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African American Male Students' Perceptions of the Community College Experience in Rural Louisiana and How It Influences Graduation and Retention Rates

Aaron Jagers

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African American male students' perceptions of the community college experience in rural Louisiana and how it influences graduation and retention rates

By

Aaron Jagers

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Community College Leadership
in the Department of Education

Mississippi State, Mississippi

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Aaron Jagers

2017

African American male students' perceptions of the community college experience in
rural Louisiana and how it influences graduation and retention rates

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This quantitative study explored the obstacles African American male students face that can hinder their academic progress at community colleges within the rural regions of Louisiana. This study viewed the collective experiences of African American males in community colleges in order to improve their academic outcomes, completion, and retention rates. This study also explored the African American male's educational experiences and the personal and academic obstacles they faced as students in the community college environment. This study used a research design that collected data from African American male students in two rural Louisiana community colleges. This study utilized a survey as the means to collect data. The dependent variables in this study were age, first-generation college student status, academic goal, and full-time or part-time job status. The independent variables were institutional factors that affect students' completion rates, role of relationships with instructors, and impediments to social engagement in the community college environment. There were 100 African American male students who participated in the survey. The survey included 25 questions. There were 4 questions that measure participants' demographics. The demographics being measured were age range,

first-generation college student status, academic goal, and job status. There were 7 questions that measured the institutional factors that may affect completion rates. There were 9 questions that measured the experiences with faculty. There were 5 questions that measured student engagement socially and academically on campus. Answers were given based on a Likert scale or a list of responses from which to choose. Data analyses used to address the research questions include descriptive statistics for Research Questions 1-3 and one-way ANOVA for Research Question 4.

Results from this study showed a statistically significant relationship between the African American male students' demographics and institutional factors, relationship with instructors, and social engagement as a predictor for retention and graduation rates. This study provided data for community college administrators, state and federal-level policy makers, and faculty to help improve degree, diploma, and certificate attainment of African American males in community colleges.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents and my beautiful children. Aaron and Odessia Jagers, your love and encouragement guided me through this process. You are always with me every step of the way in all my endeavors. Aaron Jagers, III and Ariyanna Jina Jagers, as your father I did this for you so I can be a shining example of what can be accomplished regardless of what obstacles you may face in life. This manuscript is also respectfully dedicated to the youths who march “onward and upward towards the light.”

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

African American male students, on average, have less successful graduation and retention rates than other racial/ethnic groups, including African American women.

African-American, Hispanic, and low-income males are not keeping the pace with their female counterparts in regards to degree attainment (Naylor, Wyatt-Nichol & Brown, 2015). The experiences of African American male students can be described as a lack of academic preparation, minimal enrollment, poor retention and poor graduation rates (Hagedorn, Maxwell & Hampton, 2007). The postsecondary achievement gaps for African American males must be downsized to alleviate the negative impact that these gaps have upon the future of the U.S. economy (Treuhaft, Scroggins, & Tran, 2014).

Retention is a topic of importance for African American males in higher education. African American males have the largest dropout rate of all ethnic and gender groups (Wood, 2012). Their high attrition rates can be attributed to several factors including insufficient financial resources, low self-esteem/identity issues, and deficient academic preparation (Bush & Bush, 2010).

The community college system attracts minority and other underrepresented students (e.g., students of color, part-timers, adult reentry students, exceptional or special needs students and veterans; Nevarez & Wood, 2010). Community colleges are designed to meet the needs of the community, and African American males are an integral part of

the community (Tschechtelin, 2011). Specifically, 71% of African American males who enroll in public postsecondary education begin their academic careers in community colleges (Wood & Williams, 2013). Many institutions are struggling to reduce high departure rates among collegians (Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Gonyea & Kinzie, 2008). More specifically, the likelihood of success (e.g., persistence, achievement, graduation, or transfer) for African American males attending community colleges is low (Wood & Turner, 2010). African American males have the lowest rates of completion among any other ethnic groups at community colleges.

African American males in community college who receive some type of positive reinforcement from faculty have better chances of persisting to degree attainment (Wood & Turner, 2010). Faculty validation predicted how African American male students perceived their academic engagement and indirectly predicted their persistence at the community college. When students feel high levels of validation from their faculty members, they are more apt to stay and obtain their degrees (Barnett, 2011).

Social engagement promotes levels of academic progress and degree acquisition. High levels of social engagement increase the student's ability to persist in the collegiate setting (Tinto, 1993). Student social engagement is maintained through interactions with faculty and peers, and being involved in scholarly and social activities (Stage & Hossler, 2000). Students persist more on college campuses when they are involved in social engagement (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). For African American male students, "campus involvements and social networks provide the social and cultural capital necessary to succeed on a predominantly White or historically Black campus" (Strayhorn, 2008, p. 80). Therefore, sustained levels of involvement and networking can stimulate

African American men to successfully negotiate their higher education environments and persist toward a college degree. African American males would generally benefit from research studies conducted on retention strategies, with an emphasis on academic, social, and other forces that would enable guidance and support at the higher institutional level (Warde, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

The problem leading to this study is that African American males are leaving higher education institutions, especially community colleges, at faster rates than other ethnic groups. The success rates for African American males in the community college environment are very low. African American males have the highest attrition rates, and over time 11.5% of African American males will leave the community college before degree attainment after the first year; the rates jump to 48% after the third year and 83% after the fifth year (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Over the last 15 years, many efforts to improve the outcomes for African American males in higher education have been initiated, but little progress has been made (Harper, 2014). The African American community is confronted with numerous issues, and with many African American men not participating or succeeding at institutions of higher education, this limits the potential of these men to transform themselves and their communities. The negative outcome of low African American male success rates in higher education is decreased economic, political, social, and cultural volume to enhance the lives of all the world's citizens (Robinson, 2014).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore obstacles African American male students face that can hinder their academic progress at community colleges within the rural regions of Louisiana. The overall aim of this study was to view the collective experiences of African American males in community colleges to improve their academic outcomes, completion and retention rates. This study explored African American male's educational experiences and the personal and academic obstacles they face as students in the community college environment.

Research Questions

Four research questions guided this study.

1. What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding institutional factors that affect their completion rates per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?
2. What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding the role of relationships with instructors and the effect of academic success per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?
3. What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding impediments to social engagement in the community college environment based on the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?

To what extent are there different perceptions among African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges based on age, first-generation college student status, academic goal, and full-time or part-time job status?

Operational Definitions

1. Achievement gap refers to any significant and persistent disparity in academic performance or educational attainment between different groups of students, such as white students and minorities (Glossary of Education Reform, 2013).
2. African American is a term used to describe descendants of slaves in the United States of America who have African ancestry (Wood, 2012).
3. Community college is “a two-year degree granting institution headed by a president or chancellor; a single community college campus or multi-campus community college district; also, refers to junior and technical colleges” (Tschechtelin, 1994, p. 102).
4. Historically Black College and University (HBCUs) refers to institutions of higher learning that were founded prior to 1964 with the principal mission of educating African Americans (Cody-Mitchell, 2000).
5. “Institutional factors refer to the compositional and financial attributes of a higher education institution.” (Bailey, Calcagno, Jenkins, Leinbach, & Kienzl, 2006, p. 492).
6. Impediment is something that interferes with progress (Merriam-Webster’s dictionary, 2017).

7. Persistence is a term used interchangeably with retention to measure and to describe college students staying enrolled in college in sequential semesters until graduation (Barbatis, 2010).
8. Predominately White Institution (PWI) is the term used to describe institutions of higher learning in which Whites account for 50% or greater of the student enrollment (Lomotey, 2010).
9. Student engagement is used to describe students' participation in meaningful activities and experiences including in-class discussions, faculty-student collaborations, peer interactions, and deep active learning (Strayhorn & DeVita, 2010).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this study was the cultural-ecological theory of minority school performance. Ogbu (1990) created the cultural-ecological theory of minority school performance (CE theory), laying the foundation for decades of research to study ethnicity and race and academic achievement. Ogbu defined cultural ecology as “the study of institutionalized patterns of behavior interdependent with features of the environment” (Ogbu, 1990, p. 122). CE theory is important to this study because it provides a structure for insight on African American male beliefs and their behaviors towards education (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). For the past 20 years, Ogbu’s standpoint has dictated the minority versus nonminority educational attainment discussions (Mocombe, 2011). CE theory’s foundation allows for the study of academic achievement gaps of African American males in the community college environment.

Ogbu’s (1990) CE theory includes four important layers:

(1) the general idea that students' academic success is impacted by community forces and system forces, and that not enough attention has been paid to the ways in which community forces contribute to involuntary minority student failure; (2) the distinction of voluntary, involuntary and autonomous minorities; (3) the recognition of universal, primary and secondary discontinuities between students and the schools they attend; (4) the idea that involuntary minorities have developed survival strategies—some of which facilitate academic success and others of which hinder it—including clientship/Uncle Tomming, collective struggle, hustling, emulation of whites and camouflage (Foster, 2004, p. 370).

The behaviors and motivations of African American male students, though different from those of their white peers, are not byproducts of deviance, but should be viewed as African American male students trying to adapt to their academic environment (Ogbu, 1990).

Delimitations

The delimitations recognized for this study include:

1. The study is bounded by the group of students in certain distinct locations.
2. The study is bounded by the strength and range of the instrument used.

Significance of the Study

Low graduation and retention rates particularly plague African American males at community colleges in the nation. This is a problem because the academic failure among African American males not only impacts society but also impacts the social positioning of African American men, as degree attainment is directly attributed to participation in

the workforce, income, social mobility, decreased likelihood of incarceration and increased life expectancy (Bush & Bush, 2010). “The under-representation of African American men has serious repercussions not only for the men themselves but also for the nation as a whole. Whenever a group of individuals is not interacting and achieving at optimum levels, the country is robbed of talents that could enrich the lives of many” (Hampton, 2002, p. 4).

There many circumstances and factors that negatively play a role in retention for African American males in community colleges. These circumstances include hostile campus racial climate, the absence of funds for intervention programs, the absence of institutional research on minority student retention and achievement, the absence of minority faculty and staff, and absence of social and cultural activities (Opp, 2002). In addition to the circumstances listed above, the absence of academic and social engagement also serves as obstacles to retention for African American male students (Opp, 2002).

Community college administrators, state and federal-level policy makers and faculty can apply the results of this study to help improve degree attainment of African American males in community colleges. This study is designed to illuminate the unique relationship between faculty and African American males in community colleges and its impact on their success or failure. This study is also designed to display the correlation of being socially engaged and academic success for African American males in community colleges. Finally, this study is designed to add to the volumes of research about the factors impacting community college degree attainment, particularly among African American males.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter I introduced a synopsis on how perceptions of African American males influence their community college degree attainment. The sections in this chapter are the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, operational definitions, theoretical framework, an overview of methods, delimitations, and the significance of the study. Chapter II presents a scholarly literature review related to African American males, faculty and student interaction and social engagement. Chapter III provides a detailed description of the study's procedures and methods. Chapter IV provides the results and analyses of the study, including an examination of the four research questions. Chapter V reveals the summary of the findings, implications, conclusions for each research question, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

African American Males in Community Colleges

Chapter II will focus on the relevant literature pertaining to African American males in the community college environment. This review of literature will cover the variables and combined subjects of the study: African American males in community colleges, faculty interaction with African American males, and African American male student engagement on campus. This chapter will end with a summary of the literature.

Crisis

African American males continue to fall behind their counterparts in higher education in reference to the completion of a certificate or a degree (Baber, 2014). In a 6-year span of attending a community college, only 27% of African American men and 26% of Latino men will earn a certificate or degree, or will transfer from the community college in comparison to White and Asian men's success rates of 35% and 42%, respectively (Wood & Harris, 2015). Years of academic research have shown very low graduation rates for African American males in higher education. African American males' degree completion rates are much lower than their white, other minority, and female peers (Palmer & Maramba, 2011).

The African American male's plight of success or failure in terms of social economic advancement has a unique dependency on higher education. In some cases, level of education may be a more appropriate indicator of class status for African

Americans than it is for other groups because African Americans often do not receive salaries or employment opportunities commensurate with their level of education due to employment and salary discrimination (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). In 2008, 49% of white Americans ages 25-34 had attained an associate degree or higher, while only 30% of African Americans and 19% of Hispanic Americans had achieved degree completion (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). If the African American male is not assimilated into some form of postsecondary education, there is a higher chance of unemployment or under-employment which could lead to many negative societal outcomes for the African American male. Poor employment prospects for young men tend to be associated with their increased engagement in various forms of criminal activities (Freeman, 1996). “These social and incarceration problems of young dropouts are quite severe among all gender and race-ethnic groups but are frequently more severe among men and Blacks” (Sum, Khatiwada, McLaughlin, & Palma, 2009, p. 13). In 2010, all African American men were six times as likely as all white men to be incarcerated in federal, state and local jails (Gao, 2014).

The social science literature is replete with bleak conditions and experiences of African American males in education (Bailey & Moore, 2004). Researchers note that terms such as endangered, uneducable, dysfunctional, and dangerous are often used to describe African American males (Majors & Billson, 1992).

Statistics are beginning to portray a story of an African American male crisis in higher education. As an example, of the African American males eligible to graduate from high school, less than half do not, and even fewer African American males are enrolling in the nation’s colleges (Cuyjet, 2006). Those African American males who

choose to participate in higher education, especially those from low-income environments (Walpole, 2003), may enroll at HBCUs, 2-year community colleges, and open enrollment 4-year colleges (Baum & Payea, 2004).

African-American males are one of the most at-risk populations in higher education in regard to retention. Of particular concern to many in higher education is the persisting problem of early departure among African American men. They have the lowest retention and graduation rates compared to females and other ethnic groups (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

At the nation's community colleges, African American males have the lowest completion rates compared to other ethnic groups. In the current academic climate, African American males' lack of completion and retention is becoming an epidemic in community colleges across the country (Bush & Bush, 2010). Hagedorn et al. (2007) have posited that the retention of African American male community college students is among the lowest of all ethnic groups nationally. Postsecondary degree attainment for African American males leads to outcomes such as increased life expectancy, ability to participate in the workforce, viable income, social mobility, and decreased chances of incarceration (Bush & Bush, 2010).

African American males have a lower likelihood of completing the goals they had upon entering the institution (Harris & Wood, 2014). For example, without completing their intended degree, 11.5% of African American male students will leave the community college after one year, 49% will leave after three years and 83% will leave after six years without a degree or certificate (Wood & Williams, 2013). African American males have the lowest rates of completion among any other ethnic groups at

community colleges. Harper (2006) noted that in 2002, African American males represented 4% of all students enrolled in postsecondary education—the same as they did in 1976.

African American males have a high rate of unemployment and underemployment, which can lead to having negative outcomes such as incarceration. African American males make up approximately 13% of the U.S. population and 40% of the prison population. These negative impacts on society could be removed if there was a scholarly, calculated effort to increase African American male participation, engagement, and graduation at America's community colleges (Bush & Bush, 2010). Even though the statistics are alarming and the fate of the African American males enrolled in community colleges seems desolate, there must be a comprehensive collective from the educational community to correct these issues (Wood & Williams, 2013). The community college model was designed for everyone to have open access to a competent education or vocational training (Hofland, 2011). African American males consistently fall behind other male racial groups at community colleges regarding degree or certificate attainment (Wood, 2012).

Obstacles

Various characteristics of African American males (e.g., first generation and low academic preparation) play a role in their enrollment in college and graduation from college. African American males attending community colleges are more likely to be first-generation college students. This is quite a disadvantage because they have not obtained the social and cultural capital needed to excel in the collegiate environment (Wood & Essien-Wood, 2012). Community colleges have open enrollment mission

statements that are inclusive to all students in a region regardless of how well prepared or unprepared academically the student is, and the cost of attending a community college is more attractive at first than that of a 4-year institution. This is the reason why many students choose the community college as their best option to participate in higher education (Piland & Wolf, 2003). Many African American males seek out the community college experience because they recognize these institutions are avenues for socioeconomic advancement (Bush & Bush, 2005). These perceptions have a unique correlation to the community college's mission of providing open-access educational options for everyone (Nevarez & Wood, 2010).

African American males have viewed the community college as a place to help improve their social and economic status. The African American male's matriculation to the community college has not garnered many successful outcomes (Bush, 2004). Bush (2004) states the reason for the lack of successful outcomes for African American males in community college is because many of the solutions designed to help improve African American males' outcomes at community colleges are based on the failure of the African American male student and not the educational system's failure regarding the African American male students.

African American males entering college may have limited resources for academic support while facing demands of social growth (Strayhorn, 2008). Cuyjet (2006) noted that African American males have shown a deficit in gaining a positive self-image and identity in higher education and continue to be inadequately represented. The negative imagery of the African American male in popular culture has not helped to support their higher education aspirations and opportunities.

Current research has unearthed that employment during college has a negative effect on any student in a college setting. Students with part-time or full-time employment have higher instances of leaving college without obtaining a degree (Summers, 2003). Tinto (1993) concludes that off-campus employment can have negative consequences for academic persistence and completion. Minority students are more apt to work to help pay for tuition, thus increasing the dropout rates for African American males (Wendt, 2014). Wood (2011) used a qualitative method by interviewing 28 African American males at a community college located in the southwestern part of the United States to determine the different predictors for African American males leaving community colleges, and in his research, it was noted that in comparison with other males attending college, African American males leave college due to personal reasons, family responsibilities and financial resources.

Compared to other students in collegiate environments, African American males are introduced to obstacles that, without some form of intervention, may have negative effects on their academic success: problems with asking for assistance, becoming involved in social offerings at the colleges, and cultivating relationships with faculty members, administrators, and peers (Strayhorn, 2008). While the weight of success or failure in the university setting is on the student, the low graduation rates for African American males cannot be placed solely on personal responsibility. There are many factors that negatively influence retention for African American male students enrolled in community colleges. These factors include destructive campus racial environments, insufficient financial aid, lack of college funds for intervention programs, lack of institutional research on minority student retention and achievement, lack of minority

faculty and staff, and lack of social and cultural activities (Opp, 2002). Thus, while there are structural and environmental forces that inhibit a diversity of students from succeeding in college, the overwhelming content of the literature suggests that there is something unique about the experience of African American males due to historical trends of race-based discrimination and flawed cultural assumptions (Wood, 2011; Wood & Essien-Wood, 2012). The environment surrounding the African American males is as much a key to success as their academic and social upbringing (Bush & Bush, 2010).

Research at 4-year Colleges

Many African American male undergraduate students are enrolled in public 2-year community colleges, at a rate of 41% (Palmer, Wood, Dancy & Strayhorn, 2014). The research about African American males' experiences in community college has been scarce, with much of the research to this date focused on African American males enrolled in public or private, 4-year universities (Wood & Essien-Wood, 2012).

The volume of literature concerning the African American male in higher education concentrates on 4-year institutions rather than the community college (Beckles, 2008). The research has many discrepancies in assuming the experiences of the African American male students at community colleges are similar to those of the African American male students at 4-year institutions (Wood, 2011). Research suggests the experiences of African American male students pursuing a college degree have not improved, especially at the community college level (Flowers, 2006).

While research on African American students in higher education has been restricted to their undergraduate experiences at PWIs, HBCUs, and at other senior colleges, little attention has been given to the experiences of African American males

enrolled in community colleges (Harper, 2013). Community colleges are the most prevalent entry point for postsecondary education for African American students (Chenoweth, 1998).

Faculty Interaction with African American Males

Regardless of the students' demographic characteristics, the student-instructor interactions remain an important factor in student success. The majority of faculty-student interaction research was concentrated on white students, but in research done by Lundberg and Schreiner (2004), faculty-student interactions were analyzed as a predictor of academic success for six different racial and ethnic groups. Survey results from a sample of 4,501 students who completed the College Student Experiences Questionnaire indicated that frequent faculty interaction contributed to success for all racial groups. However, Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) also found that faculty-student interaction was a better predictor of academic success for African American students than for White students.

Faculty influence on the persistence of African American students is not to be understated. African American students are more likely to persist when faculty display a compelling acceptance, sometimes referred to as validation, that all students are capable of learning and can be taught to learn (Good, Halpin, & Halpin, 2002).

African American students aspire to have direct contact with faculty and credit much of their academic success to professors who engage them in the classroom and affirm them as qualified to be there (Kraft, 1991; Love, 1993). In a qualitative research study involving 43 African American students attending a PWI, almost 60% of the males

interviewed mentioned social support as one of the essential factors to enhance their academic success (Nettles & Perna, 1997).

Other research findings on underserved students in the community college setting report that when students develop relationships with faculty and staff within the institution, it improves student motivation, outcomes, goal completion and persistence rates (Settle, 2011). Brown (2007) declares that students who communicate with faculty outside the classroom and have meaningful interactions with them are more likely to persist in a college environment.

Foster (2008) conducted qualitative research in the form of interviews and focus groups with 12 African American male students at a community college in California. Two of the main focuses of the research were to garner information about the students' experiences with faculty and the collegiate environment. He found that if the student perceives the college environment to be negative, the student is less likely to participate in class. It was also noted in his research that the African American males in his study are present in class but often fail to participate in any of the discussions in class. Some students in his study stated that they may consult with faculty after class is over, but most will not ask for help from a faculty member, and all participants responded that attending office hours is not considered as an option.

Stevens (2006) organized a qualitative study about the African American males' experiences at community colleges. There were six African American male participants in the study. The demographics for these students were first-generation college students between the ages of 18 and 20 and first semester freshmen at a selected community college in the northeast United States. Stevens stated that African American males were

hesitant “to speak out in class [due to] fear of making some mistake that would reflect unfavorably on their race” (p. 153). In Stevens’ (2006) study, students noted that their lack of participation in the classroom environment was a direct result of what they felt were unwarranted stereotypes that African American males are inferior in intelligence. In her study, faculty participants recognized that they perceived and treated African American males differently and that these students were unwilling to participate in class discussions or come to office hours. Stevens’ (2006) research indicated that faculty participants felt disappointment and frustration with African American males because they did not reach out and ask for help when needed.

Stereotype threat is a condition where students are aware of the negative stereotypes that surround them (Steele 1997, 1998). Stereotype threat is the leading cause of minimum self-efficacy and the beginning stages of self-identifying with entities that conflict with obtaining an education (Chavous, Harris, Rivas, Helaire, & Green, 2004).

Wood’s (2014) research with 28 African American male participants showed that faculty and other students viewed African American males as academically inferior. Multiple participants in this study stated that fear of being perceived as “dumb,” “ignorant,” and “stupid” halted their classroom engagement. Some students said that their lack of engagement also made them leery of using on-campus tutoring (Wood, 2014). The students in the study understood that the first interaction with the faculty set the tone for how much or how little the students will engage in the classroom setting. In a majority of the cases, the students had to initiate that first contact in order to be taken seriously in the class. For example, three subjects in this study all noted that the

instructors were testing the students' desires to succeed in the class by waiting on them to make the initial contact before giving a student time and energy. These participants also noted that the faculty viewed disengagement as them not caring about their studies or academic discipline. From this study, it was established that the majority of the faculty who taught the participants held an "approach me first" and "prove yourself" mantra before establishing any rapport with the student (Wood, 2014).

Fear of being dumb is one factor that is leading African American males to disengage in the classroom. This disengagement is the byproduct of a protective mechanism from an actual past or present inferiority complex African American males may have received in other academic settings (Fischer, 2010).

The faculty are the gatekeepers to a student's success or failure in the classroom setting. The faculty set the tone and environment for success in the classroom. Faculty set the tone by fostering a welcoming environment, being proactive in starting the positive friendly dialogue with students and making the classroom environment a place where all the students feel they belong. If these conditions are present in the classroom, student engagement will increase (Harrison & Palacios, 2014). Costner, Daniels, and Clark (2010) purport that if the postsecondary educational system wants African American male students to succeed, it must not only look to the students to change but also for the faculty to examine the attitudes they hold that serve to disenfranchise minority students.

Faculty engagement is the number one variable that contributes to the success of African American males in community colleges. Faculty who foster personal connections with African American males begin to see their African American male

students raise the bar in academics and classroom participation (Community College Survey of Student Engagement, 2014). Each educator has the ability to thwart any negative mechanism that may prevent any student's success (Smith & Hung, 2008).

Faculty engagement can be achieved in the following ways: “(a) creating a welcoming environment in the classroom; (b) proactively reminding students of coursework; (c) seeking out conversations with students; (d) remedying the concerns of the students; and (e) always giving positive encouragement to students to help them achieve their academic potential” (Wood & Turner, 2011, p. 147).

Consistent and influential contact with a faculty member is essential to African American students in the college environment. Mentoring opportunities (formal or informal) with faculty and staff, especially if available from African American professors, are effective strategies to support student success (Ugbah & Williams, 1989).

African American Male Student Social Engagement

There is a limited amount of research related to African American males' experiences in community colleges, especially in the areas of engagement. The majority of the literature targets persistence in community college (Wood, 2010).

Student engagement by definition is “the time and effort students devote to activities that are empirically linked to desired outcomes of college and what institutions do to induce students to participate in these activities” (Kuh, 2009, p. 683), and as “the extent to which students are engaging in activities that higher education research has shown to be linked with high-quality learning outcomes” (Krause & Coates, 2008, p. 493). Similarly, Hu and Kuh (2001, p. 3) define engagement as “the quality of effort students themselves devote to educationally purposeful activities that contribute directly

to desired outcomes.” Research findings show that African American males in college can be affected by the institution’s social environment (Reid & Radhakrishnan, 2003). If faculty and institutional members in teaching-learning positions do not integrate student development theories, African American males can become disengaged from the campus community (Reid & Radhakrishnan, 2003).

One of the best predictors of student success is the degree to which a student is engaged in the life of a college community. Research specifically on minority students shows that when they are simultaneously connected, involved, and served, a student of color is more likely to persist in college (Tinto, 1987). Students who are fully invested in the academic and social life in college experience positive outcomes in satisfaction and academic growth, and graduate at a faster rate than those students not involved in the social or academic life (Astin, 1996).

Kinzie and Kuh (2004) conducted research studying the inner workings of 20 campuses. The focus of the research was to seek out common attributes at these colleges that promoted student success. The institutions in this study varied from small, large, urban, rural, HBCUs, PWIs, commuter and residential, exclusive, and open access. Each of the institutions in the study was chosen because of its higher than predicted graduation rates and its high scores in all or some of the hallmarks on the National Survey of Student Engagement. Practices at the institutional level can help promote student academic and social engagement that is paramount to developing the student personally and intellectually. Kinzie and Kuh (2004) stated when researching college preparation and previous academic standing and placing all ethnicities within categories, student engagement is the strongest indicator of college success.

The likelihood for degree attainment increases when the student has greater levels of social integration and a high commitment to the college (Pascarella, Smart, & Ethington, 1986). Talley (2008) asserts: “The importance of providing a supportive environment that enhances and facilitates conceptual and practical learning cannot be ignored because it compels students to do their best and work to their full potential” (p. 331).

African American male academic and social engagement are at much lower levels than African American female social and academic engagement (Harper, 2009). In Harper’s (2009) research, he used a qualitative method of face-to-face interviews to collect data from 143 African American male undergraduates at 30 PWIs in the U.S. The focus of the research was to provide a narrative of the African American males’ experiences at PWIs. The African American males chosen for the study were undergraduates with a cumulative, grade point average (GPA) above 3.0; who engaged in leadership with a multitude of on campus student organizations; who created bonds with campus administrators and faculty beyond the classroom setting; who were involved in experiences that enriched their education such as internships, studying abroad, and conducting summer research; and who had been recognized for their college achievements. These African American males were chosen because decades of literature on undergraduates state that students who are actively engaged on campus have a better chance of surviving intutional barriers than those who are not engaged socially (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Harper’s (2009) research opposes the notion that the low levels of engagement for African American males is because of their lack of focus and drive in their educational pursuits. Harper (2009) stated the challenge of low engagement

is an institutional problem and not the issue of the African American male student. He uncovered in the research that disengagement is a byproduct of institutional neglect. Bush's (2004) and Harper's (2009) stances on African American male student engagement are similar. Bush (2004) stated that African American male students have a type of social reluctance to meet with faculty inside and outside the confines of the classroom. He described that failure to be engaged in classroom activities had a negative effect on that student's performance. Therefore, African American male students' reluctance to interact with faculty and poor attainment are a result of a college's culture, operations, and dispositions, which often foster perceived views of inferiority. Research findings show that African American males in college can be affected by the institution's social environment (Reid & Radhakrishnan, 2003). If faculty and institutional members in teaching-learning positions do not integrate student development theories, African American men can become disengaged from the campus community (Reid & Radhakrishnan, 2003).

Bush and Bush (2010) conducted a study that showed the many institutional dilemmas that African American males face as they try to reach completion through the California community college system. This study analyzed the correlation between institutional support at the community college and the academic achievement of African American males. Inland Community College (ICC) located in Southern California was used for this study. A focus group was used as a means of supporting and clarifying the quantitative data on African American male students' perceptions of their college experience and its effects on their achievement. The focus group comprised of six African American male students enrolled at ICC. Participants had an age range of 18-25.

Bush and Bush's (2010) research explains that many African American males face subtle nuances with racial stereotypes that occur in the classroom with White faculty, staff, and students. This unsettling environment can cause very low levels of overall engagement at the college. Lack of engagement is attached to reduced success, performance and achievement rates among African American males. In their research, they found the lack of engagement as a cause for concern because African American males are in the most need of faculty-led classroom interactions and the other helpful support services offered to students.

Kraft (1991) conducted a research study with 43 African American students at a PWI. The purpose of this study was to figure out why some African American students succeed at PWIs and why some do not. In her qualitative study, there were 10 freshmen, 12 sophomores, 12 juniors, and 9 seniors. The participants were 65% African American females. The ages were from 18 to 26. Kraft (1991), supporting the idea of alienation, found that African American students stated the greatest problem they faced upon arrival to campus was the inhospitable atmosphere created by the white student population.

In retention studies, social participation has become a great measuring tool because social involvement tends to focus on the behaviors of students. Social involvement influences students' satisfaction and persistence (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1983). Pascarella and Terenzini (1983) went on to conclude that students who feel comfortable socially persist at a higher rate than students who do not feel comfortable socially. Furthermore, Griffin (1992) inferred that friendly relationships between students and staff were enhanced by students' informal contact with staff and that these

friendly relationships had a positive influence on students in terms of their personal, social, and intellectual development.

Mayo, Murguia, and Padilla (1995) conducted an investigation with the purpose to display the effect of formal versus informal social integration on grade point average. The participants in this study were: 344 Mexican American, 315 African American, 292 Native American and 340 White students. They found that formal social integration (e.g., contact with formal representatives and organizations) had a much greater impact on Mexican American and White students' academic performance and that informal social integration (e.g., participation in the social life of the campus) had a greater impact on academic performance for African American students. African American students' perceptions of institutional supportiveness impacted their college persistence (Berger & Milem, 1999). Supportive campus atmospheres communicate to African American students that it is safe to take risks associated with intellectual growth and development and increase the probability that they will succeed (Allen, 1992).

Strategic and intentional institution-wide efforts towards affirming individual student value and creating connections are essential for the success of African American students. Holmes, Ebbers, Robinson, and Mugenda (2000) developed a conceptual model based on the belief that minority students need to sense appreciation and hospitality both academically and socially in order to succeed. Therefore, their experience both inside and outside the classroom, from the initial exposure to the institution and continuing through each developmental stage of their college career, needs to reinforce the sense that they are valued and welcomed.

African American male student athletes are benefiting from student engagement. African American male student athletes attain degrees at a higher percentage than the African American male student body (53% compared to 41%). The support system provided to student athletes is very beneficial to retention and degree attainment for African American male students (Hosick, 2015). The National Collegiate Athletic Association (2009) communicates that Division I athletic departments supply athletes with academic support services, orientation programs, tutoring, mentoring, and financial support. The support that is supplied to student athletes is very significant because in the general sense, student athletes score lower on standardized tests required for college entrance. In spite of this, African American male athletes are persisting in the collegiate environment at higher rates than African American males who do not receive this type of support (Wright, 2016).

Summary

The literature and research about African American males in higher education thus far have uncovered a variety of topics such as achievement gaps at universities and community colleges, effects of faculty student interaction, persistence, and social engagement on campus. Due to disparaging academic achievement outcomes for African American males in higher education, the majority of the literature describes the African American male in a negative light using keywords such as underprepared and disengaged. The use of negative words in the literature can give the impression that higher education may not be for African American males. Community colleges have a mission to serve all segments of society through an open-access admissions policy that offers equal and fair treatment to all students (Vaughn, 2006). The issues of low

achievement and lack of engagement for African American males is a community college issue, and research should be focused on how these institutions of higher education can help combat and remedy these issues.

In every type of higher education environment, faculty members set the tone for the learning environment. This is especially true at community colleges. Community college faculty's main focus is instructing and assisting students of all types of academic backgrounds in the different disciplines (Smith, Wenderoth, & Tyler, 2013). There is a disconnect in the classroom environment between faculty and African American males. The limited research goes on to expose that there may be other factors at play besides the standard underprepared and uninterested African American male student argument (Harper & Davis, 2012). That argument has been presented in research and practice as the underlying issue of why African American males are failing socially or academically in community colleges, which can lead researchers to discount the particular group and not the actual policies, administration and culture surrounding the community colleges (Bush & Bush, 2010). "Some of these factors are gender issues, personal characteristics (self-efficacy, motivation, and identity), the resources available in poorer segregated schools attended by many African American males (academic preparation), expectations and biases of significant people in a student's life (teachers, family members, peers and societal messages), lack of male role models (at home, in school and life), and low levels of engagement in educational activities" (Manning & Everett, 2008, p. 2). Research shows that the impact of positive faculty and staff-student relationships and interaction is vital to the success of African American males (Hilton, Wood, & Lewis, 2012).

African American males are an at-risk population in the realms of higher education. There is an achievement gap for African American males in community colleges. The lack of achievement may be attributed to low levels of engagement on these community college campuses. Higher levels of student engagement are positively correlated with higher student retention and graduation rates (Astin, 1999). The consensus among researchers regarding African American male engagement in education is that more research is warranted (Manning & Everett, 2008). The National Survey of Student Engagement (2013) describes student engagement as "the amount of time and energy students put into their studies, other educationally purposeful activities, coupled with the ability of an institution to deploy its resources and organize activities supporting student learning" (p. 1). Engaging students in activities that encompass and support all students from different socioeconomic statuses and cultural backgrounds is vital in assisting students with degree completion. Moreover, the engagement of African American males is significant because this group is at risk for not matriculating to graduation (Brooks, Jones, & Burt, 2013).

Higher education should be able to provide comprehensive environments which persuade social engagement and academic enhancement for African American males. This may be accomplished by acknowledging the social aspect of the student's life and investigating opportunities in order to establish social and intellectual comfort (Taylor & Olswang, 1997).

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the perceptions of African American male students regarding the challenges they face that can hinder their academic progress at community colleges within the Louisiana rural regions. The overall aim of this study was to view the collective experiences of African American males in community colleges to improve their academic outcomes as well as their completion and retention rates. This study explored African American male's perceptions of their educational experiences and the personal and academic obstacles they face as students in the community college environment and included 100 African American males enrolled in two rural community colleges in Louisiana sharing their experiences by participating in a survey.

This chapter provides information related to the research design, research questions, research site, population and sampling procedures, instrument, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures.

Research Design

In this study, the researcher used the quantitative design method to collect data. This is also a correlational and a cross-sectional study. These research design methods were chosen because they provided the researcher with descriptive statistics and relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The dependent variables

in this study were age, first-generation college student status, academic goal, and full-time or part-time job status. The independent variables were institutional factors that affect students' completion rates, role of relationships with instructors, and impediments to social engagement in the community college environment. Through the collection of quantitative data, the researcher sought to find a better understanding of the underachievement issues at community colleges related to African American male students.

Review of Research Questions

Four research questions guided this study:

1. What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding institutional factors that affect their completion rates per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?
2. What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding the role of relationships with instructors and how it affects their of academic success per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?
3. What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding impediments to social engagement in the community college environment based on the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?
4. To what extent are there different perceptions among African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges based on age, first-generation college student status, academic goal, and full-time or part-time job status?

Research Site

The study was conducted at two community colleges in rural Louisiana. The community colleges selected were chosen for the rural environment and number of African American male students each community college in the study serves. The size of the community colleges in this study is important because students at larger populated community colleges may have different experiences and perceptions. The first community college that participated in the study has a student population of 4197. The student population is 30% African American. Minority representation within the faculty and staff is less than 2%. The student body consists of 53% males (Louisiana Board of Regents, 2017). There are over 22 career technical education programs ranging from drafting to nursing. This community college also offers a transfer to a 4-year university pathway and has over 10 transfer partnerships with universities. The citizens in the community surrounding the first community college have an average income of \$38,000. The community racial demographics consisted of 49% African American and 48% White. In this community 61% of African Americans are at the poverty line (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). The second community college that participated in this study has an overall student population of 2071. The student population is 21% African American. Minority representation within the faculty and staff is less than 5%. The student body consists of 45% males (Louisiana Board of Regents, 2017). The second community college offers over 18 career technical education programs and has a transfer degree program. The community surrounding the second community college has a median income of \$46,005. The community racial demographics are 68% White and 27% African American. In this community 58% of African Americans live in poverty (U.S.

Census Bureau, 2015). The results provided information about the unique experiences of African American males at community colleges within these rural regions.

Participants

Participants selected for the current study were self-identified as Black or African American males of U.S. citizenship enrolled full time or part time in an associate degree, technical diploma or certificate program at a community college located in the rural Louisiana. The data for this study were provided by 100 African American male students from 2 of the 13 community colleges in the state of Louisiana. The statistical analysis started and the survey participation was closed when 100 surveys were finished by the participants. As an incentive to participate in this study, all participants' email addresses were entered into a drawing for a \$100.00 Amazon gift card.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for this study (see Appendix A) was developed in 2017 by the researcher to analyze the experiences of African American male students in Louisiana that affect retention and completion rates. The survey instrument created by the researcher was modified from the Mattering Scales for Adult Students in Higher Education (MHE) survey developed by Schlossberg, Lassalle, and Golec (1989). Dr. Schlossberg granted the researcher permission to use the MHE for this study. The MHE's main purpose is to assess the perceptions of adult learners about their educational environment (Schlossberg et al., 1989). The format of the MHE survey was used as a guide, but survey questions were changed to meet the needs of this study. The specific changes made to the instrument focused on capturing the experiences and perceptions of

rural African American male community college students. A Likert-type scale was used in the survey. The survey questions were guided by the four research questions. The research questions provided the four sections for the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey:

1. Institutional factors that affect African American male students' completion rates.
2. The role of relationships with instructors and the effect that relationship has on academic success for African American students.
3. Impediments to social engagement for African American male students in the community college environment.
4. Demographic information including age, first-generation college student status, academic goal, and full-time or part-time job status.

Table 1 shows the connection between each of the research questions and the survey instrument items as well as the statistical procedure used to analyze the responses for each item.

Table 1

Research Question Mapping and Analysis

Research Question	Instrument Item Number	Analysis Procedure
Institutional factors that affect completion rates	5-10, 24	Descriptive statistics (mean, SD, and percentages)
Role of relationships with instructors and effects on academic success	11-18, 25	Descriptive statistics (mean, SD, and percentages)
Impediments to social engagement in the community college environment	19-23	Descriptive statistics (mean, SD, and percentages)
Different perceptions based on age, first generation students, fulltime or part-time job status, and community college goal	1-25	One way ANOVA

Pilot Study

A pilot study was used to establish the reliability of the questionnaire. “The term ‘pilot studies’ refers to mini versions of a full-scale study, as well as the specific pre-testing of a particular research instrument such as a questionnaire or interview schedule” (Teijlingen & Hunley, 2002, p. 33). The pilot study was conducted at a rural community college in Arkansas. The results from the 16 Likert-scale items in the questionnaire were evaluated using Cronbach’s Alpha Test. The Cronbach's Alpha output for the institutional factor questions 5-10 and 24 was $N=7$ and $\alpha = 0.708$. The Cronbach's Alpha output for the student instructor relationship questions 14 through 18 was $N=5$ and $\alpha = 0.675$. The Cronbach's Alpha output for the social engagement questions 20

through 23 was $N=4$ and $\alpha = 0.566$. A reliability coefficient more than 0.70 is an acceptable alpha level and an alpha level as low as 0.50 is appropriate for effective measures, particularly for beginning research (Nunnally, 1978). The researcher found a high level of internal consistency for the instrument used with the specific sample population questioned in the pilot study. The survey instrument used for the pilot study included 25 questions overall. There were four questions that measure participants' demographics. The demographics being measured were age range, first-generation college student status, academic goal, and job status. There were seven questions that measured the institutional factors that may affect completion rates. There were nine questions that measured the experiences with faculty. There were five questions that measured student engagement socially and academically on campus.

A panel of experts established the validity of the pilot's questionnaire. The panel's main purpose was to recommend the direction and flow of the questions and to approve the questionnaire before the pilot study was conducted. The panel of experts consisted of two seasoned professionals in the community college with significant knowledge of instruction and administration. Each of the panel's experts reviewed the pilot test questions and the proposal and offered his unique perspectives to the project. The majority of the communication between the researcher and panel was done with telephone conferences and email correspondences. The panel recommended that the survey be minimized to 25 questions from 45 questions and to correct any grammatical issues found in the survey. The researcher compiled all the recommendations from the panel and made the necessary adjustments to the survey instrument. The Institutional

Review Board (IRB) of Mississippi State University approved the pilot study and the ensuing research.

Data Collection Procedures

This study utilized a survey as the means for data collection. The survey was presented to 100 African American male students at two community colleges located in rural Louisiana. The survey was distributed online via Kwik Surveys during the summer semester of 2017. The primary contacts at the community colleges provided the researcher with the email addresses of all the African American male students enrolled at their colleges. The researcher then emailed the participants a link to the survey and a letter of consent. Once the survey was completed by each participant, his results were recorded in an online database only the researchers had access to. The African American male students who participated in the study did so anonymously. Even though their email addresses were collected for purposes of the drawing, their responses were not tied to an identifying email address.

Data Analysis Procedures

For the purposes of this study, participants were put in categories based on the demographic information. This study investigated the differences between the responses of each participant. The data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. For the Likert-scale questions 5 through 10, 14 through 18, and 20 through 24, “Strongly Disagree” (SD) was given a value of 1, “Disagree” (D) was given a value of 2, “Agree” (A) was given a value of 3, and “Strongly Agree” (SA) was given a value of 4. Percentage data and standard deviation were used in the analysis of

Research Questions 1, 2, and 3. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were used to determine if there were any differences in African American male students' perceptions based on their demographic characteristics for Research Question 4.

Chapter Summary

Chapter III presents an examination of the survey research design used for this study. The participants' characteristics are defined, and the parameters for the questionnaire are defined along with the sections of the instrument. The chapter ends with details about the study's data collection and analysis procedures.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the obstacles African American male students face that can hinder their academic progress at community colleges within the rural regions of Louisiana. This study explored the African American male's educational experiences and the personal and academic obstacles they faced as students in the community college environment. This was a quantitative research study. Data analyses used to address the research questions include descriptive statistics for Research Questions 1-3 and one-way ANOVA for Research Question 4. SPSS software, version 24.0, was used to conduct the analysis on the data collected. This chapter presents a description of the results.

Four research questions guided this investigation.

1. What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding institutional factors that affect their completion rates per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?
2. What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding the role of relationships with instructors and the effect of academic success per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?
3. What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding impediments to social engagement in the community college

environment based on the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?

4. To what extent are there different perceptions among African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges based on age, first-generation college student status, academic goal, and full-time or part-time job status?

All 13 community colleges in Louisiana were invited to participate in the study; however, only two participated in this study. Those two community colleges provided the researcher with the email addresses of all the African American male students enrolled in the summer semester. A total of 100 African American male students from the two community colleges completed the survey. The survey included 25 questions. The survey questions were organized by the institutional factors that affect completion rates, the role of relationships with instructors, impediments to social engagement in the community college environment, and different perceptions based on age, first-generation college student status, full-time or part-time job status, and community college goal.

The demographic data of the participants are presented first. Then, all of the survey questions are presented with a summary of the responses. After the overall responses are presented, data that was used to answer each of the research questions is presented. This chapter presents the results of the survey along with the findings of the analyses.

Demographic Information

The participants included in this study were all African American male students at two rural community colleges located in Louisiana. There were 100 African American male students who completed the survey.

Table 2 is a representation of the demographic characteristics of the participants in this study. As shown in Table 2, 18% of the participants were 18-20 years old, and 36% were aged 21 to 23. There were 21% of participants in the 24 to 26 age range, 10% in the 27-35 age group, and 15% in the 36 and above category. Regarding the job status of participants in this study, 0% of the participants worked 10 hours or less weekly, 4% worked 11 to 14 hours weekly, 41% worked 15 to 20 hours weekly, 16% worked 21 to 35 hours weekly, 12% worked 36 to 40 hours weekly, 4% worked more than 40 hours weekly, and 23% of participants were not employed. Of the participants, 45% were first-generation students and 55% were not first-generation students. An examination of the participants' community college goal revealed 46% of participants' intentions were to complete an Associate's degree, 15% of participants' intentions were to obtain a technical diploma, and 32% of participants' intentions were to complete basic coursework so they can transfer to a university. Of the participants 1% of them had intentions to obtain a certificate and 6% of participants stated they did not have a goal. Participants were allowed to choose only one goal.

Table 2

Demographic Information of African American Male Student Participants

Variable	Percentage
Age	
18-20	18%
21-23	36%
24-26	21%
27-35	10%
36 and above	15%
Job Status	
10 hours or less	0%
11 to 14 hours	4%
15 to 20 hours	41%
21 to 35 hours	16%
36 to 40 hours	12%
More than 40	4%
Not employed	23%
First-Generation Student Status	
Yes	45%
No	55%
Community College Goal	
Complete my Associate's Degree	46%
Obtain a Technical Diploma	15%
Complete Basic Coursework so I can transfer	32%
Obtain a Certificate	1%
I Do Not Have a Goal	6%

Demographics Data Summary

The demographic information gathered supplied useful data regarding the survey participants. Participants responded to four demographic questions which provided data relating to age, job status, first-generation student status, and community college goal. The analytics of the participants showed that the majority of the participants fall within the 21-23 age range (36%) and 24-26 age range (21%). Table 2 also shows the majority of the survey participants work part-time (61%) or are not employed (23%). The demographic data collected on first-generation student status revealed that 55% of survey participants were not first-generation students. The demographic analytics on the survey

participants' community college goal showed 46% intended on completing the Associate's degree and 32% intended on transferring to a 4-year university.

Research Question 1:

What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding institutional factors that affect their completion rates per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?

Research Question 1 was crafted to aid the researcher to understand some of the perceptions African American male community college students had about the administration. There were seven survey questions designed to answer Research Question 1. Those questions were questions 5-10 and question 24. The seven survey questions were designed to extract favorable or unfavorable responses about perceptions African American community college students in rural Louisiana have about their community college administration. To analyze Research Question 1, descriptive analysis was administered, including percentages, means, and standard deviations using SPSS software. In the SPSS software, "SD" was given the value of 1, "D" was given the value of 2, "A" was given the value of 3, and "SA" was given the value of 4. The results are listed in Table 3.

Survey question number 5 asked the participants if, "The administration does a good job of making sure you feel comfortable and safe on campus." Of the responses given, 1% chose "SD," 16% chose "D," 73% chose "A," and 10% chose "SA." The mean was 2.7. The standard deviation was .6.

Survey question number 6 asked the participants if, "There are programs on campus that have reached out to you personally to help you succeed as a student and as a

person.” Of the responses given, 3% chose “SD,” 51% chose “D,” 37% chose “A,” and 9% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.6. The standard deviation was .7.

Survey question number 7 asked the participants if, “You feel like you are important to the administration and student body.” Of the responses given 7% chose “SD,” 41% chose “D,” 48% chose “A,” and 4% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.5. The standard deviation was .7.

Survey question number 8 asked the participants if, “The administration does a good job in promoting diversity in its faculty and staff.” Of the responses given, 4% chose “SD,” 65% chose “D,” 21% chose “A,” and 10% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.4. The standard deviation was .7.

Survey question number 9 asked the participants if, “You feel comfortable talking with the administration about your fears, experiences, and needs on campus.” Of the responses given, 5% chose “SD,” 46% chose “D,” 40% chose “A,” and 9% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.5. The standard deviation was .7.

Survey question number 10 asked the participants if, “You feel you are viewed as a negative racial stereotype at this community college.” Of the responses given, 9% chose “SD,” 51% chose “D,” 32% chose “A,” and 8% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.4. The standard deviation was .8.

Survey question number 24 asked the participants if, “I know more than 3 African American males who have graduated or transferred to a 4-year university from this community college.” Of the responses given, 10% chose “SD”, 47% chose “D”, 27% chose “A”, and 6% chose “SA”. The mean was 3.1. The standard deviation was .9.

Table 3

Perceptions of Institutional Factors

Survey Question	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Standard Deviation
(5) Feel comfortable and safe on campus	1%	16%	73%	10%	2.7	.6
(6) Programs have reached out to you personally	3%	51%	37%	9%	2.6	.7
(7) Feel important to administration and student body	7%	41%	48%	4%	2.5	.7
(8) Administration does a good job in promoting diversity in its faculty and staff	4%	65%	21%	10%	2.4	.7
(9) Comfortable talking with administration about your fears, experiences, and needs on campus	5%	46%	40%	9%	2.5	.7
(10) Viewed as a negative racial stereotype at this community college	9%	51%	32%	8%	2.4	.8
(24) Know more than 3 African American males who have graduated or transferred from this community college	10%	47%	27%	16%	3.1	.9

Question 1 Data Summary

The findings in Table 3 suggest that 83% of survey respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the administration is doing a good job of making them feel safe on

campus. Of the survey participants, 54% either disagreed or strongly disagreed that there are programs that have reached out to them to help them succeed as a student and as a person. Of the survey participants, 52% either agreed or strongly agreed with feeling important to the administration and student body. Amongst the survey participants, 69% noted that they either disagreed or strongly disagreed that the administration is promoting diversity in its faculty and staff. Of the survey participants, 51% disagreed or strongly disagreed with feeling comfortable talking with the administration about their fears, experiences, and needs on campus. Of the survey participants, 60% disagreed or strongly disagreed with being perceived with a negative racial stereotype on their community college campus. Among the survey participants, 57% of survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed to knowing more than three African American males who have graduated or transferred to a 4-year university from this community college.

Research Question 2:

What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding the role of relationships with instructors and the effect of academic success per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?

Research Question 2 was designed to provide insight regarding some of the perceptions African American male community college students have about their instructors. There were nine survey questions that were designed to answer Research Question 2. Those questions were questions 11-18 and question 25. The nine survey questions were designed to gauge how the participants perceived their instructors. To analyze Research Question 2, descriptive analysis was administered, including

percentages, means, and standard deviations using SPSS software. The results are listed in Tables 4 through 8.

Survey question number 11 asked the participants, “At your community college you have taken one or more classes where the instructor was an African American male.” Of the participants, 36% chose “yes” and 64% chose “no.” The results from this survey question are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Perceptions of Relationship with Instructor Question 11

Survey Question	Yes	No
(11) Taken one or more classes where the instructor was an African American male	36%	64%

Survey question number 12 asked the participants, “In your opinion, you would have a higher chance of achieving a B or above in class if your instructor” and listed several options (participants could choose more than one option). “Addressed me by name in class” was chosen 38 times, “Showed interest in me” was chosen 44 times, “Acted like they cared whether or not I passed the course” was chosen 47 times, “Made me feel like I’m wanted in his or her classroom” was chosen 46 times, and “I don’t need the instructor to do anything because I am going to make a B or above regardless” was chosen 22 times. The results from this survey question are shown below in Table 5.

Table 5

Perceptions of Relationship with Instructor Question 12

Survey Question	Addressed me by name in class	Showed interest in me	Cared I passed the course	Made me feel wanted in class	I don't need the instructor
(12) You would achieve a B or above in class if your instructor	38	44	47	46	22

Survey question number 13 asked the participants, “If you are a working student with a flexible work schedule that may require you to miss class and some assignment days, your instructors will” and listed several options. Of the respondents, 2% chose “Not excuse me and give me a 0,” 35% chose “Allow me to turn in the assignment earlier than the due date,” 40% chose “Give me time to complete the assignment when I return back to class with a percentage of my grade knocked off,” and 23% chose “I don’t work.” The results for survey question 13 are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Perceptions of Relationship with Instructor Question 13

Survey Question	Not excuse me and give me a 0	Turn in the assignment earlier than the due date	Complete the assignment later with a minus a percentage	I don't work
(13) A working student missing class, your instructors will	2%	35%	40%	23%

Survey question number 14 asked the participants, “In my time, here at the community college my instructors have offered me help on assignments even when I have not asked.” Of the respondents, 4% chose “SD,” 43% chose “D,” 44% chose “A,” and 9% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.58. The standard deviation was .713. The results are shown in Table 7.

Survey question number 15 asked the participants, “I feel that my presence and input in class are valued by my instructors.” Of the responses given, 0% chose “SD,” 30% chose “D,” 60% chose “A,” and 10% chose “SA”. The mean was 2.8. The standard deviation was .6. The results are shown in Table 7.

Survey question number 16 asked the participants, “I am afraid to interact and ask questions in class because I fear of being labeled dumb.” Of the responses given, 11% chose “SD,” 49% chose “D,” 34% chose “A,” and 6% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.4. The standard deviation was .8. The results are shown in Table 7.

Survey question number 17 asked the participants, “When I do not understand the course lesson or an assignment, I know I can count on my instructors to help me understand the course lesson or assignment better.” Of the respondents, 2% chose “SD,” 12% chose “D,” 73% chose “A,” and 13% chose “SA.” The mean was 3.0. The standard deviation was .6. The results are shown in Table 7.

Survey question number 18 asked the participants, “If you are struggling academically someone from the community college will call you and advise you on how to pull up your grades.” Of the responses given, 8% chose “SD,” 65% chose “D,” 20% chose “A,” and 7% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.3. The standard deviation was .7. The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Perceptions of Relationship with Instructor Question 14-18

Research Question	SD	D	A	SA	Me an	Standard Deviation
(14) Instructors have offered me help on assignments even when I have not asked	4%	43 %	44%	9%	2.6	.7
(15) My presence and input is valued	0%	30 %	60%	10%	2.8	.6
(16) I fear labeled dumb	11%	49 %	34%	6%	2.4	.8
(17) Instructors help me understand assignment better.	2%	12 %	73%	13%	3.0	.6
(18) Advisement on how to pull up your grades.	8%	65 %	20%	7%	2.3	.7

Survey question number 25 asked the participants, “I get positive academic encouragement and support from” and participants could choose more than one option. “One of my instructors” was chosen 33 times, “My tutor” was chosen 3 times, “Study group formed with my classmates” was chosen 15 times, “My Mentor” was chosen 3

times, “No one, I am in this by myself” was chosen 20 times, “My Advisor” was chosen 16 times, “A family member” was chosen 59 times, and “Significant other” was chosen 47 times. The results from this survey question are shown below in Table 8.

Table 8

Perceptions of Relationship with Instructor Question 25

Research Question	Instructors	Tutor	Study group	Mentor	No one	Advisor	Family member	Significant other
(25) Positive academic encouragement and support from	33	3	15	3	20	16	59	47

Question 2 Data Summary

The findings in Table 4 show that 63% of participants have not experienced an African American male instructor on their community college campus. Table 5 shows that the participants perceived they had a better chance of receiving a “B” or higher if instructors showed interest in them (44), acted like they cared whether or not the participants passed the course (47), and made the participants feel wanted in his or her classroom (46). Table 6 shows the working students with flexible work schedules who may have to miss class perceived that their instructors would let turn assignments in earlier than the due date (35%) and give them time to complete the assignment with points deducted when they return to class (40%). Table 7 shows that 53% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that instructors have helped them without the participants asking for help. The majority of participants (70%) responded that they agreed or

strongly agreed that their presence and input in class was valued. The majority of participants 60% strongly disagreed or disagreed with being fearful of interacting in class because they may be perceived as being labeled dumb by their peers or the instructor. Of the respondents, 86% either agreed or strongly agreed they can count on the instructor helping them on coursework and assignments that they may not understand. Of the participants, 65% disagreed with being called by someone at the community college when they are struggling academically. Table 8 shows that the participants receive academic encouragement and support from a family member (59%), significant other (47%), and instructor (33%).

Research Question 3:

What are the impediments to social engagement for African American male students in the community college environment?

Research Question 3 was designed to provide insight about the perceptions African American male community college students may have about social engagement. There were five survey questions that answer Research Question 3. Those questions were questions 19-23. The five survey questions were designed to gauge how the participants perceived the importance of social engagement in the community college environment. To analyze Research Question 3, descriptive analysis was administered, including percentages, means, and standard deviations using SPSS software. The results are listed in Tables 9 and 10.

Survey question number 19 asked the participants, “I have attended campus-sponsored events.” Of the respondents, 21% chose “once or twice this semester,” 6%

chose “once a month,” 5% chose “once a week,” and 68% chose “never.” The results from this survey question are shown below in Table 9.

Table 9

Social Engagement Perceptions Question 19

Research Question	Once or twice this semester	once a month	once a week	never
(19) attended campus-sponsored events	21%	6%	5%	68%

Survey question number 20 asked the participants, “During this semester, you have asked for academic help from an instructor or tutor.” Of the participants, 9% chose “SD,” 31% chose “D,” 54% chose “A,” and 6% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.5. The standard deviation was .7. The results are shown in Table 10.

Survey question number 21 asked the participants, “You worked on class projects or studied as a group with other classmates outside of class.” Of the participants, 6% chose “SD,” 39% chose “D,” 44% chose “A,” and 11% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.8. The standard deviation was .8. The results are shown in Table 10.

Survey question number 22 asked the participants “I feel I belong on this campus.” Of the participants, 7% chose “SD,” 37% chose “D,” 41% chose “A,” and 15% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.9. The standard deviation was .8. The results are shown in Table 10.

Survey question number 23 asked the participants, “Do you feel that participation in extracurricular activities, student organizations, and being social on campus enhance your overall chances for graduation?” Of the participants, 7% chose “SD,” 32% chose “D,” 46% chose “A,” and 15% chose “SA.” The mean was 2.7. The standard deviation was .8. The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Social Engagement Perceptions Questions 20-23

Research Question	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Standard Deviation
(20) You have asked for academic help	9%	31%	54%	6%	2.5	.7
(21) You worked on class projects outside of class.	6%	39%	44%	11%	2.8	.8
(22) I feel I belong at this campus.	7%	37%	41%	15%	2.9	.8
(23) Participation in extracurricular activities helps graduation	7%	32%	46%	15%	2.7	.8

Question 3 Data Summary

The majority of the respondents (68%) chose “never” in response to having attended campus sponsored events as shown in Table 9. As shown in Table 10, 60% of

respondents chose strongly agree or agree to asking for academic help from an instructor or tutor. Of the respondents, 55% agreed or strongly agreed to having worked on class projects or studied with a group of classmates outside of class. Of the respondents, 56% strongly agreed or agreed that they felt that they belonged on campus. Of the respondents, 61% strongly agreed or agreed in believing that participation in extracurricular activities, student organizations, and being social on campus enhances chances for graduation.

Research Question 4:

To what extent are there different perceptions among African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges based on age, first-generation college student status, academic goal, and full-time or part-time job status?

Research Question 4 compares institutional perceptions, relationship with instructor perceptions, and social engagement perceptions among the different demographic groups. To analyze Research Question 4, a one-way ANOVA was administered using SPSS software. There were 16 survey questions along with 4 demographic questions that were used to answer Research Question 4. Those questions are demographic questions 1-4 and questions 5-10, 14-18, and 20-24. The results are listed in Tables 11 through 31.

Institutional Factors

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of feeling safe on campus (survey item

5) based on age ($p=.6$), number of hours worked ($p=.4$), goal at the community college ($p=.8$) or first-generation college student status ($p=.5$). See Table 11.

Table 11

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal and Student Status Question 5

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	.871	4	.218	.660	.621
Within Groups	31.31	95	.330		
Total	32.18	99			
Hours worked					
Between Groups	.575	2	.287	.946	.392
Within Groups	29.46	97	.304		
Total	30.03	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	1.14	3	.381	.278	.841
Within Groups	131.60	96	1.37		
Total	132.74	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.138	1	.138	.419	.519
Within Groups	32.37	98	.330		
Total	32.50	99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of programs on campus reaching out to help them succeed as a student (survey item 6) based on hours worked (see Tables 12 and 13). A Tukey HSD post hoc test was performed in order to make pairwise comparison between groups at the $p < .05$ level. The test indicated that respondents who worked part-time hours ($p=.02$) were less likely to perceive that they were contacted by programs on campus to help them academically and socially as compared to students who worked full time. There were no indications of statistically significant differences when comparing

any of the other groups. There were no indications of statistically significant differences when comparing goal at the community college, age, or first-generation college student status.

Table 12

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 6

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	4.25	4	1.06	2.25	.068
Within Groups	44.70	95	.471		
Total	48.95	99			
Hours worked					
Between Groups	4.66	2	2.33	5.10	.008
Within Groups	44.25	97	.456		
Total	48.91	99			
Goal Programs					
Between Groups	4.11	2	2.05	1.51	.225
Within Groups	131.52	97	1.35		
Total	135.63	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.138	1	.138	.419	.519
Within Groups	32.37	98	.330		
Total	32.50	99			

$p > .05$

Table 13

Tukey Post Hoc Test Table of Institutional Perceptions based on Hours Worked Question 6

Dependent Variable	(I) Hours Worked	(J) Hours Worked	Mean Difference (I-J)	Standard Error	p
Hours worked	Part-time	Full-time	-.514*	.189	.021
		Do not work	-.378	.165	.062

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of feeling important to the administration and student body (survey item 7) based on community college goal (see Tables 14 and 15). A Tukey HSD post hoc test was performed in order to make pairwise comparison between groups at the $p < .05$ level. The test indicated that respondents who did not have a goal ($p = .006$) were less likely to perceive that they were important to the administration and students at the community college as compared to those with the technical diploma goal. There were no indications of statistically significant differences when comparing any of the other community college goal groups. There were not indications of statistically significant differences when comparing age, number of hours worked, or first-generation college student status.

Table 14

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 7

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	1.91	4	.480	1.01	.406
Within Groups	45.07	95	.474		
Total	46.98	99			
Hours worked					
Between Groups	.077	2	.039	.084	.920
Within Groups	44.92	97	.463		
Total	44.99	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	5.82	4	1.943	4.303	.007
Within Groups	42.89	95	.452		
Total	48.71	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.553	1	.553	1.28	.260
Within Groups	42.28	98	.431		
Total	42.83	99			

$p > .05$

Table 15

Tukey Post Hoc Test Table of Institutional Perceptions based on Community College Goal Question 7

Dependent Variable	(I) Community College Goal	(J) Community College Goal	Mean Difference (I-J)	Standard Error	p
Goal	No Goal	Associate's	-.710	.291	.077
		Tech Diploma	-1.10*	.324	.006
		Transfer	-.572	.298	.228

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of the administration doing a good job promoting diversity in its faculty and staff (survey item 8) based on age ($p = .3$), number of hours

worked ($p=.07$), goal at the community college ($p=.2$) or first-generation college student status ($p=.09$). See Table 16

Table 16

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 8

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	2.25	4	.562	1.34	.261
Within Groups	39.86	95	.420		
Total	42.11	99			
Hours worked					
Between Groups	2.40	2	1.20	2.67	.074
Within Groups	43.70	97	.451		
Total	46.10	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	3.06	4	.766	1.50	.206
Within Groups	48.24	95	.508		
Total	51.33	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	1.70	1	1.70	3.02	.085
Within Groups	55.29	98	.564		
Total	56.99	99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of feeling comfortable with talking with administration about their fears, experiences, and needs on campus (survey item 9) based on age ($p=.1$), number of hours worked ($p=.2$), goal at the community college ($p=.1$) or first-generation college student status ($p=.4$). See Table 17

Table 17

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 9

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares		<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Age						
Between Groups	3.41		4	.855	1.78	.139
Within Groups	45.57		95	.480		
Total	48.98		99			
Hours						
Between Groups	2.00		2	1	1.65	.197
Within Groups	58.98		97	.608		
Total	60.98		99			
Goal						
Between Groups	3.98		4	.997	1.93	.110
Within Groups	48.85		95	.514		
Total	52.83		99			
Student Status						
Between Groups	.328		1	.328	.636	.427
Within Groups	50.58		98	.516		
Total	50.90		99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of negative racial stereotypes (survey item 10) based on age (see Tables 18 and 19). A Tukey HSD post hoc test was performed in order to make pairwise comparison between groups at the $p < .05$ level. The test indicated that respondents who were 36 and older ($p = .04$) were more likely to perceive that they were viewed as a negative racial stereotype at the community college as compared to the 18-20 age group. There were no indications of statistically significant differences when comparing any of the other age groups. There were not any indications of statistically significant differences when comparing goal at the community college, number of hours worked, or first-generation college student status.

Table 18

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 10

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	6.45	4	1.61	2.86	.027
Within Groups	53.54	95	.564		
Total	59.99	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	.210	2	.105	.176	.839
Within Groups	57.98	97	.598		
Total	58.19	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	1.83	4	.459	.736	.569
Within Groups	59.20	95	.623		
Total	61.03	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.012	1	.012	.021	.886
Within Groups	57.77	98	.590		
Total	57.78	99			

$p > .05$

Table 19

Tukey Post Hoc Test Table of Institutional Perceptions based on Community College Goal Question 10

Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Standard Error	p
Age	36 and above	18-20	.744	.262	.043
		21-23	.550	.230	.129
		24-26	.180	.253	.953
		27-35	.3	.306	.864

$p > .05$

Relationships with Instructors Factors

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of receiving help from their instructors

when they have not asked for it (survey item 14) based on age ($p=.2$), number of hours worked ($p=.4$), goal at the community college ($p=.1$) or first-generation college student status ($p=.7$). See Table 20.

Table 20

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 14

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	2.89	4	.723	1.50	.207
Within Groups	45.61	95	.480		
Total	48.50	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	1.07	2	.536	1.01	.366
Within Groups	51.11	97	.527		
Total	52.18	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	3.34	4	1.11	2.00	.118
Within Groups	52.67	95	.555		
Total	56.01	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.097	1	.097	.190	.664
Within Groups	50.09	98	.511		
Total	50.18	99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of their input and presence being valued by their instructors (survey item 15) based on age ($p=.6$), number of hours worked ($p=.8$), goal at the community college ($p=.1$) or first-generation college student status ($p=.1$). See Table 21

Table 21

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 15

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	1.02	4	.257	.683	.605
Within Groups	35.72	95	.376		
Total	36.74	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	.236	2	.118		
Within Groups	43	97	.443	.266	.767
Total	43.23	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	2.65	4	.664	1.75	.144
Within Groups	35.93	95	.378		
Total	38.55	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	1.05	1	1.05	2.33	.130
Within Groups	44.10	98	.450		
Total	45.15	99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of being fearful of interacting or asking questions in class (survey item 16) based on age ($p=.5$), number of hours worked ($p=.09$), goal at the community college ($p=.8$), or first-generation college student status ($p=.9$).

See Table 22

Table 22

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 16

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	2.03	4	.510	.930	.450
Within Groups	52.07	95	.548		
Total	54.1	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	3.03	2	1.51	2.42	.094
Within Groups	60.72	97	.626		
Total	63.75	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	.810	4	.203	.344	.848
Within Groups	55.94	95	.589		
Total	56.75	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.020	1	.020	.036	.851
Within Groups	54.42	98	.555		
Total	54.44	99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of receiving help from instructors for a better understanding of the lesson or assignment (survey item 17) based on age ($p=.4$), number of hours worked ($p=.5$), goal at the community college ($p=.1$), or first-generation college student status ($p=.9$). See Table 23

Table 23

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 17

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	1.49	4	.373	1.12	.350
Within Groups	31.50	95	.332		
Total	32.99	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	.624	2	.312	.728	.486
Within Groups	41.56	97	.429		
Total	42.18	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	2.38	4	.597	1.85	.124
Within Groups	30.52	95	.321		
Total	32.9	99			
Student					
Between Groups	.002	1	.002	.005	.946
Within Groups	33.83	98	.345		
Total	33.83	99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of someone from the community college will call them and advise them if they are struggling academically (survey item 18) based on age (see Tables 24 and 25). A Tukey HSD post hoc test was performed in order to make pairwise comparison between groups at the $p < .05$ level. The test indicated that respondents who were 36 and older ($p = .02$) were more likely to perceive that someone from the community college will call them and advise them on how to pull up their grades as compared to 18-20 group. The test went on to indicate that respondents who were 36 and older ($p = .03$) were more likely to perceive that someone from the community college will call them and advise them on how to pull up their grades as

compared to 21-23 group. The test also showed that respondents who were 36 and older ($p=.01$) were more likely to perceive that someone from the community college will call them and advise them on how to pull up their grades as compared to 24-26 group.

Finally, the test showed that respondents who were 36 and older ($p=.05$) were more likely to perceive that someone from the community college will call them and advise them on how to pull up their grades as compared to 27-35 group. There were not any indications of statistically significant differences when comparing goal at the community college, number of hours worked, or first-generation college student status.

Table 24

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 18

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	6.73	4	1.68		
Within Groups	42.97	95	.452	3.72	.007
Total	49.70	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	4.72	3	.787		
Within Groups	45.91	96	.494	1.59	.157
Total	50.63	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	2.45	4	.613		
Within Groups	47.25	95	.497	1.23	.303
Total	49.7	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.006	1	.006	.013	.911
Within Groups	50.15	98	.512		
Total	50.15	99			

$p > .05$

Table 25

Tukey Post Hoc Test Table of Institutional Perceptions based on Community College Goal Question 18

Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Standard Error	<i>p</i>
Age	36 and above	18-20	.755	.235	.015
		21-23	.616	.206	.029
		24-26	.771	.227	.009
		27-35	.766	.274	.049

$p > .05$

Engagement Factors

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of asked for academic help from instructors or tutor (survey item 20) based on age ($p=.8$), number of hours worked ($p=.7$), goal at the community college ($p=.3$), or first-generation college student status ($p=.9$).

See Table 26.

Table 26

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 20

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	1	4	.251	.447	.774
Within Groups	53.35	95	.562		
Total	54.35	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	1.13	3	.565	.357	.701
Within Groups	153.62	96	1.58		
Total	154.75	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	2.80	4	.701	1.34	.258
Within Groups	49.38	95	.520		
Total	52.18	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.003	1	.003	.004	.947
Within Groups	56.74	98	.579		
Total	56.74	99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of working on class projects or studied in groups with classmates outside of class (survey item 21) based on age (see Tables 27 and 28). A Tukey HSD post hoc test was performed in order to make pairwise comparison between groups at the $p < .05$ level. The test indicated that respondents who were 36 and older ($p = .05$) were more likely to perceive that they have worked on class projects or studied in groups with classmates outside of class than the 21-23 group. The test also indicated that respondents who were 36 and older ($p = .02$) were more likely to perceive that they have worked on class projects or studied in groups with classmates outside of class than the 27-35 group. There were no indications of statistically

significant differences when comparing any of the other age groups. There were not any indications of statistically significant differences when comparing goal at the community college, number of hours worked, or first-generation college student.

Table 27

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 21

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	6.81	4	1.70	3.16	.017
Within Groups	51.18	95	.539		
Total	57.99	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	1.92	3	.962	1.67	.193
Within Groups	55.86	96	.576		
Total	57.76	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	2.16	4	.540	.922	.455
Within Groups	55.63	95	.586		
Total	57.79	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	1.18	1	.396	1.61	.191
Within Groups	23.56	98	.245		
Total	24.74	99			

$p > .05$

Table 28

Tukey Post Hoc Test Table of Institutional Perceptions based on Community College Goal Question 21

Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Standard Error	<i>p</i>
Age	36 and above	18-20	.411	.256	.500
		21-23	.633*	.225	.047
		24-26	.657	.248	.070
		27-35	.933*	.299	.020

p > .05

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of a sense of belonging on campus (survey item 22) based on age ($p=.1$), number of hours worked ($p=.1$), goal at the community college ($p=.2$), or first-generation college student status ($p=.2$). See Table 29.

Table 29

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 22

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	5.23	4	1.30	2.04	.095
Within Groups	60.87	95	.641		
Total	66.1	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	2.94	3	1.47	2.05	.134
Within Groups	69.56	96	.717		
Total	72.5	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	3	4	1	1.44	.235
Within Groups	65.90	95	.694		
Total	68.90	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.135	1	.045	.176	.175
Within Groups	24.61	98	.256		
Total	24.75	99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of the benefits of participation in extracurricular activities (survey item 23) based on age ($p=.9$), number of hours worked ($p=.6$), goal at the community college ($p=.6$), or first-generation college student status ($p=.1$). See Table 30

Table 30

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 23

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	.974	4	.244	.336	.853
Within Groups	68.78	95	.724		
Total	69.75	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	.690	3	.345	.499	.609
Within Groups	67.07	96	.691		
Total	67.76	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	2.01	4	.504	.737	.569
Within Groups	64.98	95	.684		
Total	66.99	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	.001	1	.001	.001	.971
Within Groups	66.10	98	.675		
Total	66.10	99			

$p > .05$

Results from the ANOVA show that there was not a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of knowing more than 3 African American graduates from their community college (survey item 24) based on age ($p=.06$), number of hours worked ($p=.08$), goal at the community college ($p=.8$), or first-generation college student status ($p=.2$). See Table 31.

Table 31

ANOVA Summary Table Regarding Institutional Perceptions Based on Age, Job, Goal, and Student Status Question 24

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Age					
Between Groups	6.05	4	1.51	2.31	.063
Within Groups	62.13	95	.654		
Total	68.18	99			
Hours					
Between Groups	4.02	3	2.01	2.53	.084
Within Groups	76.93	96	.793		
Total	80.96	99			
Goal					
Between Groups	.816	4	.272	.799	.796
Within Groups	75.87	95			
Total	76.68	99			
Student Status					
Between Groups	1.33	1	1.33	.749	.185
Within Groups	73.41	98			
Total	74.74	99			

$p > .05$

Question 4 Data Summary

There was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of programs on campus reaching out to help them succeed as a student (survey item 6) based on hours worked (see Tables 12 and 13). There was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of feeling important to the administration and student body (survey item 7) based on community college goal (see Tables 14 and 15). There was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of negative racial stereotypes (survey item 10) based on age (see Table 18 and 19). There was also a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of someone from the community college will call them and advise

them if they are struggling academically (survey item 18) based on age (see Tables 24 and 25). There was a statistically significant difference in the respondents' overall perceptions of working on class projects or studied in groups with classmates outside of class (survey item 21) based on age (see Tables 27 and 28).

Chapter Summary

Chapter IV depicted the statistical analysis followed by a discussion of the data findings. The research questions were probed with the statistical data taken from the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey.

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding institutional factors that affect their completion rates per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey? Data collected for Research Question 1 indicated that participants of the survey perceived administration does a good job of making them feel safe on campus and most students did not feel they were viewed as a negative racial stereotype. The data also indicated that the administration does not do a good job of reaching out to the participants or a good job of promoting diversity in the staff and faculty.

Research Question 2: What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding the role of relationships with instructors and how it affects their academic success per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey? The data collected for Research Question 2 reveals that majority of the participants have not experienced an African American male instructor and have not been advised about how to pull up grades. In addition, most participants indicated that their support system comes from personal relationships rather

than institutional relationships. Participants feel their input is valuable and are not afraid to interact in the classroom environment. Also, participants feel that instructors will help them understand the assignments better.

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding impediments to social engagement in the community college environment based on the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey? Data collected for Research Question 3 indicated that the overwhelmingly majority had not attended any campus events, but a majority felt that social engagement on campus enhanced their chances for graduation. A majority of participants had asked for help and worked on class projects. Also, a majority of participants felt they belong on campus

Research Question 4: What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding impediments to social engagement in the community college environment based on the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey? The data collected for Research Question 4 shows that the perceptions varied based on demographic characteristics.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of Chapter

Chapter V provides a summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations based on the results. The summary includes the purpose of the study and specifies the procedures used in amassing the data. The conclusions answer each of the research questions based on the data analysis. The limitations of the study are stated and recommendations for further research are given.

The findings of this study give perspectives of 100 African American male community college students enrolled in two rural community colleges in Louisiana who chose to participate in the study regarding African American male students' perceptions of the community college experience in rural Louisiana. Participants ranged from 18 years old to 36 years and older. The average respondent was not a first-generation student, worked a full-time or part-time job while attending school, and had a goal for attending community college of receiving an Associate's degree or transferring to a university.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore obstacles African American male students face that can hinder their academic progress at community colleges within the rural regions of Louisiana.

Summary of the Results

The results from this study show that majority of the participants perceive that within the institutional factors of their community college, the administration does a good job of making them feel safe on campus but does not promote diversity among its faculty and staff. In the findings, the majority of the participants indicated that they have positive relationships with their instructors. The results from this study go on to show that majority of the participants are participating in class discussion and study groups, but they are not participating in the community college's social events. The findings also show that age, hours worked, and community college goal made a significant difference on participants' perceptions. The study's findings display the first tenet of the CE theory which states that students' academic success is impacted by the student's social environment and institutional factors.

Discussion of the Findings and Conclusions

Research Question 1

What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding institutional factors that affect their completion rates per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?

There were seven questions that asked participants about their perceptions of the institution they attend. Those questions were survey items 5-10 and survey question 24.

The results show the following.

Positive

- That majority of the respondents felt the administration makes them feel safe on campus. Participants perceived that their community college is a safe environment for them.
- The majority of participants did not perceive that they were viewed as a negative stereotype by all entities on campus. This displays that the participants perceive they are viewed with a positive self-image by the student body and administration.

Negative

- A majority of the participants disagreed with having received any kind of communication from a program that would help them succeed academically or socially. This indicates that the participants in this study may not be using their community college email regularly, and the community college must research the best method of communication between them and their students.
- The participants did not see diversity in the staff and faculty and did not feel the administration does a good job promoting diversity.
- The majority of the participants did not know more than three African American males who have graduated or transferred to a university.

Conclusion 1: The community colleges the participants attend do an excellent job of ensuring that their student body feels safe on campus. Contrary to the research from Dulabaum (2016), African American male college students feel they are being perceived with negative stereotypes such as being ignorant and no expectation of success. The participants in this study did not feel as if they were viewed as a negative stereotype in their community college environment. The community colleges attended by the

participants in the survey do not promote diversity within the faculty and staff ranks. According to the research of Robinson, Byrd, Louis, & Bonner (2013), scholars have stated there is a great underrepresentation of faculty of color in higher education institutions. The institutions do not communicate graduation or transfer success of African American males effectively.

Research Question 2

What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding the role of relationships with instructors and how it affects their academic success per the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?

There were nine questions that asked participants about their perceptions of their instructors. Those questions were survey items 11-18 and survey question 25. The results show the following.

Positive

- Most of the participants in this study perceived that their instructors were offering them help without the participants asking. This shows that the participants' instructors are doing the best they can to help students.
- Most of the participants in this study felt their contributions in the classroom environment were valued by their instructors.
- Most the participants in this study were not afraid to interact in class for fear of being labeled dumb.

- Many of the participants felt their instructors could help them understand the assignment or lesson better.

Negative

- The majority of the participants had not taken a class at their community college with an African American male instructor.
- The majority of the participants in this study declared that if an instructor made them feel wanted in class and showed interest in them, that would encourage the participants to achieve a “B” or better in class.
- The majority of respondents who worked part-time or full-time perceived that if they had to miss class for work their instructor would allow them to complete an assignment when they return to class with a percentage of the grade off. This is an indication of the participants’ willingness to complete the assignment and understanding the penalty associated with the assignment being late.
- The majority of the participants in this study disagreed that someone from the community college had called them and provided help if they were struggling academically. This may be a result of miscommunication between the community college and the student. The community college may be using a form of communication method that the student does not use.
- The majority of the participants in this study received their support from personal relationships and not institutional relationships.

Conclusion 2: Participants perceived if their instructors showed interest in them and made them feel welcome in the classroom environment, they would have a better chance of achieving a “B” or higher in the classroom. Participants are not

communicating with any kind of academic support if they are failing. A majority of the participants are receiving some type of support from family members, significant others, and instructors. Contrary to the research of Foster (2008) which states African American males are present in class but fail to participate, the participants in this study actively participated in the classroom environment. Wood's (2014) research confirmed that multiple participants in his study stated that fear of being perceived as "dumb," "ignorant," and "stupid" halted their classroom engagement. The participants in this study were not fearful of being labeled dumb and actively engaged in the classroom.

Research Question 3

What are the perceptions of African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges regarding impediments to social engagement in the community college environment based on the Rural African American Male Community College Experience survey?

There were four survey questions that asked participants about social engagement perceptions. Those questions were questions 19-23. The results show the following.

Positive

- The majority of the participants in this study have asked for help from an instructor or tutor during the semester.
- Most of the participants in this study have worked on projects with classmates outside of the classroom setting. This is an indication that the participants in this study are engaging with their classmates outside of class.
- The majority of the participants in this study felt they belonged on campus.

- The majority of the participants believe social engagement enhances the chances of graduation.

Negative

- The majority of the participants had never participated in any campus events. This is an indication of that a majority of the participants in this study work and may not have time to attend social events.

Conclusion 3: Findings show that the participants in the survey believe social engagement is a component to graduating, but they are not participating in any social engagement events on campus. Contrary to the research of Wood (2014), African American male students are less inclined to ask for help from faculty fearing that they will be perceived as underprepared for college level work, destined for failure in college, and unwelcome in the campus community. The participants in this study are asking for help from their instructors and participating in study groups with classmates outside of the classroom.

Research Question 4

To what extent are there different perceptions among African American males in rural Louisiana community colleges based on age, first-generation college student status, academic goal, and full-time or part-time job status?

The findings of this study revealed statistically significant differences based on age, academic goal, and employment that positively or negatively affected the perceptions of the participants in the survey in the realms of the institution they attend, the relationship with instructors, and social engagement. The results show the following.

- Part-time workers were less likely than full-time workers to perceive there are programs on campus that have reached out to them to help them succeed.

- Technical diploma seekers were more likely than students without a goal to perceive that they are important to the administration and student body. This is an indication that a student's relationship with a goal at the community college has a direct correlation to how that student perceives his importance.
- Younger students were less likely than older students to perceive they are viewed as a negative stereotype at their community college.
- Younger students were less likely than older students to perceive that if they are struggling academically someone from their community college will call them.
- Younger students were less likely than older students to say they have worked on class projects or studied as a group outside of class. This is an indication of the younger students not understanding the importance of engagement with their peers outside of the classroom environment.

Conclusion 4: Age showed a statistically significant difference in institutional perceptions, instructor relationship perceptions, and social engagement perceptions. Contrary to the findings in this study, the research of Green (2014) stated older students socially engaged on campus far less than younger students. The younger students in this study were not socially engaged. Academic goal accounted for a statistically significant difference in perceptions of instructors. According to the research of Poondej and Lerdpornkulrat (2016), students' motivational goals directly influence their approaches to learning. Jobs status revealed a statistically significant difference in perceptions of instructors.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study were the time to gather participants and the number of community colleges that allowed their African American male students to participate in this study. The study took place over the summer semester term. Generally, the enrollment numbers are low in the summer semester. Only two rural community colleges located in Louisiana agreed to allow their students to participate in this study. Participants' mode of instruction, which may have an impact on the responses, was not considered in this study. In survey question 4 the participants' interpretation of the word family may have included other family members besides mother and father. The findings may have limited generalizability when compared to other studies with similar populations.

Recommendations for Practitioners and Policymakers

African American males will continue to enroll with the goal of achieving some type of credential in America's community colleges. African American males' lack of completion and retention is becoming an epidemic in community colleges across the country (Bush & Bush, 2010). Only 17% of all African American male students who enter community colleges will earn certificates or associate degrees or transfer to a 4-year university (Gose, 2014). Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations are offered as solutions to improve African American male students' perceptions of the institution, their relationships with instructors, and the importance of social engagement when it comes to retention and graduation:

- Administration should add the students' social media accounts as a contact method to distribute information about school services and social events.

- Administration should look to create a more diverse staff and faculty by creating a committee on diversity that focuses its efforts on diversifying its faculty through research and policy.
- Community colleges should employ a stronger advisement system that caters to guiding students academically through the curriculum and providing the students with a single point of contact throughout their enrollment at the community college.
- Community colleges should provide transportation to and from social events for satellite campus students.
- Community colleges should provide “how to support your loved ones while at our college” seminars at no cost for family members, significant others of students, and faculty and staff.
- Community colleges should research similar institutions that may have a better process or program of retaining and graduating the studied population and mimic their success.
- Community colleges should encourage participation in social activities and campus organizations by making it part of the Freshman Orientation course’s curriculum. Each student must participate in a set number of hours of social activities and be a part of an organization in order to receive full credit for this course.
- A representative from each demographic group mentioned in this study should participate in a focus group being led by a representative from the administration, staff, and faculty.

- The community college should mandate weekly tutoring sessions for students with a grade point average below 2.2 on a 4.0 scale.

Implications for Future Research

The disparaging outcomes of African American male students in community colleges continue to be an issue. A review of the successful outcomes will generate some best practices for community college administrations and faculty to follow.

Administration should give the survey instrument used in this study before and after the semester to gauge improvements and deficiencies. It is also suggested that all of the African American male community college students in Louisiana be studied to get a more accurate data snapshot of perceptions. The findings in this study revealed that African American male students perceive that social engagement is an important factor to graduation but fail to participate in anything socially on campus, and further research on that topic is needed. Research is needed to develop best practices on how to support students who are employed. The impact the African American male instructor has on academic outcomes of African American male students should be researched as well. Finally, this research study could be adapted to include Native American and Hispanic males in the community college environment.

Summary

Chapter V supplied a synopsis of the findings and conclusions of this dissertation study. Each research question was answered and conclusions given. This chapter also provided a discussion of findings; limitations; recommendations for community college leadership, staff, and faculty; and recommendations for future research. This study gave

voice to the African American male students in order to help include them in the finding of solutions to this issue in community colleges.

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APPENDIX A
AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE EXPERIENCE IN RURAL COMMUNITY
COLLEGES SURVEY

1* How old are you?

A 18-20	B 21-23	C 24-26
D 27-35	E 36 and above	

2* What is your overall goal at this community college?

A Complete my Associate's degree	B Obtain a Technical diploma	C Complete basic coursework so I can transfer to an university
D Obtain a Certificate	E I do not have a goal	

3* If you are employed please indicate the number of hours you work per week?

A 10 hours or less	B 11 to 14 hours	C 15 to 20 hours
D 21 to 35 hours	E 36 to 40 hours	F More than 40
G Not employed		

4* Are you the first person in your family to attend community college?

A Yes	B No
-------	------

5* The administration does a good job of making sure you feel comfortable and safe on campus.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

6* There are programs on campus that have reached out to you personally to help you succeed as a student and as a person.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

7* You feel like you are important to the administration and student body.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

8* The administration does a good job in promoting diversity in its faculty and staff.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

9* You feel comfortable talking with administration about your fears, experiences, and needs on campus.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

10* You feel you are viewed as a negative racial stereotype at this community college.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

11* At your community college you have taken one or more classes where the instructor was an African American male.

A Yes	B No
-------	------

12* In your opinion, you would have a higher chance of achieving a B or above in class if your instructor: Please select all that apply.

A Addressed me by name in class	B Showed interest in me	C Acted like they cared whether or not I passed the course
D Made me feel like I'm wanted in his or her classroom	E I don't need the instructor to do anything because I am going to make a B or above regardless	

13* If you are a working student with a flexible work schedule that may require you to miss class and some assignment days, your instructors will: (If you do not work please choose the I don't work option).

A Not excuse me and give me a 0	B Allow me to turn in the assignment earlier than the due date	C Give me time to complete the assignment when I return back to class with a percentage of my grade knocked off
D I don't work		

14* In my time, here at the community college my instructors have offered me help on assignments even when I have not asked.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

15* I feel that my presence and input in class are valued by my instructors.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

16* I am afraid to interact and ask questions in class because I fear of being labeled dumb.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

17* When I do not understand the course lesson or an assignment, I know I can count on my instructors to help me understand the course lesson or assignment better.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

A	B	C	D
---	---	---	---

18* If you are struggling academically someone from the community college will call you and advise you on how to pull up your grades.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

A	B	C	D
---	---	---	---

19* I have attended campus-sponsored events.

once or twice this semester

once a month

once a week

never

A	B	C	D
---	---	---	---

20* During this semester, you have asked for academic help from an instructor or tutor.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

A	B	C	D
---	---	---	---

21* You worked on class projects or studied as a group with other classmates outside of class.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

22* I feel I belong at this campus.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

23* Do you feel that participation in extracurricular activities, student organizations, and being social on campus enhances your overall chances for graduation?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

24* I know more than 3 African American males who have graduated or transferred to a 4-year university from this community college.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	B	C	D

25* I get positive academic encouragement and support from: (Choose all that may apply).

A one of my instructors	B My tutor	C Study group formed with my classmates
D My Mentor	E No one..I am in this by myself	F My Advisor
G A family member	H My significant other	

APPENDIX B
IRB APPROVAL LETTER



NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

DATE: June 27, 2017
TO: Stephanie King, Educational Leadership, Linda Coats; Mark Fincher; Susan Johnson, Aaron Jagers
FROM: Jodilyn Roberts, HRPP Officer, MSU HRPP
PROTOCOL TITLE: [African American male students# perceptions of the community college experience in rural Louisiana and how it influences graduation and retention rates.]
PROTOCOL NUMBER: IRB-17-302
Approval Date: June 23, 2017 Expiration Date: June 23, 2018

This letter is your record of the Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) approval of this study as exempt.

On June 23, 2017, the Mississippi State University Human Research Protection Program approved this study as exempt from federal regulations pertaining to the protection of human research participants.

The application qualified for exempt review under CFR 46.101(b)(2).

Exempt studies are subject to the ethical principles articulated in the Belmont Report, found at www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/#

If you propose to modify your study, you must receive approval from the HRPP prior to implementing any changes. The HRPP may review the exempt status at that time and request an amendment to your application as non-exempt research.

In order to protect the confidentiality of research participants, we encourage you to destroy private information which can be linked to the identities of individuals as soon as it is reasonable to do so.

The MSU IRB approval for this project will expire on June 23, 2018. If you expect your project to continue beyond this date, you must submit an application for renewal of this HRPP approval.

HRPP approval must be maintained for the entire term of your project. Please notify the HRPP

when your study is complete. Upon notification, we will close our files pertaining to your study.

If you have any questions relating to the protection of human research participants, please contact

the HRPP by phone at 325.3994 or email irb@research.msstate.edu.

We wish you success in carrying out your research project

Jodilyn Roberts

Review Type:	EXEMPT
IRB Number:	IORG0000467

APPENDIX C

PERMISSION TO USE THE MHE SURVEY

On May 23, 2017, at 10:14 AM, Aaron Jagers <aaron.jagers@gmail.com> wrote:

Dr. Schlossberg,

I am using an adaptation of the Mattering Scales for Adult Students in Higher Education (MHE) for my dissertation to collect information about African American male students in my dissertation. I would like your permission to use the instrument. I am attaching the survey that you inspired that I created and my dissertation proposal to this email.

Thank you,

Aaron Jagers

From: **Nancy Schlossberg** <nancyks4@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, May 23, 2017 at 10:32 AM
Subject: Re: Permission to use Dr. Schlossberg in dissertation
To: Aaron Jagers <aaron.jagers@gmail.com>

Aaron Jagers,

Your study is an important one and I am pleased that the work on mattering might be of help to you. I can give you permission to use the Mattering Scales in its original form.

Good luck to you.

Nancy Schlossberg
NancyKS4@gmail.com
www.transitionsthroughlife.com