THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC MENTORING PROGRAMS AT PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

This research paper will examine the usefulness of undergraduate mentoring programs, specifically those geared towards supporting African American and Hispanic male students attending a PWI; highlighting pre–college and existing environmental factors affecting both African American and Hispanic students, including perceptions, academic outcomes, mentoring approaches, and the significance of ethnicity and gender in a mentoring relationship. Lastly, influential approaches to mentoring: "ethnic–matching mentoring" and "gender–matching mentoring" are discussed.

Gender affects students of color's academic outcomes *and* perceptions on a college campus (Frierson, Hargrove, & Lewis, 1994). The conclusion of the study suggests necessary support services are needed in order to positively alter the lives of male students of color.

Introduction

Mentoring has varying definitions in the literature. According to Healy and Welchert (1990), "no widely accepted definition of mentoring [had yet] been articulated … [they were] inconsistent, idiosyncratic definitions of mentoring … that frequently lacked grounding in theory" (p.17). Mentoring is a close relationship between a mentee and a mentor where essential knowledge and wisdom is passed down to the inexperienced mentee by an experienced mentor (LaVant, Anderson, & Tiggs, 1997). Despite the differing definitions, researchers rarely debate the effectiveness of undergraduate and graduate mentoring programs to aid in the success of students. Jacobi (1991) shares that there is a common message among scholars and students who agree that mentoring is an essential part of a successful undergraduate education.

Additional research clearly noted mentoring as an effective practice for most college students; more recently, mentoring has been deemed crucial for African American and Hispanic students who attend predominantly White institutions (PWIs) (Jacobi, 1991; Frierson, et. al., 1994). Recently, the clear paucity of African American and Hispanic students' attending PWIs strengthens the significance of providing mentoring support to increase success among multicultural students (Reddick, 2006). Rodriguez, Guido–DiBrito, Torres, and Talbot (2000) state PWIs should encourage Hispanic students to, "develop mentor–like relationships with upper–class students who can serve as guides or interpreters of the physical, social, and cognitive domains of the [campus] environment" (p. 521). To this end, African American and Hispanic students attending PWIs are encouraged to engage in mentoring programs, which charges PWIs to continue implementing mentoring programs targeted toward African American and Hispanic students (Jacobi, 1991).

Statement of the Problem

There is a national need to study the effectiveness of African American and Hispanic mentoring programs at PWIs, particularly those focused on males. To illustrate this need, recent data show, "In 2002, Black men comprised only 4.3 percent of students enrolled at institutions of higher education, the exact same percentage as in 1976" (Harper, 2012, p.3). More recently, in 2009, 55.3 percent of undergraduate African American males were football and basketball players at public NCAA Division I universities, when only 3.6 percent were *general*–undergraduate students (Harper, 2012). Jacobi (1991) recommended that mentoring primarily aided the success of women of color who attended a PWI, by providing academic and social support. In recent years the gains made by African Americans in higher education has been largely attributed to the achievements of African American women and not their male counterparts (LaVant et al., 1997). This is not surprising given that traditionally more Black women enroll in college resulting in less than half of the total number of Black college students being male (Cuyjet, 1997). The same can be interpreted when studying the benefits of mentoring

related to Hispanics and gender as researchers have studied Hispanic women, without regard to their male counterparts (Rodriguez, Guido-DiBrito, Torres & Tolbot, 2000).

African American and Hispanic women have received a copious amount of support during college while African American and Hispanic males have not (LaVant et al., 1997; Rodriguez et al., 2000). Research (i.e., Jacobi, 1991; LaVant et al., 1997; Rodriguez et al., 2000) adds to the foundation that African American and Hispanic male mentoring programs are necessary given the disproportionate amount of input African American and Hispanic males have contributed to the gains of their ethnicities in higher education. African American and Hispanic male students at PWIs are in need of additional mentoring to support their academic and social adjustments.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to explore the following research questions: 1) To what extent do undergraduate mentoring programs support the academic and social adjustment of African American and Hispanic students attending PWIs, and 2) Why is it important to develop exclusively male mentoring programs (EMMP) specifically geared towards supporting African American and Hispanic male students attending a PWI? The underlying goal is to increase the awareness of mentoring African American and Hispanic males at PWIs.

Statistics paint a vivid picture with less than half of all Black males enrolling at four–year institutions earning a bachelor's degree within a six–year timeframe (Harper, 2012). Many factors, including race, play a role in this low percentage. Du Bois (1903), stated that the "The problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line" (p. vii). In the twentieth century, factors of the color line are apparent in the mentoring relationship and although a majority of the literature available exclusively pertains to African American's students, there are still significant reasons to build research on mentoring as it relates to Hispanics. Hispanics are among the least educated ethnic group in the United States which is one reason that indicates Hispanic students attending PWIs would benefit from research on mentoring (Rodriguez et al., 2000). The lack of research supports the need for Student Affairs professionals to purposely consider the importance of the color line and gender when it comes to mentoring students who attend a PWI. By redefining their environments and shifting their campus' cultural values, PWIs can begin to address the specific needs of the student body, including targeted support for African American and Hispanic students, particularly males (Pounds, 1987; LaVant et al., 1997). Recognizing the specific needs of the student body begins with identifying pre–college and environmental factors facing all students of color attending PWIs.

Review of the Literature

Pre–College and Environmental Factors Faced by Students of Color at PWIs

Historically, students of color have faced various pre–college and existing environmental factors that posed challenges during their years attending a PWI (Astin, 1982). Students of color often find it difficult to "cultivate a sense of belonging" at predominantly white campuses due to unwelcoming cold and hostile environments (Strayhorn, 2008).

Since the early 1960s, African American students traditionally attended historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) (Allen, 1985). Years after the trenchant Civil Rights movements of the mid–1960s, desegregation of America's higher education institutions led to increased enrollment of African American students at PWIs (Strayhorn & Terrell, 2010). Historically, African American and Hispanic students often faced many challenging factors before and during their tenure at college that impeded their success (Allen, 1985; Rodriguez et al., 2000; Strayhorn et. al., 2010). For consistency with the research, the term "persistence" is used instead of success, because it is generally utilized more often than the word "success" to characterize a college student's matriculation.

The myriad of factors indicating African American student persistence over several decades were combined into two categories consisting of (a) pre–college factors and (b) environmental factors. Some African American student's pre–college factors are "high school grades, aptitude test scores, study habits, and secondary school curriculum" (Astin, 1982, p.92) These pre-college factors affect their overall academic preparation and persistence in college. Astin (1982) also states that students of color are more satisfied with their undergraduate experience if they participated in a college preparatory curriculum during high school.

Recent research indicates a lack of support for students of color in the areas of financial literacy, cultural sensitivity, and academic disparity which often times lead to feelings of isolation (Strayhorn et. al., 2010). Additional research attributes the lack of African American student success at PWIs to high schools that are underprepared [*sic*] in supporting and aiding their student's academic achievement, depressing socioeconomic status (SES), internalization of negative stereotypes portrayed by the popular media, and lack of parental or familial support (Allen, 1985; Rodriguez et al., 2000; Strayhorn et. al., 2010). In addition to pre–college conditions affecting African American student persistence at a PWI, recent literature suggests that the college environment plays a critical role in the success of students of color.

The success of African American students can be affected by external factors. For example, for African American students in the late 1970s, these external factors included living with family rather than in a residence hall, having a job while taking classes, and attending a two–year community college rather than a fairly selective or prominent four–year institution (Astin, 1982). Astin (1982) adds that of the first–year students of color,

those with the best chance of eventually attaining a college degree are both ambitious as freshmen or those who desire to attain a graduate degree.

Nearly 30 years later, some of the same challenges mentioned by Astin (1982) still serve as heavy "baggage" for African American college students today. Bonner (2010) states that "much like grand bodies of water, comprising multiple and competing tributaries, so too, is achievement of [African American students] affected by a number of influences" (p. 66). These influences are related to pre–college experiences and existing environmental factors, which are often times out of the student's control. Although African American students have faced factors impeding their success, Hispanic students are expected to encounter even more barriers in the years to come.

In 1993 the United States Hispanic population was projected to reach 38.2 million by 2020, resulting in an increase of Hispanic student college enrollment (O'Brien, 1993). In 2010 out of the 12.2 million students in "two- or four-year colleges" Hispanic students "accounted for 1.8 million of the overall enrollment" (Fry, 2011, p. 3). Researchers state that the reason behind the increase of Hispanic student enrollment is due to the lack of available work in America's job force resulting in an increase of Hispanic enrollment in college. Fry (2011) states, "By the fourth quarter of 2010, [the share of 20- to 24-year-olds who are employed] had risen to only 60.3% and hence some young [Hispanic] adults may be pursuing college because they cannot find work" (p. 15). Similarly, many American–young–adults, which include Hispanics, have a difficult time finding jobs due to a decrease in job security in America (Fry, 2011). This means that more Hispanic students are graduating from college and attempting to become members of America's work force. However, as the availability of jobs decrease for those Hispanic graduates, colleges and universities are opening its doors to larger numbers.

The number of Hispanic students attending college today has drastically increased. However, research on "unique factors facing this group of students are not readily available" (Strayhorn, 2008, p. 303). Despite the fact that Hispanic students have begun to close the gap in college enrollment, Fry (2011) states, "Hispanic young adults continue to be the least educated major racial or ethnic group in terms of completion of a bachelor's degree" (p. 5). One contributing factor that relates to the minimal college persistence of Hispanic students is poor "schooling levels of Hispanic immigrants" (Fry, 2010, p. 6). Much like African American students, most Hispanic students are affected by pre–college and environmental factors that make it difficult for them to successfully earn a college degree.

 "Low SES and familial obligations" are among the leading pre–college factors faced by Hispanic students, which affect their completion of college (Rodriguez et al., 2000, p.514). Hispanic students face unique challenges that jeopardize their possibility for persistence in higher education (Strayhorn, 2008). "Strong familial obligations [such as working an off campus job] may prevent Hispanic students from establishing a sense of belonging on campus" (Strayhorn, 2008, p. 302). To this end, Strayhorn (2008) states

that, for some Hispanic students, "paying for college can be difficult and provoke undue psychological stress; which, in turn, affects persistence" (p. 302). Hispanic students' persistence is not only affected by "psychological stress", but also by demographic characteristics such as "parental income" (Strayhorn, 2008; Astin, 1982). Most Hispanic student success while attending a PWI is strongly related to their "parental income, parental education, parental occupation, and racial composition of their high school" (Astin, 1982, pp.94-95). Because a student might be consumed with these pre–college factors, Hispanic students are more likely to lack a "sense of belonging [at a PWI], which, in turn, may lead to [them] leaving college" (Strayhorn, 2008, p. 313).

Some Hispanic students find it difficult to identify a support system that will assist them in locating places to study, building relationships with faculty, and physically helping them to navigate around an unknown campus (Rodriguez et. al., 2000). For example, "some faculty members … ascribe negative stereotypes to [Hispanic] students and, thus, come to view them as uneducable, lazy, illiterate, and unteachable[*sic*]" (Strayhorn, 2008, p. 303). Rodriguez et al, (2000), state that given this increase in Hispanic student enrollment, PWIs environmental factors affecting Hispanic students' success, such as lack of institutional value or a non–existing feeling of hospitality, will need to be addressed by senior level academic and student affairs administrators. New trends indicate that more Hispanic students are enrolling in college in 2010, and could eventually surpass African Americans as the largest ethnic group at colleges (Fry, 2010). However, even with this increase of enrollment, traditionally there have been few campus services that specifically meet the unique needs of Hispanic students (Villalpando, 2004).

Both African American and Hispanic students have often described the climate and environment of PWIs as both "chilly," and "restrictive" (Dahlvig, 2010; Strayhorn et. al., 2010). These factors make a compelling case for the existence of MMPs for African American and Hispanic students, because research has shown that some are still "not comfortable walking around their individual campuses" (Strayhorn et. al., 2010, p.1).

The literature acknowledges that students of color face pre–college academic and existing environmental factors. Both of these categories affect their yearly success and eventual persistence while attending a PWI. Bonner (2010) adds that students of color attending PWIs encounter "multiple and competing challenges that have to be addressed, sometimes in tandem, [and] at other times in turn. But they all must be addressed" (p. 72). One method of addressing these factors is by implementing MMPs and providing support to students relating to academic and social transitions. Given the many types of MMPs it is important to consider which approaches are most effective when mentoring students of color at PWIs.

Approaches of effectiveness used by multicultural mentoring programs at PWIs

The existing literature stresses the importance of the mentoring relationships for students of color attending a PWI as the heart of their college experience (Frierson, et. al., 1994).

Researchers (i.e., Dahlvig, 2010; Jacobi, 1991; Frierson et. al., 1994; Strayhorn et al., 2010) have frequently recommended mentoring as a means of supporting students of color through their years of college as they deal with the numerous factors that can hinder their persistence. Often times the effectiveness of an MMP can depend on the approach that is taken. Researchers (i.e., Jacobi, 1991; Saddler, 2010; and Healy and Welchert, 1990) discuss various approaches to MMPs. Among the many types of mentoring relationships, two of the most unique found in the literature are "ethnic–matching mentoring" and "gender–matching mentoring."

An ethnic–matching mentoring approach is used to refer to the race or ethnicity of the mentor providing support to the student [under–class mentee] (Jacobi, 1991). The terms race and ethnicity are used interchangeably and depends on the researchers who used the terms. Dahlvig (2010) points out the ethnicity of a college student matters as an important factor in developing a substantial mentoring relationship. Similarly, in the book *Race Matters,* West (1993) transparently illustrates that *race* matters in all aspects of America's past and, more importantly, that race matters in all aspects of America's present. The significance of race –or– ethnicity holds a pivotal role in a multicultural mentoring relationship.

When studying the effects that ethnicity plays in relation to the success of college students participating in MMPs, there is a positive correlation among ethnic–matching in mentoring relationships (Dahlvig, 2010; Reddick, 2006; Frierson et. al., 1994; Jacobi, 1991; Bonner, 2010). Fierson et al, (1994) suggests that students of color paired with mentors of the same ethnicity were likely to have greater progress throughout their collegiate careers. The consideration of ethnicity in the mentoring relationship is a valid concern given the large majority of White students and faculty on the campus of a PWI (Jacobi, 1991). Furthermore, ethnic–matching mentoring is encouraged to help circumvent the circumstances of African American and Hispanic students attending a PWI, including feelings of alienation or becoming victims of racism (Jacobi, 1991). Particularly, with African American students, some feel "that only African Americans can meet the needs of African American students in a mentoring relationship" (Bonner, 2010). Additionally, Hispanic students also tend to advance academically once they have developed a "mentor–like" bond with upper–class students with whom they can relate to on various levels, including ethnicity (Rodriguez et. al., 2000).

Another factor that can be used to match mentors and mentees is gender. A gender–matching mentoring approach is used to refer to the gender of a mentor providing the support to the student [under–class mentee] (Jacobi, 1991, p. 519). The relevance of biological sex in mentoring programs is frequently studied alongside ethnicity. The last two sections will focus primarily on the male gender by (a) identifying critical factors faced by males, (b) factors faced by African American and Hispanic males attending a PWI, and (c) future implications for Student Affairs professionals for EMMPs.

Unique Factors Faced by African American and Hispanic Males at PWIs

> I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me. Like the bodiless heads you see sometimes in circus sideshows, it is as though I have been surrounded by mirrors of hard, distorting glass. When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination–indeed, everything and anything except me (Ellison, 1952, p. 3).

As Ellison (1952) notes in the novel *Invisible Man*, the male figure in society often goes unnoticed and currently the same is happening to African American and Hispanic males attending PWIs (Jenkins, 2006). According to the results of the United States Census, there were a total of 10,214,150 males enrolled in public or private colleges or graduate schools in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, Table B14004). Even with a large number of males attending college, factors faced by males in college are often times overlooked or assumed to be included in the general discussion of student development (Davis & Laker, 2004; Ludeman, 2004; Cuyjet, 1997). It is important to note that males do have unique pre–college factors that impede their persistence in college. At an early age boys learn what society expects of the male gender (Davis et al., 2004; Ludeman, 2004). Traditionally, boys are inundated with messages similar to what Brown (1965) wrote:

> In the United States a real boy climbs trees, disdains girls, dirties his knees, plays with soldiers, and takes blue for his favorite color. … When they go to school, real boys prefer manual training, gym, and arithmetic. … In college the boys smoke pipes, drink beer, and major in engineering or physics. … The real boy matures into a "man's man" who plays poker, goes hunting, drinks brandy, and dies in war (p.161).

Socialization tends to sculpt young boys into a "rigid, sexist, or restricted gender role" that often times leads to many unhealthy choices by college aged men (Davis et al., 2004, p. 50). Men typically outnumber women in multiple negative behavioral categories such as drinking, which include consumption, alcohol abuse, and dependence (Capraro, 2000). It has been reported by Ludeman (2004) that college judicial programs and services interact the most with first– and second–year collegiate men, who are mentally underdeveloped, irresponsible and who have yet to grow feelings of comfort at the institutions they attend.

These erratic behaviors are mostly generated by the theory of a "gender straitjacket," as Pollack (1999) writes, which is stitched together by a plethora of mixed nonverbal messages provided by societies' expectations of what "real boys" are supposed to be (Brown, 1965). For example, there is a fear of expressing emotions, and acknowledgment of feminine qualities among men, as it is seen as revealing weakness, which creates developmental conflicts for men (Ludeman, 2004). However, like most college students, college–aged men must grow and develop throughout college. Traditionally students must learn how to develop competence, manage emotions, move

towards interdependence, develop interpersonal relationships, establish their identity, and develop purpose and integrity (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 1993).

There is a national need to study the unique factors faced by African American and Hispanic males at PWIs. To illustrate this need, data suggests "only 37 percent of African Americans who enter a four–year college in this country graduated within six years from the same institution they entered as freshmen" (Harper, 2012, p.3). In recent years the gains made by African Americans in higher education has been largely attributed to the achievements of African American women and not their male counterparts (LaVant et al., 1997). African American males have historically faced challenges associated with prejudgment, disdain, and oppression (Jenkins, 2006). A majority of these factors are fueled by unpleasant perceptions that African American males represent dire trouble and social disorder (Hopkins, 1997). Some African American males are often viewed as troubled, oppressed, and hopeless. It is suggested that they attend college not to learn but rather to throw a ball around and advance in their athletic careers, while draining the financial aid that is provided from their athletic scholarships, which in most cases is their only funding to stay in college (Harper, 2009).

These perceptions continue to feed into the misconceptions of both African American and Hispanic males as "threatening, unfriendly, and less intelligent than any other distinguishable segment of the American population" (Cuyjet, 1997, p. 8). Many African American and Hispanic males begin to internalize these negative perceptions and unconsciously develop an "inferior perception of their own abilities and aspirations as compared to others" (Cuyjet, 1997, p. 8). Because of these internalized beliefs about themselves, "Black boys" often times exhibit negative behaviors in a classroom setting, which in turn causes some White and Black teachers to remove the "Black boys" from the educational environment; this only exacerbates their lack of academic growth (Jenkins, 2006). This action to remove young African American males from the classroom setting perpetuates the research that states by fourth grade only 12 percent of African American male students read at or above their grade level while 38 percent of their White counterparts do (Gabriel, 2010 November 09).

This educational gap is also seen at the collegiate level. A study surveying African American men indicated that academic performance is particularly a factor affecting this group of students. This study illustrates that 16.5 percent of African American men answered that they received As or Bs, where as 18.9 percent answered they received C or below (Cuyjet, 1997). Among other factors affecting the African American male attending a PWI are the significance of the "family unit, the drug trade, violence and criminality, and hip–culture" (Jenkins, 2006, pp.132-150).

Recent Findings on Exclusively Male Mentoring Programs

According to Nealy (2009), on the campus of the Ohio State University (OSU), the 2001 freshmen African American male second–year retention rate was 68.6 percent. Seven

years later, the second–year retention rate for freshmen African American males reached 91 percent. This success is attributed to PWIs such as OSU implementing an on campus resource center that advocates for the African American male and their needs. The Todd Anthony Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male opened on the campus of OSU in 2005, with goals to facilitate African American male "personal growth, academic achievement and professional leadership through specialized programs that positively impact Black male undergraduate students" (Nealy, 2009, p.1).

Similar programs nationwide strive to match undergraduate African American males with either upperclassman African American male students or faculty (LaVant et. al., 1997). Programs such as: *The Student African American Brotherhood* (SAAB), founded on the campus of Georgia Southwestern University, *The Black Male Think Tank,* implemented on campuses such as Texas Southern University, *The Meyerhoff Program,* based at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, *The Bridge,* initiated at Georgia State University, and *Project BEAM*, at West Virginia University, all provide innovative programming which have been documented to be beneficial in accomplishing their goals (LaVant et. al., 1997).

African American men require support systems to effectively make the transition into the collegiate environment successfully (Saddler, 2010; LaVant et. al., 1997; Nealy, 2009; Cuyjet, 1997). Cuyjet (1997) reaffirms the implication of providing EMMPs for African American males. Cuyjet acknowledges that African American males, who enter college successfully, arrive in a state of mental confusion resulting from "poorer schooling; financial hardships; and other social, cultural, and economical disadvantages" (1997, p.14). Although the recent findings seem to produce positive results, it is important to be critical of the existing literature and programs by providing analysis and research based recommendations for future Student Affairs professionals.

Analysis and Recommendations

The research reviewed for this paper intended to explore the following research questions: 1) To what extent do undergraduate mentoring programs support the academic and social adjustments of African American and Hispanic students attending PWIs, and 2) Why is it important to develop undergraduate mentoring programs specifically geared towards supporting African American and Hispanic male students attending a PWI? The underlying goal is to increase the awareness of EMMPs for African American and Hispanic male at PWIs.

Among the various pre–college factors that affect students of color's success, several key factors remain consistent throughout the literature. These factors include academic preparation, socioeconomic status, and financial resources (Allen, 1985; Rodriguez et al., 2000; Bonner, 2010). Although these findings are consistent, some of the key factors mentioned by the above researchers are narrow in their scope of relevance to students of color's persistence at college. Astin (1982) discusses the significant impact of pre–

college academic preparation on student success in higher education. More than any other pre–college factor, academic preparation before college, has the strongest relationship to first–year college student outcomes. Among the list of pre–college factors identified by Astin (1982), "high school grades, aptitude test scores, and study habits," the narrowest factor in relevance to a student's persistence is a student's "secondary school curriculum" (pp. 92-93).

Although academic preparation in high school is a significant determinant of success in college, researchers failed to acknowledge secondary school curriculum as an external pre-college factor. Unlike study habits or high school grades, which are realistically under the student's control, secondary school curriculum is not. School districts, boards of education, and other stakeholders directly impact policies that determine a school's curriculum. These policies disproportionately affect low–income and multicultural students who often attend high schools that lack the necessary resources to prepare them for academic success in college. Less research should focus on the factors that are under student's control, and the affect these factors have on persistence. Instead a focus should be directed towards the SES factors that affect a student's persistence in college (Allen, 1985; Rodriguez et al., 2000; Bonner, 2010).

Instead of only acknowledging the compelling research and studies that affect a portion of the student body, PWIs should adopt the idea of "When you know better, you do better." Once campuses recognize the factors faced by students of color, it is important for each campus to acknowledge and take action in helping to support students of color transitions. Given the significant factors faced by students of color and particularly males, campuses should implement multicultural mentoring programs to avoid sending a message of insignificance to their students of color. Campuses should utilize the tested approaches to mentoring, ethic-matching and gender-matching mentoring, in order to achieve optimum persistence among their male students of color.

Campuses need to recognize the success of nationally recognized departments such as the Todd Anthony Bell National Resource Center on the African American Male at The Ohio State University. Other PWIs should create its own exclusively male mentoring program that addresses the unique challenges faced by male students of color. In addition, there is enough evidence to suggest that administrators and professors should be required to attend diversity–training workshops. These workshops would be created by a planning committee that develops a strategic plan with an objective to: increase the awareness or pre–college and environmental factors faced by students of color, and how the interactions, teachings practices, and professional behavior of administrators and professors can reinforce or rather help to change the impact these factors have on students of color persistence.

Additionally, it is a financial benefit for university administrators at PWIs to exhaust all options in their attempt to increase the persistence of male students of color. For

example, a university could increase their yearly budget as a result of more tuition money funded by a boost of enrollment by male students of color.

Continuous research related to AAM students' needs to be conducted. Research should target how socioeconomic status negatively affects male students of color and particularly how the concept of poverty relates to inadequate academic achievement among males. Additional research should be conducted to illustrate the impact an academically inadequate K–12 system, can have on male students of color, and track which K–12 school districts in the state of Ohio have the highest college drop-out rates.

Conclusion

Undergraduate mentoring programs support the academic and social adjustments of students of color attending a PWI. It is implied that these mentoring programs have a direct impact on the success of students of color and it can be argued that exclusively male mentoring programs will follow suit. Gender affects students of color's academic outcomes and perceptions on a college campus. This study concludes that Student Affairs practitioners could positively alter the lives of male students of color by providing the necessary support services. Traditionally society presumes that most of the male gender requires the least amount of assistance in life, but research suggests the opposite. It is time for PWIs to support male students of color on their campuses in order to show that the institution is genuinely invested in male students' worth and value as students and future positive contributors to society. The Hispanic student body has steadily increased over the past few years and with this increase, there is a need for specialized support services at PWIs. Services that support African American students are frequently assumed to support all ethnic groups on campus. This assumption has inadvertently resulted in many PWIs perpetuating the notion that all ethnic and gender groups face the same challenges, when in actuality the challenges are starkly different.

PWIs can no longer stand aside and allow the strenuous pre–college and environmental factors to negatively affect the academic and social adjustments of male students of color. When we *know better* we should *do better*. Student Affairs professionals can *do better* by using this research to influence institutions' value–sets as it relates to the creation of support systems exclusively for male students of color attending a PWI.

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