universities. The only requirement for the site selection was that the institution participates in HEOP. There was some attempt to recruit from schools ranging from Ivy League to two-year programs. However, students were recruited based on responsiveness to my request.

Interviews

The interviews (See Appendix E) were on average 45 minutes to 1 hour in length and were done remotely via Zoom. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic virtual interviews were preferable to in person meetings where social distancing guidelines at the time would have had to be managed. Interviews were chosen as the preferred method of inquiry to enable all students who are research participants to have equal opportunity to answer all questions in a private setting. Individual interviews were also chosen as the preferred method to reduce the possibility of students influencing each other's answers in a focus group setting. The interviews were audio recorded via Zoom. Students were notified during the interviews that they may be selected for a follow-up interview if there were any issues with the recording. The interviews went smoothly; consequently, no follow up interviews were conducted

Coding and Analysis

Reflection memos were kept upon the completion of each interview to maintain a record of ideas and themes that are present within each interview. The transcript notes and memos were cleaned and organized into a formal template to aid in the development of generating codes and themes. The organization of qualitative data contains the time, date, observations, emerging themes, hunches, and analytic ideas (Rossman & Rallis, 2012).

The first step was organizing the interview data after completing the interviews. Transcription of Zoom audio recordings were done via the Zoom transcribing feature. I then proceeded to clean transcriptions. l read, edited the transcripts, checked for errors, and made necessary corrections. I reread the transcripts and listened to the audio recordings several times to familiarize myself with the interview data. After several rounds of cleaning interview data, I conducted two rounds of coding. In the first round, the codes were based on the research questions and concepts form the literature review. The second round was based on codes that emerged from the data. During my thematic analysis I analyzed the data to see if there were specific concepts that arise which highlight the Black male students' perspectives on the services that they are receiving by participating in HEOP.

Coding was revisited in an iterative process; data was reorganized depending on what emerged out of the reading of the transcripts. Transcriptions were reread for additional emerging themes and coding. These data went through a final round of coding and organization to complete my data analysis (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Dedoose Version 8.0.35 was used for managing interview data, memos, and codes.

Data Management

Audio files and transcripts are private and were not shared with any interview participant and/or other entities besides me. Audio files and transcripts were stored on the University of Massachusetts Amherst preferred method of secure and encrypted electronic storage. All audio files and transcripts will be destroyed upon three years after the conclusion of the study. Student participants signed a consent form (see Appendix C) and were made aware that direct quotes are to be used. Students were given a choice to use pseudonyms and the right to choose their preferred name. All students except for one preferred to use their real name.

Delimitations

The following delimitations are present within the study:

1. These data used in the quantitative analysis was limited to data collected on HEOP by NYSED from post-secondary private institutions that were awarded a HEOP grant between 2014 and 2019.

2. Only Black male students enrolled in the New York State Arthur O. Eve HEOP were included in the qualitative interviews for this study.

Limitations

The scope of this study was limited to private New York State colleges and universities that participate in offering HEOP to a select group of qualified students. The scope of Black male student perspectives was also limited to those students who qualify and are enrolled in HEOP. I do not have contrasting views of students who are not in HEOP in this study, nor do I have data for non-HEOP students to compare the quantitative results. I also did not learn the perspectives of students who are in public colleges nor the views of Black female students and learning how their needs are met or not by those programs.

This study also cannot be generalized to Black male students that may be enrolled in similar opportunity programs. While there are equivalent programs that offer similar services to HEOP in the public and private sector they fall outside the scope of this research. However, a good follow-up research project would be to repeat this study for different opportunity programs like those found at public institutions, in another state, or for students enrolled in programs like Posse.

This study does not capture Black students who are attending college in New York State college but live out-of-state, since a requirement to be a participant in HEOP is to be a New York State resident. Therefore, the experiences of out-of-state Black males who are attending school in New York state as an out-of-state resident will not be included. This is an important notation because there may be specific services and support those out-of-state residents may need that an in-state resident may not need. While attending an out-of-state school may not directly affect Black male students' racial and gendered needs, it may affect their overall college experience and shape the results of the study. It is also important to note that the experiences of Black men within New York State are still significant in that student experiences may be impacted as to whether they are attending a school close to home or in another part of the state.

What this study focused on was the experiences of Black males who participate in HEOP. The study explored whether HEOP is meeting the racial and gendered needs of those students. This study also explored the extent to which support services provided impact academic outcomes. This study gave insight into whether Black males who are enrolled in HEOP would be better served in a race-centered academic support service program or can be served by a program like HEOP. The

study also provided insight to whether there is a need for more race-centered support within HEOP.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought some unique challenges that no doubt impacted the qualitative portion of my study. With social distancing guidelines in place, I was limited to conducting my study remotely via Zoom. While this did present initial recruitment challenges, it presented some advantages such as eliminating travel time to interviews across New York State. I may have been limited to interviewing only students who had have reliable access to technology. However, I do not have that information because the likelihood of being contacted by those students would be low. Being that colleges and universities across New York State were managing social distancing differently depending on the campus, students were both on campus, remote, and attending in a hybrid format. For students who are "remote", it may have been a challenge if they did not have reliable internet access. It may explain why I initially had some issues with recruitment. While they may have qualified to be interviewed and willing to participate, they may not have the necessary resources at home.

Ethical Considerations

As a researcher, it is always possible to introduce bias into the study. The reader should be aware that during this study I was employed at the NYSED where I co-managed HEOP state-wide. As a result, it is always possible that my own views and perspectives as a program manager of HEOP can influence the analysis of the data, the interpretation of the results, and my interactions with student participants during interviews. I acknowledge that my role as a program manager at NYSED helped me navigate the process of recruiting student participants. I had direct contact and relationships with HEOP directors and used those established relationships as a

method for recruiting student participants. I discussed my research with project directors and requested their help to recruit students. To mitigate the risk of influencing students' responses during the interviews, I asked the HEOP directors to introduce me to students as a University of Massachusetts Amherst graduate student researcher and not a state-wide program manager of HEOP.

To ensure that this study is ethical it was reviewed by the University of Massachusetts Amherst Institutional Review Board (IRB). A protocol application was be submitted and approved by the IRB. It outlined all steps and procedures of the research process. Being that this study included students that are from economically and educationally disadvantaged background or as the IRB refers to as "vulnerable subjects", it was important to have this study vetted to ensure students are protected.

It is important to reiterate that there was a screening tool and a consent form used in this study. The screening tool (see Appendix B) was given to students that were interested in participating in this study. The screening tool assessed the eligibility of the students to participate. The screening tool screened out participants who did not wish to be audio recorded.

The consent form (see Appendix C) was given to student participants to obtain their consent to participate to be able to use the interviews as part of this study. The consent form also includes information about the study so that students could make an informed decision before participating. The consent form also verified that students agreed to have their interviews recorded and understand that it will be used as a part of my research. All student identities are protected. While students chose to use their real names. Last names are not used, and their colleges or universities are not

revealed. Both the screening tool and the consent form were submitted for approval to the IRB before use.

Permission to use data collected from NYSED was requested on August 20th, 2018, from former NYSED Deputy Commissioner John D'Agati (D'Agati, personal communication, August 20, 2018). Permission was granted to use HEOP data collected on February 13th, 2019 (D'Agati, personal communication, February 13, 2019).

All secondary data collected from NYSED used for this study is stored on the University of Massachusetts Amherst's preferred method for secure online storage. These data will be destroyed three years upon the conclusion of the study. Should a breach of data occur the UMASS IRB, NYSED, and dissertation chair will be notified immediately.

CHAPTER IV

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Problem Statement

This mixed methods study explores the impact of the services provided to Black males in HEOP. Chapter 4 is organized by the research questions posed in the first chapter. The first part of this chapter displays the characteristics of HEOP participants using descriptive tables. These tables provide overall context for the second part of this chapter that delineates the regression results. In addition, the chapter reports the results of the quantitative analysis while shaping context for exploring the relationship between student academic outcomes and services provided by HEOP.

The findings in this chapter indicate that HEOP is over-represented by people who are Black and Latino Students, compared with the population of New York State that has low income. There are implications for most HEOP students—being either Black or Latino—and how Black males describe their HEOP experience; this will be discussed further in Chapter 6. The majority of HEOP students, including Black males, are students seeking bachelor's degrees. Completion rates and GPAs for Black male HEOP students tend to be lower than the overall completion rates for all HEOP students but not by large margins. It is likely that because all HEOP students are offered the same services that effect on-time completion and GPA, these supports are mostly the same across the board. The regression analysis was limited by the available control variables. Also of note is that tutoring may have had a positive effect on graduation for the Black men who received it.

Characteristics of HEOP Participants

Demographics of Black Males by Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Table 4.1 has been weighted to approximate the number of Black males that were enrolled in HEOP between 2014-2019. Per NYSED data, 11,379 students participated in HEOP between 2014-2019. Out of those students enrolled in HEOP, 1,625 students were Black males, accounting for 14.7% of the entire population; 1,449 Black males identified themselves as Black and no other race or ethnicity. In addition, 8 Black males self-identified as American Indian or Native; 5 Black males self-identified as Asian; 6 Black males self-identified as Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; and 101 Black males identified as Hispanic or Latino—by far the largest category of Black males identifying with another racial or ethnic category. This could be due to the way data is captured; Hispanic/Latino is defined as an ethnicity and not a race. Also of note, 56 Black males also self-identified as White.

Table 4. 1 The Number Black Male HEOP Students Who Also Identify with Some Other Race or Ethnicity, Enrolled between 2014-2019 (weighted)

<u>Black Male</u>

Race or Ethnicity	No	Yes	.	Total	Total by Percentage
Black or African American	2160	1449		**3609**	**31.72%**
American Indian or Native	73	8		**81**	**0.71%**
Asian	1250	5	1	**1256**	**11.04%**
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	131	6		**137**	**1.20%**

	Female	Male	.	Total	Total by Percentage
Hispanic or Latino	4580	101	8	**4688**	**41.20%**
White	1196	56	5	**1256**	**11.04%**
.	349		3	**352**	**3.09%**
Total	**9739**	**1625**	**16**	**11379**	**100.00%**

From Table 4. 2 we can see that HEOP is primarily Hispanic or Latino and female which make up most students in HEOP. As will be discussed in the qualitative analysis the critical mass of students enrolled in HEOP are Black and Latino students. Arguably, there are positive implications for having a mostly Black or Latino student body. This significant representation can shape how Black males' experiences in HEOP are impacted; this is further discussed in Chapter 5. As previously stated, HEOP is not a race-based program; the acceptance into the program is based on income and educational disadvantage. It is curious as to whether the colleges and universities that host HEOP are purposely targeting Black and Latino students who are low-income or that the critical mass of low-income students happen to be Black and Latino.

Table 4. 2 HEOP Students by Gender and Race/Ethnicity, Enrolled between 2014-2019 (weighted)

<u>Gender</u>

	Female	Male	.	Total	Total by Percentage
Race or Ethnicity					
Black or African American	2160	1449		**3609**	**31.72%**
American Indian or Native	51	30		**81**	**0.71%**

Asian	791	466		**1256**	**11.04%**
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	79	58		**137**	**1.20%**
Hispanic or Latino	2903	1785		**4688**	**41.20%**
White	755	501		**1256**	**11.04%**
.	218	133	1	**352**	**3.09%**
Total	**6956**	**4422**	**1**	**11379**	**100.00%**

As seen in Table 4.3,[1] Blacks in New York State account for 19.19% of the total population in poverty. Accordingly, of the total population in poverty in New York State, 25.38% of Hispanics or Latinos; 7.77% of Asians; .04% of Pacific Islanders; 30.20% of Whites; and .55% of American Indians or Natives are facing this persistent lack of access to financial resources to meet basic needs. Looking at the distribution of poverty in New York State, Whites account for most of the population in poverty, yet this people group represents only 11.37% of the population recruited in HEOP between 2014-2019. However linear this argument is, it is consistent with arguments made for underrepresentation of ethnic minorities in various promising sectors of society.

Comparing tables 4.1 and 4.2, the recruitment of HEOP students is overrepresented with Black and Latino students. Consequently, the student composition does not match the distribution of low-income residents in New York State. For example, Latino students are overrepresented, accounting for 42.49% of the

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[1] Note that categories 'Other' and 'Two or More Races' are not discussed for comparative purposes to Table 4.2 where those categories do not exist in the data.

population in HEOP and only 25.38% of the total population in poverty in New York

State. Black students are 32.77% of the population in HEOP and 13.96% of the total

population in poverty in New York state. It does not appear that the distribution of

students in HEOP—which is income based—mirrors the population in poverty in

HEOP. This could lead to the supposition that there is purposeful targeting of Black

and Latino students in HEOP. The purposeful targeting of those groups may be due to

the high poverty rates of Blacks and Latinos as referenced in table 4.3; this could

explain why those groups are specifically targeted for HEOP.

Table 4. 3 New York Poverty Rate by Race

	New York Poverty Rate by Race				
Race	Population	Total Population by Percentage	Total Percentage of Population in Poverty	Total Population in Poverty	Poverty Rate
Black or African American	2,987,117	13.96%	19.19%	672,101.33	22.50%
American Indian or Native	74,890	0.35%	0.55%	19,171.84	25.60%
Asian	1,619,418	7.57%	7.77%	272,062.22	16.80%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	7,571	0.04%	0.04%	1,567.20	20.70%
Other	1,700,682	7.95%	13.55%	474,490.28	27.90%
Two Or More Races	571,474	2.67%	3.33%	116,580.70	20.40%
White	10,793,799	50.44%	30.20%	1,057,792.30	9.80%
Hispanic or Latino	3,644,173	17.03%	25.38%	889,178.21	24.40%
Total Population	21,399,124.00	100.00%	100.00%	3,502,944.07	16.37%

Note. Adapted from www.welfareinfo.org/poverty-rate/new-york/ Copyright 2019 by WelfareInfo.org.

Degree Type Sought by Black Males

As seen in Table 4.4,[2] the majority of HEOP students—including Black

males— are bachelor's degree seeking students. Black males account for 1545

(14.2%) of the entire population seeking bachelor's degrees. This is because most

HEOP students are traditionally aged college students attending a 4-year private

college or university. Very few private schools that participate in HEOP offer

associate degree programs.

Table 4. 4 Comparing the Number of Black Male HEOP Students Seeking a
Bachelor's or Associate's Degree to Non-Black Male Students in HEOP, between
2014-2019 (weighted)

	Black or African American								
	No			Yes			Total		
	Gender			Gender			Gender		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Degree Sought									
Associate's	177	147	324	145	**80**	225	322	227	549
Bachelor's	4369	2644	7013	2256	**1545**	3801	6625	4189	10814
Total	**4546**	**2791**	**7337**	**2401**	**1625**	**4026**	**6947**	**4415**	**11363**

Black Male Persistence to Graduation (Completion) Rates

The completion rates are higher for Cohorts 1 and 0; they are higher than all other

cohorts because the students in these cohorts are more likely to have their graduation

captured withing a 5-year time frame. It is less likely that graduation data will be

captured for subsequent cohorts. This is the case given that their graduation dates are

referenced as part of a future cohort and may not be captured in the data set. Students

who have received associate degrees and those in Cohort 2 who may have graduated

---

[2] The information for degrees obtained by degree type is available in the data but contains many
missing values and cannot be accurately reported.

in 4 years are exceptions. Subsequent cohorts would not have the 5-year graduation date because it is a date in the future not captured by this dataset. For example, the 5-year completion date of Cohort 5 would be the year 2022; thus, it is not captured.

Focusing on Cohorts 1 and 0, the completion rates for Black male HEOP students are slightly lower than the overall completion rates for all HEOP students. For Cohort 0 –which includes all students that started prior to 2014—and Cohort 1—all students that started in 2014— the average completion rate for Black males' averages 7 percentage points lower than the completion rate for both cohorts. Table 4.5 shows that the completion rate for Black males in Cohort 0 is 68.60% compared to 72.31% for all students. For Cohort 1 the completion rate is 56.75% for Black males compared to 67.09% for all students in Cohort 1.

Table 4. 5 Comparing Completion Rates of Black Male HEOP Students to Non-Black Male HEOP Students by Cohort

	Black Male		
	No	Yes	All
Cohort			
0	72.92%	**68.60%**	**72.31%**
1	68.70%	**56.75%**	**67.09%**
2	54.35%	42.11%	52.78%
3	4.28%	1.36%	3.87%
4	0.62%	2.72%	0.94%
5			
Total	45.70%	38.50%	44.70%

Black Male Grade Point Averages

GPA data was not collected in the 2014 program year. Table 4.5 shows the average GPAs for Black male students compared to other races and ethnicities and genders. As seen in this table the average GPA for Black men is slightly lower than all other groups but is still relatively comparable to the average GPA of their peers.

Asian females have slightly higher GPAs across all years. It is likely that because all

HEOP students are offered the same services that effect on GPA is mostly the same

across the board.

Table 4. 6 Comparing the Average GPAs for Black Male HEOP Students to Other
Races and Ethnicities in HEOP by Program Year, between 2015-2019

	Gender							
	Female				Male			
	Program Year				Program Year			
Race and Ethnicity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Black or African American	2.75	2.78	2.81	2.8	**2.58**	**2.57**	**2.56**	**2.58**
American Indian or Native	2.49	2.62	2.62	2.95	2.53	2.62	2.72	2.64
Asian	3.11	3.12	3.14	3.11	2.96	2.97	2.98	2.97
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	3.23	2.58	2.95	2.98	3.00	2.78	2.67	2.65
Hispanic or Latino	2.88	2.89	2.88	2.88	2.67	2.72	2.7	2.72
White	2.93	2.95	2.96	2.93	2.74	2.72	2.68	2.7

Black Men and HEOP Services

Research Question 1.

To what extent does HEOP academic support services impact Black male students'

academic outcomes?

Data collected from the NYSED's HEOP were used to explore the relationship

between the tutoring and/or counseling services rendered by the program to Black

male participants and the probability of graduating. A Regression analysis was

performed by using more than one Linear Probability Model (LPM) to analyze

students who were reported as graduated between 2014-2019. To be able to track the same student over a series of time, fixed effects were applied to the regression model using the student ID variable. To evaluate the robustness of the results a logit models were also used to examine the sensitivity of the results to the choice of analysis models obtaining the same conclusions. It is important to note that the controls are limited because of the limitation of available data within the dataset. The data collected from the NYSED's HEOP was also used to explore the relationship between the tutoring and/or counseling services rendered by the program to Black male participants and GPAs. Multiple linear regression analysis was performed by using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) to analyze students' GPAs between 2014-2019.

Over a dozen regression models were conducted to test the hypothesis. After running a series of regression models most of the results were not statistically significant. This is likely due to availability of data and the type of data collected. A detailed explanation of the regression analysis of each model can be found in Appendix F.

Research Question 1a.

What are types of tutoring and counseling services Black males in HEOP receive the most?

As seen in Table 4.7, 32.99% of HEOP students in all cohorts receive other types of tutoring, which is the most tutoring type out of all the tutoring categories is not specified. It is difficult to ascertain from the data whether the types of tutoring received had a relationship to the types of courses they took given that course data was not included in the dataset. It is possible that other types of tutoring are the highest percentage because it is a "catch all" variable for any tutoring that does not fit

in the other categories. The next highest percentage of tutoring received by students in all cohorts is Study Skills tutoring at 17.12%. Approximately, 11.31% of students in all cohorts are tutored in math— the least tutoring services rendered to HEOP students in all cohorts. In comparison, Black males also received the most amount of tutoring in other tutoring types not specified, also followed by Study Skills tutoring the next highest category of tutoring services rendered. In contrast, the lowest category in which Black male students received tutoring is in Life Sciences. Within each cohort Black males had a lower percentage of Life Science tutoring services rendered. Given the results of the regression models, non-substantial conclusions can be made regarding the types of tutoring Black male students received and the outcomes of graduating, GPA, and persistence to graduating.

Table 4. 7 Percentage of Types of Tutoring Services Rendered to Black Males by Cohort

Tutoring Type	Cohort						Total
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Humanities							
Black Male							
No	12.01	12.68	10.72	10.94	12.42	9.8	11.59
Yes	13.76	12.66	11.2	15.38	10.42	11.97	**12.79**
Total	**12.27**	**12.68**	**10.78**	**11.59**	**12.12**	**10.14**	**11.76**
Math							
Black Male							
No	9.31	11.81	9.05	13.67	11.68	14.57	11.17
Yes	11.24	12.4	8.4	16.81	10.81	14.79	**12.16**
Total	**9.6**	**11.89**	**8.97**	**14.13**	**11.55**	**14.6**	**11.31**
Life Science							
Black Male							
No	20.02	12.9	11.29	13.92	15.44	11.13	14.5
Yes	13.53	8.71	7.56	7.69	13.9	9.15	**10.14**
Total	**19.06**	**12.3**	**10.82**	**13.01**	**15.21**	**10.81**	**13.88**
Social Science							
Black Male							
No	15.26	14.43	12.96	14.06	8.72	9.4	13.17
Yes	13.53	12.66	13.45	9.4	10.04	5.63	**11.54**
Total	**15.01**	**14.18**	**13.02**	**13.38**	**8.92**	**8.81**	**12.94**

Study Skills							
Black Male							
No	8.88	13.99	17.16	19.58	25.64	29.14	17.03
Yes	14.22	13.72	19.05	14.25	25.48	29.58	**17.67**
Total	**9.67**	**13.95**	**17.4**	**18.8**	**25.61**	**29.21**	**17.12**
Other Tutoring							
Black Male							
No	34.52	34.19	38.81	27.83	26.11	25.96	32.54
Yes	33.72	39.84	40.34	36.47	29.34	28.87	**35.71**
Total	**34.4**	**35**	**39**	**29.1**	**26.59**	**26.42**	**32.99**
Total Tutoring							
Black Male							
No	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Yes	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

As seen in Table 4.8, 82.39% an overwhelming majority of HEOP students among all cohorts receive academic counseling. There is no definition given within the data dictionary for academic counseling. It is possible that academic counseling could be a variation of counseling ranging from course enrollment advice, strategy development for struggling with courses, or a combination of several academic topics. It is also unknown whether this definition for this counseling services may include tutoring services rendered. At 6.23%, social counseling services is the second highest percentage of counseling services rendered to HEOP students among all cohorts. Personal counseling is the least counseling service rendered to HEOP students at 0.01%. Black males among all cohorts are similar to the overall HEOP population. At 82.5%, academic counseling is the highest percentage of counseling services rendered to Black male HEOP students. Social counseling is also the second highest percentage for counseling services rendered to Black male HEOP students. Cohort 5 had the highest percentage of counseling services rendered to Black male students at 93.01% when comparing cohorts. There were no personal counseling services rendered to

Black male students. Surprisingly, the amount of financial counseling rendered to Black males was only 2.65% among all cohorts. Without definitions for the variables, it is unknown what specifically counts as financial counseling. It may range from financial literacy to financial aid exit interviews, to budgeting, or a combination thereof. Cohorts 0 and 1appear to have the most financial counseling services rendered to both Black male students and HEOP students overall. There was no financial counseling rendered to Black male students in Cohort 5. However, as this data only captures students between 2014-2019, it is possible that Black males in Cohort 5 subsequently received financial counseling services in later years.

Table 4. 8 Percentage of Types of Counseling Services Rendered to Black Males by Cohort

Counseling Type	Cohort						Total
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
Academic							
Black Male							
No	77.15	81.72	82.58	85.17	84.82	88.63	82.37
Yes	74.75	84.91	81.97	83.59	86.14	93.01	**82.5**
Total	**76.81**	**82.14**	**82.5**	**84.95**	**85.02**	**89.34**	**82.39**
Financial							
Black Male							
No	3.61	3.35	2.49	2.31	2.13	1.04	2.72
Yes	4.21	2.48	3.28	1.56	2.17		**2.65**
Total	**3.69**	**3.24**	**2.59**	**2.21**	**2.13**	**0.87**	**2.71**
Personal							
Black Male							
No			0.02				**0.01**
Total			**0.02**				**0.01**
Psychological							
Black Male							
No	0.53	0.73	0.81	1.48	1.31	1.15	0.94
Yes	1.01	0.9	1.8	1.17		0.54	**1.03**
Total	**0.6**	**0.75**	**0.93**	**1.43**	**1.11**	**1.05**	**0.95**
Social							
Black Male							
No	6.69	6.05	6.88	5.04	7.21	6.99	6.4
Yes	5.39	4.05	6.07	8.59	7.61	5.38	**6.23**

Total	**6.51**	**5.78**	**6.77**	**5.54**	**7.27**	**6.72**	**6.37**
Vocational							
Black Male							
No	8.3	5.29	4.1	2.86	2.47	0.94	4.59
Yes	10.1	5.86	3.77	1.95	2.72		**4.75**
Total	**8.56**	**5.36**	**4.06**	**2.73**	**2.5**	**0.79**	**4.62**
Other Counseling							
Black Male							
No	3.72	2.87	3.12	3.15	2.08	1.25	2.98
Yes	4.55	1.8	3.11	3.12	1.36	1.08	**2.84**
Total	**3.84**	**2.73**	**3.12**	**3.14**	**1.97**	**1.22**	**2.96**
Total Counseling							
Black Male							
No	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Yes	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

No substantial conclusions can be drawn from the percentage tables that follow. However, it interesting to note that given the high percentage of academic counseling services provided most of the regression models for counseling was not statistically significant. As a result, I decided to run two regression models regressing only the Academic Counseling services against the outcomes variables representing graduation and GPA to test if I could get a statistically significant result. The new models showed that Academic Counseling is in fact statistically significant when regressed against both the variables representing graduation and GPA.

As seen in Table 4.9, the coefficient for the variable representing academic counseling is statistically significant at the 1% level for both graduating and GPA. The coefficient for this variable when regressed against the variable representing graduating is -0.178 (CI -0.214 - -0.142), indicating that the probability of graduating is reduced by 0.178 for academic services rendered. The coefficient for GPA is -0.046 (CI -0.0734 - -0.018), indicating that the GPA decreased by 0.046 points for academic counseling services rendered. The variable representing Black males is also

significant in both models (* p<0.1 for model 1 and ** p<0.05 for model 2),

indicating that being a Black male significantly reduced the probability of graduating

by 0.186 and reduced Black male GPA by 0.192 points. The interaction variable

between Black male and counseling is significant at the 5% level. The coefficient for

the interaction variable between Black males and counseling is -0.208 (CI -0.398 - -

0.018), indicating that the probability of Black males graduating is reduced by 0.208

for counseling services rendered. The interaction variable is not statistically

significant on model 2. As previously mentioned, this may mean that receiving

counseling reduces the probability of graduating or that students that are receiving

academic counseling are more likely to receive academic counseling. Also, it is

possible other unknown variables or other combinations of tutoring and counseling

may be interacting with the outcome variables impacting the results.

Table 4. 9 Model for Academic Counseling Regressed Against GraduatedYN and GPA

	Models	
	1	2
VARIABLES	GraduatedYN	GPA
AcademicCounseling	-0.178***	-0.0460***
	-0.0183	-0.0143
BlackMale	0.186*	-0.192**
	-0.0967	-0.0753
CounselBlackM	-0.208**	0.053
	-0.097	-0.0744
Constant	0.356***	2.820***
	(-0.0181)	(-0.0156)
Observations	18,563	19,530
Number of StudentID	9,093	9,351
Standard errors in parentheses		
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1		

Research Question 1b.

How many hours of tutoring and counseling hours do Black males in HEOP receive in comparison to their peers in HEOP?

Given the high number of errors in reporting hours for tutoring and counseling, this question unfortunately could not be answered. Upon cleaning the data set it was discovered that there was no consistency in reporting hours between institution and program years for both tutoring and counseling variables. There were many instances where institutions reported both hours and minutes. Initial attempts were made to do imputations to correct the data by converting minutes to hours, however still, much of the numbers reported did not "make sense". I chose not to continue this route to avoid the introduction of bias into the analysis. During the data cleaning process, I contacted several HEOP directors to ask how they reported data. There were many instances where they could not tell me what was reported and why it was reported in the way it was. It was determined that all I could tell from the data was whether a student had received tutoring or counseling and not how much time was spent. As a results, the continuous variables for tutoring and counseling were converted to dummy variables for the regression analysis to determine whether a student received services or not. Unfortunately, given the reporting errors this question is unanswerable.

GPA and Graduation Outcomes for Black Men in HEOP

Research Question 1c.

How do these results compare to non-Black men and Black female students?

One of the major findings is that there may have been a marginal benefit for Black men who received tutoring in comparison to non-Black males in HEOP.

Regression analysis was performed by using a Linear Probability Model to analyze Black female students and non-Black male students who were reported as graduated between 2014-2019 in comparison to Black male students. To be able to track the same student over a series of time fixed effects were applied to the regression model using the student ID variable.

The results for Table 4.10 indicate that there may have been a marginal benefit for Black male students that receive tutoring services in comparison to non-Black males. This is evident in regression model 2 and model 6 where the probability increase is positive when examining the interaction between tutoring and Black males in comparison to non-Black males. The regression models comparing Black males to Black females are all not statistically significant. The models examining counseling services are all not statistically significant. The null hypothesis for these models cannot be rejected. The R^2 for these models can only explain 3% or less of the variance between the dependent variable. To evaluate the robustness of the results logit models were also used to examine the sensitivity of the results to the choice of analysis models obtaining the same conclusions (See Table F.4 in the appendices).

For testing the main hypothesis of the regression models I used the following equation[3]:

$$
\begin{aligned}
y = \ &\beta0 \ + \beta1 \ (tutoring)s + \beta2 \ (Gender)s \\
&+ \beta3 \ (interaction \ between \ tutoring \ and \ gender)s + \beta4 \ (Black)s \\
&+ \beta5 \ (interaction \ between \ tutoring \ and \ Black \ males)s \\
&+ \beta6 \ (Counseling) \ s \\
&+ \beta7(interaction \ between \ counseling \ and \ gender)s \\
&+ \beta8(the \ interaction \ between \ counseling \ and \ Black \ males) + \in s
\end{aligned}
$$

---

[3]For the logit equations whereas y = 'GraduateYN', the equation

$$
\begin{aligned}
LN(O/1-O) = \ &\beta0 \ + \beta1 \ (tutoring)s + \beta2 \ (Gender)s \ + \beta3 \ (interaction \ between \ tutoring \ and \ gender)s + \beta4 \ (Black)s \\
&+ \beta5 \ (interaction \ between \ tutoring \ and \ Black \ males)s \ + \beta6 \ (Counseling) \ s \\
&+ \beta7(interaction \ between \ counseling \ and \ gender)s \\
&+ \beta8(the \ interaction \ between \ counseling \ and \ Black \ males) + \in s
\end{aligned}
$$

Whereas the outcome may be the continuous variable 'GPA' or the dummy variable 'GraduatedYN' and 's' is the fixed effect using student IDs. This is the equation of the full model (model 6). However, several variations are presented in Table 4.10. A detailed explanation of the regression analysis of each model can be found in Appendix F. An additional regression analysis comparing the GPAs of Black males to Black females and non-Black males, which did not have statistically significant results in terms of Black men, may also be found in Appendix F.

Table 4. 10 Regression Models for Graduation Comparing Black Males to Black Females and Non-Black Males

			Models			
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
VARIABLES	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**
TutoredYN	-0.164***	-0.173***			-0.164***	-0.171***
	-0.0209	-0.0183			-0.021	-0.0183
Gender	0.0373		0.214			
	-0.0505		-0.195			
TutorGenderM	0.0407				0.0396	
	-0.0331				-0.0332	
Black		0.0235		0.194		
		-0.0571		-0.197		
TutorBlackM		0.0672**				0.0648**
		-0.0315				-0.0316
CounselingYN			0	-0.0382	-0.0265	-0.0354
			-0.112	-0.114	-0.0908	-0.0922
CounseledGenderM			-0.16		0.0254	
			-0.189		-0.0488	
CounselBlackM				-0.122		0.0107
				-0.189		-0.0548
Constant	0.242***	0.235***	0.151	0.176	0.275***	0.276***
	-0.0228	-0.0223	-0.113	-0.116	-0.0887	-0.0895
Observations	6,463	7,320	6,378	7,237	6,379	7,237
R-squared	0.027	0.029	0.001	0.001	0.027	0.029
Number of StudentID	3,379	3,744	3,324	3,688	3,325	3,688

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Research Question 1d.

Are Black male students who receive more support services more likely to persist?

A regression analysis was performed by using a Linear Probability Model to analyze the probability of Black male students persisting to graduation between 2014-2019. To be able to track how students persisted to completion (graduation) over a series of time, a new dummy variable was created called 'PersistToGrad'. For this variable, if an observation with the same student ID graduated at any point in time between 2014-2019, the student would be labeled with a "1". To run the regressions for these models, the variable Cohort was used as a control variable limiting this model to just Cohorts 0 and 1. This is because only Cohorts 0 and 1 will show the students that have graduated in the 4th and 5th years. To evaluate the robustness of the results a series of logit models were also used to examine the sensitivity of the results to the choice of analysis models obtaining the same conclusions (see Table F.6 in the appendices).

For testing the main hypothesis of the regression models I used the following equation[4]:

$$
\begin{aligned}
y = \ & \beta 0 \ + \beta 1 \ (\text{tutoring}) + \beta 2 \ (\text{Black males}) \\
& + \beta 3 \ (\text{interaction betwteen tutoring and Black males}) \\
& + \beta 4 \ (\text{Cohort} \\
& = 1) + \beta 5 \ (\text{Counseling}) \ s \\
& + \beta 6 (\text{interaction between counseling and Black males}) + \in s
\end{aligned}
$$

---

[4]For the logit equations whereas y = 'PersistToGradYN', the equation
$(LN(0/1-0)) = \beta 0 \ + \beta 1 \ (\text{tutoring}) + \beta 2 \ (\text{Black males}) \ + \beta 3 \ (\text{interaction betwteen tutoring and Black males}) + \beta 4 \ (\text{Cohort})$
$+ \beta 5 \ (\text{Counseling}) \ s + \beta 6 (\text{interaction between counseling and Black males}) + \in s$

Whereas the outcome may be the continuous variable 'GPA' or the dummy variable 'PersistToGradYN' and 's' is the fixed effect using student IDs. This is the equation of the full model (model 3). However, several variations are presented in Table 4.11.

The results from Table 4.11 indicated that HEOP students in Cohort 1 were less likely to persist to graduation in comparison with Cohort 0. This is because Cohort 0 has had more time to graduate in comparison to Cohort 1. HEOP students that have received tutoring may be more likely to persist to graduation. The table also indicated that being a Black male may lower the probability of persisting to graduation (completion). The results for Black males who have received tutoring and counseling services (as seen in model 3) were not statistically significant; the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Without further exploration it is not possible to rule out an unknown variable that may be impacting the persistence to graduation for Black male students receiving tutoring. The R^2 for the regressions models for graduation were 0.7%. This shows that only 0.7% or less of the variation in graduation can be explained by these models. A detailed explanation of the regression analysis of each model can be found in appendix F.

Table 4. 11 Regressions Models for Persistence to Graduation (Completion)

	Models		
	1	**2**	**3**
VARIABLES	**PersistToGradYN**	**PersistToGradYN**	**PersistToGradYN**
TutoredYN	0.0192*		0.00898
	-0.0098		-0.00979
BlackMale	-0.0755***	0.0889	0.0891
	-0.0178	-0.124	-0.124
TutorBlackM	0.00149		0.000977
	-0.0259		-0.0259
1.Cohort	-0.0559***	-0.0535***	-0.0550***

	-0.00919	-0.00907	-0.00919
CounselingYN		0.0126	0.0112
		-0.05	-0.0501
CounselBlackM		-0.163	-0.164
		-0.125	-0.125
Constant	0.726***	0.727***	0.725***
	(-0.00722)	(-0.0499)	(-0.0499)
Observations	10,416	10,311	10,311
R-squared	0.007	0.007	0.007

Standard errors in
parentheses
*** p<0.01,
** p<0.05, * p<0.1

CHAPTER V

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter is an analysis of semi-structured interviews of Black males who are currently enrolled as HEOP students at various private colleges and universities across New York State. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Black men from these interviews were selected by reaching out to various HEOP directors across New York state requesting their assistance with identifying and recruiting Black male students who would be interested in being interviewed for this study. The only requisite criteria to be interviewed included being a currently enrolled HEOP student that identified as a Black male.

It is important to preface this chapter with some overall discoveries that bring context to the findings that will be discussed in context with the research questions. The first discovery that is evident in both the qualitative and quantitative data is that Black and Latino students make up many students enrolled in HEOP (See Table 4.1). When participants were asked about the demographics within their HEOP program, all the participants stated that the HEOP programs on their campuses were either majority Black, Latino, or both, echoing the finding in the quantitative analysis. It is important to reiterate that criteria set forth by NYSED on recruiting HEOP students is based on economic and academic performance and not race.

While it is beyond the scope of this research, it is curious that the recruitment of HEOP students has led to a mostly Black and Latino cohort of participants. Secondly, most of the young men that were interviewed indicated that they attended high school in New York City. It would be of further interest to know if the HEOP staff and college admissions target Black

and Latino students from the New York City. This might lend credence to the argument that Blacks and Latinos are highly represented in the lower socio-economic class; by targeting class instead of race, economic based policies still reach a significant percentage of people of color (Wilson V., 2015; DeNavas-Walt & Proctor, 2015).

This chapter begins with a brief description of the participants' profiles and their understanding of HEOP. The chapter then describes the themes that emerged from the participant student in context to the research questions. The emergent themes help to answer the following research questions from this study:

RQ2: What are the Black male student perspectives about the services offered by HEOP and do those services meet their racial and gendered needs?

RQ3: Can the interview data help to explain why Black men sought out these support services and the extent to which the services were helpful?

RQ4: Does HEOP reduce stereotype threat by providing identity affirmation for Black male participants?

    a. Does the "disadvantaged" label perpetuate stereotype threat for the Black male students involved?

I am emphasizing the importance of diverse experiences among the Black male participants before the reader reviews the findings. One of the primary takeaways from this analysis is that Black males feel supported by HEOP. Several reasons for feeling supported include the importance of the existence of a community of peers and faculty that are of similar economic, geographic, and racial backgrounds; connections with HEOP faculty and staff that are of similar ethnic backgrounds to Black male students or that are culturally sensitive; tutoring and counseling are important services but more so, because of the services

are culturally sensitive. Even if the men did not know the term "stereotype threat," having a same-race tutor (or at least a tutor also in HEOP) would make stereotype threat less likely.

The mandatory academic summer program HEOP students attend is important to acclimating Black males to PWIs and fostering the development of community among Black males and their HEOP peers. Gender for most Black males was in the background while race remained in the foreground for connecting with peers, staff, and their individual experiences. Stereotype threat existed but not because of the participants participation in HEOP but rather because of their race. HEOPs' ability to help Black men navigate feeling stereotyped seem to vary depending on the participants' program or their level of comfort and/or concern bringing the issue to a HEOP staff member.

Participant Profiles

I interviewed Black men from diverse backgrounds. Ethnically, out of the students that disclosed their cultural background, three stated they were of direct African descent, meaning that they were either from the African continent and moved to the United States while in high school or was only a generation removed. Three men described themselves as being ethnically of mixed race. Two of the participants also described themselves as being also of Latino heritage and one came to the United States from a Latin American country while in high school. All the men interviewed racially identified as Black regardless of ethnicity. Ten out of the twelve participants were originally from the New York City area or lived there for quite some time before attending college. A small subset of the men interviewed were from upstate New York.

Table 5. 1 Frequency of Participants that Disclosed Ethnicity

# of Students That Disclosed Their Ethnicity	# of Students that disclosed they are of Direct African Descent	# of Students that disclosed they are of Latino Descent	# of Students that disclosed that are Multiracial
6	3	2	2

It is important to note that all the young men except for one participant decided that they prefer their real names be used in lieu of a pseudonym. To protect the privacy of the one participant that is using a pseudonym, I will not disclose which participant names are pseudonyms and first names only will be used. Additionally, the names of the colleges and universities from which the participants are enrolled will also not be disclosed.

Jordan

Jordan is currently a junior at a large selective university in upstate New York. He is currently majoring in broadcast journalism and is originally from New York City. Jordan was in a program—not a part of his high school—that introduced him to HEOP. He explained it was through this program that he learned about HEOP as an opportunity to pay for college. Jordan's understanding of HEOP is that it is a program for students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds to allow them to attend prestigious universities with their expenses covered. Jordan describes his experience in HEOP as a "program that caters to the needs of the marginalized community". Jordan further explains that HEOP is a program that guides First Generation Students and serves as "parents in the absence of our parents". He likens HEOP to a hub for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to have advisors that help HEOP students excel academically.

This interview highlighted the importance for Black men's need for community and space that are exclusive to Black men. There was talk in this interview about the importance

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of having a physical communal space for HEOP students. Jordan saw value with being in HEOP and having a community that he described in family terms like "brother" and "sister". He also mentioned issues of mental health. He thought HEOP was an important program within a PWI. However, when pressed whether he would pick HEOP or a targeted program he said he would choose an "all black program". Jordan stated, "Oh I'm going with my Black men and women, of course. I love HEOP for what it is. I don't [want] to dim it down, but that's part of my mission is creating a space with Black men and Black women are able to have certain companies and be a part of the network. I'd pick that any day, for sure. That is a …of identity." For the participants that I interviewed, gender appeared to be in the background and race is in the foreground. As exemplified by this quote, Jordan stated that he would choose a program that is for Black men and women even though the question was particularly about Black men.

Jordan also stated, "If I had to choose to have a predominantly Black HEOP over HEOP now, yeah I'm going with them. I love being around diversity, for sure, but I will go my brothers and sisters." While he appreciated the diversity HEOP brought, the importance of having a program that specifically catered to his racial identity was preferable. What is interesting about Jordan's interview is that in his university there was a sub-group developed within HEOP on his campus that allowed for all the young men of color to meet on a regular basis. Even in light of the availability of this active sub-group, the idea of having a program dedicated to his cultural identity took precedence.

Kofi

Kofi is a senior at a small liberal arts college in upstate New York and is majoring in business. He did not disclose where he was originally from. Kofi was first introduced to HEOP through a mutual friend. His friend informed him that when he applies to college, he

should apply through HEOP. Kofi's understanding of HEOP is that it is a program that, "…gives students an opportunity to go to college... and release some of the pressure from finances of college." He stated that HEOP, "Did a good job [of] making sure that not only are you communicating with your professors, but you [are] on top of your work, classes, [and] studying." Kofi describes HEOP as enhancing his college experience by providing services for homework help, essay help and internships.

Some important highlights about this interview were that Kofi described many positive thoughts and feelings about HEOP. In particular, he appreciated that there was not a focus on race and gender in the program. Kofi described himself as being mixed race. It is possible that the student being mixed race may impact their perspective. He stated, "I think I would say I've never like actively thought about my race being in the program, but I would say it is definitely a program that is very supportive and assisting to minorities that do have, or do not have like their own personal problems at home; it's an opportunity for just people who are eligible and people who need the support." He described HEOP as a place where he felt "heard," "valued," "respected," and "human,"; all powerful statements. He, like other students, did not seem too focused on the importance of gender in his relationships with HEOP staff. It was more important that the advisor that he related to have a similar ethnic background to him. He stated,

> My personal counselor right now...I think we've been able to connect to just because she's understood.. she grew up, she's like a mixed race as well and just throughout these four years, I can tell like we've been able to have a personal connection just, I think, because of our own personal background…and is similar in the way in which we grew up. I would say that you're you know, race, a is not huge thing that I thought about, but I do believe it has brought me closer to my personal my own counselor because of our

own situations growing up and things like that. But I think yeah, I do love that the

faculty is diverse.

It was more important that the advisor that he related to have a similar ethnic background to him and not whether she was male or female.

Ibrahim

Ibrahim is a fourth-year transfer student studying at a small liberal arts college majoring in business in upstate New York. He is originally from New York City. Ibrahim originally attended a mid-sized 4-year public university in New York State. He explains that first college he attended accepted him into EOP which is a similar program to HEOP at public colleges and universities in New York. Ibrahim explains that he was unfamiliar with EOP or HEOP until he applied to college. He only became aware of the program once he applied. He explains after applying to the public university that he was accepted into, a teacher in High School told him that the EOP program would, "…help me financially and it would help me meet people that could help me in everything I could do in life." He explains that because he was originally an EOP student he was able to transfer to his current private college as an HEOP student. He states that his understanding is that for both programs, "Your grades have to be between 85 to [a] 90 average... and financially your parents have to make under a certain amount."

This interview brings up some important ideas about HEOP. It appears that in many of the campuses the majority of HEOP students are Black and Latino. As suggested by this interview there is identity affirmation happening within HEOP because the students are coming from similar backgrounds. Also, the faculty and staff of many of the interviewees— as with this one—is people of color. Like many of the other participants, he saw gender as not being in the forefront. Even when pressed about gender it comes as an afterthought. This

could be the privilege of being male. The Black men I interviewed are not actively thinking about their gender. It does not seem that there is not much of a difference regarding how the students feel about having a Black female counselor or having a Black male, but there seems to be a big difference regarding the race of the HEOP staff member with which they have the most contact. Being that the critical mass of HEOP students is Black and Latino with very few other races and ethnicities represented the implications are that students generally feel racially supported in HEOP; only some of the participants have expressed a desire for some targeted gendered support services.

Esmael

Esmael is a senior majoring in chemistry at a small liberal arts college in upstate New York. He states that his goal is to become a medical doctor. Like Ibrahim, Esmael is also a transfer student and originally enrolled in a CUNY School. Esmael was originally a part of the SEEK program; this is a similar program to HEOP at CUNY. He explains that between the two programs, "there's a lot of similarities." He further explains in his understanding of HEOP that it "specifically helps diverse students like Black undergrad students...to help them with books, tuition assistance, and also giving them advice to help them with counseling and any difficulty they are having in classes." He explains that the difference he sees between the programs is that HEOP provides more financial assistance (this is perhaps due to the larger cost in attendance or may be due to better financial packages at private college). He first became aware of the SEEK program through the college application process. He explains that he "wasn't really sure what [SEEK] was." It was not until he did research that he saw all the benefits that the SEEK program provided. He was aware that a private college offering HEOP would consider him as a HEOP transfer since he was a SEEK student.

This interview was particularly interesting because this participant had experience both as a SEEK and HEOP student. He provided contrasting experiences despite the programs being similar. He described HEOP as having more financial resources available than his experience in SEEK. Also, he described feeling more connected to his current HEOP advisor who is a Black male in contrast to his SEEK advisor who was a White female. When asked whether there was a difference in his connection with his advisors in SEEK and HEOP he said the following, "I'm gonna (sic) say that that makes a huge difference. The connection is definitely more about the race. Maybe I feel more comfortable talking to Eric because he's Black. I just feel open talking to him more than I feel talking to my other advisor. So, yeah." Here again we see that gender was not what was most important. To the contrary, the fact that he could connect with his current advisor because he is Black, and he felt more comfortable speaking to him than his previous White advisor were paramount. He also stated he would prefer a program that targeted Black males. He continued to share,

> I think I would definitely choose a program that is more tailored to just Black men in general. And this is because, like I said earlier I feel like Black men in general, if you even if you look at the statistics on like a lot of colleges, most Black men are struggling in colleges. I feel like if we have a program for just Black men, Black females, and all that stuff. I feel like we could help one another out. That program can actually increase those statistics. It's definitely going to help us in the future.

Esmael points out that the statistics are not favorable for Black men in college and that having a target program could be a way to improve those statistics. He Also discussed the ability to relate to other Black males and some of the mental health issues specific to Black males that could be discussed in such a setting. Overall, he appeared satisfied with the services received by HEOP. However, he expressed some need to be able to connect with

HEOP alumni post-graduation and the ability to network for employment purposes. He described this as a missing component within HEOP.

Esmael also mentioned feeling stereotyped about his race in his science classes and spoke about being one of the only Black students in his classes. He stated the need to have a target program for Black males to counteract some of the stereotyping he was feeling. He also expressed that there were not many resources available in HEOP or at least he was not aware of them because he did not share his feeling of being stereotyped with the HEOP staff. However, he felt that if he did bring it to their attention they would seek to help.

Kelvin

Kelvin is a fourth-year student who attends a large selective university in upstate New York. He majors in information technology management with an emphasis in business. Kelvin is originally from upstate New York. His football coach in high school introduced him to HEOP. He stated that his coach had a representative from the university he currently attends come to speak to him and other students about HEOP while he was in high school. He explained, "It was kind of a longer process for me because coming out of high school my GPA was where it was supposed to be, but my SAT score wasn't the best. So, it was a lot of back and forth with HEOP explaining my situation." Kelvin explained that his understanding of HEOP is that it's a program that, "supported me throughout my college career. I would have bi-weekly sessions where I would go and just talk about school and even deeper than just school, home, [and] just making sure everything is good mentally." He shared, "I just look at HEOP like an organization that's just always there for you whenever you need anything."

Kelvin's interview was particularly insightful. He described his feelings about an incident where a professor stereotyped him and accused him of stealing. He stated,

I was in the Business School one day looking for an application for a minor— the minor I have right now. My business minor. When I got there the lady, she told me that those are only for students. And, then I told her what I was doing. She didn't really ask anybody else about their ID. So, I asked her if she wanted to see my student ID. She said, "No." She wanted to see my real ID. So, I gave her my real ID and then she said oh it was a little mistake. A lot of students that look like you try to come up here to steal...I live like 10 minutes away from the university so that hit me pretty hard because those kids [that the professor was referring to] are where I'm from.

When asked what he thought contributed to that incident he stated, "I guess at the time, I had a big nappy afro. I had a book bag. I didn't really have anything that said XYZ University on it. I had regular clothing. I had a hoodie." I asked Kelvin whether he thought his race and gender had an impact on the incident. He then stated,

The fact that there was a pretty decently long line, and I was the only one that got ID'd in that line, and most of those kids were White or Caucasian. That was the number one thing for me. The fact that she asked for my state ID instead of [school] ID. It was probably a little alarming for me. I just felt like she looked at me differently, for some reason.

He shared insights about how HEOP staff helped and actively intervened in the situation when his professor stereotyped him. He also described the mental health impact of the negative experience.

Perry

Perry is a fourth-year student attending a selective liberal arts college in upstate New York. He is majoring in English and computer science. He explains that he did not know

about HEOP while he was in high school. He stated, "…For the most part, at least in my high school they basically have you just apply for colleges at random." Similarly, to other participants, he explained that he had no idea what HEOP was until he received his acceptance letter from the college, he attends. Not knowing what HEOP is about until enrolled in a HEOP at college appears to be a normal occurrence unless students were specifically informed about HEOP while in high school. Perry explained his understanding of HEOP happened after he attended a mandatory 5 week pre-first-year student HEOP academic summer program (this is mandatory by all HEOP programs across the state). He explains that the HEOP program at his college was "very adamant [about] showing the students that the program that you're in is very, very special. That very few people get inducted into it and that because we were inducted into it, we were very special individuals." Perry discussed that he viewed the services that HEOP provides as being both academic and financial.

The interview with Perry expressed the importance of community and having a communal space for HEOP students. Interestingly, Perry did not think it would be necessary to have a dedicated program of just Black men. It is possible that this is because the current racial demographics of HEOP allow him to feel supported in his racial identity. There was no difference with connecting with female and male HEOP staff. Again, the importance of connecting with someone of a similar cultural background was more importance than their gender. Perry affirmed that HEOP does provide identity affirmation on some campuses; many students are proud to be part of HEOP. Tutoring was a valuable resource; the importance of the summer program preparing students for the possible shock of being on a PWI was also important. Perry also mentioned initial feelings of impostor syndrome early in his college career. However, it seemed as though the support he received from HEOP alleviated those feelings.

Jonathan

Jonathan is a second-year student attending a small liberal arts college in upstate New York. He explains that his major is currently undecided; he is considering a degree in written arts or teaching. Jonathan attended high school in New York City and explains that his guidance counselors casually introduced him to HEOP. He stated it was not until, "I was applying to college [that I] learned about HEOP more specifically. I was familiarized with the word through the college process senior year and more specifically, understood what HEOP actually means." Jonathan admitted even now he still does not "understand 100% what HEOP even means". However, he does have "a very, very strong grasp of the goal and the reasoning behind a HEOP type of scholarship".

Jonathan was one of the few students that had mixed feelings about HEOP. He stated he had some traumatic experiences that he did not go into detail about that could have influenced his view of HEOP. Yet, he described HEOP as a program that is helping him navigate his experience as a Black man. He is appreciative of the services that HEOP provides and its satisfied overall but there are some more targeted issues (that he did not specify) but inferred they are related to this race and gender that is not addressed by being in HEOP. He also described that there is a certain perception about who Black males are supposed to be and how they are supposed to act. He explained that within a targeted program he would feel more comfortable addressing issues pertaining to his Black male identity.

From his experience he expressed some frustration about not being able to have his (unspecified) issues dealt with directly with his peers and in a space that was Black male centered; he felt because he would be among other Black men, he would feel comfortable being more direct about issues related to his identity. He states\d, "I find as a Black man

within [HEOP]...you're only finding help after a conflict with another person. Me being a Black male... within the Black space I feel like a Black male centered HEOP program, I could just hit points more directly."

Interestingly, this participant was also a part of a dedicated group of men of color on campus. He expressed that he felt the group allowed him to have the space to discuss issues centered around being a man of color. Instead, the focus of the group went from being a safe space to focusing on mentorship. Depression and mental health were items that came up during the interview. He mentioned that HEOP provided some general help with mental health issues, but this is an area that is not addressed by the program that might be supported in a targeted program.

Denzel

Denzel is a graduating senior attending a small selective liberal arts college in upstate New York. He is majoring in an interdisciplinary major that consists of government, economics, and philosophy. Denzel is originally from New York City where he attended high school. He stated that his academic counselor informed him about HEOP. He stated however, that even though his counselor informed him about HEOP he did not fully understand what it was until attended the pre-first-year HEOP summer program at his college. Denzel had a comprehensive understanding of HEOP. He discussed the various components of the summer program he attended, then began to describe in detail the support services that HEOP offers at his college. Denzel stated that at his college students, "…meet regularly with the program staff...at the end of every semester...and do an evaluation and... have a big reflection moment of how the [semester went] for you." Denzel spoke in depth about the financial resources HEOP provides.

Denzel had very insightful and thoughtful ideas about intersectionality regarding his own cultural identity. He also expressed the importance of having a program like HEOP and the need for a targeted race-centered program. He stated,

> I think obviously the alternative program is that there would probably be more resources just focused on Black specific issues. And I also think...while it's important to...build this diverse community it's also important to recognize that every background probably comes with a (sic) certain experiences that is unique to it...and [has] specific challenges or.... specific practices cultural practices that are important to recognize and would probably benefit from having attention paid just for it (sic), if that makes sense, and so I think...overall [I would] go with HEOP, but I think they both have their benefits in different ways.

Denzel's own preference would be to enroll in a program like HEOP; he expressed that there is a need for targeted programs to address specific challenges for Black men.

His relationship with an Africana studies professor was particularly interesting. It highlighted some points about the importance of having Black faculty and staff members. He developed this relationship with this Black professor who was not directly affiliated with HEOP but taught a course for the HEOP summer entry program. He described the relationship as follows,

> …that's probably like the relationship from all the professors I've met and have relationships on campus that's like the deepest and the one that I valued most, and it all started like I said because he was always open during that first summer when I came here for HEOP. And, just to talk to him and just was always somebody I knew that I could talk to.

This relationship described by Denzel highlights the importance of connecting with Black faculty and staff for Black male students. As stated in the literature review, Black male retention is most successful when schools invest in Black male students by connecting them with Black faculty and staff, creating diverse living and learning environments, training faculty and staff to be culturally responsive, and ensuring that financial stress does not burden Black male students (Wood et al., 2012).

Richard

Richard is a third-year business administration major at a small liberal arts college in upstate New York. Richard attended high school in New York City. He talked about how while in high school he was told he should try to get into HEOP, but he did not know much about it. Richard stated that as a result when he applied to college, he also applied to HEOP. When his college formally accepted him, the college then invited him to interview for HEOP. He recalled the day by stating, "I came up here myself. I remember the day and everything...I met some great people." He then goes on to describe his first interaction with the HEOP director. He shared, "You know this guy was probably one of the biggest reasons why I came and joined the program. Honestly speaking it wasn't really even about the school...for me it was more about the program and not just the financial piece." Richard stated his understanding about HEOP is that it is "basically one of the biggest blessings that have happened to my life. It's a support system, also people for you to talk to. This is a program where we come into summertime, and you go through a couple of classes. All that stuff is really helpful because you get to meet people, you get that experience firsthand before anybody actually get to campus as a first-year student." Richard continued throughout much of the interview to describe HEOP as a community.

Richard's interview was particularly interesting because like Denzel he mentioned the intersection of his multiple identities. He also drove home the importance of HEOP building community for Black men. He stated the following when asked about whether he would prefer a program target to Black men or HEOP.

> I love here, but I will go with the Black program because it would give me a chance to prove excellence. I know HEOP is not just Black people. Since the program is mostly Black let's say in a perfect scenario, I guess, I will do it just to show excellence. There's a lot of stereotypes behind like viewpoint and stuff like that...we need to break those barriers, little by little. So, to show excellence, you know just represent. I think that's the word I'm looking for: represent. Represent the whole community overall. We see this all time. We have Black colleges and stuff like that. Again [HEOP] does great man if you put great minds together to work. Man, you've (sic) get to accomplish great things. I feel like I'm not putting HEOP on the side. I love the program and the concept but, in my opinion, if I was to pick it would be the Black group.

Richard's interview reinforced Black men's need to connect with other Black men; he said he would prefer a program targeted to Black men as a way that Black men can show excellence and display counter images to negative stereotypes. He described instances of feeling unsupported by his campus and dealing with an issue with a professor, but his HEOP staff was supportive of him navigating the issue. Richard also reinforced the necessity for him being able to connect with Black male staff although he also described his relationship with a female staff positively. Cultural connection appears to have taken precedence over gender in this case as well.

Sanouse

Sanouse is a business administration major with a psychology minor at a small liberal arts college in upstate New York. He is originally from New York City. Sanouse stated that he was introduced to HEOP in 10th grade: "So, they was (sic) telling us, oh, because [you're] not eligible, your grades [are] not high enough, or your family doesn't make enough...people like me can be part of the HEOP program." Sanouse stated that his initial understanding of HEOP was that it was a program that would just pay for his school. He then described that after attending his college pre-first-year HEOP summer program that, "...It's way deeper than that. It's like that summer for that first summer program...you made a little family before you even got on campus.... everybody [is] your same skin color, it's like you build a bond, you build a bond with the director...we made a connection with one of our counselors...then you meet new people during the school year." Sanouse continued to describe the importance of mentorship in his program and connecting with other HEOP students by reinforcing ideas about family and community.

In his interview he used terms like brother, sister, and auntie to describe his relationship with the HEOP staff and peers. Like some of the other young men he saw the importance for having connection with other Black males; he said if he was presented an opportunity to be in an all-Black male program as a high school student, he probably would have chosen that program. Knowing what he knows now he would pick HEOP as he appreciated the diversity that it brings. Yet, he also described the importance of having students in the program that come from similar backgrounds as him. For these participants who felt this way, it would be interesting to know if the racial demographics of the program included more White and Asian students whether these Black men would still be of the same opinion.

He also mentioned feeling proud about being associated with HEOP. He said he felt stereotyped about his race but not so much about being in HEOP. He made a correlation that

most students in HEOP are Black so there may be some stereotyping about the HEOP

students because of their race. He also mentioned the importance of having pride in HEOP

and how that positive reflection of being in HEOP is a counteraction to negative stereotypes

about HEOP students. The complexity of what HEOP means to these Black men was

fascinating.

Mohammed

Mohammed is a business major with a concentration in marketing at a small liberal arts

college in upstate New York. Mohammed attended high school in New York City. His

introduction to HEOP was upon acceptance to the college he currently attends. He stated that

upon learning about HEOP he did his own research to learn more about the program.

Mohammed explained his understanding of HEOP: "We all know that the Higher Education

Opportunity Program [is] not only [for] the financial aspect where it helps pay for tuition but

it's also more like a brotherhood and everyone...has brothers and sisters, like family, more

family." During his interview, Mohammed continued to describe HEOP as a family that has

helped him in several ways throughout his college career.

Like the other students, Mohamed described HEOP in terms of family and community.

He used terms like family, brotherhood, sister, and brother. As with the other participants

gender was in the background and did not appear to have a vital role for respondents in

feeling connected to HEOP staff. Race was more important when participants discussed

having a connection with HEOP staff and peers. Tutoring and counseling were also both

important aspects. Tutoring as a service seemed to be popular when Black men were

discussing the most impactful services.

Andre

Andre is a biomedical engineering student attending a highly selective university in New York State. Andre discussed his growing up in the counties slightly north of New York City. He described his hometown as "there wasn't much there". A local program in Andre's hometown helped mentor him through the college application process. This program was not affiliated with his high school. He claimed that this program was a big part of him getting into his university because his high school and hometown lacked resources. When asked about whether he was informed about HEOP while in high school he responded: "I actually had no idea it was a thing. I'm trying to remember when. I believe it was when I got accepted...I was on the waitlist (for his university). So, when I got off the waitlist...the acceptance page said in order to attend [you need to] ...do this program. So, I said sure I would want to do something like that. I didn't go into it knowing it was a HEOP program." He goes on to discuss that the main goal of his high school was to just graduate. The only opportunity he heard of pertaining to college while in high school was the New York State Excelsior Program which allows students whose families earn less than $125,000 to attend a SUNY or CUNY college or university for free. For much of Andre's interview he described the importance of being in a program with students of similar racial and economic backgrounds.

Andre shared details surrounding the community that HEOP provided on his campus. He also spoke about the benefits of the HEOP summer program and how it was instrumental in his academic preparation. He also described his participation in the summer program as a pivotal period in developing a community for him; if it was not for HEOP and the summer program he might have felt lost. He mentioned that he would not want to be in a targeted race and gendered specific program. However, he entertained the idea of having a sub-group within HEOP that would meet—just for Black men. Interestingly, a sub-group within HEOP was discussed in another participant's interview.

Table 5. 2 Participant Profiles

Participant	Institution Type	Class	Major	Attended a NYC High School	Transfer Student?
Jordan	Large Selective	Junior	Broadcast Journalism	Yes	No
Kofi	Small Liberal Arts	Senior	Business Finance	.	No
Ibrahim	Small Liberal Arts	Senior	Business Sports Management	Yes	Yes
Esmael	Small Liberal Arts	Senior	Chemistry	.	Yes
Kelvin	Large Selective	Junior	Information Technology Management	No	No
Perry	Selective	Junior	English and Computer Science	Yes	No
Jonathan	Small Liberal Arts	Sophomore	Undecided	Yes	No
Denzel	Small Selective	Senior	Public Policy	Yes	No
Richard	Small Liberal Arts	Junior	Business Administration	Yes	No
Sanouse	Small Liberal Arts	Junior	Business Administration	Yes	No
Mohamed	Small Liberal Arts	Junior	Business Marketing	Yes	No
Andre	Large Selective	Junior	Biomedical Engineering	No	No

Interview Analysis and Emergent Themes

Research Question 2.

What are the Black male student perspectives about the services offered by HEOP and do those services meet their racial and gendered needs?

Before discussing the participant perspectives on the services offered by HEOP, it is important to note that HEOP offers a variety of support services beyond the tutoring and counseling services that the quantitative analysis references in the prior chapter. Tutoring and counseling are services mandated by NYSED in addition to screening, pre-testing, and post-testing; all potential HEOP students (screening, pre-testing, and post-testing are not in the data set used for the analysis in the prior chapter) must also receive these services. NYSED captures student level data on tutoring and counseling because they are mandated services.

However, the complexity of services that HEOP provides its students often goes beyond the scope of just tutoring and counseling. As supported by the young men interviewed, HEOP provides a variety of soft skills and a complex web of support services that are not easily measured quantitatively. Therefore, it was important to be able to capture the firsthand experiences of Black males in HEOP through semi-structured interviews to better understand their perspective about the comprehensive services offered by HEOP. Also, I am emphasizing here the importance of a diverse experiences among the Black male participants before the reader reads the findings. It is also important to note that differences in institutional type, the diversity of cultural experiences, the young men's individual experiences, and prior academic experiences allowed them to all bring a unique perspective about HEOP. As discussed in the literature review, researchers often do not consider the diversity of Black men, and they are treated as a homogeneous group (Harper, 2014 & 2015). I caution the reader not to draw broad-based conclusions about all Black men's experiences based solely on the participant interviews. Nevertheless, important themes emerged that brought some cohesion between the unique experience and perspectives that are discussed in the findings.

The discussion with the Black male participants that volunteered for this study brought about important emergent themes that highlighted their perspective on HEOP services offered to them. Most of the participants described their overall experience as a HEOP student positively; most were pleased with the scope of services HEOP provided to them.

One of the popular services that participants described as being a pertinent service was tutoring. Many of the participants described tutoring services being a service they appreciated not just because it helped them out with their courses but because the tutors offered by HEOP were often other HEOP students. This was important because the tutors as described by the young men were able to tutor them in a culturally relevant way. Ibrahim states:

> Because most of the tutors in my school are White, that could make it hard to have a conversation with someone else from a different background. But the tutors that HEOP offers, most of them are Black students like me. You know so they know how to explain stuff better to me that in a way that that I can understand it faster and better. So, definitely. That would be the best service that they offer.

It is possible that having a same-race tutor (or at least a tutor also in HEOP) would make stereotype threat less likely.

Jordan, Perry, Denzel, and Kelvin also spoke about their experience with having HEOP tutors. The men described being appreciative of HEOP offering tutoring services and additionally having a HEOP student provide this support. Denzel stated, "You can reach out to the HEOP office and like get help from someone who might be a senior or junior HEOP student [who] has had that experience... So, I think those two things were particularly helpful in being able to like build that supportive environment." Having a supportive environment where students were tutored in a culturally relevant manner is important to note as it may imply that HEOP—on this participant's campus—operated by utilizing an anti-racist

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framework: students are receiving teaching methods that are culturally relevant to their experience, race, and gender. Only one student, Richard, indicated that tutoring was not a service he found particularly useful. He remarked, "Sometimes I don't really connect much with other people's ways on how to do things... I just sometimes never really connected with the way things were done through tutoring." It is unclear whether the tutors in Richard's college were other HEOP students or whether tutoring was offered through another means.

There were several students that stated having financial resources was important to their HEOP experience as Black men. Having HEOP support them with tuition, books, as well as having a lower student loan debt were reasons given as to why financial support by HEOP was important. Denzel asserted, "I think what one thing, maybe I don't know if it's necessarily as a Black man, but I think I mean it's kind of correlated. One of the things, obviously, the financial assistance that you get from here like coming from lower-income can be particularly helpful at times." He further reflected, "You'll talk to other Black students [or] other students of color and I think one thing that you realize that it's not uncommon to like hear struggles with [and be] worried about money. Or I'm worried about money, so I have to work jobs on campus to make money because money is an issue or a worry for me." Kofi stated, "One in particular is your books. And they provide us with a book voucher so that we can purchase our textbooks so that's something I'm super grateful and will always be grateful for, because especially the business textbooks are super expensive." As stated in the literature, wealthy White families can leverage resources to ensure their children have access to the best preparation for elite schools. Even high-income Black families often must apply for financial aid and use loans (which can perpetuate disadvantage); wealthy White families are likelier to be able to pay for college outright. HEOP appears to be leveraging its resources to provide a fair economic opportunity for these men. While these students may still have some loan burden, easing the financial burden speaks directly to the importance of providing

financial resources for Black men. That by providing economic help, HEOP is providing an essential resource to Black men.

All participants discussed meeting with a HEOP staff member in an advising or counseling role. Counseling services may be academic, financial, personal, social, or vocational. The level and breadth to which HEOP staff counsel students vary between students and colleges. It is likely that the counseling services offered are dependent on and customized to the needs of the individual student.

Most relevant from the several types of counseling services that the participants received is the connection the students have with HEOP staff members who are providing counseling and advising services. Mohammed shared, "I have an advisor who's not a HEOP advisor and when it comes to him and like classes, when I'm selecting, choosing my classes for the following semester, it's more of just direct choosing and like I don't know. We don't really have a deeper conversation about like what I really want. What I'm trying to like [do], I don't know, we don't really have a conversation like that, as compared to like HEOP." It appears that for Mohammed when he meets with his major advisor the focus of the discussion appeared to be strictly on academic advising. However, what he appreciated about his advising session with his HEOP advisor was the connection he had and the ability to have deeper level conversations beyond academics.

Kelvin echoes the importance of being able to go deeper in his conversations with his HEOP advisor. He explained, "I would have bi-weekly sessions, where I would go and just talk about school and even deeper than just school, like home. Just making sure everything is as good mentally." Other participants also discussed the importance of their HEOP advisor or counselor checking in on them and having relationships that were deep and meaningful.

One of the themes that emerged was the importance of the pre-first-year academic summer program. The "summer program" as defined on NYSED's website is a mandatory offering to all pre-first-year HEOP students (New York State Education Department, 2021). Many of the participants seemed to have appreciated that they were allowed to become acclimated with their institution prior to their first semester. Andre stated, "[HEOP] was very helpful for a general introduction to the campus. We knew [HEOP] kids that were currently on campus [and] we knew [non-HEOP] kids." Jonathan echoed that sentiment: "One of the things I don't really think gets talked about here, is [the] fact that we come in with summer program. Like we [are] coming in knowing people...one of the craziest privileges that I've had within [HEOP] being able to come to a predominantly White school." Being able to be familiarized with their respective institutions seemed to garner a sense of appreciation for HEOP.

The academic preparation the summer program provided seem to be a valuable tool for some because of lack of preparation for college while in high school. Andre stated, "I would have not been prepared for the workload, because I would have, I will have no idea [that the] workload could be like this. Like the most I had gotten in high school were AP classes. Not to say AP classes aren't hard but the AP classes, at my school, were kind of thrown together." For others it provided a unique opportunity to be ahead of their peers to adjusting to campus life before starting college. Mohammed stated, "It was more like a boost, and it just helped towards my academic career...pushing for things like this that would just help us, or me as a Black person be ahead of my mates or ahead of other people on campus." Mohammed's quote provides interesting context because it not just highlights the importance of being ahead of his peers but the importance of being a Black person and being ahead of his peers.

Additionally, students discussed the importance of being able to take non-credited coursework during the summer program. Jordan stated, "Another part of HEOP is the summer program...that helps us to gain some insights. So, you take three courses during the summertime prior to the start of the actual academic school year...I think that experience helped me a lot." The summer program also is an important part of establishing a cultural community of students from similar backgrounds. Jonathan described his paraprofessional role as a second-year student working with incoming HEOP students during the summer program. He stated,

> HEOP has definitely created an environment to help promote a sense of community, communication, networking and more… so, just connecting people that probably who would have never met in their life if not for this program. And I think personally for me as a Black person looking from the perspective of what happens after all, yeah, creates this community. We are trying to get a [sic] better education opportunities and we are you know lucky enough...worked hard enough to be selected to get where we are. People of color working together.

Jonathan described the development of community within the summer program. Many of the participants that were interviewed depicted the summer program as being foundational for the development of community within the program.

Research Question 3.

Can the interview data help to explain why Black men sought out these support services and the extent to which the services were helpful?

Community, being from similar cultural and economic backgrounds, and being able to relate to peers are related themes that emerged within the discussion of the participants. While building community in of itself is not part of the services HEOP offers, the services

provided by HEOP appeared to be important building blocks in developing a community. Many of the participants described HEOP's ability to provide a community as being important to their college experience as Black men and why they sought out HEOP resources. Perry described his experiences as follows:

> For the most part, I haven't met any student [outside of HEOP] that's made me feel uncomfortable with the color of my skin or the culture I embody...but at the same time just being able to communicate with people that come from the same city as you, that come from the same background as you, that understand what you've been through and understand the sort of trials and tribulations of becoming a college student. Especially, given the sort of financial backdrop you come from is something that, it's very, very inspiring. It encourages you to not only relate to those people even more, but at the same time sort of work through that t struggle together.

Perry's quote highlights several important characteristics of community that were also prevalent among the other participant interviews. He illustrated not just the importance of having a community but the significance of that community—that he is able to relate to culturally, economically, and geographically. It allows him not just to relate but to experience a shared struggle. It could be inferred that because he is part of a shared struggle in a community that understands him, he is not alone in his college experience.

The interview with Richard echoed Perry's sentiments. Richard shared, "I feel like the biggest thing for me to answer that question would be my peers. The people from the HEOP program are people just like me and I feel that's the greatest thing ever. Why? Because I got people that I could connect to. I got other Black students. I got people from the city...." Richard, like Perry, stressed the importance of having peers who are relatable in culture and geographic background. Similar to Perry, Richard emphasized the importance of a shared

struggle: "It's not always that my minorities get to stand out that a Black person gets to stand out...Having a group of you know people just like you trying to reach the same goals when you just want to be great, it's awesome to me..." The idea of shared struggle is taken a step further by Richard in that his quote also emphasizes the importance of shared goals. The interviews revealed that it is not just that HEOP has built a community— but a relatable community that consist of people of similar backgrounds and identities.

The communities that the participants described as important also extended beyond their peers. Having relatable HEOP and faculty and staff were also of importance to the participants. In fact, another sub-theme that emerged while describing these communities was the idea of families. Many students described their relationships with both the HEOP staff and their peers by using terms like "brother," "sister," "auntie," and "mom". Mohammed in his interview pointed out, "There's a sense of like brotherliness and when we're in the office we just have conversations. We just have fun...We just feel comfortable...discussing personal stuff to each other." The term brotherliness that Mohammed uses in this excerpt suggested that there is a kinship between him and his peers that extend beyond just classmates. Strong bonds connected him to his peers. Jordan discussed the idea of having "brothers" and "sisters" that "look just like him." He stated, "When it comes to just having a big brother or big sister that [supportive] someone [that] had been in the space that looks just like you that knows about your experiences...." The importance emphasized in this quote is that there are people who have shared experiences.

Again, as with the other young men the importance of the community that HEOP provides is the development of a relatable community of shared experiences. This seemed to help the young men navigate predominately White spaces. Jordan further stated, "How to navigate...a predominately White institution for many of us, this is a culture shock. We never

been around this amount of White people. The ratio—it's like I was a Black person around 21,000 White people." A key term used here by the participants is "culture shock" which seemed to further emphasize that having a community that is like where many of these young men are originally from is something they need to be able to navigate a predominately White space; this can enable them to better cope with their college experiences.

Jordan went on to say, "So the numbers is very uneven so to have a [sic] big brothers and big sisters. I can speak to you on an emotional level about feeling like you are the minority." There are several layers to unpack in this quote. The first is the re-emphasis on the number of White students in comparison to students of color. However, for many of the young men this was not just about race but geographic and economic background as well. Being in a White institution for many of the young men meant being surrounded by upper-middle to upper-class White students whom they felt were not always able to relate to their experiences. Also, the experience of being from geographically different regions than many of their peers who were not HEOP students seemed to reinforce the necessity to be able to relate to students that were from their hometown and could relate to their experiences. Jordan in his quote again re-emphasized the idea of "brothers" and "sisters". The reference to his peers in HEOP as members of a family further emphasized the deeper connection of the community built beyond surface-level peer groups. He then went on to say he can speak to these "brothers" and "sisters" on an "emotional level" indicating that there is a deeper connection and emotional bond. What is most interesting is he stated he can relate to them about "feeling like a minority". This is an important piece because the assumption is that these young men would be considered "minorities" and the feeling of being a "minority" should not be novel. However, in their hometown communities and previous schooling they were the majority.

However, as seen in Jordan's next quote the feeling of being in a minority group was new for many of these young men. Whereas in their hometowns, they are the majority group. Jordan continued to state, "For the first time, many of us feel like we are the minority because we come from the Bronx, Brooklyn, Harlem; these are Black places." Jordan was emphasizing the point that he has never felt like a "minority." In his hometown he is the majority. The importance of the community HEOP establishes can be interpreted as replicating the feeling belonging to a community that in some way replicates their hometown communities, in which they are not the minority.

Part of the community that HEOP provided for many of the young men was the relationship they had with the HEOP faculty and staff. Interestingly, gender was not a barrier to the men's ability to identify with female staff. Many of the young men when asked about the importance of having relationships with male staff verses female staff saw no difference. The importance for them was again having staff that was relatable. Race played a slightly more significant role but still was not of utmost importance. What was mostly important for these participants was staff that were sensitive to their needs, had cultural sensitivity to these men's cultural background, and responded to them in a way that was relatable. A couple of them often described their relationship with female HEOP in maternal terms. Jordan stated,

> So, something, most of the advisors in the office are actually Black and Hispanic. [My
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> advisor] happens to be one of them that are not. I think. I don't really.... I never really
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> looked at it like that. She doesn't even come across as White. She might not even be
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> White. That's the crazy part. I don't know. She just didn't come across as a White
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> person to me. She was like a mother figure, and I don't think her race is really [a]
>
> determining factor of what's important.

Here Jordan emphasizes the maternal bond he has with his advisor. Until the question was posed to him in the interview, he never thought about her race. He goes on to say it is not what is important to him. It is significant to note that he also stated that most of the HEOP staff are Black and Hispanic. While there is no statistical data on the race and gender of the staff, most of the participants interviewed echoed this statement.

I asked Johnathan about the relationship he had with a female HEOP advisor. He replied, "I think what helps with the director is even though she's Spanish or whatever the case may be, she's a mom. That kind of mom connection I guess kind of gets me.... More so, that where I feel a connection. Whereas you have that type of mom intuition." Again, here the relationship with the HEOP staff member transcended both race and gender and the importance of a maternal relationship he established was of importance. Sanouse described his relationship with his female HEOP staff member: "So I just connect with people...we had our assistant director, where at one point I was calling her auntie, because we got that close." Again, here the emphasis of the closeness of staff that creates family bonds is evident in the terminology used. He went on to state, "That was a one-year relationship, because she ended up leaving before my second year, but that was a great mentorship relationship...she don't (sic) even talk to us like it's her job, she's doing it because she enjoys like she enjoys motivating like Black kids or uplifting us." He goes on discuss the importance of this relationship and the impact of the loss. He even stated that the importance of the relationship he had with the HEOP staff person held greater value than the services he received from HEOP.

For other participants, having staff that not only were relatable but "looked like them" was an important contrast to having faculty and staff that were predominately White at their institutions. Ibrahim stated,

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The [HEOP] staff is very good. They look just like us. And there's not a lot of staff that look like me at my school. Going to their office they know my shoulders [sic]. They know where I come from, so it makes it easier for them to help me rather than going to my White [major faculty] advisor to asks them for help. I mean they would help me too but coming from someone that knows where I come from and all that makes it easier for them to help me. It makes it easier for me to talk to them about my shoulders about my problems. So, the faculty members are good. They help a lot.

Here Ibrahim drew a comparison between his advisor in HEOP and his faculty advisor for his major. He drew the conclusion that it's easier to get help from the HEOP staff because they are culturally relatable. For Sanouse, age came up as an important relatable factor in conjunction with the HEOP counselor's race and gender. When describing his relationship with a Black male HEOP counselor, he stated,

He's another motivation because he's younger, so he's like, he's around, he's 24, 25ish? And him figuring out his life at that ... he still says he didn't figure it out yet, but the track he's going is like amazing, so us me, seeing that oh, if I could get there, if I could get there, at 23, 24, 25, then my life by the age of 30, 33...I could be the best version of myself.

Research shows that Black male students are most successful when they have relatable Black faculty and staff (Will, 2017; McClain, 2016; Toldson, 2013). For some students, this reliability transcends both race and gender. For others, having the ability to relate to Black HEOP faculty and staff is just as important. The experiences of these young men emulated Ogbu's (1985) assertion of the importance of group membership among Black students. It may be that these young men have described the "fictive kinship" within HEOP as opposition to their experience in a PWI. The importance of this finding is that having a relatable

community in which the Black men feel is relevant to their experiences may allow them to seek services that can further benefit their college experience and academic outcomes.

Research Question 4.

Does HEOP reduce stereotype threat by providing identity affirmation for Black male participants?

All the participants described some sort of incident on their campus where they felt stereotyped. It is important to note that most of the incidents that the participants described had to do with their race. Very few participants felt stereotyped because of their participation in HEOP. Of the participants that felt they were stereotyped because of their participation in HEOP it was still described in relation to their race and that most HEOP students are students of color. For example, Denzel described the following:

> I will say that I've been fortunate enough that it hasn't been stereotyping specifically related to either my gender identity or my race. But definitely relates to the HEOP experience I definitely have encountered stereotypes. Like in my first year here, one something somebody said was HEOP… is a program for like students of color to learn how to interact with White students on campus which is like just false.

While the notion here is that the stereotyping did not have to do with race, the stereotype described is that HEOP is for students of color and for them to learn how to assimilate with White people. Interestingly, as seen in the literature review, this assertion was described by Francis et al. (1993) whereas the SEEK program (the sister program to HEOP at CUNY) was a tool to assimilate poor students of color into college. So, the stereotype described here by Denzel may be rooted in the history of the purpose for these programs.

In fact, the participants mostly spoke about the pride and identity affirmation they felt in being a HEOP student. Sanouse stated, "No, I definitely don't feel stereotyped. I actually embrace it. I wear the sweater...around campus, I embrace it. Everybody knows I'm a HEOP student. I show them." The positive experiences that the participants have in HEOP the ideas that they have about community and family seemed to provide identify affirmation as a HEOP student. Kofi described at first having a personal insecurity about HEOP but stated that he never felt stereotyped about being a HEOP student. He states:

> I would say in the beginning I had my own personal insecurity about it. I felt like I was in a program that wasn't like an honors program...that was my own personal insecurity...I was never put down or judged differently because I was part of it. Actually, when I've explain (sic) HEOP to people most people got very interested...as I got more comfortable with...sharing about HEOP it went away completely. I'm super proud to be part of something like that.

When Richard was asked the question about feeling stereotyped about his participation in HEOP he said the following: "People feeling a type of way about saying that they're from [HEOP]. I feel you shouldn't feel like that ever. This is a blessing and be proud of it." From the participants' perspective, the HEOP staff appear to place emphasis on how special it is to be a part of HEOP.

Perry stated, "In fact, they [the HEOP staff] actually make being a HEOP student feel not just worthwhile, but it makes the position feel very special. The position as an HEOP student is a once in a lifetime opportunity." Feeling valued by the HEOP staff seemed to further enforce identify affirmation about being a HEOP student. Kofi stated, "[I am] more like a human and didn't feel like a number or an asset. I am value[d]. I'm human you know. I

would say HEOP definitely helped that." He goes on to discuss the value of HEOP and the appreciation of it allowing him to be in school.

None of the young men felt that they were treated differently in a negative way because of their participation in HEOP. Mohammed shared, "I personally haven't been through anything like that, and it's been like affirmations like from here everybody feels proud of me, you know, proud of the program." This was possibly because of the community HEOP fosters which in turn may foster a sense of pride in one's family and community. Jonathan alluded to this in his statement,

> Maybe yes because there's that type of family aspect. Maybe it's half HEOP, half me. I'm that kind of person that can just vibe with anyone. I guess they were stereotypes I probably haven't heard it yet or felt it but. Coming into the summer program there was definitely some people during the program who helped me be okay with myself.

It appears that the affirmations that were received in HEOP for most of the participants were strong enough to counteract any feeling of being stereotyped. It could also be that the group of participants selected did not experience stereotyping on their campuses because of the support services or by happenstance. Again, it would be difficult to draw broad conclusions but the data here may allude to support services, community and feelings of family being a counter measure to stereotype threat.

Many of the participants described some racial stereotyping incident on campus. The results were mixed as to whether students felt that HEOP was instrumental in helping them navigate the incidents they described. Some of the participants stated that they never reported the incident to a HEOP staff member but was sure that if they did HEOP would have tried to intervene.

Research Question 4A.

Does the "disadvantaged" label perpetuate stereotype threat for the Black male students involved?

It does not appear that the "disadvantaged" label perpetuated stereotype threat for any of the participants. Again, many of the participants discussed being proud and having some sort of identity affirmation from being involved in HEOP. Also, on some campuses participants mentioned that other non-HEOP students may not even be aware of their HEOP status. Esmael stated, "Most of the students in HEOP, we don't tell them that we're actually HEOP students. Nobody actually knows unless you actually tell someone. I feel like a lot of my friends don't even know that I am in HEOP." As to whether it was purposeful that this information was not shared with peers or that it was something that did not come up in conservation because of relevance is unknown.

It appears that most of the participants were aware that HEOP is a program for students who have an economic disadvantage. Not all are aware that it was also for students with an educational disadvantage. Nevertheless, the "disadvantage" label did not appear to trigger any feeling of feeling stereotyped. Participants were proud of the HEOP community they were a part of, spoke highly of their experiences and felt affirmed by the HEOP community.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary and overview of the study. It discusses important conclusions drawn from the quantitative data presented in Chapters 4 and the qualitative data presented in Chapter 5. It then discusses the implications for actions, provides recommendations for further action, and concludes with remarks.

Summary of the Study

Overview of the Problem

Black men have faced a long history of racial atrocities in the United States. As a result, they have struggled to gain full participation in the American education system. As a result of the undue burden and challenges Black men have faced, they have shown lower rates of college enrollment and graduation.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to explore the impact of the services provided to Black males in HEOP. To date, there has not been sufficient research on the college experiences of Black men in race-neutral college access and opportunity programs like HEOP. This study helped to fill in the gap in understanding whether programs that target for socioeconomic status instead of race and gender can meet the racial and gendered needs

of Black men and help contribute to academic success. It is important to study programs like HEOP and how they have worked for Black men.

This study examined how services provided by HEOP impacted academic performance and graduation for Black males analyzing the quantitative data obtain from NYSED on HEOP from 2014-2019. It also examined the extent which the services provided met the racial and gendered needs of these students; 12 Black men currently enrolled in HEOP were interviewed for this study. This research answered the following questions:

1. To what extent does HEOP academic support services impact Black male students' academic outcomes?

    a. What are types of tutoring and counseling services Black males in HEOP receive the most?

    b. How many hours of tutoring and counseling hours do Black males in HEOP receive in comparison to their peers in HEOP?

    c. How do these results compare to non-Black men and Black female students?

    d. Are Black male students who receive more support services more likely to persist?

2. What are the Black male student perspectives about the services offered by HEOP and do those services meet their racial and gendered needs?

3. Can the interview data help to explain why Black men sought out these support services and the extent to which the services were helpful?

4. Does HEOP reduce stereotype threat by providing identity affirmation for Black male participants?

a. Does the "disadvantaged" label perpetuate stereotype threat for the Black

male students involved?

To answer these questions the research was designed as a two-step mixed methods study

using a convergent design. Convergent designs allow for the triangulation of data to get an

overall understanding of the topic.

Review of the Methodology

The first phase of the study explored the relationship between Black male student

academic outcomes and services provided to them in HEOP. To explore these outcomes, the

study used data collected from NYSED on HEOP from 2014-2019. The quantitative analysis

included descriptive statistics and used regressions analyses to explore the relationship

between outcomes and services provided within these data. The second phase was the

analysis of semi-structured interviews of 12 Black male HEOP students to understand if

services provided by HEOP meet their race and gender needs.

Major Findings

It is important to note that regarding the quantitative findings, most of the results were

not statistically significant. This is likely due to the limitations of the available data included

in the dataset that could be used for controls and help to explain variance of the dependent

variables. All results were statistically insignificant for the regressions models where

counseling was used a control for Black men. This is due to the requirement that all HEOP

students are counseled, and all students must receive some sort of counseling.

Nevertheless, there were important findings from the quantitative data. The first is

that nearly all students enrolled in HEOP between 2014-2019 were Black and Latino

students. The qualitative data echoed this finding as most of the interview participants claim

that their respective programs consist of Black and Latino students. It is possible that HEOP may have historically targeted Black and Latino students and used income as a proxy for race. Given the political climate of the 1960s when this program was developed it would be of no surprise if the intent was to target Black and Latino students. This climate did not allow language that targets race to be included in law.

However, if this is the case, it would also mean that the arguments made by scholars like Kahlenberg (2014) and Goldsmith (2010) of using class instead of race offers both racial and economic diversity. Students of color may be still allowed access into college and afford access. Low-income White students that face similar economic and social mobility barriers also may not always have this type of access since, in a program like HEOP, White students are still largely underrepresented. However, it is also a possibility that PWIs are using HEOP to racially diversify their campuses under the guise of targeting low-SES students. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the participants that were interviewed were in HEOP communities that reflected their racial and ethnic identities.

The major findings from the quantitative analysis showed that the completion rates for Black males in HEOP were on average 6% lower than their all other HEOP students. Overall, the GPAs for Black men in HEOP were slightly lower than their counterparts, but not significantly. The data showed that all race and gender categories in HEOP achieved similar grade point averages as outlined in Table 4.4. The average for all HEOP students was a 2.79 GPA; Black male students earned an average 2.47 GPA. There may be a marginal benefit towards graduating for Black men who receive tutoring in comparison to non-Black men. Based on this research, Black men were similar academically to other students in HEOP. Tutoring may be sought out more by Black students in academic trouble. Also, we do not

have the data to tell whether Black male academic outcomes might have been worse without HEOP.

The major findings from the qualitative analysis included observations that the critical mass of HEOP students are Blacks and Latinos and very few other races and ethnicities participate (as suggested by the young men and seen in the demographic data in Chapter 4); the implications are that students feel racially supported in HEOP with only some of the participants desiring some targeted gendered support services. HEOP appeared to provide the young men with faculty, staff, and peers to whom Black men feel racially connected. HEOP also seems to provide a safe communal space for these men where they feel connected to their HEOP peers and the staff. In the study, many of the young men described their HEOP peers and staff as family. They indicated that having HEOP faculty, staff, and peers that share similar backgrounds—and are relatable—is vital to navigating their experiences at PWI's. Being relatable was not only about race, but participants also shared that being around peers and HEOP staff that came from their neighborhood or had similar life experiences in their own hometowns was also important. Having faculty and staff that were close in the same age range made HEOP staff relatable as well. As stated in the literature, connections should be made and fostered as early as possible; they should also be continuous. HEOP appeared to do just that. It is clear from this study as well is that even a small cohesive community of Black students helped address these issues and served to create a more successful living and learning environment for Black males (Wood et al., 2012).

Also, HEOP provided identity affirmation regarding being a HEOP participant; these thwarted feelings of stereotype threat due to participation in HEOP. The program does a lot to instill pride in being a HEOP student. However, the participants discussed feeling some sort of stereotype threat due to their race on their campuses outside of HEOP. There were mixed

responses as to whether HEOP was helpful in being responsive to racial stereotyping. As stated in Chapter 5, some of the participants admitted to not sharing their racial stereotype incidents with HEOP but was sure HEOP staff would be helpful if they were informed of the incidents.

Whether Black men would prefer a program that was specific to Black men is not conclusive as there was no consensus among the participants. Different participants expressed several reasons why they would prefer HEOP to a Black male specific program or a Black male specific program to HEOP. What was more important—despite the choice—is that all the men echoed that they wanted to be a part of a program that was culturally sensitive to their needs. Some men even suggested creating a sub-group within HEOP for Black men to get the benefits of both.

Findings Related to the Literature

For the Black men who were interviewed it appears many of them described having what Ogbu (1985) describes as "fictive kinship" but not exactly in the same way that Ogbu discusses it. This is reflective of the historical exploitative relationship between Black and White Americans. For Ogbu (1985), the importance of group membership among Black children takes precedence over academic performance. He states that because Black people are an exploited group, they have developed an alternative identity structure that is in direct opposition to White identity. In many ways, the Black men that were interviewed described their participation in HEOP as a group with an alternative identity that was in direct opposition to the predominate White identity of their campuses. This alternative identity structure reflects a "fictive kinship" meaning a shared cultural experience as a direct result of oppression. Ogbu (1985) postulates that due to this fictive kinship Black Americans have created a distinct set of cultural rules that defines what it means to be Black beyond skin

color. Many of the Black men interviewed described having a shared experience in HEOP with their peers; they emphasized the ability to relate culturally to one another.

Ogbu (1985) emphasizes that Black children learn early on what it means to be culturally Black and associate their academic success in relationship to their Black peers. Many of the Black men in HEOP saw their success as in direct relation to their peers. However, where the experience of these Black men differs from Ogbu's (1985) idea of "fictive kinship" is that in Ogbu's research, displaying behavior that contribute to academic success is seen by Black students as "acting White"; this undermines fictive kinship. This was not the case for the participants in this study. Many of them described ideas of "Black excellence"; they saw their academic performance as an opportunity to prove that they are capable scholars. Once participant stated it would crush him if he disappointed someone that believed he could be a better student given the opportunity HEOP has provided. For other interviewees, the idea of having a group solely dedicate to Black men was preferred because it would allow them to display Black excellence and disprove negative stereotypes about Black men. Thus, Black men can experience "fictive kinship" while displaying behaviors that are positive and contribute to positive academic performance.

In Ogbu's study to establish "fictive kinship" academic success is undermined for Black students. However, for these Black males, establishing "fictive kinship" with their peers meant maintaining positive peer pressure to promote "Black excellence." Doing well academically for these participants is what keeps them feeling connected to their peers in HEOP. For these participants they are not just bonded by their race, they are bonded by the notion of academic success.

Other findings related to the literature include the support services that HEOP offers. Black men in the study described that their summer academic entry program was valuable in

helping them prepare for their first semester of college. They all expressed that without the summer program they would have experienced both academic shock and "culture shock" within their first semester. As stated in Chapter 2, summer bridge programs tend to offer academic workshops, remedial coursework, and college credit coursework (Lee & Barnes, 2015; Winograd et al., 2018). Research shows that students who participate in summer bridge programs are more likely to persist throughout their college experience (Cabrera et al., 2013; Lee & Barnes, 2015; Santa Rita & Bacote, 1996).

The participants also expressed that tutoring was of importance to their academic success. However, it was not just the tutoring alone that was important but the importance of having culturally relatable tutors. As stated in Chapter 2, literature shows that students who are exposed to additional academic resources demonstrate higher levels of academic performance; they are more likely to persist, are more likely to be retained, and have higher rates of graduation (Allen, 1976; Cabrera et al., 2013; Quinn et al., 2019; Watson & Chen, 2019). As seen in the quantitative data, Black male students have GPAs which are relatively on par with their peers within HEOP. And as previously stated, there is a marginal benefit in relation to graduating for Black males that received tutoring in comparison to non-Black men in HEOP. The effectiveness of culturally responsive tutoring is echoed in the literature: Black males are most successful when they are in culturally responsive environments and have faculty and staff that are culturally responsive.

The participants also expressed the importance of having financial resources provided by HEOP. Many stressed that HEOP alleviated the financial burden of attending college. Thus, the participants did not have the added stress of paying for college or buying academic related materials for courses. This is representative in the literature: it states that students who

benefit from the financial assistance of opportunity programs have better academic outcomes and are more likely to persist (Watson & Chen, 2019; Winograd et al., 2018).

Personal support and social development were the services that the participants said they were most enthusiastic about. Having counseling services, peer mentoring services, and peer networking groups that help Black men form communities within HEOP was extremely important. Having relatable and supportive staff helped the participants navigate their college experiences. The support provided them with the resources needed to improve academic performance. This echoes the literature in which Quin et al. (2019) studied first generation students in a TRIO SSS program and found that students enrolled in the program felt the support received from staff helped them better adjust and navigate college. A similar study on the CUNY College CD program found the CD summer bridge program helped participants transition and adjust to college life and improved their persistence rates (Santa Rita & Bacote, 1996).

The ability to transition to a predominately White culture where students described themselves as no longer being the majority community was important. Thus, HEOP's ability to help students navigate this space and have a safe space within a culturally predominately White campus environment was valuable to the participants experiences. Lee & Barnes (2015) found that similar academic transition programs at PWIs increased students' feelings of abilities, social integration, and development of supportive networks. Students involved in such programs had improved confidence and self-efficacy. Additionally, these programs increased student social and academic engagement which is a mutual benefit to the student and the college.

Both the quantitative and qualitative data suggest that the academic services like tutoring that HEOP provides to Black men are pertinent to their academic success. The

overall takeaway from the findings is that Black men do require culturally responsive

environments where they are supported academically and financially. Access to safe spaces,

the ability to establish communities, and engagement with relatable culturally responsive staff

were also key. Because of the population demographics of HEOP, Black men are in a de

facto racially targeted program. Thus, they are receiving the racial support that they need

from HEOP. The significance of this finding is that for college support programs that are

race-neutral, it is important to incorporate racial support services that serve Black male

participants.

Surprises

One of the surprising findings is that the participants did not see gender as a barrier or

a gateway for connecting with other HEOP students or staff. As stated in the literature, Black

males tend to be most successful when there are Black male faculty and staff who can

connect and relate to them. The bonding experience between Black male students and staff

can create and foster a safe space for Black male students to thrive (Bonner II & Bailey,

2006).

However, for these participants gender was primarily in the background. When

students were asked questions related to their gender, they often responded with answers

related to their race. It is possible that because of male privilege that the participants do not

actively think about their gender. When students were redirected to answer questions related

to their gender, they often responded that the gender of the HEOP faculty or staff was not of

importance.

What was of importance to many of the students was whether the HEOP faculty and

staff were culturally sensitive to their issues, were either of the same race or ethnicity, or

were culturally relatable. This also was the case when participants were asked about

connecting with their peers. The participants overall saw more importance in being able to connect with same race peers than gender—not that connecting with other Black males was not important. There were participants who stated they would like to be connected in groups that were made up of only Black males but even these students seemed comfortable with females being a part of such groups. The Black men had a stronger awareness of their racial identity and how that intersected with their experiences in HEOP and at a PWI.

Conclusions

Implications for Action

The implication from this study is that Black men can be racially supported in programs that do not specifically for race and gender. However, programs that use income or other criteria for proxies for race should be mindful of fostering culturally sustaining communities where Black men can relate to program staff and their peers. While HEOP may be majority Black and Latino other race-neutral programs may be more diverse and have less of a critical mass of Black male students. In this instance it would be important to establish purposeful Black male peer subgroups or connect Black men with external resources where they are able to foster racial identity connections and affirmations. The continuance of Black male identity affirmation can also thwart stereotype threat and provide a sense of community belonging.

Echoing the findings in a recent dissertation published on career development in New Jersey opportunity programs (Videla, 2020), the Black male participant in HEOP often stated that they desired the ability to connect with other Black male alumni for the purpose of networking for career purposes. Many stated that HEOP did not provide adequate resources post-graduation and desired more post-graduate career opportunities. HEOP may consider fostering alumni networking groups for Black male students; this will enable them to connect

with Black male alumni to help them navigate the pathway from college to career. Also, seeing Black male alumni who are in careers fosters and reinforces the ideas of "Black excellence" that the participants deemed important.

NYSED should reconsider how data is collected for HEOP. Data for HEOP is self-reported and collected via spreadsheet. This made it extremely difficult to work with the data as it was prone to entry errors. Without insider knowledge of this program, an outside researcher would have had a challenging time utilizing this data for research purposes. Even with intricate knowledge of HEOP the data took 6 months to clean to be ready for analysis. This painstaking work included contacting HEOP directors and asking for clarifications on the reported data. This is a privilege that I was afforded that an outside researcher may not have. The raw data as originally collected would not likely yield any reliable results; extreme caution should be used if reporting data without substantial time taken to clean the data that is reported.

NYSED should seek to develop a secure electronic web-based information reporting and analysis system that can accurately track HEOP students across multiple years and transfers between HEOP institutions. The system should also be able to monitor academic progress with fidelity. If NYSED continues to use spreadsheets for the collection of data, it should consider reducing the number of fields for data collection for pertinent demographic data and move to narrative forms to collect extraneous data that cannot be accurately captured qualitatively without a robust reporting system.

Also, many of the regression models were not statistically significant. This is due to other services and variables that were not captured that may influence GPA and graduation. Whether students are screened, pre-tested, and post-tested is not currently captured in the data, but these are listed as essential services within the current HEOP Request for Proposals

that act as a set of guidelines for colleges and universities that have HEOP on their campuses. With a robust information reporting system this data could be readily available and usable for analysis purposes.

Recommendations for Further Research

For any researcher looking to pick up the mantle of where this project leaves off, the following pages outline a few recommendations for further research. Unfortunately, for this project I did not have access to non-HEOP student data. It would have been beneficial to examine not just how Black men did in comparison to their peers in HEOP but how they performed in comparison to Black men who were not in HEOP. Having the data for comparison would shed more light and detail as to whether there is a true benefit of the services provided by HEOP in comparison to the Black males who are not afforded these services. It may be of interest for a future researcher to perform this research with a select group of campuses where they could gain access to campus data as well as HEOP performance data.

The original intent of this project was to include not just HEOP data but to include data from SUNY's EOP and CUNY's SEEK and CD programs. Gaining access to this type of data would have been painstaking and difficult. I would have also run into the issue of accessing data between the three sectors that might not be readily comparable. This might have been the case given how these sets may have been collected utilizing different formats. It may, however, be of interest for a future researcher to repeat this study at one of the public sector opportunity programs. It would be interesting to see whether there are differences in student perspectives and whether greater availability of data collected by the public sector programs would yield statistically significant results.

For future studies it would be helpful to interview Black female HEOP students, and Black male students who attend EOP and SEEK programs at SUNY and CUNY institutions. It would also be of interested to compare the data to Black male students are not in HEOP but are only race-centered programs to compare their campus experiences. This information is not found in this study but could be a great future study.

Other researchers may consider whether to repeat this study with other racial and gender groups within HEOP or other opportunity programs. It would be interesting to know the perspectives of those racial and gendered groups that make up the minority of these programs, for example, whether they felt the program met their racial and gendered needs would be of significance too.

Another possible research project would be a qualitative study of HEOP programs, focusing on how HEOP staff understand Black male students' needs and try to meet them. This project could gain insights from the HEOP staff perspective on interacting with Black male students and the types of resources they believe are important to meet the needs of Black male students.

The last recommended area for further research would be a qualitative analysis of the HEOP faculty and staff and admissions officers at the institutions that have HEOP. It would be curious to know what the process is for selecting HEOP students beyond meeting the state requirements of income and academic eligibility. The purpose of such a project would be to see if race-neutral programs can really be a proxy for race by targeting other criteria or whether HEOP is truly a race-blind admission process. Are admissions officers purposely targeting specific high schools, or demographic regions for recruitment where there are a larger percentage of Black and Latino students? For example, are American Indian or Native

students purposely not targeted or is it just by chance due to population and applications received by the colleges and universities?

Concluding Remarks

How well does the New York HEOP work for Black men? It appears that for those Black men who are participants—where they are a part of programs that foster community, racial identity affirmation, identify affirmation in being a HEOP student— and were provided culturally responsive academic services, the program works quite well. As previously stated, HEOP appeared to be a de facto racially targeted program. While it did not officially target students by race, it targeted race in practice. As a result, Black male students received the racial support services that are necessary for their academic progress. While gender was in the background for the participants, it would still be wise to provide gendered related services for Black male participants. As recently as 2021, reports have come out about the drop in male enrollment overall (Smith, 2021). The trend has been happening over the last decade. However, the gap significantly widened in 2020 the same year of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is likely that Black males will be the most affected by this phenomenon. Having purposeful gendered related support services within race-neutral programs that foster academic success can help to keep Black men enrolled, retained, and graduated in college whether in race-target programs or programs that proxy for race.

Using an Anti-racist framework for this study leads to the question: Can a race-neutral education opportunity program serve Black men well? The simple answer is yes. However, there are some important caveats. It is likely that having race-targeted programs will be phased out in favor for race-neutral programs that use proxies for race. Whether a program targets for race or not having crucial racial and gendered support services, creating environments that foster community, and the promotion of Black excellence even within

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race-neutral programs will be critical to the success of Black men. Kendi (2019) posits that "there is no neutrality in the racism struggle. The opposite of 'racist' is not 'not racist.' It is 'anti-racist' (p.9)." While his sentiment may be valid the reality is that it is likely that race-neutrality will be favored. Therefore, it will be important that while policy and programs will favor race-neutrality in practice purposeful race-targeting support and resources must continue to exist to provide the necessary support services for Black men. HEOP appears to be doing just this. In policy it is race-neutral but in practice there is purposeful targeting ensuring that the resources and the needs of Black men are met.

Lastly, while it is important to continue to push for policies and practices that are race specific within predominately White spaces, it is equally or more important for Black men to create spaces and pipelines for younger Black men. These may be outside of the traditional academic pipelines that are just for Black men. A fitting example of this is the X for Boys organization which operates at a 501(c)3 with a mission to teach young Black men valuable skills and resources that enable them to be contributors in their communities. Thus, cyclical pipelines of success are created. X for Boys plans to open a school called the "X" for Boys Life Preparatory School in the Fall of 2022. The existing "X" organization already claims to offer its participants support to have a dramatic increase in academic performance as well as providing them with technical skills like automotive repair that go beyond academics (Boys, n.d.). Examples like this "X" school promote ideas of Black excellence. These types of programs and schools will become even more important as race-neutrality gains favorable outcomes in predominately White spaces.

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APPENDIX A

HEOP INCOME ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
2015-16 THROUGH 2019-2020

# of Household Dependents	2015-2016 Eligible Income	2016-2017 Eligible Income	2017-2018 Eligible Income	2018-2019** Eligible Income	2019-2020 Eligible Income
1	$21,755	$21,978	$22,311	$22,311	$22,459
2	$29,471	$29,637	$30,044	$30,044	$30,451
3	$37,167	$37,296	$37,777	$37,777	$38,443
4	$44,863	$44,955	$45,510	$45,510	$46,435
5	$52,559	$52,614	$53,243	$53,243	$54,427
6	$60,255	$60,273	$60,976	$60,976	$62,419
7	$67,951	$67,951	$68,709	$68,709	$70,411
8	$75,647	$75,647	$76,442	$76,442	$78,403

*For 2019-20, add $7,992 for each additional family member in excess of 8.

**The Income Eligibility Levels for 2018-19 remained the same as the previous year (2017-18)

SCREENING TOOL FOR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH STUDY

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Researcher(s):   Michael A. DeJesus, III; Doctoral Candidate

Faculty Chair: Kathryn McDermott, Ph.D.; Professor & Chair

Study Title: Comparing Black Male Success in the Higher Education Opportunity

Program: Expounding on the Secondary Data Analysis with Qualitative

Interviews

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research study. Before you officially enroll in this research study, I will be asking you to complete a screening questionnaire. It should take you no more than 5 minutes to complete. If you are determined ineligible to participate, your completed questionnaire will be destroyed. If you are determined eligible to participate, the completed questionnaire will become part of the study materials, and we will protect your information as confidential and safeguard it from unauthorized disclosure. Only research personnel will have access to the information contained in your screening questionnaire. If the screening questionnaire indicates that you are eligible to participate, we will proceed to obtaining your written informed consent for participation in the study.

If you have any questions, please contact me at madejesu@umass.edu.

Screening Questions:

1. Are you over 18 years old?
   ☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No**

2. Do you currently identify as male?
   ☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No**

3. Do you identify as Black or African American ("Black or African American" refers to a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. For example, this includes those that identify as African American; Sub-Saharan African, such as Kenyan and Nigerian; and Afro-Caribbean such as Haitian, Dominican, and Jamaican). Please note that Black" includes people who emigrated to the US in recent decades regardless of ethnicity (i.e., Hispanic or Latino).

4. Are you currently enrolled and matriculated in a private college or university in the state of New York?
☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No**

5. **If so, which one?** _____

6. Are your currently enrolled in the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) at your college or university?
☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No**   ☐ **Not Sure**

7. I agree to be audio recorded during the interview.
☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No**

8. I agree that the researcher may use direct quotes from the audio recorded interview (please note that you may choose to use a pseudonym in lieu of your name and will be quoted as such your actual name will not be used if quoted).
☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No**

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH STUDY

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Researcher(s):   Michael A. DeJesus, III; Doctoral Candidate

Faculty Chair: Kathryn McDermott, Ph.D.; Professor & Chair

Study Title: Comparing Black Male Success in the Higher Education Opportunity Program: Expounding on the Secondary Data Analysis with Qualitative Interview

1. What is this form?

This is a consent form. It will give you information about this study, so you can make an informed decision about participation in this research. I am a doctoral candidate, who identifies as a Black male, at the University of Massachusetts – Amherst in the College of Education. This study is a part of my dissertation research, which is a requirement for graduation.

2. Who is eligible to participate?

You are invited to participate in my research study about the experiences of Black male college students enrolled in New York State's Higher Education Opportunity Program. You are being selected to participate in this study because you identify as a Black male, are at least 18 years old, are a New York State resident, are enrolled in a private New York state college or university, and you are a student participating in the New York State Education Department's Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) at your college or university.

Please note subjects must be at least 18 years old to participate.

3. What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to learn about the experiences of Black male students in New York's Higher Education Opportunity Program.

4. Where will this study take place and how long will it last?

If you agree to take part of this study, your participation will consist of 45 minutes to one-hour long interview. Interviews will be conducted, and audio recorded remotely via Zoom. You will need to have access to a reliable internet connection, a quiet space, and preferable a mic and headset. You may be asked to volunteer for a follow-up interview in the event it has been determined that there are issues with the audio recording from the original interview. Such issues maybe but not limited to corrupted audio file, distorted/choppy audio, low

recording volume, and/or background noise. Participation in a follow-up interview is voluntary and you may opt to not participate. You may stop participation at any time during any the interview.

5. What will I be asked to do?

In the interview, I will ask you questions about your experience as a Black male in the New York State Higher Education Opportunity Program, aspects of the program that you feel help your college success. For example, you may be asked questions about the types of academic support you have received while participating in HEOP.

6. What are my benefits of being in this study?

While you may not directly benefit from your participation in this research, your participation may help contribute to the existing body of knowledge and best practices on education opportunity programs. Participation may also help you foster connections with other students.

7. What are my risk for participating in this study?

There is no known or foreseen physical, emotional, or social risk associated with your participation in this study. The following are possible inconveniences:

- Time taken from your schedule.
- Possible discomfort with topics discussed in the interview (please note that all questions are voluntary, and participants may opt not to answer questions asked).
- Additionally, the researcher will make every reasonable effort to maintain the confidentiality of data obtained from participants. However, a data breach is always possible.

8. How will my personal information be protected?

The following procedures will be used to protect the confidentiality of the participants:

Interviews will be audio recorded via Zoom. The use of audio recording is for data analysis purposes and direct quotations. All audio files will be stored in secure, password protected account. All files will be destroyed three years after the conclusion of the study. Audio files will be transcribed via Zoom. Transcripts will be kept in secure; password protect data storage. Please note that direct quotes will be used from interviews. However, your name will not be used and will be protected using pseudonyms. You have the right to choose the pseudonym used during the interview. Please be aware that the findings of this research may be published in academic journals and/or presented at conferences. Your identity will be kept confidential and will not be shared in any publications and/or conferences.

10. What if I have questions?

Please take time contemplate before you decide as to whether you participate. I will be happy to answer any question you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have an issue related to this research, you may contact me by email at madejesu@umass.edu, by phone or text at 347.845.5229. You can also contact my faculty sponsor Dr. Kathryn McDermott at mcdermott@educ.umass.edu for questions related to this research.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at (413) 545-3428 or humansubjects@ora.umass.edu.

11. Can I stop participating in this study at any time?

Please be reminded that your participation in this study is voluntary. You can choose not to answer any question with which you are uncomfortable. You may opt out of this study at any time. If you agree to be in the study, but change your mind later, you may still opt out. There are no negative consequences if you decide that you no longer want to participate.

12. What if I am injured during this study?

The University of Massachusetts does not have a program for compensating subjects for injury or complications related to human subjects' research. However, in the event of a medical emergency 911 will be called.

13. Subject statement of voluntary consent:

When signing this form, I am agreeing to voluntarily enter this study. I have had a chance to read this consent form, and it was explained to me in a language which I use and understand. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers. I understand that I can withdraw at any time. A copy of this signed Informed Consent Form has been given to me.

Please check and indicate consent by checking the boxes, signing, and dating below.

By signing this consent form, you indicate that you voluntarily choose to be in this research and agree to allow your information to be used and shared as described above.

_____   _____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date   Printed Name

☐ **I consent to be audio recorded during the Zoom interview**

☐ **I do not consent to be audio recorded during the Zoom interview**

☐ **I agree to be contacted for a follow-up interview in the event it has been determined that there was an issue with the original audio recording and have this follow-up**

interview audio recorded. My preferred method of contact is by (<u>chose only one option below</u>):

- **phone** _____

or

- **email**_____

By signing below, I indicate that the participant has read and, to the best of my knowledge, understands the details contained in this document and has been given a copy.

_____   _____   _____

Signature of Person   Print Name: Date:

Obtaining Consent

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE E-MAIL TO HEOP DIRECTORS

Dear _____,

I am seeking to interview Black male students who participate in the Higher Education

Opportunity Program. I am reaching out to see if you would be able to assist me in

connecting with your students who may be interested in being interviewed for my research.

Students who are interested can email me at madejesu@umass.edu.

If the students or you have any questions regarding my research, please feel free to contact

me at madejesu@umass.edu. Interested students will be screened for eligibility and must sign

a consent for before participating. This research is approved by and will be done in

accordance with the University of Massachusetts - Amherst Institutional Review Board.

Thank you for your help!

Best,

Mike

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. Student Introductions

- o Please tell me a little about yourself (name, college, major, class year, and hometown).

1. How did you decide to apply to and enroll at your college?

2. Can you tell me how you were introduced to HEOP?

   a) How did you find out you were eligible for HEOP?

   b) How did you manage and navigate the application process?

B. Black Male HEOP Student Experience

1. First, I am going to ask you to tell me about your experiences at your college/university. Where do you see yourself fitting in on your campus?

2. Can you describe a challenge that you have experienced as Black male on campus?

   a) Can you provide examples of these challenges?

   b) Who helped you overcome these challenges and how?

   c) Has HEOP been involved or not with overcoming these challenges and can you describe how? (i.e., resources like tutoring, counseling, summer program)

3. Do you think you have received enough financial aid, and have you encountered any financial hurdles attending college?

   a) Are you worried about college debt?

   b) Who has helped you resolve those challenges, if so, in what way?

c) Has HEOP been involved?

4. Are there other resources on campus that support Black men? What are they?

5. Has HEOP supported your identity as a Black male? If so, how?

6. What types of relationships, if any, have you formed with other Black males in HEOP?

   a) Does HEOP help facilitate those relationships?

7. What types of relationships, if any, have you formed with other Black males outside of HEOP?

   a) Do you belong to any Black male specific clubs, organizations, or fraternities?

   b) Does HEOP help facilitate those relationships?

8. What sorts of relationships have you formed with other students outside of your race and gender identities?

   a) How did you develop those relationships?

   b) Are there organizations that help facilitate these relationships? ("I noticed that you did/did not mention [whatever HEOP is called on the campus]). Did HEOP play a role?

   c) Is there something about [whatever HEOP is called on the campus] that makes it particularly helpful/not helpful at facilitating relationships among Black men?)

9. Is there anything you would like to share about your experience in HEOP that I have not asked about?

Are there other sources of support that we have not discussed that I as researcher should understand about your experience as a Black male college student?

APPENDIX F

REGRESSION MODELS YIELDING STATISTICALLY NON-SIGNIFICANT

RESULTS AND ALTERNATIVE LOGIT REGRESSIONS FOR LPM MODELS

Research Question 1. To what extent does HEOP academic support services impact

Black male students' academic outcomes?

Regression analysis was performed by using a Linear Probability Model (LPM) to

analyze students who were reported as graduated between 2014-2019. To be able to track

the same student over a series of time fixed effects were applied to the regression model

using the student ID variable. To evaluate the robustness of the results a logit models

were also used to examine the sensitivity of the results to the choice of analysis models

obtaining the same conclusions.

For testing the main hypothesis of the regression models I use the following
equation[5]:

$$y = \beta 0 + \beta 1 \text{ (tutoring)}s + \beta 2 \text{ (Black males)}s$$
$$+ \beta 3 \text{ (interaction betwteen tutoring and Black males)}s$$
$$+ \beta 4 \text{ (Counseling)}s$$
$$+ \beta 5 \text{ (interaction between counseling and Black males)}s + \in s$$

Whereas the outcome may be the continuous variable 'GPA' or the dummy variable

'GraduatedYN' and 's' is the fixed effect using student IDs. This is the equation of the

full model (model 5). However, several variations are presented in Table F.1.

---

[5]For the logit equations whereas y = 'GraduateYN', the equation
$$y(LN(O/1 - O)) = \beta 0 + \beta 1 \text{ (tutoring)}s + \beta 2 \text{ (Black males)}s + \beta 3 \text{ (interaction betwteen tutoring and Black males)}s$$
$$+ \beta 4 \text{ (Counseling)}s + \beta 5 \text{ (interaction between counseling and Black males)}s + \in s$$

It is important to note that the controls are limited because of the limitation of available data within the dataset. The coefficient of interest is the interaction between Black males and tutoring (TutorBlackM). This is because the significance of this coefficient implies a differential effect of tutoring over Black males. The controls are overall tutoring (TutoredYN), being a Black male (BlackMale), receiving counseling (CounseledYN). The interaction of receiving counseling as a Black male (CounselBlackM) is important because most of the students get counseling so I ensured that effect is captured. The other regressions capture the individual effect of any student being tutored, the effect of being tutored given a Black male, the effect of counseling over any student, the effect of being counseled being a Black male.

The results indicate from Table F.1 that HEOP students who have received tutoring and/or counseling are less likely to graduate. This may also indicate that students who are less likely to graduate are the participants to receive tutoring and/or counseling. Without further exploration it is not possible to rule out an unknown variable that may be impacting the reduction in graduation for students receiving tutoring and/or counseling. The R^2 for the regressions models for graduation were less than or equal to 3%. This shows that only 3% or less of the variation in graduation can be explained by tutoring or counseling services rendered.

The results differ for Black male graduates who have received tutoring and/or counseling. These results are not statistically significant and therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. These results for graduation are presented in terms of the marginal effect each independent variable has on the probability of impacting graduation.

Model 1 examines the relationship between students that received tutoring and graduating. The results in model 1 indicate that receiving tutoring is statistically significant at the 1% confidence level. Receiving tutoring reduced the probability of students graduating by 0.155, with a confidence interval of -0.174 to -0.136. The selection effect may also indicate that students who are less likely to graduate are most likely to be the participants to receive tutoring.

Model 2 examines the relationship between students that received tutoring and graduating, Black males and graduating, and Black males that received tutoring and graduating. The results in model 2 indicate that receiving tutoring is statistically significant at the 1% confidence level. The coefficient on tutoring is -0.160 (CI -0.179 - -0.139), indicating that receiving tutoring reduced the probability of graduating by 0.160. The coefficient on the dummy variable representing Black males was 0.042 (CI -0.035 - 0.118) and 0.037 (-0.017 - 0.091) for Black males that received tutoring; exhibiting a result that is not statistically significant.

Model 3 examines the relationship between counseling and graduating. The results in model 3 indicated that counseling is statistically significant at the 1% confidence interval. The coefficient on counseling is -0.151 (CI -0.244 - -0.058), indicating the probability of students graduating reduces by 0.151 for students that received counseling. The R^2 for this model is 0.001 and can only explain a 0.1% of the variance of the dependent

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variable[6]. This makes sense given that there are many other independent variables likely needed to explain more of the variance.

Model 4 examines the relationship between counseling and graduating, Black males and graduating, and Black males that received counseling and graduating. The results in model 4 indicate that counseling is statistically significant at the 1% confidence interval. The coefficient on counseling is -0.148 indicating that receiving tutoring reduced the probability of graduating by 0.148. The coefficient for the dummy variable for Black male and for the interaction variable Black males that received counseling produced a result that was not statistically significant, therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The R^2 for this model is 0.001 and can only explain a 0.1% of the variance of the dependent variable. 5

Model 5 examines the relationship between both counseling and tutoring and graduating. The predictors counseling (p<0.01) and tutoring (p<0.05) had a significant correlation with graduation as seen in model 5. The coefficient on tutoring is 0.158 (CI -0.178 - -0.138), indicating that the probability of graduating decreases by 0.158 for tutoring services rendered. The coefficient for counseling is -0.114 (CI -0.21 - -0.017), indicating that the probability of graduating decreases by 0.114 for counseling services rendered. The results for the dummy variable representing Black males showed no statistical significance. Likewise, there was no statistical significance for Black males that received tutoring and/or counseling services, therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

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[6] This is likely due to mostly all students in HEOP receiving counseling

Table F. 1 Regression Models on Graduation Variable

	Models				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
VARIABLES	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**
TutoredYN	-0.155***	-0.160***			-0.158***
	-0.00961	-0.0103			-0.0104
BlackMale		0.0416		0.0772	0.056
		-0.0391		-0.168	-0.166
TutorBlackM		0.037			0.0335
		-0.0278			-0.0279
CounselingYN			-0.151***	-0.148***	-0.114**
			-0.0475	-0.05	-0.0494
CounselBlackM				-0.0119	-0.0126
				-0.164	-0.162
Constant	0.265***	0.259***	0.328***	0.316***	0.372***
	-0.00608	-0.00816	-0.0472	-0.05	-0.0494
Observations	18,803	18,752	18,614	18,563	18,563
R-squared	0.027	0.027	0.001	0.001	0.027
Number of StudentID	9,230	9,221	9,102	9,093	9,093

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table F. 2 Logit Models Examining Sensitivity of Regression Models in Table F.1

	Models				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
VARIABLES	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**
TutoredYN	-1.186***	-1.225***			-1.221***
	-0.0749	-0.0811			-0.0815
BlackMale		0.32		0.4	0.155
		-0.285		-0.871	-0.912
TutorBlackM		0.337			0.305
		-0.206			-0.209
CounselingYN			-0.754***	-0.759***	-0.648**
			-0.269	-0.287	-0.293
CounselBlackM				0.167	0.176
				-0.826	-0.868
Observations	6,824	6,781	6,763	6,720	6,720
Number of StudentID	2,329	2,317	2,313	2,301	2,301
Standard errors in parentheses					
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1					

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed by using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) to analyze students' GPA between 2014-2019. To be able to track the same student over a series of time fixed effects were applied to the regression model using the student ID variable.

The results for Table F.3 indicate that HEOP students who have received tutoring exhibit lower GPA scores. This may also indicate that students who exhibit lower GPAs are more likely to receive tutoring. However, causation cannot be inferred without further exploration. An unknown variable may be impacting the reduction in GPA for students receiving tutoring and cannot be ruled out. The regression results were not statistically significant for Black males who have received tutoring and/or counseling therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The R^2 for all the GPA regressions are 0.3% or less and indicates that only 0.3% or less of the variation in the dependent variable be explained by these models. These results for GPA are presented in terms of the effect each independent variable has on the likelihood of impacting GPA.

Model 1 examines the relationship between GPA and receiving tutoring for all HEOP students. The results in model 1 indicate that tutoring is statistically significant at the 1% level. The coefficient on tutoring is -0.024 (CI -0.326 - -0.147), there is an associated decrease in college GPA of 0.02 points if a person was tutored.

Model 2 examines the relationship between tutoring and GPA, GPA and Black students, and Black male students that received tutoring and GPA. The results for model 2 show that tutoring is statistically significant at the 1% level. The coefficient on tutoring is -0.022 (CI -0.316 - -0.0123), indicating that there is an associated decrease in college GPA of 0.02 points if a person was tutored. The predictors, the

dummy variable for Black men and the interaction variable for Black men who received tutoring is shown to be not significant and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Model 3 examines the relationship between receiving counseling and GPA. The results for model 3 show that the predictor variable counseling is not statistically significant. The coefficient for counseling is -0.027 (CI -0.718 - 0.186). The R^2 for this model is 0 and cannot explain the variance between the dependent variable.

Model 4 examines the relationship between counseling and GPA, Black males and GPA, and Black males receiving counseling and GPA. The results for model 5 show that the results are not statistically significant counseling, the dummy variable Black males, or for the interaction variable representing Black males that received counseling. The R^2 for this model is 0 and cannot explain the variance between the dependent variable.

Model 5 examines the relationship between Black men that received tutoring and counseling and GPA. The results for model 5 show that tutoring is statistically significant at 1% level. The coefficient for tutoring is -0.022, indicating that for every there is an associated decrease in college GPA of 0.02 points if a person was tutored. The predictors for the dummy variable Black Male, the interaction variable indicating Black males that have received tutoring, counseling, and the interaction variable representing Black males that received Counseling all were not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis for these predictors cannot be rejected.

Table F. 3 Regression Models on GPA Variable

	Models				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
VARIABLES	**GPA**	**GPA**	**GPA**	**GPA**	**GPA**
TutoredYN	-0.0237***	-0.0220***			-0.0217***
	-0.00457	-0.00493			-0.00494
BlackMale		0.00413		-0.0777	-0.0757
		-0.0189		-0.0826	-0.0826
TutorBlackM		-0.0151			-0.0143
		-0.0131			-0.0132
CounselingYN			-0.0266	-0.0329	-0.0283
			-0.0231	-0.0242	-0.0242
CounselBlackM				0.0744	0.0794
				-0.0807	-0.0807
Constant	2.824***	2.823***	2.839***	2.845***	2.853***
	-0.00289	-0.00392	-0.023	-0.0242	-0.0243
Observations	19,770	19,719	19,581	19,530	19,530
R-squared	0.003	0.003	0	0	0.003
Number of StudentID	9,488	9,479	9,360	9,351	9,351

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Model 1 examines the examines the probability of Black males graduating who received tutoring in comparison to Black females. To run the regression, the dummy variable Black was used as a control variable limiting the population of the model to only Black students (N=6,436). The dummy variable gender represents Black males in this model. An interaction variable 'TutoredM' was created to represent all males that have been tutored. In this model 'TutoredM' represents Black male students that have received tutoring services. The result for tutoring is statistically significant at the 1% level. The coefficient for tutoring is –0.164 with a confidence interval of -0.205 to -0.123, indicating that the probability of a Black student graduating decreases by 0.164 for tutoring services rendered. It cannot be determined from this model whether Black male students receive a marginal benefit from tutoring in comparison to Black female students. The coefficients for gender (indicating Black men) in this model and the interaction variable between tutoring and gender are not statistically significant and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Model 2 examines the probability of Black males graduating who received tutoring in comparison to non-Black males (N=7,320). To run the regression for this model, the variable 'Gender' was used as a control variable limited the population to this model to just males. The dummy variable 'Black' in this model represents Black males. The interaction variable 'TutorBlackM' represents Black male students that have received tutoring. The result for tutoring is statistically significant at the 1% level. The results for the interaction variable representing Black men who received tutoring is statistically significant at the 5% level. The coefficient for tutoring in this model is –0.173 with a confidence interval of -0.208 to –0.137, indicating that the probability of non-Black men graduating reduces by 0.173 for tutoring services rendered. The coefficient for the interaction between tutoring and Black males is

0.672, indicating that the probability of Black men graduating increases by 0.672 in comparison to non-Black male students who were tutored. The coefficients for the variable Black (indicating Black men) in this model are not statistically significant.

Model 3 examines the probability of Black male students graduating that received counseling services in comparison to Black females. To run the regression, the dummy variable Black was used as a control variable limiting the population of the model to only Black students (N=6,378). The results shown in Table 3 that the none of the predictor variables counseling, gender, or the interaction variable between counseling and gender are statistically significant, and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Model 4 for examines the probability of Black male graduating that received counseling in comparison to non-Black males. To run the regression for this model, the variable Gender was used as a control variable limiting the population in this model to just males (N=7,237). The dummy variable Black in this model represents Black males. The results from show that the predictor variables counseling, gender and the interaction variable between counseling and gender are not statistically significant, and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Model 5 examines the probability of Black male students graduating that received tutoring and counseling services in comparison to Black female students. To run the regression, the dummy variable Black was used as a control variable limiting the population of the model to only Black students (N=6,379). The result for tutoring is significant at the 1% level. The coefficient is -0.164 (CI -0.205 - -0.123), indicating that the probability of graduating decreases by 0.164 for Black students that received tutoring. The predictor variables representing counseling and the interaction variable between counseling and gender were not statistically significant and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Model 6 examines the probability of Black male students graduating that received counseling services in comparison to non-Black male students. To run the regression, the dummy variable Gender was used as a control variable limiting the population of the model to only male students (N=7,237). The result for tutoring is statistically significantly at the 1% level. The coefficient for tutoring is -0.171, indicating that the probability of graduating decreases by 0.171 for non-Black men that receive tutoring. The results for the interaction variable between tutoring and Black males are significant at the 5% level. The coefficient for the interaction between tutoring and Black males is 0.648, indicating that the probability of Black men graduating that are tutored increases by 0.648 in comparison to non-Black male students. The coefficients for the dummy variable Black, counseling, the variable representing the interaction between counseling and gender, and the interaction variable between counseling and black are all not statistically significant, therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Table F. 4 Logit Models Examining Sensitivity of Regression Models in Table 4.10

	Models					
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
VARIABLES	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**	**GraduatedYN**
TutoredYN	-1.250***	-1.384***			-1.260***	-1.377***
	-0.168	-0.155			-0.169	-0.155
Black		0.258		0.963		
		-0.422		-1.109		
TutorBlackM		0.599**				0.570**
		-0.248				-0.251
o.Black		-				
Gender	0.208		1.125			
	-0.402		-1.083			
TutorGenderM	0.349				0.333	
	-0.256				-0.26	
CounselingYN			0	-0.198	-0.148	-0.246
			-0.643	-0.684	-0.517	-0.563
CounseledGenderM			-0.592		0.111	
			-1.007		-0.373	
CounselBlackM				-0.395		0.164
				-1.034		-0.391
Observations	2,080	2,365	2,046	2,335	2,046	2,335
Number of StudentID	722	814	713	806	713	806

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Additional Regression Model for Comparing the GPAs of Black Males to Black Females and Non-Black Males

Multiple regression analysis was performed by using an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) to examine relationship between predictor variables tutoring and counseling with GPA. OLS regression is used here as the preferred model given that the outcome variable 'GPA' is continuous. The results were compared with Black female students and non-Black male students in HEOP from 2014-2019 in comparison to Black male students. To be able to track the same student over a series of time fixed effects were applied to the regression model using the student ID variable.

The results for Table F.5 indicate that Black HEOP students who have received tutoring exhibit lower GPA scores as seen in model 2 and model 6. This may also indicate that students who exhibit lower GPAs are more likely to receive tutoring. However, causation cannot be inferred without further exploration. An unknown variable may be impacting the reduction in GPA for students receiving tutoring and cannot be ruled out. The regression models for tutoring comparing Black males to Black females and Black males to non-Black males are all not statistically significant. The models examining counseling services are all not statistically significant. The null hypothesis for these models cannot be rejected. The R^2 for these models can only explain 0.7% or less of the variance between the dependent variable.

Model 1 examines the relationship between tutoring and GPA for male students. The model compares the GPA outcomes of Black males who received tutoring to non-Black males (N=7,696). To run the regression for this model, the variable Gender was used as a control variable limited the population to this model to just males. The dummy

variable Black in this model represents Black males. The interaction variable which represents Black male students that have received tutoring. None of the results in this model was statistically significant the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Model 2 examines the relationship between tutoring and GPA for Black students. The model compares the GPA outcomes of Black males who received tutoring to Black female students (N=6,817). To run the regression for this model, the variable Black was used as a control variable limited the population to this model to just Black students. The results indicate that the tutoring in this model is statistically significant at the 1% level. The coefficient for tutoring is -0.036 (CI (-0.057 - -0.016), indicating that the GPA for Black students decreases by 0.036 points for Black students that receive tutoring services. The results for the dummy variable Gender representing Black males in this model and the interaction variable between tutoring and gender representing Black males that received tutoring are both not statistically significant.

Model 3 examines the relationship between counseling and GPA for male students. The model compares the GPA outcomes of Black males who received counseling to non-Black male students. To run the regression for this model, the variable Gender was used as a control variable limited the population to this model to just males. The results for this model are not statistically significant and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Model 4 examines the relationship between counseling and GPA for Black students. The model compares the GPA outcomes of Black males who received counseling to Black female students. To run the regression for this model, the variable Black was used as a

control variable limited the population to this model to just Black students. The results for this model are not statistically significant and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Model 5 examines the relationship between receiving both counseling and tutoring and GPA for male students. The model compares the GPA outcomes of Black males who received tutoring and counseling to non-Black male students. To run the regression for this model, the variable Gender was used as a control variable limiting the population of this model to just males. The results for this model are not statistically significant and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Model 6 examines the relationship between receiving both counseling and tutoring and GPA for Black students. The model compares the GPA outcomes of Black males who received tutoring and counseling to Black female students. To run the regressions for this model, the variable Black was used as a control variable limiting this model to just Black students. The results for tutoring are significant at the 1% level. The coefficient for tutoring is -0.037 (CI -0.058 - -0.017), indicating that the GPA for Black students decreases by 0.037 points for Black students that receive tutoring services. The results for the dummy variables Black and Gender, the interaction variables representing the interaction between tutoring and Black, counseling, and Black, tutoring and Gender, counseling and gender, and counseling were all not statistically significant, therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Table F. 5 Regression Models for GPA Comparing Black Males to Black Females and Non-Black Males

	Models					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
VARIABLES	**GPA**	**GPA**	**GPA**	**GPA**	**GPA**	**GPA**
TutoredYN	-0.0143	-0.0366***			-0.0133	-0.0374***
	-0.00921	-0.0103			-0.00925	-0.0103
Black	0.00153		-0.0781			
	-0.0291		-0.1			
TutorBlackM	-0.0188				-0.0189	
	-0.0157				-0.0158	
Gender		-0.0019		0.00694		
		-0.025		-0.0991		
TutorGenderM		-0.00098				0.00105
		-0.0161				-0.0162
CounselingYN			-0.0286	0.0518	-0.000635	0.0589
			-0.0568	-0.057	-0.047	-0.0466
CounselBlackM			0.0701		0.00711	
			-0.0965		-0.028	
CounseledGenderM				-0.0102		-0.00331
				-0.0962		-0.0243
Constant	2.705***	2.731***	2.726***	2.660***	2.704***	2.675***
	-0.0113	-0.0113	-0.0575	-0.0576	-0.0457	-0.0456
Observations	7,696	6,817	7,612	6,732	7,612	6,733
R-squared	0.002	0.006	0	0	0.002	0.007
Number of StudentID	3,849	3,476	3,793	3,421	3,793	3,422

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Explanation of Linear Probability Model (LPM) Models in Table 4.11

Model 1 examines the relationship between persisting to graduation and tutoring. Table 4.9 shows that the predictor variable representing tutoring is statistically significant at the 10% level. The coefficient for the tutoring variable is 0.019 (CI -0.000 - 0.038), indicating that the probability of persisting to graduation increases by 0.019 for tutoring services rendered. The variable representing Black males are also statistically significant at the 1% level. The coefficient for the variable representing Black males is -0.076 (CI -0.111 - -0.041), indicating that being a Black male decreases the probability of persisting to graduating by 0.076. The variable representing Cohort 1 is also statistically significant at the 1% level. The coefficient for the variable representing Cohort 1 is -0.056, indicating that being in Cohort 1 reduces the probability of persisting to graduation by 0.056 in comparison with Cohort 0. The variables representing the interaction between Black males and tutoring, Black males and counseling, and counseling are all not statistically significant.

Model 2 examines the relationship between persisting to graduation and counseling. The model shows that the predictor variable counseling is not statistically significant. The variables representing Black males, Black males that have received tutoring, and Black males that have received counseling are all also not statistically significant. The model echoes model 1 and shows that being in Cohort 1 reduces the probability of persisting to graduation by 0.543 in comparison to Cohort 0. The variable representing Cohort 1 is statistically significant at the 1% level. The coefficient for this variable is -0.543 (CI -0.071 - -0.0358).

Model 3 examines the relationship between persisting to graduation and receiving both tutoring and counseling. The Table 5 shows that the variable representing Cohort 1 is statistically

significant at the 1% level. The coefficient for this variable is -0.055 (CI -0.073 - -.0370), indicating that being in Cohort 1 reduces the probability of persisting to graduation by 0.055 in comparison to Cohort 0. None of the other variables in this model are statistically significant and the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

Table F. 6 Logit Models Examining Sensitivity of Regression Models in Table 4.11

VARIABLES	Models		
	1 **PersistToGradYN**	**2** **PersistToGradYN**	**3** **PersistToGradYN**
TutoredYN	0.0932*		0.0436
	-0.0476		-0.048
BlackMale	-0.344***	0.504	0.505
	-0.0819	-0.685	-0.686
TutorBlackM	0.000568		0.00374
	-0.119		-0.121
1.Cohort	-0.266***	-0.258***	-0.265***
	-0.0439	-0.0437	-0.0444
CounselingYN		0.062	0.0549
		-0.244	-0.244
CounselBlackM		-0.849	-0.853
		-0.688	-0.689
Constant	0.976***	0.980***	0.970***
	-0.0352	-0.243	-0.243
Observations	10,416	10,311	10,311

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1