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From the Mouths of Mentors: A Qualitative Case Study Exploring the Perspectives of African-American Men Who Mentor Secondary School-Aged African-American Males

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FROM THE MOUTHS OF MENTORS: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY
EXPLORING THE PERSPECTIVES OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN WHO
MENTOR SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGED AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES

by

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ABSTRACT

High profile deaths of unarmed African-American males caused much discourse in the years 2012 through 2015. Embedded in the news and on the minds of people of all ages were these deaths and the circumstances that surrounded them. Documentation of actions by some of the young males indicated that questionable behaviors existed prior to their demise. However, little documentation exists regarding attempts to assist these African-American male youths in changing these undesirable behaviors. One traditional approach to meeting the needs of African-American male students occurs through mentoring.

Although, the *My Brother's Keeper Initiative* launched by President Obama's administration sparked an increase in the number of mentoring programs aimed at disrupting the school-to-prison pipeline, the need still exists. This case study identified 10 African-American men who voluntarily mentored secondary school-aged African-American male youth. As their stories unfolded, they answer the question: What motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama?

Key Terms: African-American males, mentors, mentoring, mentoring programs,
              school-based mentoring

iii

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to a very special person, who believed in me when I didn't

believe in myself. She taught me to never quit, no matter what obstacles I might face, to

push through them. This is for you Mom, Gloria B. Wheeler

I DIDN'T QUIT!

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level much higher than I had anticipated, thank you. Because of your commitment, many of the young men from the program are now productive citizens. Once again, thank you.

I take this opportunity to record a sincere thanks to my former co-workers, Dr. Kisha Tolbert-Woods and Dr. Tara Foster, who assisted me along the way and Dr. Pamela Williams, who inspired me to pursue this doctoral degree.

I would like to publically express gratitude to my sister, Lakeisha Brandon, my friends, Judy Casselberry and Wilena McCarter, who were in the trenches with me during the entire process. I look forward to assisting you during your educational journeys. I whole heartily would like to thank Michael Anthony for being there to listen when things got rough and for providing me with breaks, as needed. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank everyone who directly or indirectly gave their helping hand in this venture.

Sincerely,

Tonya Wheeler Anthony

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 1

Introduction

High profiles deaths of unarmed African-American male youth in the years 2012 through 2015 caused much discourse in all America. This topic was embedded in sermons by clergy (Banks, 2014; Tillman, 2015), examined in current events in schools (Emerson, Norfleet, & Reinan, 2015; Hagopian, 2015; Perry, 2015), debated by adults over dinner, and discussed by children during playtime. Many African-American male students confront challenges, such as the lack of positive adult attention, adverse living conditions, constant exposure to crime and violence, and increased stress-laden peer-to-peer encounters (Bennett & Miller, 2006; Harper & Davis, 2012; Kafele, 2014; Parker & Maggard, 2009). According to Hardiman (2013), African-American males are leading in categories like incarceration, homicide, school dropout rates, fatherless homes, drug addiction, sexually transmitted disease, high unemployment, and poverty.

One traditional approach to meeting the needs of African-American male students occurs through mentoring. Through mentoring relationships, African-American male students who are culturally responsive are afforded the opportunity to create strong adult relationships (Kafele, 2012; Kunjufu, 2005). Mentoring is defined as a positive relationship with a non-parental adult in the life of a young person (Gordon, Iwamato, Ward, Potts, & Boyd, 2009).

Traditionally, African-American ancestors interceded for their future generations by fighting against slavery, police brutality, racism, and many more problems that the

African-American community had to deal with during different eras in the United States (Hardiman, 2013). The widely used ancient African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child," is as useful today as it was when it was originated. African-American male youth need males of the same ethnicity who have common spiritual and cultural experiences with whom they can identify to help guide them in a society governed predominately by White males (Daniels, 2012; Miller, 2008; Sciencecodex.com, 2016).

As noted by Wynn (2007), African-American male mentoring of other African-American males may be the most important strategy in ensuring the successful development and maturation of young African-American males into a generation of men who will be loving fathers to their children, faithful husbands to their wives, and leaders in their communities. However, previous research findings suggest that encouraging community-based, culturally responsive relationships between African-American male students and mentors will lead to increased positive behavioral and academic outcomes for African-American males (Gordon, et al., 2009; Jarjoura, 2013; Lott, 2008; Morrow & Styles, 1995).

Mentoring can be traced back to 875 BC when the Greek citizen, Mentor, was charged by King Odysseus (or Ulysses as known in Roman myths) to watch over his son Telemachus and his palace while he was fighting in the Trojan War (Nayab & Schneid, 2011). As noted in a lecture by Cheatham (2009), Athena, the goddess of wisdom, comes to Telemachus to pass on the gift of wisdom; however, in an effort to protect herself from suitors who were trying to convince Penelope that her husband was dead, Athena disguised herself as Mentor. During these years of development, Athena provided Telemachus with wisdom, inspiration to learn from his father, and guidance to emulate

him in providing protection for his mother (Cheatham, 2009). This classic tale has captured the fascination of many; it is significant that Mentor played such an important role in the life of Telemachus (Hean, 2005).

There are many notable mentoring programs throughout the country such as: (a) Big Brothers Big Sisters, which has existed for over a century; (b) 100 Black Men of America, Inc., located throughout America and internationally, and the newest, (c) My Brother's Keeper, an initiative developed in a response to a challenge made to cities, counties, and communities across the country by President Barack Obama. However, many youths who arguably need mentoring most, African-American males, are frequently not as involved in these mentoring programs as they need to be.

According to the MENTOR/Nationally Mentoring Partnership, nearly 17.6 million young Americans need or want mentoring, but only three million are in formal, high-quality mentoring relationships. Hence, there is a national crisis for African-American male youth seeking mentors because of the challenges involved in recruiting and retaining adult African-American male mentors (Miller, 2008; St. Myer, 2016). Mentoring has been practiced throughout history by many great men, including: Aristotle who mentored Alexander the Great, Merlin who mentored King Arthur of England, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who mentored Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, and Haydn who mentored both Beethoven and Mozart (Nayab & Schneid, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

The loss of African-American male lives to senseless violence during the years 2012 and 2015 resulted in the development of a national "Black Lives Matter" movement (Garza, 2014). According to recent reports, police officers and others who are hired to

protect and serve the public killed young, unarmed, African-American males between the ages of 15 and 24 (Frierman, 2014). Embedded in the news and on the minds of people of all ages were these deaths and the circumstances that surrounded them. Documentation of actions by some of the young males indicated that questionable behavior existed prior to their demise.

On March 26, 2012, the Miami Herald revealed that Trayvon Martin had received multiple suspensions stemming from possession of a burglary tool as well as a dozen pieces of female jewelry. Martin was also caught with marijuana and a marijuana pipe (Cashill, 2013). On April 30, 2015, Tom Cleary reported on Fox Nation that Freddie Gray's arrest record included 18 mainly drug-related offenses (Clearly, 2015).

Little documentation exists regarding attempts to assist these African-American male youths in changing these undesired behaviors. However, Trayvon Martin attended school in the Miami-Dade School District which has its own police department (Cashill, 2013). According to the mission of the Miami-Dade School District Police Department (M-DSPD), one of the roles of its officers is to divert offending students, especially black males, from the criminal justice system (Cashill, 2013). As reported in the New York Times, Michael Brown's mother, Ms. McSpadden, said she relied on family and friends, including a retired juvenile officer, to help mentor her son (Eligen, 2014).

Under these circumstances, a need existed for African-American men who could identify with African-American male youth. These individuals could emulate the actions of their ancestors by teaching African-American male youth coping mechanisms to survive in society (Baruti, 2012; Daniels, 2012). Even though, there have been numerous studies on mentoring and the positive effects of mentoring on African-American males in

both academic and social arenas, the need persists (Anchrum, 2015; Bass, 2011; Coonrod, 2012; Derrick, 2009; Jenkins-Williams, 2013; Lance, 2015; Lavergne, 2011). There are many African-American male youth who are in need of a mentoring relationship with males of the same race who have experienced many of the same situations. Based on a review of mentoring studies, there is paucity in the research literature regarding the lived experiences of African-American men who mentor African-American male youth.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the lived experiences of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama.

Research Question

This qualitative case study focused on the central question: What are the lived experiences that motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama? The following sub-question provided additional information regarding the topic of interest:

1. How do lived experiences influence the beliefs and core values of the mentor?

Significance of the Study

Mentoring young men of color, particularly African-American males, became a major focus of the Obama administration following the death of Trayvon Martin (Madhani, 2014), as well as an increasing number of Black men who were dying, many as a result of encounters with police officers (DeCarr, 2015). President Obama launched an initiative aimed at providing services to promote literacy, early childhood education

and healthy lifestyles, and to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline (Jackson, 2014); issues that often affect the African-American community. This initiative sparked an increase in mentoring programs throughout local cities, counties, and states across the United States. As reported by Barnes (2016), over 200 communities in 49 states have adopted the My Brother's Keeper Initiative. Even though the number of mentoring programs has increased, there still exists a need for more African-American male mentors (Daniels, 2012).

However, this case study identified 10 African-American men who voluntarily mentored secondary school-aged, African- American male youth. As their stories unfolded in this phenomenological case study, they answered the following question: What motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama? As noted, mentoring relationships may provide African-American male youth with the necessary support mechanisms to better combat antisocial behavior and academic apathy (Howard, 2013).

The findings from this study may provide information to researchers, program directors, and policy makers to more effectively recruit and retain new mentors and to decrease mentor attrition in the African-American community. However, the ultimate goal of this study is to contribute to the body of literature regarding mentoring relationships from the perspectives of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American male youth.

Limitations

This study was subject to the following limitations:

1. This study focused on the perspectives and experiences of African-American male mentors.

2. Using qualitative research methods limited the generalizability of data to the group being studied.

3. As the primary data collection instrument for this qualitative study, the researcher was value-laden and brought personal biases to the study as data were analyzed and interpreted.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the unit of analysis which was confined to:

1. African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American male youth.

2. African-American men who served as mentors in the *Boys to Men Mentoring* program.

3. African-American men who served as a mentor in Alabama.

Assumptions

The following assumptions outlined the study:

1. There existed a sufficient pool of African-American male mentors to participate in the study.

2. Selected participants were willing, cooperative, and forthcoming about their experiences.

3. Perspectives of the mentors accurately reflected their practice and honestly depicted their experiences.

4. The researcher was a learner in the process as knowledge was gained from participants.

5. Verification strategies were utilized to insure the trustworthiness of the study.

Theoretical Framework

To examine the perspectives of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males, the researcher relied heavily on the work of Kohlberg. Kohlberg studied the process of growth in moral judgment (Duska & Whelan, 1975). Moral education has been equated with the teaching of rules and the development of character, which are expected to manifest themselves in behaviors that exemplify the traditionally revered virtues of honesty, self-control, friendliness, and respect (Duska & Whelan, 1975).

The Kohlberg theory suggests that rather than attempt to indoctrinate or socialize students, moral education should seek to stimulate the natural process of development toward more mature and moral reasoning (Munsey, 1980 p. 360). A process of educating African-American males through mentorship by African-American men lends itself to identifying areas in which applying moral reasoning skills is important for the mentor. Six stages of moral development identified by Kohlberg provide opportunities for mentors to delve deeper into the pros and cons for the actions they choose.

Kohlberg's three levels and six stages of moral reasoning are beneficial for mentors to use as a guide (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2010). Level I: Pre-conventional Morality consists of Stage 1: Punishment-Avoidance and Obedience. In Stage 1, African-

American males learn strategies to avoid punishment, future incarceration, and problems with the law. Hoerr (2013) reported that before his son received his driver's license, he was taught what to do *when* not *if* he was stopped by a police officer. Similarly, mentors may teach African-American male youth how to react when faced with compromising life experiences. Lessons may come from prior personal experiences or experiences mentors witnessed.

Stage 2, Exchange of Favors, is a potentially contentious stage because African-American males are in the "What is in it for me stage?" Actions of individuals are based on what they have to do to get what they want. In Level I (ages 9 and below), authority is outside the individual and reasoning is based on the physical consequences of actions (McLeod, 2011).

Level II: Conventional Morality consists of Stage 3: Good girl/boy and Stage 4: Law and order. According to Kohlberg (1971), during Level II (ages 10 to adolescence), individuals perceive the maintenance of expectations of family, group, or nation as valuable in their own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. In Level II, African-American males develop a sense of loyalty to family and community.

According to Farrell, Henry, Mays, and Schoeny (2011), parental values and expectations have significant influences on a child's belief system and behaviors. If parents are not active in the lives of African-American males, African-American mentors may take on the responsibility of shaping these African-American youth (Kafele, 2012, 2014). If African-American male youth are not guided in the right direction during Level II, the potential for drugs, alcohol, gang affiliation, and other criminal activity may exist (Carswell, Hanlon, O'Grady, Watts, & Pothony, 2009).

Level III: Post-conventional Morality consists of Stage 5: Social contract and Stage 6: Universal ethical principle. According to Kohlberg, a social contract exists between an individual and the government. This contract protects the rights of an individual but also protects the rights of others; it establishes a law to do the greatest good for the greatest number of people. In this instance, a social contract is necessary to provide due process for individuals who are accused of breaking the law. During Stage 6, individuals are prone to do what is right regardless of the consequences. The majority of adults, however, do not reach this stage (Barger, 2000, McLeod, 2011, McDevitt & Ormrod, 2010).

According to Kohlberg, individuals can only progress through these stages one at a time and cannot skip between stages. Therefore, an African-American male can be 16 years of age but still in Stage 3, seeking the approval as being a "good boy" by an adult. African-American male mentors may share their experiences with African-American male youth in hopes that their experiences will provide insight to what actually happens during each stage of Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Reasoning.

Table 1
Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Reasoning

Level	Stage	Explanation
1. Pre-conventional	1. Punishment-Avoidance & Obedience	Avoid getting in trouble
		What is in it for me?
	2. Exchange of Favors	
2. Conventional	3. Good Girl/Boy	Gain approval of others
	4. Law and Order	Obey rules, respect authority
3. Post-conventional	5 Social Contracts	Sense of democracy
	6. Universal Ethical Principles	Personal integrity

Research Design

Qualitative research methods were used for this study to capture the perspectives and lived experiences of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged

African-American males. According to Hatch (2002), qualitative research is an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry which involves collecting data in a natural setting and is sensitive to the people and places involved in the study.

This case study explored the lived experiences of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males in their natural setting. Creswell (2009) suggested that researchers collect data themselves by examining documents, observing behavior, or interviewing participants. By using a qualitative case study method, the researcher collected data via individual interviews and a focus group session.

The purpose of this case study was to gain insights and knowledge of the lived experiences of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama. According to Yin (1984), a "case" in a classic case study may be an individual (p. 31). Each African-American male mentor in this study contributed to the case explored. Creswell (1998) stated that the study of more than one case dilutes the overall analysis; therefore, the researcher typically chooses no more than four cases. In this study, the researcher engaged 10 participants.

Definition of Key Terms

For this study, the following definitions were used:

Adequate yearly progress. Adequate yearly progress (AYP) sets a standard for accountability. AYP measures states, schools, and districts based on results of state-level tests in two main content areas: math and reading (Paige, 2004).

African-American. African-Americans are largely the descendants of slaves—people who were brought from their African homelands by force to work in the New World.

11

Their rights were severely limited, and they were long denied a rightful share in the economic, social, and political progress of the United States (Lynch, 2014). In this study African-American male and Black male are used interchangeably.

African-American male youth. In this study, African-American male youth was defined as males of African descent who were between the ages of 15 and 24 (Feierman, 2014).

At-risk student. An at-risk student was defined as someone who is confronting challenges, such as the lack of positive adult attention, adverse living conditions, constant exposure to crime and violence, poor academic performance, and increased stress-laden peer-to-peer encounters (Bennett & Miller, 2006; Harper & Davis, 2012; Ogbu, 1981; Parker & Maggard, 2009).

Black Lives Matter. Black Lives Matter was a call to action in response to the virulent anti-Black racism that permeates American society (Huang, 2015). #BlackLivesMatter, a project started by Garza, Cullors, and Tometi, is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise (Garza, 2014).

Boys to Men Mentoring Program (Alabama). The *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* is a mentoring program that was developed in 2005 for African-American male students who had the potential to excel, had an excessive number of disciplinary write-ups, and who were not performing to their ability in a middle school located in central Alabama.

Community-based mentorship. Community-based mentorship typically involves longer meeting periods, the content and context is less constrained than those in a school-based mentoring program, and the locations and pairs are chosen by participants (Bayer, Grossman, & Dubois, 2013).

Education debt. Education debt is the foregone schooling resources that we could have (should have) been investing in (primarily) low income kids, which deficit leads to a variety of social problems (e.g. crime, low productivity, low wages, low labor force participation) that require on-going public investments (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

Extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation describes the attainment of tangible rewards such as money, prizes, or other benefits; intangible rewards such as social approval, a sense of worthiness, or even a sense of conscientiousness; or the avoidance of tangible and intangible punishments such as time-out, scolding, rejection or sense of low self-worth (Kaplan, 2010).

Intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation describes engagement in an activity with no reasons other than the enjoyment and satisfaction of engagement itself (Kaplan, 2010).

Mentor. The definition of mentor has evolved over the years; however, for the purpose of this study, the 1997 definition from Dondero was used: A mentor is a person who listens to, cares for, advises and shares information about life, careers, and other experiences with another, usually a younger person who requires their assistance.

Mentoring. Mentoring is a sustained relationship between a young person and an adult used to improve a student's academic success and improve the quality of the student's social life (Abiddin & Hassan, 2012).

My Brother's Keeper Initiative. My Brother's Keeper is a program created by President Barack Obama in February 2014 to increase opportunities for young black, Hispanic and Native America males, while also decreasing the amount of negative views that surround these young men (DeCarr, 2015).

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). President Bush signed the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* into law January 8, 2001. The principles of NCLB date back to the famous case, *Brown v. Board of Education,* when the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed racial segregation and determined that the "separate but equal doctrine" was unconstitutional (Paige, 2004). The major focus of NCLB was to close student achievement gaps by providing children with a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

School-based mentorship. School-based mentorship is a mentoring program which meets the following criteria: operates on a school campus; meets for the duration of the school year; youth are referred by teachers, counselors, and other school staff; and is not a tutoring session (Jucovy & Garringer, 2008).

School-to-prison pipeline. *The School-to-prison pipeline* presents the intersection of the K-12 educational system and a juvenile justice system (Kim, Losen, & Hewitt, 2010). As reported in the magazine Rolling Stone, Lieberman, the New York Civil Liberties Union's executive director, stated, "Once a child is subjected to suspensions or arrests in school, they are less likely to graduate and more likely to end up involved in the criminal justice system" (Kneel, 2013).

Summary

With the number of high profile deaths of unarmed African-American males on the rise, several actions occurred: African-Americans began to examine the laws and how they pertain to them (Smith, 2014), a Black Lives Matter Movement, which spread across the country, prompted school children to exercise their free speech and walk out of

school in protest (Gonzalez, 2012), and the President of the United States launched an initiative to mentor men of color (Condon, 2014).

This study explored the experiences of 10 African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American male youth in Alabama. Despite diversity of ages and backgrounds, all of these men willingly gave their time and expertise to mentor young African-American males. The premise of this study was to explore experiences which led these mentors to embark on this journey.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

To understand the challenges of African-American male youth, this chapter highlights changes of mentoring over time, characteristics of mentors, benefits of mentoring, and three mentoring programs which serve African-American males. In addition to mentoring and its components, contributions of behaviors affected by the educational debt of African-American male youth as well as multiple theories were explored. Theories included The African-American Male Theory (AAM) (Bush, L., & Bush, E., 2013), McClelland's Human Motivation Theory (McClelland, 1961), Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Reasoning (1958), and the Theory of African-American Personalities. These theories assisted with the understanding and analysis of motivations of African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama.

Mentoring

The purpose of this section is to review the literature on mentoring. Specifically, this section examines the history of mentoring, the impact mentoring has on those who mentor, and the benefits of mentoring.

Mentoring can be traced back to 875 BC, when King Odysseus appointed a guardian to his household. This guardian acted faithfully as teacher, adviser, friend, and surrogate father to Telemachus; the guardian was named Mentor (Murray, 2001). Although Mentor was given the charge, it has been argued that he did not adequately

fulfill that role and failed to epitomize later definitions of what the term mentor has come to signify (Sengal, 2011). The original mentoring design involved both male and female attributes. Mentor was a man, but Athena, the female goddess of wisdom, assumed his form in order to guide, teach, and protect young Telemachus (Cheatman, 2009; & Ragins & Kram, 2007). It was customary in ancient Greece for young male citizens to be paired with older males in hopes that each boy would learn from and emulate the values of his mentor (Murray, 2001).

In *The Seasons of a Man's Life,* Levinson (1978) explored the impact of mentoring on men's development. In 1985, Kram published the book, *Mentoring at Work,* which offered a theoretical foundation for understanding developmental relationships at work for both men and women (Murray, 2001). According to Murray (2001), Kram's book captured and defined the construct of mentoring, planted a theoretical foundation for the field, and ignited a program of research that moved the concept of mentoring from an abstract academic construct to a household word.

Mentoring Defined

One intervention that has received some attention as a novel and innovation strategy is mentoring (Gordon et al., 2009). Mentoring has evolved over time to its current definition. Zey (1984) defined a mentor as a person who oversees the career and development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counseling, psychological support, protection, and at times, promotion or sponsorship. Mentoring evolved to include a nurturing process that fosters the growth and development of the protégé (Shandley, 1989).

In a separate study, the author, (Dondero, 1997) defined a mentor as a person who listens to; cares for; advises; and shares information about life, careers, and other experiences with another, usually a younger person who requires their assistance. During this same year Allen, Poteet, and Burroughs (1997) defined mentoring as an individual who has taken a personal interest in an individual and has guided, sponsored, or otherwise had a personal influence on their career development.

Yet in other studies completed in the consecutive years of 2005 and 2006, two pairs of researchers defined mentoring as the positive relationship with and contribution by a non-parental adult to the life of a young person (Baker & McGuire, 2005; DuBois & Rhodes 2008). More recently, Loeser (2008) defined mentoring as a situation arranged by a community organization, business, or school in which two individuals agree to meet one-on-one on a regular basis.

Goldner and Mayseless (2009) emphasized the dyadic characteristics of mentoring and described mentoring as a relationship between nonprofessional and non-parental adults and their protégés. Thomas and Zand (2010) also included age in their definition by describing mentoring as the pairing of a younger person (mentee) with an older, more experienced person (mentor) with the expectation that the dyad would develop into a relationship where the mentor would support and guide the mentee.

Mentoring has been defined in many ways based on the intent of its use. This study utilized the definition of mentoring by Dondero (1997): a mentor is a person who listens to; cares for; advises; and shares information about life, careers, and other experiences with another, usually a younger person who requires assistance. This

definition encapsulated the role that African-American men who mentored African-American male youth exemplified in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*.

Types of Youth Mentoring Programs

There are two types of mentoring programs discussed in this study: community-based and school-based, which use either formal or informal approaches. Individual, group, or combinations thereof are frequently used to mentor African-American males who are affected by the educational debt. Relationships established between African-American men and African-American male youth typically determines the effectiveness of each type of mentoring program.

Positive mentoring experiences provide African American male mentees with increased opportunities for pro-social development, conflict resolution, academic success, and career advancement (Brown, 2009). Results from a recent study indicated that for youth affected by the educational debt, community-based mentoring programs have traditionally provided a safe and structured environment free from coercive constraints that are sometimes prevalent in schools (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, & McMaken, 2011).

More recently, Gordon, Downey, and Bangert (2013) stated that mentoring programs located in schools are referred to as school-based mentoring programs (SBMPs). As reported by the National Center for Education Evaluation (2009), school-based mentoring programs are programs in which teachers and other school staff members target and identify academically and/or social/emotionally students whom they feel would benefit from mentoring (Anthony, Kristonis, & Herrington, 2007; Gettings & Wilson, 2014; Harper & Davis 2012).

In general, school-based mentoring programs are designed to provide targeted

19

mentoring sessions in a small group or one-to-one setting (Abiddin & Hassan, 2012). The

U.S. Department of Education Student Mentoring Program, authorized under the No

Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, Section 4130, is a competitive federal grant

program managed by the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools (OSDFS). This program

"addresses the lack of supportive adults at critical junctures in the lives of students in at-

risk situations by providing funds to schools and to community- and faith- based

organizations to create school-based mentoring programs targeting children in grades 4–

8" (NCEE, 2009, p.1). Hence, funds provided from this grant may cover costs due to

expenses necessary to transport African-American male youth to and from events,

provide snacks after school, pay for youth to enter special events and programs used as

rewards, and purchase books and supplies to assist mentees with core academic content.

However, an absolute priority as stipulated by the OSDFS is its focus on the academic

and social needs of the students affected by the education debt (NCEE, 2009).

Whereas school-based mentoring programs have time constraints due to the setup

of the school day, community-based mentoring programs (CBMPs) are not constrained

by time. According to Bayer et al. (2013), the more limited time commitment and firmer

structure of school-based mentoring makes it easier for agencies to recruit volunteers.

Additionally, mentors are more apt to participate when they have an idea of the amount

of time needed to effectively mentor an African-American male youth.

On the other hand, community-based mentoring programs are designed with a

specific goal to transform a community (Parker & Maggard, 2009). Often, local chapters

of incorporated fraternities such as Alpha Phi Alpha (Lead Academy), Kappa Alpha Psi

(Kappa League), and Omega Phi Psi (Assault on Illiteracy an International program)

provide mentoring services to African-American male youth through their organizations.

As noted by Wheeler, Keller and Dubois (2010), community-based mentors are often

responsible adults from the community who wish to provide skill training, conflict

resolution, and other services germane to the needs of the protégé or mentee.

Benefits of Mentoring African-American Males

As noted by Jarjoura (2013), youth participating in mentoring programs are more

likely to stay in school and attain higher levels of educational success; less likely to

participate in gangs, less likely to be involved in substance abuse, and less likely to be

delinquent or involved the justice system. Loeser (2008) found that the benefits of

mentoring included the ability for youth to cultivate a trusting relationship with an adult,

to learn how to model appropriate behavior (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health,

2013), to develop new skills and interests, and to be exposed to new experiences.

Results from a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America study of mentored youth after

an 18-month period also yielded significant differences in behavior and academic

performance of mentored youth when compared to control group participants (Rhodes,

2008). In another study, mentoring was credited for helping adolescents build self-

esteem, become more resilient, and resolve problems (Converse & Lignugaris-Kraft,

2009). During a study in 2011, the researchers also noted that displays of anger, breaking

the law, and substance abuse were reduced when informal mentors provided support and

helped African-American male youth learn to deal with adult problems (University of

Georgia, 2011).

Despite the benefits of mentoring for the youth, discussions about the benefits

accrued by mentors are limited (Allen, 2007). Lentz and Allen (2009) observed that

individuals with experience as mentors reported greater job satisfaction, greater organizational commitment, and fewer intentions of job turnover than those with no experience as mentors. Additional benefits for mentors include enhanced self-esteem, revitalized interest in work, close relationship with protégé, fulfillment of one's own developmental needs, and a legacy (Murray, 2001).

Mentoring Programs

Three of the most notable mentoring programs will be highlighted in this section. These programs include Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, 100 Black Men, and My Brother's Keeper. All of these programs have a high level of success and participation among African-American male youth.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) is the largest youth mentoring organization in the United States (Luckert, 2006). In fact, BBBSA is a national federation with approximately 450 affiliated agencies that provide volunteer mentors for more than 230,000 at-risk children in all 50 states (Uhle, 2007). The mission of BBBSA is to provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring professionally supported one-on-one mentoring relationships that change the lives of the youth for the better, forever (Uhle, 2007; Hansan, 2014; Luckert, 2006). However, its purpose is to provide friendship, emotional support, and guidance to youth through their involvement with positive role models (Luckert, 2006).

BBBSA began in 1903 when Westheimer, a Cincinnati businessman, saw a young boy and his dog scrounging for food in a trash can. After feeding the boy and meeting the boy's poverty stricken family, Westheimer learned that the boy's hardship was caused by

his father's recent death. According to historical accounts, Westheimer knew that there were other children throughout the city who would benefit from having a mentor.

Westheimer told his story to a group of young men who agreed to form an association with the view of bettering the conditions of a large number of neglected or delinquent Jewish boys in Cincinnati. These individuals agreed to become guardians of individual boys who required special attention, to act as "Big Brothers" to each of them (Big Brothers Big Sisters Association of America, 2016).

In 1904, Coulter, a New York City county clerk, observed that many boys were passing through the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Courts came from fatherless homes. He reasoned that a man's influence could help to curb the boys' abnormal and sometimes criminal behavior. Once he called for volunteers, every man in the room raised his hand. Coulter is considered to be the founder of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (Big Brothers Big Sisters of American).

In 1905, Okeefe began a Big Sisters program in New York City after learning of the Big Brothers program success. Okeefe became known as the first Big Sister. Big Brothers of America was charter by the United States Congress in 1958. Big Sisters International was chartered in 1970. The organizations merged in 1977 forming Big Brothers Big Sisters of American.

100 Black Men

In 1963, a group of concerned African-American men who were trying to explore ways to improve conditions of their community started the 100 Black Men, Inc. in New York (100 Black Men of America, Inc., 2011). Since that time, the organization has grown tremendously; it has over 10,000 members and 116 chapters nationally and

internationally. Its mission is to improve the quality of life within the African-American community and enhance educational and economic opportunities for African-Americans (100 Black Men of America, Inc., n.d.). The 100 Black Men initiative has mentoring programs nationally and internationally, and impacts tomorrow's leaders through two different programs, *Mentoring the 100 Way* and *Collegiate 100* (100 Black Men of America, Inc., n.d.).

Furthermore, 100 Black Men, Inc. is committed to the intellectual development of youth and the economic empowerment of the African-American community, based on the following percepts: respect for family, spirituality, justice and integrity (100 Black Men, Inc., n.d.). From 2006 to 2009, the 100 Black Men initiative helped launch the National Cares Mentoring Movement (formerly the Essence Cares) to mobilize millions of African-Americans to take the lead in fulfilling our society's spiritual and social responsibility of our children (100 Black Men of America, Inc., n.d.).

In fact, while interviewing Hart, Kelly documented the one slogan used by most of its members: "What they see is what they will be" (Kelly, 2011, p. 1). The meaning behind the slogan leads one to believe that if African-American male youth see African-American men who do not work or value education, disrespect African-American women, and destroy one another then young, school-aged African-American male youth will become this type of man.

On the other hand, when African-American male youth see African-American men who work to provide homes for their family, advance their education, honor African-American women, and help each other, they will strive to do the same.

Therefore, positive African-American men are needed to serve as role models for African-American male youth.

My Brother's Keeper

In February 2014, The White House issued a statement in which President Obama launched My Brother's Keeper (MBK), a new initiative to help every boy and young man of color who is willing to work hard to get ahead (Jarrett & Johnson, 2014). The My Brother's Keeper initiative was modeled on local initiatives in which governments have successfully partnered with local businesses and foundations to connect young men with mentoring networks and helped them cultivate skills to get ahead (Condon, 2014).

The broad goals of MBK are to help young men of color with early literacy at critical moments in their lives, teens and early 20s when so many are pulled into the so-called school-to-prison pipeline (Lee, 2014). In September 2014, President Obama issued a challenge to cities, towns, counties, and tribes across the country to become MBK Communities. The challenge represented a call to action for all members of communities to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color to ensure that they reach their full potential (National League of Cities, 2014). More importantly, the six goals of the Challenge are: (1) Ensuring all children enter school cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally, ready; (2) Ensuring all children read at grade level by 3rd grade; (3) Ensuring all youth graduate from high school; (4) Ensuring all youth complete postsecondary education or training; (5) Ensuring all youth out of school are employed; and (6) Ensuring all youth remain safe from violent crimes. (The White House, 2016, p. 19).

According to Fenlon (2014), the initial funding behind MBK initiative was a collaboration between the following 10 foundations: Annie E. Casey Foundation, The Atlantic Philanthropies, Bloomberg Philanthropies, The California Endowment, The Ford Foundation, The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, The Open Society Foundations, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and The Kapor Center for Social Impact. Each foundation agreed to contribute $750,000 to help build the infrastructure of the initiative; these foundations also agreed to invest at least $200 million in new investments, collectively over the next five years to support the initiative.

Approximately six months since the launch of MBK, President Obama announced that millions of dollars were being dedicated to expand the initiative (Lee, 2014). Included in this effort were the National Basketball Association (NBA) and the NBA player and retired players' association, AT&T, the Emerson Collective, The College Board, Citi Foundation, and Discovery Communications.

Summary

There are a number of mentoring programs in which African-American men take the lead to teach African-American male youth skills needed to become successful in society today; three were highlighted in this study. One major concern of some African-American men, similar to those of African-American male youth, is that to see it is to believe it is true. African-American men who did not have a father or mentor with whom they were able to see daily may not believe it is possible for them to achieve, thus the cycle begins. Studies performed on mentoring programs that target African-American men to serve as mentors for African-American male youth have shown that mentoring

can work. Therefore, this study explored the experiences that motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama.

African American Males

This section further supports the need for African-American men to mentor African-American male youth, especially those who are affected by the educational debt. Not all African-American males live in at-risk conditions nor are they all affected by the educational debt; therefore, the researcher defined at-risk conditions as they pertained to mentees in this study. Some contributing situations which place African-American males in at-risk conditions include the absence of fathers in the home, adverse living conditions, low educational performances, and crime and violence. The development and implementation of the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* is also discussed in this section.

African-American Male Youth Affected by the Education Debt

To build a foundation for this study, the definition of African-American males who are affected by the education debt included individuals confronting challenges such as the lack of positive adult attention, adverse living conditions, constant exposure to crime and violence, poor academic performance, and increased stress-laden peer-to-peer encounters (Bennett & Miller, 2006; Harper & Davis, 2012; Ogbu, 1981; Parker & Maggard, 2009).

Absent fathers. One condition that may cause African-American males to be affected by the education debt is the absence of a father in the home. According to Elder (2013), there is a direct link between the absence of a father in the home and increases in high school dropout rates, welfare enrollment, and criminal behavior. Brownfeld (2014) noted that the problem of absent fathers is particularly acute in the African-American

community: Nearly five million black children, or 54%, live in a one parent, matriarchal family. In a commentary on CNN during a conversation about race following the Zimmerman acquittal, Lemon reported that 72% of children in the African-American community are born out of wedlock (Jacobson, 2013). Children who grow up without a father are five times more likely to live in poverty and commit crime, nine times more likely to drop out of school, and 20 times more likely to end up in prison (Brownfeld, 2014).

Adverse living conditions. Similarly, adverse living conditions may also contribute to African-American male youth in becoming affected by the education debt. Conditions that contribute to adverse living conditions began as early as the 1930s, when the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) addressed the housing crisis by subsidizing construction of single-family homes outside central cities, creating the suburbs that surround metropolitan areas. The FHA guaranteed construction loans for builders to create suburban subdivisions with the requirement that no builder receiving such a loan could sell to a black family (Rothstein, 2015).

In the two decades after passage of the 1949 Act, housing conditions for minority households did not improve as they did for non-Hispanic whites (Martinez, 2000). In Missouri, the state regulatory body supervising the real estate industry considered it an ethical violation to sell a home in a white neighborhood to a black purchaser; doing so could lead to the loss of real estate license (Rothstein, 2015). Hence, the goal of a decent home and suitable living environment for *every* American family would not be legally protected until 20 years later, with the passage of the Fair Housing Act (Martinez, 2000). Under these circumstances, the rigid segregation of urban neighborhoods was shaped by

decades of public policy and urban disinvestment and neglect as well as ongoing housing discrimination (Bouie, 2014).

Inasmuch as African-Americans in the mid-20th century were prohibited from living in most neighbors and were instead crowded into limited urban space in high-rise public towers of deteriorating neighborhoods with private housing stock, rent was higher than those for comparable housing in white neighborhoods (Martinez, 2000; Rothenstein, 2015). Consequently, whites fled to the suburbs leaving African-Americans in the city where many reside today (Rothenstein, 2015). Conversely, Sullivan (2011) reported that African-Americans were moving south and to the suburbs. Findings from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 Census revealed that the proportion of the Black population living in the biggest city of a given metropolitan decreased in all 20 of the nation's largest metro areas in the past decade. According to Trotter (2011), data from the Census' American Community Survey suggest that African-Americans likely moved to the suburbs for their good schools and lower costs of homeownership.

Poor academic performance. Poor academic performance, a result of the education debt, leads to low graduation rates. Only 18% of African-American students in Grade 4 performed at or above the Proficiency level in Reading on the National Assessment for Academic Progress (NAEP) as compared to 46% of white and 21% Hispanic students. The results in Math were equally poor, 15% of African-American students in Grade 4 scored at or above the Proficiency level as compared to 51% of their white peers and 25% of Hispanic students (The Nation's Report Card, 2013).

As noted by Kafele (2012), there are plenty of challenges in public schools, but the greatest crisis faced in education is that of the black male learner: The national high

school graduation rate for black males is only 47%. According to the Schott Foundation (2008), the U.S. high school graduation rate for black males is just 47% percent, compared to 57% for Latino males and 75% for white males. The graduation rate for African-American males in Alabama during the 2012-2013 school year was 56.7% as compared to 60.5% for Latino males and 72.2% for White males (Schott, 2015).

Many times, aggressive behaviors and/or miscommunications exhibited by African-American males lead to negative disciplinary actions. African-American male students are more likely than any other populations to face discipline leading to suspensions or expulsions (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Lewin, 2012; Milner, 2013; Noguera, 2008; Rudd, 2014). In districts that reported expulsions under the zero-tolerance policies, Hispanic and black students represented 45% of the student body, but 56% of those expelled under such policies (Lewin, 2012; Perry, 2014).

Although, the likelihood of suspensions increased from 2.4% in elementary school to 11% in middle school, the risk for suspension between school levels by race showed an increased risk of 18 points for blacks but only about five points for whites (Losen & Martinez, 2013). When students are not in school they are still learning, however, what they are learning is the question. However, when students are not in school due to a suspension or expulsion, many districts do not require these students to receive homework support or tutoring; therefore, they fall further behind their peers (Perry, 2014).

Notably, policy and legislation such as the zero tolerance policies play a major role in students' lives, particularly African-American males, entering the school-to-prison pipeline. As early as the 1996-1997 school year, 79% of schools had adopted zero

tolerance policies for violence, going beyond federal mandates (Skiba, 2000). Nationally, nearly a third (31%) of black boys in middle school was suspended as least once during the 2009-2010 school year (Losen & Martinez, 2013; Skiba, 2000). With this in mind, some of the most rigorous research conducted on the subject of zero tolerance shows that out-of-school suspension can severely disrupt a student's academic progress in ways that have lasting negative consequences (Kang-Brown, Trone, Fratello, & Kapur, 2013).

Consequently, each expulsion correlates with court involvement. An expulsion can last up to one year. A local school board seeking to expel a student must give him a hearing before doing so, unless the student is so disruptive or threatening that he must be removed from school before the hearing (Lohman, 2002). Whenever a young person is expelled, enters the court system and sees a judge, he or she should be accompanied by the principal of the last school attended (Perry, 2014) or a school representative.

Boys to Men Mentoring Program

According to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, parents of children who attended a low-performing public school were given options for their children to attend a school that was performing at proficient levels (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). In September, 2005, over 40 students, mostly African-American males, transferred from three local low-performing middle schools to a small public middle school in the eastern section of a city in Alabama. This massive increase in enrollment caused the faculty and staff to reorganize, basically starting a new school year.

Classroom procedures, school regulations, and the overall culture of the school had to be revisited. The new group of students was not accustomed to the operations of

31

this school. Discipline infractions increased tremendously, homework was not being completed, defiance was becoming the norm, and day-to-day operations were untenable.

However, the principal, faculty, and staff were not ready to surrender control of the school to this new group of preteens, so a meeting was convened to discuss possible solutions. During the first month, there were more suspensions and expulsions than had occurred over the previous year. A female teacher who was working on a graduate project offered a plan she completed for her class. This plan was comprised of a mentoring program for African-American males with many discipline infractions. After presenting the proposal to the faculty, it was agreed upon by all involved that implementation would occur immediately after the winter break.

Each grade level team was asked to submit the names of 10 African-American male students who had the potential to excel but who were not working to their abilities according to the contact person (See Appendix E). Once the names were submitted, a meeting with all of the boys was held, parents were sent permission slips (See Appendix F), and a quest for mentors began.

All of the boys identified expressed a desire to participate, all of the parents granted permission, and all seven of the African-American male teachers, agreed to serve as mentors. The first roadblock was identifying mentors in the community; no one came forward to assist during the first year of its inception.

The mentoring program proceeded as designed. During each month there was an overarching theme scheduled, however, other subjects more relevant to the African-American males were also discussed during the hour-long meeting. Mentors and boys met after school for at least an hour. Mentors would not only discuss issues with the boys

but would also assist with homework, conduct book studies, and participate in athletic games. The partnership became a highlight of the school and soon boys who had no disciplinary infractions and also girls wanted to participate in the mentoring program. The program became so successful that it was featured in *The Birmingham Market Magazine* (Coman, 2013).

Summary

Risk factors, such as living in a single-parent family or living in poverty, can markedly increase adverse outcomes for children (Robbins, Stagman, & Smith, 2012). Risk factors such as participation in crime and violence and low academic performance led to the development and implementation of a successful mentoring program for secondary school-aged African-American males in a middle school in central Alabama.

Theories

Several theories were reviewed to develop a deeper understanding of motivations of African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American male youth in Alabama. The first theory was moral development by Kohlberg. Three levels and six stages are discussed. Next, the researcher explored the Theory of Motivation by McClelland. Finally, the researcher considered the African-American Male Theory and African-American Personality Theory. Three different approaches of the African-American Male Personality Theory were used to discuss how each group viewed the world, thus affecting their interactions in society. Together, these theories exemplified moral conventions, motivational needs, and personality types of the African-American mentors in this study.

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Reasoning

Kohlberg further developed Piaget's theory of moral development through the use of a storytelling technique (Habib, Truslow, Harmon, & Karellas, 2011; McLeod, 2013; Sincero, 2012). According to Kohlberg, children develop through their interactions with others where they learn how viewpoints differ. As problems and differences arise, children develop their opinions of what is fair and just (Habib et al., 2011). In each scenario that Kohlberg investigated, Kohlberg was not really asking whether or not the person in the situation was morally right or wrong, but rather why children viewed characters as morally right or wrong (McLeod, 2013; Sincero, 2012).

Kohlberg's study consisted of 84 American boys from a variety of socio-economic groups between the ages of nine and 16 years old (Kohlberg, 1958; McLeod, 2013). Only 75% of the boys persisted in the later longitudinal study (Kohlberg, 1981; McLeod, 2013). Kohlberg emphasized that it was the way an individual *reasoned* about a dilemma that determined positive moral development (Boundless, 2015).

Level 1. According to Kohlberg, an individual progresses from the capacity for pre-conventional mortality (before age 9) to the capacity for conventional morality (early adolescence). Additionally, individuals progress toward attaining post-conventional morality which only a few fully achieve (Boundless, 2015). At Level 1, there is no personal code of morality; the moral code is shaped by the standards of adults (McLeod, 2013).

Sincero (2012) related this stage to Skinner's Operational Conditioning because it includes the use of punishment. Individuals refrain from performing an action and continue to obey the rules in order to avoid punishment. As reported in Boundless (2013),

a child with pre-conventional morality has not yet adopted or internalized society's conventions regarding what is right or wrong, but instead focuses largely on external consequences of actions. Level 1 consists of Stage 1: Obedience and Punishment, and Stage 2: Individualism and Exchange. In Stage 2, children recognize that individuals have different viewpoints (McLeod, 2013).

Level 2. At the conventional level, Level 2, most adolescents and adults begin to internalize the moral standards of values that adults model. Authority is internalized but not questioned and reasoning is based in the norms of the group to which the person belongs (McLeod, 2013). As reported in Boundless (2015), children continue to accept the rules of authority figures, but their adherence to rules is due to their belief that acceptance is necessary to ensure positive relationships and societal order.

Stages in this level, Stage 3: Good Boy, Good Girl, and Stage 4: Law-and-Order perfectly depict this this scenario. In Stage 3, the child seeks the approval of others and acts in ways to avoid disapproval (Boundless, 2013; McLeod, 2013). When children enter Stage 4, they move from simply viewing the morality of family and friends to viewing the morality of society as a whole (Habib et al., 2011). In Stage 4, a child blindly accepts rules and conventions because of their importance in maintaining a functioning society (Boundless, 2013).

Level 3. Level 3 is marked by a growing realization that individuals are separate entities from society and that individuals may disobey rules that are inconsistent with their own principles (Boundless, 2013). Individual judgements are based on self-chosen principles, and moral reasoning is based on individual rights and justice (McLeod, 2013);

this is evident in Stage 5: Social Contract and Individual Rights, and Stage 6: Universal

Principles.

Individuals in Stage 5 use more complex reasoning skills and make decisions

about what is considered "good" or "bad" for society (Peens & Loun, 2000). In Stage 6,

moral reasoning is based on abstract reasoning using universal ethical principles

(Boundless, 2013). When individuals reach this stage they have a well-rounded view of

society where a person's judgement guides them to an equal respect for all people (Habib

et al., 2000).

At this stage, individuals are prepared to act to defend these principles (i.e.,

human rights, justice, equality) even if it means going against the rest of society and

having to pay the consequences of disapproval and/or imprisonment (McLeod, 2013).

The individual acts because it is morally right to do so rather than to avoid punishment.

Further, individuals act even if it is not in their best interest, expected, legal, or

previously agreed upon by others (Boundless, 2013).

Although there have been many opinions supporting Kohlberg's Theory of Moral

Development, there are others that do not support the theory. Individuals have noted that

the dilemmas in Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development are unfair to most people

(Rosen, 1980). Further, dilemmas not always age appropriate. Kohlberg's theory was

based on an all-white male sample (Gilligan, 1977). The sample was limited and not

generalized to all racial and ethnic groups nor responsive to both sexes.

McClelland's Needs Theory of Motivation

In an effort to explore the motivations of African-American men to mentor

African-American-American male youth, the researcher used McClelland's Needs

Theory of Motivation. People are motivated to mentor others for different reasons. As a

psychologist, McClelland developed this theory of motivation in the late 1960s.

According to McClellan, humans have three motivating drivers: a need for achievement,

a need for affiliation, and a need power (Eyre, 2008). McClelland asserted that peoples'

needs are influenced by their cultural background and life experiences. In order to use

this information in this study, the researcher needed to identify the characteristics of each

category.

        Achievement motivation. Daft (2008) stated the need for achievement involves

the desire to accomplish something difficult, master complex tasks, attain a high level of

success, and surpass others. A person who is motivated by achievement tends to be

competitive. According to an article in ACCEL, achievement-motivated people are not

gamblers. Rather, they prefer to work on a problem than leave the outcome to chance.

Eyre (2008) reintroduced the following as characteristics of a person who has the

dominant motivator of achievement:

- Has a strong need to set and accomplish goals;
- Takes calculated risks to accomplish their goals;
- Likes to receive regular feedback on their progress and achievements;
- Often likes to work alone.

In Unit 5 of New Charter University's Leadership and Organizational class,

individuals who exhibit a need for achievement are constantly striving to improve their

performance and relentlessly focus on goals, particularly stretching goals that are

challenging in nature. In a summary of motivational theories by Bell, people with a high

need for achievement seek to excel and thus tend to avoid both low-risk and high-risk

situations. Another characteristic highlighted by ACCEL is that achievement-motivated

37

individuals tend to be more concerned with personal achievement than with the rewards of success.

   Affiliation motivation. According to Selfer (2008), affiliation seekers want peaceful relationships with the people around them. Their need for affiliation is just sufficient approval rather than justified recognition for their work. Ball (2012) stated that people with an affiliation need are team players and they need to be liked and held in a popular regard. People who are motivated by affiliation may not be good managers (Ball, 2012; Eyre, 2008). Additionally, Ball (2012) suggested that a strong affiliation motivation undermines a manager's objectivity, because of his or her need to be liked which affects a manager's decision making capacity.

   Authority motivation. According to the Management Study Guide (MSG, 2013), individuals who are motivated by power have a strong urge to be influential and controlling (Ball, 2012; Eyre, 2008; Leadership & Organization). These individuals have a powerful need to influential and effective as well as a need to make an impact. Additionally, they are driven towards enhancing their personal status and prestige (Warrilow, 2015).

Table 2

McClelland's Human Motivation Theory

Dominant Motivator	Personal Characteristics
Achievement	Has a strong need to set and accomplish challenging goals
	Takes calculated risks to accomplish goals
	Likes to receive regular feedback on their progress and achievements
	Often works alone
Affiliation	Wants to belong to the group
	Wants to be liked, and will often go along with whatever the rest of the group wants to do
	Favors collaboration
	Doesn't like high risk or uncertainty
Authority	Wants to control and influence others
	Likes to win arguments
	Enjoys competition and winning
	Enjoys status and recognition

African-American Male Theory

In response to more than 40 years of being studied among exclusive groups of individuals, Bush and Bush developed the African-American Male Theory (AAMT) in 2013. According to the authors (2013):

The African-American Male Theory is a theoretical framework that can be used to articulate the position and trajectory of African-American boys and men in society by drawing on and accounting for pre- and post-enslavement experiences, while capturing their spiritual, psychological, social, and educational development and station (p. 6).

Previous studies dealing with African-Americans used theories that were not directly related to the African race and certainly not the subgroup African-American males. Many of these studies also used critical race theory as their theoretical framework (Ballard & Clintron, 2010; Blair, 2009; Morgan, 2013). As stated by Bush and Bush (in press):

While we categorically affirm the necessity of considering racism, power, and

cultural hegemony as a framework to analyze and situate this population (African-

American boys and men), drawing on the critical race theory (CRT) as the sole

theory offers a myopic viewpoint and provides limited foundation on which to

build (p. 7).

Bush and Bush (2013) identified the following six tenets of the African-American Male

theory:

- the individual and collective experiences, behaviors, outcomes, events,

  phenomena, and trajectory of African-American boy's and men's lives are best

  analyzed using an ecological systems approach;

- there is something unique about being male and of African descent;

- there is a continuity and continuation of African culture, consciousness, and

  biology that influence the experiences of African-American boys and men;

- African-American boys and men are resilient and resistant;

- race and racism coupled with classism and sexism have a profound impact on

  every aspect of the lives of African-American boys and men; and

- the focus and purpose of study and programs concerning African-American

  boys and men should be the pursuit of social justice (p. 6-12).

These six tenets of the AAMT were utilized in analyzing the results of this current study.

African-American Personality Theory

African-American's personality development has its origins in one of three

philosophies: European/European-American, Pseudo-Africentric, and Africentric

(Kambon & Reid, 2010). Each philosophy has a different worldview thus the way a

person in each area responds may be different. Although African-American male mentors may have similar experiences because of their worldviews, they may react to the situation differently. To determine the model in which each mentor operated the following summaries describe each model.

Eurocentric approach. The Eurocentric approach has its origins in Europe and its racial philosophical orientation is of Europe/European-American descent thus representing the European Worldview (EWV) (Kambon, 1992, 1998). These theories are classified as "Pure Eurocentric" because of their Caucasian authorship and exclusive emphasis on the EWV as the conceptual framework (Kambon & Bowen-Reid, 2010). The EWV depicts African-American personality as a negative psychological picture.

Pseudo-Africentric models. The Pseudo-Africentric models represent theories of African-American personality developed by African-Americans and others of African descent (Fanon, 1967). Pseudo-Africentric models also have an allegiance to the basic paradigms of Eurocentric Psychology (Kambon et al., 2010). These models accept the monolithic cultural paradigm of Eurocentric psychology and view African-American personality as derived from the same Eurocentric motivational forces as white Americans (Kambon et al., 2010).

Africentric models. Africentric models represent theories under African/African-American authorship that utilize the African worldview as the conceptual framework (Kambon et al., 2010). Africentric models utilize traditional African philosophical-cultural values, beliefs, and behavioral norms for formulating/constructing the psychological traits, dispositions, and behavioral patterns that are used to represent normal and natural African-American personality as distinguished from maladaptive,

41

abnormal, and dysfunctional African-American personality (Kambon, 1998; Kambon &

Brown-Reid, 2009).

Chapter 3

Research Design

Qualitative Research

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the lived experiences of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama. Qualitative research methods originated in the social and behavioral sciences: sociology, anthropology, and psychology. Qualitative research methods are used to tell the participants' story by capturing and communicating what happened, when, to whom, and with what consequences (Creswell, 2002, p.10). The central question which highlighted the research problem is: *What are the lived experiences that motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama?*

Exploring the lived experiences of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males qualified this study as a phenomenological one. According to Creswell (2007), the central phenomenon is the concept being experienced by the subjects in the study, which may include psychological concepts such as grief, anger, or love.

Furthermore, qualitative methodologies use more open-ended approaches in which the inquirer asks general questions of participants and participants share their response possibilities (Creswell, 2015). With this in mind, the researcher conducted individual, one-on-one, open-ended interviews in the office/classroom of mentors. As

reported by Patton (2002), qualitative designs are naturalistic to the event and the research takes place in a real world setting. The researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest. Qualitative research is conducted because there is a need to empower individuals to share their stories (Creswell, 2007). Narrative research designs are qualitative procedures in which researchers describe the lives of individuals and collect and tell stories about these individuals' lives (Creswell, 2015). Consequently, the lived experiences of the African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males are narrated by the researcher.

In addition to one-on-one interviews, the researcher used convenience sampling to identify a group of mentors who had been mentees in the Boys to Men Mentoring program and who are now mentors in the New Generation Mentoring program. These individuals participated in a focus group interview. The date of the interview was based on the availability of mentors. Once a date was agreed upon, participants received information about the time and location via phone. The central topic of discussion was focused on the central question, what motivated African-American males to mentor secondary school-aged African American males in Alabama? As reported by Lichtman (2013), a focus group consists of a set of people who come together for approximately an hour to discuss a specific topic.

Philosophical Paradigm

This chapter describes the methods which were used to explore the lived experiences of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama. A qualitative research design was utilized in this study. According to Lichtman (2013), qualitative research is a way of knowing which assumes

44

that the researcher gathers, organizes, and interprets information with his or her eyes and ears as a filter.

Current research findings address all facets of mentoring programs, the process of mentoring, and actions of mentees. Therefore, research was needed to explore the lived experiences which motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males. According to Creswell (2007), in qualitative research inquirers make assumptions that consist of a stance toward ontology (reality), epistemology (knowledge), axiology (values), rhetoric (language), and methodology (process).

Each mentor had different realities based on his experiences and family values (ontology). As such, a common event witnessed or experienced by mentors may have yielded a different perspective for each of them. Merriam (1988) recounted that qualitative research assumes there are multiple realities–that the world is not an objective thing out there but a function of personal interaction and perception.

The attempt to discover *why* mentors decided to use their wisdom, knowledge, and lived experiences to mentor school-aged African-American males was the goal of the researcher. Lichtman (2013) observed that qualitative researchers tend to ask "why" questions and questions that lead to a particular meaning (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). Therefore, the researcher used the interview method, individual interviews, and a focus group interview, to gather data.

Interviews occurred in the offices/classrooms of the mentors, their natural settings. Qualitative inquiry means going into the field, into the real world of programs, organizations, neighborhoods, street corners, and more and getting close enough to people and circumstances to capture what is happening (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002).

Qualitative research also uses an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under investigation (Creswell, 2007, Hatch, 2002).

Although the researcher gathered and transcribed the data, all of the research was value-laden and included the value system of the inquirer, the theory, the paradigm used, and the social and cultural norms for either the inquirer or the respondents (Creswell, 2003, 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1988). The researcher recognized that biases were present due to prior knowledge and previous studies. In this way the qualitative assumption of axiology was addressed.

The researcher reported data using a rhetorical narrative form. Creswell (2007) reported that the narrative is personal and literary. Patton (2002) informed readers that narrative studies are influenced by phenomenology's emphasis on understanding lived experiences and perceptions of experience. The focus of this study was on the lived experiences of African-American men who mentored African-American male youths; therefore, the characteristics for both a narrative and a phenomenological study were met.

Qualitative research methods were applied for several reasons. Two of the most prominent reasons were: (1) Qualitative methods study issues in-depth and in great detail. Fieldwork is not constrained by predetermined categories of analysis (Patton, 2002), (2) Patton (2002) also conveyed that qualitative methods typically produce a wealth of detailed information about a much smaller number of people and cases. In this study, the researcher explored the perspectives of 10 African-American males who mentored secondary school-aged African-American male youth.

Research Design

The research design applied in this study was the case study method. Case studies allow the researcher to understand complex social phenomena, while allowing the investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1994). Accordingly, case studies are pertinent when research addresses either a descriptive question or an explanatory question (Yin, 2006, 2009, 2011). The perceptions of motivations that led African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males were explanatory.

Even though there were 10 individual participants, the study was considered a single case study. According to Nock, Michel, and Photos (2007), "case studies most often involve an individual group, which may be an individual person, family, group, or classroom" (p. 338). Since, the research was limited to a single organization, African-American men who were mentors in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*, it was considered an embedded, single case study. This case study design is instrumental because the focus/intent was on an issue or concern.

The researcher relied heavily on the use of theory to help complete the essential methodological steps, such as developing research questions, selecting the case, refining the case study design, and defining relevant data to be collected. Interview questions were developed to assist mentors with addressing the central research question. In addition, question stems were used during the focus group interview to deepen and support the responses given during individual interviews. Through data collection, a detailed description of the case emerges in which the researcher details such aspects as

47

the history of the case, the chronology of events, or day-by-day rendering of the activities of the case (Stake, 1995).

Participants and Site

A purposeful sampling strategy was used by the researcher to identify participants for this study. Purposeful sampling exists when a researcher intentionally selects individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2008, 2012, 2015). In this study, the researcher intentionally selected African-American males who mentored or were currently mentoring secondary school-aged African American males. Patton (2002) described purposeful sampling as the selection of information-rich cases strategically and purposefully, and specific types and numbers of cases are selected based on study purposes and resources.

African-American men who served as mentors in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* were chosen for this reason. More specifically, homogeneous samples were selected. Consistent with observations by Creswell (2007), the purpose of a homogeneous sample is to describe some particular subgroup in depth. The group of African-American men was the subgroup for men of all ethnic groups, the African-American race, and mentors. Due to the common experience of mentoring African-American male youth, these individuals were able to provide rich data that were valuable to the study.

Merriam (1988) stated purposeful, criterion-based sampling, requires the researcher to establish criteria, bases, or standards necessary for units to be included in the investigation. Subsequently, the researcher finds a sample that matches these criteria. To participate in this study, the individual had to be a male of African descent who

served as a mentor to school-aged African-American males, specifically served as a mentor in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program.*

In an effort to collect data, the researcher contacted mentors by telephone. To gain consent of other mentors, the researcher obtained contact information from mutual mentors. Upon agreement, mentors signed consent agreement forms, which stated their rights as a participant as well as the title, purpose, and other information vital to the study. Mentors received a copy of the interview questions prior to the actual interview to preview the types of questions necessary to address the central research question via email. Email addresses of mentors were obtained during the initial phone conversations.

Data Collection

Data were gathered via one-on-one open-ended interviews and through one focus group interview. Patton (2007) reported the purpose of interviewing was to allow the interviewer to enter into the other person's (interviewee's) perspective. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and was digitally recorded. Six of the interviews were conducted in the classroom/office of the mentor; two interviews took place in libraries, one in the office of the researcher and one in the home of the mentor. All of the interviews were conducted at a time chosen by the interviewee. The same set of pre-determined questions were used with each mentor to reduce variations and to ensure that interviewees were asked the same questions, with the same stimuli, in the same way, and in the same order, including the standard probes (Patton, 2002).

Although one-on-one interviews are considered the most time-consuming and costly approach, the data gained may be richer and provide common themes, which can be used during the analysis to make responses easy to find and compare (Creswell, 2015).

The researcher reviewed transcripts looking for common words or phrases that were repeatedly mentioned. NVivo 11 software was used to assist the researcher with finding themes and coding the transcriptions.

Due to time constraints of mentors, the focus group interview was conducted after the winter break, which was approximately one month after the one-on-one interviews were completed. A focus group interview is an opportunity to collect data through interviews with a group of people. The researcher asked a small number of general questions and elicited responses from all individuals in the group (Creswell, 2015).

Furthermore, Patton (2002) contended sampling for focus groups typically involves bringing together people of similar backgrounds and experiences to participate in a group interview about major issues that affect them. Focus group participants consisted of three men who were former mentees in the *Boys to Men Mentoring program,* who now mentor in the *New Generation Mentoring Program.* To reduce confusion during the focus group interview, protocols were given to each participant and read aloud before the beginning of the interview session. Since the number of participants was extremely low, the researcher recorded non-verbal cues during the focus group session instead of a note-taker as noted in Chapter 3. The focus group interview was also digitally recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed for common themes. The focus group interview session was held at a public library at an agreed upon time by all involved.

Data Analysis

Analyzing qualitative data requires an understanding of how to make sense of text and images so that answers to the research questions can be formed (Creswell, 2015). Like qualitative research, data analysis is also inductive and iterative (Lichtman, 2013).

The researcher transcribed interviews individually once they were completed and created

a visual array to display the data. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggested alternative

techniques of analysis, such as using arrays to display the data, creating displays,

tabulating the frequency of events, and ordering the information in such a way that will

not bias the results.

Once data were displayed in an organized array, the researcher began intensive

analysis (Merriam, 1988). All of the information about a case should be brought together

and organized in some fashion so that data are easily retrievable (Merriam, 1988). Upon

saturation of data, the researcher created case records for each participant. The case

record pulls together and organizes the voluminous case data into a comprehensive,

primary resource package (Patton, 2002).

Interviews were transcribed, reviewed for common words or phrases that were

repeatedly mentioned, and coded. Codes are labels that assign symbolic meaning to the

descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study (Miles, Huberman, &

Saldaña, 2014). The researcher used the NVivo 11 software program to assist with

coding. NVivo 11 organizes words or short phrases from participants' own language in

the data record as codes. Codes may also include folk or indigenous terms of a particular

culture, subculture, or micro-culture to suggest the existence of the group's category

(Miles et al., 2014).

Pattern coding, as a second coding method used, is a way of grouping summaries

into a smaller number of categories, themes, or constructs (Miles et al., 2014). The

researcher used three important functions to develop themes using codes. Miles et al.

(1994) described the three functions as: the condensation process, analysis during data

collection, and the use of a cognitive map. The condensation process involves combining data which are similar to avoid redundancy; analysis during data collection encompasses the researcher analyzing data as they become available; while the use of a cognitive map displays a person's representation of concepts or processes about a particular domain by showing relationships, flows, and dynamics among them (Miles et al., 1994).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical behavior represents a set of moral principles, rules, or standards governing a person or profession (Lichtman, 2013). In this study, the researcher kept in mind the purpose and significance of the study. Since human subjects were paramount for obtaining data to conduct this study, none of the participants experienced physical or emotional harm (Merriam, 1988). Lichtman (2013) proposed that there should be a reasonable expectation by those participating in the study that they will not be involved in any situation in which they might be harmed.

Informed Consent

Participants signed a consent form stating that they understood the purpose of the study, participation was strictly voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Miles et al. (2013) reported that Institutional Review Board (IRB) regulations are strict but thorough when it comes to recruiting voluntary participants, informing them about the study's goals, and assuring them of their rights throughout the project. Consent forms were kept in a file folder labeled with participant pseudonyms.

Confidentiality

Participants were ensured that their identity was kept confidential, the researcher used pseudonyms, and no identifying words or phrases denoting their identity were used.

According to Creswell (2015), researchers need to protect the confidentiality of participants by assigning numbers or aliases to use in the process of analyzing and reporting data. Participants are entitled to expect that such information will not be given to anyone else (Lichtman, 2013). No one except the researcher, the co-chairs of the study, and the transcription company had access to the information provided by the participants.

Validations Procedures

Validation procedures are used to ensure participants, external reviewers, or data sources themselves provide evidence of the accuracy of the information in the qualitative report (Creswell, 2015). The validation procedures used in this study included triangulation; member checking; rich, thick description, external audit; and an audit trail. Creswell (2015) described triangulation as the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection in descriptions and themes in qualitative research.

For this study, data were obtained from 10 different data sources and two different types of interviews. The researcher shared appropriate transcriptions and themes with participants to ensure the intent of the individual was accurately conveyed. This procedure is known as member checking (Creswell, 2015; Merriam, 2002). The researcher performed an external audit, where a person outside the study reviewed different aspects of the research and communicated an outside evaluation of the study (Creswell, 2015). Additionally, rich, thick descriptions were used by the researcher to describe in details the participants and setting under study (Creswell, 2007). External audits allow both the process and the product to be assessed for accuracy (Creswell, 2007, 2015; Litchman, 2013).

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative inquiry, the investigator is the instrument of data collection and analysis, which requires the investigator to carefully reflect on, deal with, and report potential sources of biases and error (Merriam, 2002; Patton, 2002). However, Creswell (2007) noted that the researcher's interpretations cannot be separated from their own background, history, context, and prior understandings. Creswell (2007) reported that a qualitative report should include some information about the researcher.

The researcher has experience working with secondary school-aged students. During her 24 years in education, nine of those years were spent in one middle school, six in two high schools in two different states, five at the Alabama Department of Education, and four at the University of Alabama at Birmingham campus where she is currently employed.

During her years at the middle school, a book study was conducted with *Boys and Girls Learn Differently*. After being assigned a homeroom that consisted of boys, the researcher developed a love for teaching boys, particularly those with challenges. This interest, along with a school need, lead to the development of the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*, a program composed of African-American males who had incurred multiple infractions on their record and were assigned to in-school detention on a regular basis.

The researcher presented this program to the faculty as an intervention procedure to help African-American males combat the anti-social behaviors they exhibited. She was given the challenge to develop a project while a student in an Educational Specialist class under the leadership of Dr. Collins. Since this study explored a program assigned by her

committee chair as an instructor and developed by the researcher, these would be considered biases of the study.

Another bias present is the study is the focus of a segment of the African-American population. Although the researcher is a member of the African-American race who is a certified secondary teacher with a passion for people in this age group, she believes that these individuals are the future of America and should be given equal opportunities to grow and develop as leaders in all ethnic groups.

To obtain permission to conduct the study, the researcher composed a letter and emailed it to the interim superintendent of the school system in which the study took place (see Appendix F). Once permission was granted, an application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was completed and approval granted. The researcher contacted mentors via telephone to secure dates for their in-depth, one-on-one interviews. The focus group session was held on an agreed upon date which was most convenient for the schedules of mentors.

Chapter 4

Report of Research Findings

As indicated in Chapter 3, this research study was designed to explore the lived experiences of 10 African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama. Throughout qualitative research, the problem discussion is typically used to establish the importance of the central idea, phenomenon (Creswell, 2015). The central question which highlighted the research problem was: *What are the lived experiences that motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama?*

Exploring lived experiences qualified this case study as phenomenology. According to Creswell (2007), the central phenomenon is the concept being experienced by individuals in the study, which may include psychological concepts such as grief, anger, or love. The objective was to focus on what common lived experiences participants had shared. As reported by Patton (2002), qualitative designs are naturalistic to the event, the research takes place in a real-world setting, and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest.

Six of the 10 interviews took place in the classroom/office of mentors. The remaining four interviews did not occur in the classroom/office of the mentor. One interview was conducted in a public library, another in the school library, one was conducted in the office of the researcher, and the last interview was conducted in the home of the mentor being interviewed.

Context

Since the central purpose of this study was to gain insight and knowledge of the lived experiences of African-American men, the phenomena studied, the case study method was used. According to Yin (1984), a "case" may be an individual, a community, an organization, a nation-state, an empire, or a civilization (p. 31). Each African-American man in this study was considered a unit of analysis that contributed to the phenomenon.

Creswell (1998) stated that the study of more than one case dilutes the overall analysis; therefore, the researcher typically chooses no more than four cases. For this study, the researcher interviewed 10 African-American males who participated in the single phenomenon or case.

These 10 African-American men were selected for this study through a purposeful sampling method, which was also a convenience sample. These men were chosen because they fit the criteria of being an African-American male and having served in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* in a middle school in Alabama. The *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* began in January 2005 and was in full implementation until 2015. The program slowly diminished due to changes in the administration, faculty, and staff.

In addition to individual interviews, a small focus group was conducted in order to compare the results during analysis. Participants in the focus group consisted of three former mentees of the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* who are currently mentors. Four men were identified by using the following criteria: must have been a mentee in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* and now serve as a mentor in the *New Generations Mentoring Program*. The *New Generations Mentoring Program* formed as a result of the

services received by middle school African-American males being mentored in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*. A major difference in the two mentoring programs is *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* has only male mentors who mentor African-American male youth; while the *New Generations Mentoring Program* has both male and female mentors who mentor both African-American males and females.

<div align="center">**Participants**</div>

To ensure confidentiality and protect participant identities, pseudonyms were assigned to each participant. A brief description of participants is listed in Table 3. Participant characteristics include age range, type of family structure in which they grew up, whether or not siblings were present, due to the nature of the family structure in African-American culture, their marital status, highest degree obtained, the number of children, and the initial year as a mentor in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*.

Table 3
Participant Summary Data

Pseudonym	Age Range	Family Structure	Siblings	Marital Status	Educational Level	Number of Children	Year Began Mentoring
Alex	60-70	Both Parents	Yes	Married	Master's	0	2006
Barry	30-40	Single Parent	Yes	Married	Master's	1	2006
Calvin	30-40	Both Parents	Yes	Married	Ed.S.	2	2010
David	20-30	Single Parent	Yes	Single	H.S.	0	2012
Enoch	30-40	Grandparents	No	Single	Ed.S.	0	2006
Fred	50-60	Both Parents	Yes	Married	Ed.S.	3	2006
Greg	20-30	Single Parent	Yes	Single	H.S.	1	2012
Harry	40-50	Blended	Yes	Married	Ed.S.	3	2006
James	30-40	Blended	Yes	Married	Associates	3	2006
Kelvin	60-70	Grandparents	No	Married	Master's	2	2006

Some self-identified descriptions used by the 10 African-American men to identify themselves included: husband, father, brother, son, Pastor, Minister, Deacon, Christian, volunteer, advocate, support system, nurturer, frat, friend, and mentor.

Participant backgrounds were very diverse as they were raised in different parts of the state of Alabama or in different states altogether. These men were raised in homes that were composed of both parents, single parent, blended parents, and even grandparents; yet these men shared the common goal of mentoring secondary school-aged African-American males.

Inasmuch as these 10 African-American men chose to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males, mentors left a lasting effect on many of their mentees as noted by the formation of a mentoring program similar to the one in which mentees were involved. Two of the former mentees co-founded a mentoring program for African-American boys and girls; however, they came back to where they were mentees and volunteered their services as mentors. Four of the members of the derivative mentoring program agreed to participate in a focus group session, but only three of them were able to participate.

The interviews with the 10 original mentors were scheduled in the fall of 2015. These conversations took place within a three-month period. Interviews were conducted during weekday mornings, afternoons, and evenings. Although most of the participants were no longer employed at the school where they began mentoring, they suggested that mentoring is still needed and that mentoring makes a difference in the lives of African-American male youth and the community.

Focus Group Interview

One focus group was conducted with three mentors of the *New Generations Mentoring Program.* These individuals had been mentored in the *Boys to Men Mentoring*

Program. The focus group was conducted to gather data for analysis. The researcher facilitated the focus group.

To ensure that everyone was comfortable, the focus group interview began with participants providing demographic data about themselves and their families. The conversation proceeded with open-ended questions about their understanding and experience of mentoring ("What is the role of a mentor?" "What year did you begin mentoring?). From this point forward, the conversation required participants to become more reflective and compare their experiences as a mentee with those as a mentor ("What are some benefits of mentoring? "What level of commitment is necessary for mentors?" "How often should mentors and mentees meet?").

As a result of gathering data from mentors in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*, the researcher asked questions to help bridge the gap in data under the construct of recruiting ("How do you recruit mentors for your program?" "Do you provide any type of training for potential mentors?" "What support is available for mentors?").

One of the limitations of the focus group interview was time. Since participants were not educators, worked at different locations, and had different work schedules, scheduling the focus group was difficult. Despite numerous attempts to gather all four of the men who met the criteria (African-American males who were mentees in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* and currently a mentor in the *New Generation Mentoring Program*), one was called into work at the agreed upon scheduled time of the focus group and therefore could not participate.

Patton (2002) described another limitation in which individuals who hold minority perspectives may not be inclined to speak up and risk negative reactions (Patton, 2002). To minimize the possibility of participants feeling inhibited to speak openly, attempts were made to lessen perceived power differentials. Participants were encouraged to say whatever was on their minds, whether positive or negative, and were reassured that their comments would not result in any negative repercussions. Based on participation, it was evident that participants felt free to speak openly and honestly.

Participant 1: Alex

Alex was born in a hospital on the college campus where his parents attended school. He and his two siblings were raised on campus, the same institution from which they also graduated. Alex lived in the town for 33 years. He was employed at the local high school for a year before receiving a placement as an assistant coach on the college campus where he was born. Inasmuch as Alex worked on the campus of his birth, he indicated that he was blessed to receive a job at a university in another state where he worked in the Dean of Men's and Women's Office as the Co-Ed Director. Alex also served as the basketball coach and an adjunct professor in the Physical Education Department.

Seven years later, Alex lost his mother and decided to come back to Alabama to be closer to his father. During that time, he found employment in the middle school where he has been employed for the past 20 years. Alex is the only person in his building to teach all of the students for all three years. The year of this study marked Alex's 35th year in education. Alex is married with no children.

Participant 2: Barry

A native of Birmingham, Barry received his formal education in the Birmingham City School System. Barry and his three siblings, one being his fraternal twin, grew up in a single parent home. He received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees at colleges in neighboring cities. However, he returned to Birmingham for an Educational Specialist's degree which he is currently pursuing. Barry is a teacher in the school system where he received his elementary and secondary education. Although he loves teaching, he said that he desires to become an administrator one day. Barry is the father to one daughter whom he described as the love of his life. Barry currently serves in a middle school as a classroom teacher.

Participant 3: Calvin

Calvin, the son of a Baptist minister and mail carrier, is also a twin; however, he and his brother are identical. Calvin and his siblings were raised in East Cleveland, Ohio. He received his formal education at a Blue Ribbon elementary school. Subsequently, his family moved to Birmingham when he was in high school. Barry and his siblings completed their educations in the Birmingham City School System. According to Calvin, this transition was a big change for him, but he was able to adapt. Upon graduation, he enrolled in a local university where he received a Bachelor's degree in Divinity. Later, he enrolled in a different local university where he earned a Master's Degree in Instructional Leadership. Calvin is married with two children. Calvin currently serves as a classroom teacher in a local middle school, where he has started a mentoring program for African-American males through the My Brother's Keeper Initiative. He was involved in a similar

mentoring program before participating as a mentor in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program.*

Participant 4: David

David grew up as the only male in a single parent home with his mother and older sister. David's father passed away when he was young; therefore, he had no memories of him. David was also educated in the Birmingham City School District and is currently enrolled in a local university where he is majoring in business administration and minoring in psychology. David is one of two mentors who were mentees in the Boys to Men Mentoring Program during its initial implementation. He has since come back to serve as a mentor.

David is also one of the co-founders of the New Generation Mentoring Program. Mentors in the New Generation Mentoring Program serve as mentors to both African-American males and females. David is one of the youngest males to serve as a mentor in the Boys to Men Mentoring Program. He is not married and has no children.

Participant 5: Enoch

Named after his father, Enoch has served in education for 17 years. Fifteen of those years were spent in the middle school as a classroom teacher, and the other two as an elementary school administrator. He grew up in Selma located in Dallas County. Immediately following his birth, his mother passed away due to a myocardial infarction. Even though his father was present, Enoch was raised primarily by his grandparents and aunts (mother's sisters). Prayer was the focal point of his family's life and he vividly recalled stories the family would tell him about his mother and her faith. According to Enoch, his mother had been advised by her doctor to terminate the pregnancy, but she

prayed that God's will be done. One story that Enoch shared was that both of his parents were very bright. He noted that both of his parents graduated from high school at the age of 15.

In addition, Enoch returned to school and received his Master's degree, after a 10-year hiatus and much encouragement from friends. Two years after that, he received an Educational Specialist's degree in Instructional Leadership, which led to his current placement as an assistant principal. Enoch is single with no children.

Participant 6: Fred

Fred is a native of Birmingham who also attended the Birmingham City School District and received his undergraduate degree from a university in a neighboring city. Fred is currently enrolled in the same university where he is pursuing a doctorate degree in Instructional Leadership. He is the younger of two boys, who grew up with both parents in the home. According to Fred, he and his brother received the best of two worlds: a refined mother who was prim and proper, and a father who was more down to earth. His grandmother taught him to read before he entered kindergarten which afforded him the opportunity to skip first grade.

Even though Fred played football and showed some promise, he said that he was drawn to music at a very early age. After going on a field trip to the symphony in elementary school, Fred returned to school and learned to play every instrument in the band room. He even took piano lessons, until friends, other African-American boys, teased him. From the short period he was in piano lessons, Fred learned enough to compose music for an album. Fred is married and the father of three grown children.

Participant 7: Greg

Greg, also fraternal twin, was raised in a single parent home. He has two brothers and a best friend who he also considered to be like a brother. Greg was also educated in the Birmingham City School District. Greg went into the United States Armed Forces upon graduating from high school. During his tour, he obtained injuries which led him to a career that he described as not only rewarding but also his ministry. Greg has been on several tours with his dance ministry where he has counseled African-American males. He said that he decided to come back to where it all began for him. He started mentoring with the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* and is also the co-founder of the *New Generations Mentoring Program*. He is currently working at a local establishment and has one son.

Participant 8: Harry

Harry has been in education for more than 20 years in the same school district. For more than half of those years he served in the classroom as a special education teacher. For the other half, Harry served in a leadership role. Harry has served as either an assistant principal or principal in three levels of education: elementary, middle, and K-8 schools. Although he was raised in a single-parent home for a number of years, he is the product of a blended family.

Harry was raised in Selma, Alabama, where he received his formal education. He received his advanced degrees from universities in and near the school district where he is currently employed. Harry is married and the father of three children.

Participant 9: James

James was also raised in a blended family. Members of his family including his grandmother, mother, aunts, and uncles are all educators. However, like most teenagers, James said he was just a regular student, who did not apply himself academically until the tragic death of one of his friends. Before his death, this friend made an impression on James that changed his life. James became more involved in school and extra-curricular activities. Consequently, James received an athletic scholarship to one of the big southeastern universities. An injury, however, caused James to return home and enroll in a local college.

During his stay at the local college, James became a father. At this point is his life James said he decided to *do the right thing* and stopped running around with a bad crowd so that he could take care of his child. James finished his Associate's Degree, received a job at a detention facility, and was recommended for a job at the middle school where *Boys to Men* originated. James was one of the original mentors. He is married with 3 children.

Participant 10: Kevin

Kevin was raised as an only child by his paternal grandparents. Both of his parents moved to other states but would visit him on a regular basis. Kevin was also a product of the Birmingham City School District. He received his Bachelor's Degree from a college in a neighboring state. According to Kevin, his aunt, who was an educator, was very instrumental in his educational attainment. Upon graduation, Kevin moved to New York where he met and married his first wife. They had two daughters during this union. Kevin recommended two things that everyone should do at least once in their lifetime:

get married and visit New York. He has been married to his second wife for 39 years; they have no children together but have two daughters who are a month apart. He said that he is happily retired, but still active in educating youth.

Themes and Sub-Themes

Analyzing qualitative data requires understanding how to make sense of text and images so that answers to the research questions can be formed (Creswell, 2015). Like qualitative research, data analysis is also inductive and iterative (Lichtman, 2013). A 12-question interview protocol was used for this study. Interviews were transcribed and reviewed for common words or phrases that were repeatedly mentioned, and then codes were created. Codes are labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive of inferential information compiled during a study (Miles et al., 2014). The researcher used NVivo 11 to organize codes. The NVivo 11 software uses words or short phrases from participants' own language in the data record as codes (Miles et al., 2014). Data were displayed in an array table. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggested alternative techniques of analysis, such as using arrays to display data, creating displays, tabulating frequency of events, and ordering information in such a way that it does not bias the results. These steps were done throughout the NVivo coding process.

The second way of coding used by the researcher was pattern coding. Pattern coding is a way of grouping summaries into a smaller number of categories, themes, or constructs (Miles et al., 2014). Finally, the researcher used the condensation process. The condensation process involves combining similar data to avoid redundancy. Data analysis begins as the data are made available. The use of a cognitive map displays a person's representation of concepts or processes about a particular domain, showing relationships,

flows, and dynamics among them (Miles et al., 2014). The researcher condensed 21

codes to 17 sub-themes and five themes using this process.

Table 4
Summary of Themes and Sub-Themes

Themes	Sub-themes
Creating a Healthy Balance	Being supportive
	Having faith
	Having good communication skills
	Making connections
Overcoming Obstacles	Effects of death
	Dealing with injuries
	Changing a mindset
Creating Positive Relationships	Relationship with parents
	Interacting with educators
Leading by Example	Setting high expectations
	Modeling positive behavior
	Having a high level of commitment
	Helping others
Giving to the Community	Involving the community
	Recruiting others
	Advising potential mentors
	Improving Boys to Men Mentoring

Creating a Healthy Balance

The first theme to emerge in the coding process was creating a healthy balance.

Although creating a healthy balance in life means different things to different people, it is

based on their worldviews and is essential for everyone. Creating a healthy balance in

life, for both mentors and mentees, is a process that occurs throughout the day which is

based on the choices made. The choices are derived on skills such as being supportive,

having faith, having good communication, and making connections to past experiences.

Being supportive. One of the best aspects of a relationship is for one person to support the other in whatever he or she is doing. Four mentors identified the importance of being supportive to them. Calvin expressed the following during his individual interview, "…it (support) may require you to walk along with the individual through a process that may be difficult."

Likewise, Enoch reported the following, "It's not only just being real but showing that you care. I think your actions will win someone over with more than lip service, because a lot of times people are just watching. Oftentimes, just being there makes a difference." In addition, Fred revealed some very intimate details regarding this topic, "I would go over to my mentors' house and just cry. I had to let it out."

Harry added:

Just by reaching out and calling on them (mentors) with a simple phone call. The thing is, and it goes back to the relationship part, in order for a mentor to be effective, the mentee has to feel comfortable enough with them to be able to reach out and call on him.

Having faith. Having faith is the notion that believing in something you cannot see is going to happen and turn out good. Five of the participants discussed faith or believing in a higher power in their interviews. Participants sought to exemplify the notion of a higher being and what it meant to them to have this relationship.

When referring to his mentor, Barry noted:

I sought counsel from him because we connected on a spiritual level. He's in the ministry and we got a chance to…I got a chance to come to him and I knew that he would give me the answer that I needed to hear not wanted to hear.

However, Calvin made a comparison of this generation to one during Biblical times. He stated:

> I think in this regard, the generation that we're living in right now is not a Joshua generation but it's what I feel it is an Israelite generation. And that's coming out of the Book of Judges but I feel that generation doesn't have the normal structure, family structure.

However, David referred to a change as it related to his faith, "To me, it was God telling me that, 'Hey, you're going down the wrong path. You need to turn back around, where you need to be going.'" David also talked about a mode of communication with a higher being, "Prayer is the most effective thing that we can do…We need to have prayer instituted back into our lives."

On the other hand, Enoch spoke of how faith was a part of not just his life but also his family's, "She [his Mother] believed God that things would work out, but God had different plans. I'm just glad that she came from a praying family." While Fred, who is also an ordained minister spoke of faith in this manner, "…I guess being called to the ministry, being saved and holy ghost filled by the time I was 21 almost 22 years old and called to preach around that same time, I had an experience in salvation, called baptism of the holy-ghost". Furthermore, James described his great-grandmother as the person who introduced him to church where his faith was developed; he referred to her as a "catalyst".

Possessing good communication skills. Communication is important when mentoring youth, especially African-American males. According to participants, messages frequently get miscommunicated through body language. Words can also be

taken out of context; therefore, individuals must learn to communicate more effectively. Communication was mentioned by five of the 10 study participants.

To illustrate, Alex noted that he advised mentees to converse with others if he was not available:

A lot of times, with our younger ones (male students), it's their grade-level teacher. They don't know me, but they look up to a grade-level teacher. At times when I can't talk to them, I can send them to him (a male grade-level teacher).

Consequently, Enoch cited non-verbal communication as vital in working with his mentee:

I paid attention to them (his teachers). I watched every little thing they did. They were consistent. They didn't change. Not only were they fair and consistent with me, I saw that they were doing it to other students. Kids pay attention. It's not like do what I say, I mean, not what I do, but do what I say.

Later in the conversation, Enoch stated, "Then you have to be careful when you talk to your colleagues because kids hear what you saying about other children. If you talking about Bob over here, you gone talk about me. I took that very serious."

On the contrary, Fred discussed the importance of consistent communication, "You might have expressed something else but when you get down to it I was really sad, I was really scared. Sometimes they are mad because the actually feel their boundaries have been violated."

Besides, Greg reflected on communication as it related to future endeavors, "Teach them that things that they're doing now are really going to affect them 10 years

from now." Likewise, Harry also deliberated about the benefits of communication throughout his interview. He stated:

They (teachers) communicate with someone else, talk to them about the subject, get some feedback, what have you, so certainly this process works the same way with mentors and mentees that have an opportunity to talk about different things, different subjects, different topics and having the posture that I'm not only the source of information but I'm also like a sponge. I'm trying to absorb newer, better, different ways of thinking about things and oftentimes, when you deal with your mentees, different ways of thinking about things is something that naturally happens.

Making connections. The sub-theme of making connections was identified as a way of connecting past events to current situations. Eight participants discussed how events or experiences from their past had assisted them in becoming the person they are today. They made connections that shaped their personality and formed their character.

Alex compared the effects of the community then to what the community is now:

During that time, we had that set up, it takes a village to raise a child, and with my parents being known, I knew better than to get in trouble. It was not going to work. It still takes a village, but the village is not willing to help. The help of the village is not respected.

Furthermore, Barry stated, "I was blessed to have great educators in my life from elementary through college." However, Calvin observed:

We're seeing more and more single family homes. Where there's a lack of male ... Not necessarily male influence, but positive male role model influence. For me

then, it helps me just to be connected to understand that there is a role to play, that

there is a need for men of standard, of integrity, and that you have to invest in the

lives of those who are coming up. That they may be successful and they may also

look at transferring that same spirit to the next generation."

Similarly, Enoch made several connections as he synthesized his thoughts. He said:

Some of the Males were coming from homes where the father wasn't there yet

some were foster kids. They were just looking for somebody to love them. They

were angry at the world. Good kids, but they had environmental things that

distracted them.

He further stated:

They (African American boys) come from homes where mothers not always

there, fathers not always there. They come from broken environments, poverty.

We have to be an example. We have to be a model for the students. A child could

be hurting. Because you went through hurt, you recognize hurt. You went through

certain struggles; you recognize when someone is going through a struggle. You

just need to be there, show them love, and give them that little attention. It goes a

long way. They (mentors) did that for me, and it helped. It made me care. It made

me more compassionate. I'm still that way to this day.

On the contrary, Fred noted his connection with staff members at the

implementation stage of the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*. He said, "I also told them

that hiring a pretty high percentage of male instructors in a middle school, was part of

Mrs. Gibson's genius." In addition, Fred noted a connection with one of his mentees that

made their bond even closer. He recalled:

I've spoken to a lot (of boys) that say, "Mom's not here" or "Dad's not here" or they're dealing with certain issues. To just see them when they break down from that, just to be able to lift them up. Like, "What you're going through, I went through. If I came out of it, you can come out of it too." It's always a good feeling and once that happens, from that point on, those same students come to me almost every day. Just letting me know what they're doing in life. I could have like…I could be at work and I get a text message from a student from two years ago. "What're you doing? I made the AB honor roll." Stuff like that is what I like."

Alternatively, Harry commented on the beginning and end of the mentoring program, "That the end result would be a benefit to both the mentor and the mentee." James, on the other hand, made a connection through programs: "…with first books and we give them books, name brand books. I also tell them I grew up poor. So we didn't have books at home."

In summary, 10 African-American men performed mentoring tasks as ways to assist secondary school-aged African-American males create a healthy balance in their lives by considering the choices they make daily. These mentors identified many different types of supports, provided verbal and nonverbal communication, intertwined faith in a higher being, and made connections to previous experiences, events, and situations.

Overcoming Obstacles

Overcoming obstacles was the next theme that developed. According to participants, obstacles appear at the least opportune times. Obstacles can be roadblocks that slow down progress in any event or circumstance, and if obstacles are not handled

carefully can cause progress to stop altogether. Participants reflected on their inner thoughts and feelings through the following sub-themes: effects of death, dealing with injuries, and changing mindsets.

Effects of death. As noted by participants, no one is truly ready for death, despite its inevitability. Regardless, everyone must find ways to deal with death. Five participants shared an incident involving death and its effect on their lives.

Alex recounted two experiences with death that caused him to physically move both times. He stated:

I stayed with my grandma after my grandfather passed away. That's why I went up (to North Carolina). After those seven years I decided to come back to Alabama to get closer to my dad, because my mom passed away in 1980. As a result, I began teaching in the middle school.

Whereas David's experience with death was not with a family member but a very close friend. He recalled, "… my best friend, when he passed away, a month before I actually went into the hospital the first time. He motivated me and molded me to actually want to mentor."

At the same time, Enoch reminisced about his mother, "My mother, she died the day after I was born. She had a myocardial infarction of the heart. She was actually advised by her doctor not to have a child."

However, Fred revealed very intimate details of his experiences with death. He stated:

The biggest game changer was the death of my dad while I was a junior in college. He had a stroke and died. I made the first F I ever made in my life. That really changed my life. My mind just shut off.

According to James, his experience with death resulted in positive changes. James recalled:

One of my friends got killed in a car accident. I can remember thinking as a child when that was going on that he didn't really bother anybody and he made straight A's. His death had a profound impact on me. That's when I started getting involved and looking at life a little different, trying to change my life.

Dealing with injuries. Young male students, particularly African-American males, believe that athletics is going to be the method which provides them with fame and fortune. Rarely do they consider the possibility of an injury. Participants noted that injuries can happen to anyone at any time, but what happens after the injury is just as important as how the injury is treated. Once a person encounters an injury, he can either give up and not do anything or continue on the trajectory that he was traveling. Two of the three focus group participants discussed dealing with some type of injury.

As the result of an injury, David made the following claim:

I've been hospitalized 10 times with pancreatic disease and Type 1 diabetes. The pancreatitis disease is actually a very painful disease that causes a strong pain in my stomach. To me, it was God telling me that, "Hey, you're going down the wrong path. You need to turn back around."

Furthermore, Greg suggested that his injury was a gateway into a career. He stated:

I ended up shattering both my knees in the army and came back and they

(doctors) told me I couldn't do certain things. Couldn't really walk too well, so I

actually started teaching myself to dance. I used that as a way to get my knees and

stuff better and I ended up doing a tour from Alabama to Atlanta called Paint the

City for Christ. It was a gospel tour we do. Opened up for Mary Mary.

Equally important, James talked about how his injury helped him make a decision about

which college to attend. He said, "I had an opportunity to go to Auburn on a track

scholarship or go to Lawson State Community College. I hurt my leg so I chose to go to

Lawson State.

Changing mindsets. To change the way someone thinks about an issue could be a

daunting task. A person has to be knowledgeable about the topic of discussion, have

skills of persuasion, and know when others are not progressing in the desired direction.

Five participants in this study reported either changing their mindset or helping to change

someone else's mindset.

Alex discussed an experience he had had with a student:

They (students) take it as, "You're not my dad." When I'm trying to help you, I'm

not trying to pull you down. For them to understand that they have to gain your

trust too. That's a big thing, they don't have any males that they can trust, or the

ones they have seen or been around are a negative influence. That's a big thing,

gaining their trust. Then you can just about get them to do things.

Alex also describing changing the mindsets of parents or the community, "…if we did

something wrong and they (parents) were told, it was taken that the adult was telling the

truth and that was that. Now they (parents) are questioning whether that child really did it."

In addition, Enoch identified a reasonable starting point for changes to occur, "We know what's going on in the black community. We got tired of it. We were like, as men let's come together and let's change the kids here." On the contrary, Fred made a change in his worldview as a result of someone else's actions. He said:

I remember coming home telling my mama and my dad I don't want to play the piano anymore. They asked why? The boys that play piano don't act right. My mama and my daddy, told me that playing the piano has nothing to do with your sexuality. I just didn't want to do it. They stopped pushing me but I learned enough to know chords and scales.

Fred also identified a lesson he had learned as a result of changing his mindset, "I enjoyed the music more than I enjoyed playing the football. Football was fun but I knew for me the music was the thing. That was a game changer because I found out you stick with what you like."

Furthermore, Harry discussed the effects of growing up without a father in the home and not living in abundance:

Either growing up without or not having my father in the home, abundance or at least more than what I had in places close enough to me where they were either within the family unit or in close proximity. Those things shaped me by always allowing me to see there was a different way than the way I was necessarily experiencing things.

He added, "My parents also shaped me to work hard because I came from a family of hard working people. I knew that, ultimately, if I had it within me to change my circumstances and my family's circumstances based on my actions (I would)." However, James experienced an event in his young adult life which is more common or more frequently discussed in today's society, "I got a young woman pregnant, that's when you start thinking about life, and I made the decision that I would work and take care of my kids and try to go to school."

Participants discussed how overwhelming it can be to overcome obstacles and noted that it frequently requires help from others. Participants spoke candidly about how they dealt with challenges such as death, injuries, and changing mindsets.

Creating Positive Relationships

Participants inferred that positive relationships are an essential aspect of the mentoring process. While mismatches of mentors and mentees can result in ineffective or unproductive relationships or even the dissolution of the relationship, strong bonds can be beneficial for both parties.

Relationship with parents. Positive relationships usually begin with people who are closest to you. They help to shape your character and beliefs. Typically, actions of parents in the presence of their children have a lasting effect on them. Participants in this study had very diverse family structures. Three of them were from homes in which both parents were present. Three were from single parent homes, two were from blended homes, and two were from homes where grandparents were the primary caregivers. Participants openly discussed their relationships at home and in school.

Alex was raised by both parents in the home. This is how he described his relationship with his parents, "I wouldn't trade it for anything, very open, nurturing. I probably had the best parents a lot of people have and blessed enough to have them there for me. Today, that's not the norm."

In contrast, Barry grew up in a single parent home. He described his home relationship this way:

> It's fine, I have the best relationship with my mother. I don't have the greatest relationship with my father due to the fact that I grew up in a single parent home. My mother helped shape my character as well. She instilled in me a hard work ethic. She instilled in me that life wouldn't be easy. I would have to work for any and everything.

Whereas Calvin was raised by two parents. In response to family structure, he stated:

> I would say I have a very good relationship with my parents. Speak with them almost every day or every other day, by and large. We still talk regularly in regards to biblical concerns. Also, the quality of when it comes to just the responsibilities of a man in regards to taking care of family, making sure that we're being present in the lives of our children, and also being responsible in regards to our leadership in the community as well.

On the contrary, David commented:

> Me and my mother, our relationship is actually great. It was a bumpy road growing up, because as a teenager, you want to be rebellious. When you get older, you realize, that light shines on you that says, "Hey, this is your mother." Our relationship is actually wonderful.

Enoch, however, showed signs of anger as he talked about his family structure. Specifically, Enoch said:

> My father was in my life but not like I wanted him to be. I, at times, grew up resenting him for that. It was one of those things you just have to grow out of and forgive and forget. We have a great relationship now, didn't always, but we do have a great relationship now.

He continued:

> I grew up angry, bitter at father because mom wasn't there, and, "Where's dad?" I would see him every blue moon, but that was because my mom's mom raised me. He allowed that. Growing up as a kid, I wanted my dad, too. It took me growing, understanding the full story, putting pieces together, being in church, knowing about God, and just forgiving people. I had to forgive him because I was angry. I love my dad today. I love my dad today.

Meanwhile, Fred who grew up in a home with both parents, described his relationship with his parents as "Pretty close, pretty close". He further stated:

> My dad was very close. We had, I guess, the refinement of mamma who was like a debutante, use your spoon, and use your knife. (For) my dad…(it) didn't matter if we just ate with our bare hands. We got both sides of the equation pretty good. I know a lot of the stereotype; a lot of the media likes to say that no black people know their dad. I knew mine. My dad was with me, as a matter of fact when I was sick, and missed a day at school, I would prefer my dad be home than my mom. My mom would give me medicine.

Conversely, Greg's upbringing was defined by a single parent home structure. He described his home life in vivid detail:

My mom...my mom, she worked a lot, so she wasn't home too much. We have a good relationship, but it has never been like a ... I could walk home and say, "Mom I love you" like every day. It's an awkward feeling you know? My dad, he was there for like a little while then disappeared and showed back up as soon as I turned like 18. He popped back up. It was just kind of rough and just having like feelings for...I played a lot of sports and you want your dad to be there and he was never there.

Meanwhile, Harry grew up in a blended family. He said:

My paternal father lives in another state. We have a better adult relationship than we had during my childhood. However, my step-father was a very manly man; he's a man's man, so he taught me all the things I needed to know to help me be a successful man. My mom, she's my heart, she's still living so we have a great relationship. I probably look at my mom and parents and try to...because they instill this into me to be better than they were.

Similarly, James was also raised in a blended family. He stated:

I also have a good relationship with my real father. And I can remember growing up, I had a little resentment toward my stepfather. He would always say that and as I got older, he would tell us. You don't understand this now, but you'll thank me later. I have an amazing relationship with my mother and father. With my real father, I just...A lot of my siblings, they are upset with him because he wasn't in our life. We've actually started developing a relationship and we don't really talk

about the past. That's what I told him. That was between him and my mom. He doesn't have to apologize to me about growing up and what went on. It doesn't bother me. I'm grown now. I'm over it.

However, Kevin was raised by his paternal grandparents. He had this to say about his relationship with his parents:

I had a very good relationship with my parents even though I was not raised by them. They would come to Birmingham quite often, sometimes twice during the year. Christmas, my father was known for coming home for Christmas, he loves children. In the summertime, my mother would come home, once a year, but my father would come at least two to three times a year. We had a very close relationship. After I got married it was even closer.

Interacting with educators. Educators play a major role in school-based mentoring programs; however, the types of interactions depend on the individual school where the mentoring program is housed. In this study, participant interactions with educators were not necessarily directly related to a mentoring relationship but with educators in general. Five participants addressed some type of interaction with an educator.

Alex talked enthusiastically about the positive effects his teachers had on him. He said, "My example of teachers there (at school) were perfect, and it followed through (to) my athletic coaching and even onto college. I still see those, I see a few of them are still living. The impact they had (was profound)."

In addition, Barry described the impact his teachers had on shaping his personality, "Several things helped shape my personality. I was blessed to have great

83

educators in my life from elementary through college. I was very fortunate to have Mrs. Anthony as one of my teachers in high school."

Likewise, Enoch spoke confidentially about the relationships he had with several of his teachers from a very early age. He stated:

I had great teachers that inspired me to want to go into the field of education, especially in the field of history. I had two excellent history teachers that really inspired me to want to teach history and that's why I went into the field of education as a history educator. They showed me so much love. I was teacher's pet. They showed me favoritism. You're not supposed to but they did. Seeing the attention that they gave me, that I didn't quite really get at home...got it at school. I was like "Wow. I want to impress them. I want to be good. I want to do right for them and live up to their expectation."

In addition, Fred described the first field trip he participated in and the impact it had on his life:

I was finally old enough to go to the symphony. I remember maestro Marigold Marino and Birmingham Pops, Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. The rest of the class would go to sleep and I'm sitting on the edge of my chair because it was my first time ever (to see) real violins, violas, and cellos, and all that. I thought it was wonderful. I came back to school and learned how to play everything in the band room. I learned how to play a piano. I learned how to play a trombone, a saxophone, a clarinet, a trumpet, a trombone, a tuba, and baritone. I wanted to learn how to play stuff. I wanted to learn to make that sound.

In contrast, James conveyed the impact of educators who were also co-workers, "I would say you [the researcher] had an impact on me watching what was going on with special education, especially with the black males. That made me want to go back to school and be a special education teacher."

By the same token, Kevin mentioned the impact of an educator who happened to be his aunt. He said, "…my father's sister who reared me along with my grandparents. She was an educator. She taught school in the city system for 43 years and that's what really inspired me to want to be something."

In school-based mentoring programs, educators play a major role. Educators have more time with mentees than mentors who are not housed at the school. Teachers are able to make a big impact on students because students are watching and listening to them even when teachers do not think they are. Teachers have the power to make a positive or negative impact on the students in their care.

Leading by Example

Study participants highlighted several skills in their individual interviews that supported mentoring. These skills included setting high expectations, modeling positive behaviors, being truthful and honest, and having a high level of commitment. Participants suggested that these skills can be transferred from mentor to mentee.

Setting high expectations. Successful mentoring relationships are based on setting and meeting expectations and goals. Study participants articulated their goals and expectations upon entering a relationship with a mentee. For example, Alex described how his parents' expectations of him shaped his personality and helped build his

character. Participants discussed mentee expectations that ranged from seeking help when it is available to becoming productive citizens.

When Alex was asked: *What significant events do you believe helped to shape your personality and your character?* He asserted, "Expectations of my parents. We really didn't have a choice to do right or wrong. It was expected, and the respect had to go with it."

On the other hand, Barry expressed his own expectations within mentoring relationships:

I just wanted to make sure I presented myself in a positive light. I wanted to make sure that once I was done with these children or with these kids that they were responsible citizens; that they can go out into the world and be successful. I wanted them to be thinkers. I wanted to be sure that after leaving the program that year that they were able to be successful citizens in our communities and provide a positive influence on our communities. That's what I wanted them to be able to do.

Similarly, Calvin also expressed expectations for productive citizenship. He stated:

What I would hope was for the young men to gain was an understanding that they can be both competent and confident in their abilities. That they gain insight and interest about who they are, what they can become in life and that they can continue to be a... become a citizen that is…competent, reasonable, and responsible.

However, David communicated a list of actions that represent the expectations he had for mentees. He noted:

My expectations are "a lot." My expectation number one, respect. You must learn to respect yourself and respect your surrounding cast. Number two, you must learn how to properly dress. You cannot leave the house sagging. You can't leave the house wearing baggy stuff. Your clothes must be fitted, not loose. Number three, the words you choose, your words are like bullets. Once you say it, it's already a shot fired. Be careful what you say. Number four, should be number one. Pray. Prayer is the most effective thing that we can do.

Upon entering a mentoring relationship, Fred expressed the following expectations of his mentee:

An expectation I had was to be honest. If you are upset say you are upset. Be emotionally honest. Being mad feels more comfortable. I'm not comfortable showing folks I'm scared because they'll think I'm weak. Man, really you're mad at that? Why are you mad? They start describing why they're mad. I said, "Man, that would scare me to death, you sure you're not scared?" For example, they went into a room, they weren't ready, and had a pop quiz. Now they got put out of the classroom, they got reprimanded or written up because they were mad. I would have been scared. I would have been scared that I would make a bad grade. You talk to them, be honest, are you really mad at that teacher doing his job? Are you mad at him for being a teacher? Are you mad at your mom because she took your phone? She's being mom. Or you say it because you lost your phone? My expectation, don't be afraid to be honest, say how you really feel.

In fact, Greg indicated that his expectations were very simple, "Honestly, expectations are just, they learn from me and I learn from them." Similarly, Harry also described learning but added that it had to be mutually beneficial, "That the end result would be a benefit to both the mentor and the mentee."

Additionally, Kevin described big picture expectations. He stated:

Well, my expectation was that, hopefully this student would see the help as I see it. The big picture. That he/she would want to acquire the necessary skills to make it in life. That is, by getting the best education they can acquire.

Being honest. Honesty has been characterized as being fair and modest, having integrity, and having pure thoughts and actions. Three study participants described the attribute of honesty throughout their interviews.

Granted Calvin reported:

I turned back around because there was something innate in me that I learned by being ever present in the church, being taught the values of integrity. Of being truthful, that I went back and I told my dad what I had done at that time.

With regard to truthfulness and honesty, Enoch stated:

You have to be a man of your word. You want to lead by example. Children will hold you accountable for that. If you promise you're going to do something, try to be a man of your word to do it. If you can't, apologize immediately. It's okay to let people know that you are human. You make mistakes.

At the same time, Fred discussed being emotionally honest as he described his expectations of mentees, "Expectations I had was being honest. If you're upset say you're

upset. Be emotionally honest, which is something I talk to guys about because as men we know how to be mad. We do that really good."

Modeling positive behavior. Several participants acknowledged that they are careful what they do and say. Participants articulated multiple reasons for modeling positive behaviors.

To begin with, Alex enthusiastically stated, "I get to be the example." He further commented:

Kids watch what you do, and probably mirror more what you're doing more than what you say. You show them respect; you can get respect. I've always stuck by that. I did have good people in front of me to give me leadership or a road map of what I should do.

In addition, Barry noted his reasons and methods for modeling positive behaviors: I just wanted to make sure I presented myself in a positive light. I wanted to make sure that once I was done with these children or with these kids that they were responsible citizens and they can go out into the world and be successful. I wanted them to be thinkers.

Similarly, Calvin provided several examples of ways to model positive behavior. He specifically cited the following, "To confess when you've done a wrong or committed a fault, and to own up to your responsibilities."

On the other hand, Enoch talked about the transference of modeling positive behavior and why it was important to do so. He said:

As leaders, we not only lead by example but we must prepare them for the next generation because they're our future. I feel like God put me here to stand in the

gap. I can't (just) say I'm an educator. I can't say I'm a teacher, or I'm a man. I got

to show it. I can't just give lip service. I got to commit myself to going an extra

mile."

Level of commitment. When asked about the level of commitment needed to

foster a mentoring relationship, eight participants responded without hesitation. Several

study participants discussed the importance of establishing a high level of commitment,

others gave examples, but all reasoned that the level of commitment for mentoring to be

successful had to be extremely high.

With this in mind, Barry elaborated on this sub-theme:

It's going to have to be 100%. You're going to have to be able to give your all,

you can't give half, and you can't give 75%. You're going to have to give that

child, or that adult, whoever you're mentoring, your full, undivided attention.

You're going to have to be available for them, whether that's to talk, or do other

things.

In addition, Harry discussed the value of consistency as it applied to both mentors and

mentees. He noted:

In order to have a true mentoring (experience), because it's about relationships, in

order to have that relationship, it's going to require some commitment, it's going

to require consistency, it requires the fullness of both of those in order for you to

successfully help a mentee navigate through whatever it is your objective was to

start with.

Meanwhile, Kevin suggested that mentors need to demonstrate a level of self-

efficacy to be involved with mentees. He noted:

You need to be committed to doing what you're doing and believing what you're doing. That is enriching and bettering the child with whom you are working. Hopefully that would keep them on the right track to stay focused and to want something good out of life.

Helping others. Another sub-theme that emerged from individual interviews was helping others. Four participants spoke of ways in which they helped others improve a task or skill. Barry wanted to help mentees by addressing their outward appearance. He said:

I wanted to teach the young men in the school how to tie bow ties and ties. By the young men wearing ties or bow ties would allow them to present themselves in a more professional light.

Conversely, Calvin mentioned maintaining a list of community agencies that are available to mentees as needed. He discussed providing opportunities for mentees which are needed for their personal growth. He reported:

I try to keep a list of resources that may be available in the community. We provide these young men with opportunities to have personal experience. Looking at various colleges and universities that they can consider for potential growth opportunities. Also looking at whether or not they have opportunity for work and career readiness.

Besides, both Enoch and James discussed helping African-American males with attaining an education. Enoch talked about helping mentees with homework afterschool, and James mentioned encouraging mentees to read.

Overall, study participants indicated that leading by example was very important, because African-American males who are involved in the mentoring process watch to see if what mentors say and do are consistent. Actions are also observed by other students, teachers, staff members, and people who know that they are leading children. Therefore, exhibiting positive behaviors in all situations and at all times should be the norm.

Giving to the Community

In this study, African-American male mentors noted that giving to the community was important to them. Methods for giving back ranged from involving the community in events, recruiting potential mentors, advising new mentors, and improving the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program.*

Involving the community. Alex, who was born in and continued to live in the same community for 33 years, made the following observation about involving the community, "…we had that set up, it takes a village to raise a child." In addition, Barry said that he was concerned with teaching mentees to value the place they live by participating in a community clean-up. He added, "…we did community clean-ups and things. You have to be involved, you have to do things with them. It's not all about just talking, it's about doing, showing actions."

Additionally, Calvin expressed the importance of being a leader and being visible in the community. He noted the following in talking about his parents, "…being responsible as leadership in the community as well. Our father inspired us to take an active role in the community in which we live."

Enoch, who also mentored in the Big Brother Big Sister Mentoring program, said that he had a desire to assist mentees to have pride in their community. He reported:

I participated in the Big Brothers Big Sisters Mentoring Program. As a Big brother, I did some things with my little (brother). I also wanted my students to be community-minded. I know one particular year we had Fox (News) clean-ups. I recruited them (mentees) to come out and help around the school with the clean-up, and not just that particular weekend but every day. I taught them about having pride, having a sense of community. If you see something that's not right even if you didn't play a role, fix it.

In contrast, James said that he used his current position to continue the work he began when he was a mentor in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*. He explained:

One of the things that I've implemented (in his current position) is that you have to do things in the community. To make a connection so we have a thing called first books…with first books and we give them (mentees) books. We'll get a black author to talk to them about the importance of reading. I always tell them that there was a time where I didn't like to read, but reading has opened up a new world for me and now I constantly read.

Recruiting others. Above all, recruiting others to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males was extremely important to study participants. To get other African-American men to volunteer their time and resources can be difficult. Nevertheless, participants in this study shared their thoughts and actions about how to recruit others. Four participants spoke about bringing other African-American men into mentoring sessions to tell their stories.

Calvin not only talked about volunteers telling their story but also created opportunities for mentees to tell their stories. He stated:

I can also offer or extend the invitation to those individuals that they can come

and speak with whoever the young man may be or just to give an opportunity for

that young man to make contact with them at the same time.

Similarly, James talked about involving community members to tell their stories to

mentees:

Well, we started getting male speakers, people from the community to come in

and speak to the kids. I can remember we brought in a barber from across the

street to come in and talk to the kids. We pick other professions and we put them

up there on this pedestal, but that barber had a huge impact on the kids.

By the same token, Enoch spoke of involving the community to help generate

operating funds. This was before the implementation of the My Brother's Keeper

Initiative. Enoch recalled:

We would bring in police officers and firemen. We had a council woman that was

able to donate resources. We collaborated on a grant that was approved for

$4,000.00. We used that money to buy this book, (holding up, *Brother to Brother*)

and the money we had left over we used for field trips and an end-of-the-year

banquet…We fed the kids and gave out trophies, other awards and medallions.

Advising potential mentors. In order to recruit and retain mentors, advice from

someone who had mentored African-American males was deemed helpful. Participants

noted that sharing their stories and discussing the pros and cons of spending time and

resources as well as benefits may be insightful for future mentors. Mentors in the *Boys to*

Men Mentoring Program provided advice to potential mentors.

Alex had the following advice for potential mentors:

94

Be firm, fair, consistent, and truthful. If you made mistakes, share that with them. A lot of kids think, "I've got to make my own mistakes." We all know, sometimes one mistake is the end of the road. That's something I'm always saying, "Learn from somebody else's mistake."

Likewise, Barry provided the following advice:

Be prepared, plan. I guess it goes to the five P's that I grew up on in my home. Prior planning prevents poor performance. Be prepared, be planned. I'm thinking about this new generation; the youth are going to have to be prepared for anything. "

Moreover, Calvin contributed the following advice, "I'd suggest that mentors be humble. I would expect for mentors to be knowledgeable. I would also expect for mentors to make sure that they have their own lives in order." Similarly, David had the following advice for potential mentors:

Have your image in order. You have to check yourself at the front door. Before you want to consider mentoring, you look at yourself in the mirror and ask yourself, "Do I want to mentor, or do I need to be mentored?" Just because you think you have knowledge, doesn't mean that you're cut out for, you're ready for what you really about to embrace yourself into.

Instead, Enoch had critical advice for potential mentors. He said:

Do not play with the kids. It's serious. Just be watchful. You're being watched. They want to know are you a homeboy, or are you someone I can really look up to. Don't take it lightly. This is serious. They're going to love you because you told them the truth not because you told them what they wanted to hear.

While Fred's advice to potential mentors tugged at the heart. He instructed:

Have your heart open. Be real, don't be a cartoon, don't be full of clichés and stuff

like that. Be a genuine person to the young men. Let them see you, flaws and all.

Let them know that in spite of you having failings and what have you, you're a

real fellow. You can make it. The only thing is to just to be honest with them, be

real with them.

In contrast, Greg said that he wanted to help potential mentors differentiate between

being a mentor and assisting with mentoring. He stated:

… you gotta make sure you are 100% committed to it. A lot of people say, "I

want to be a mentor, I want to just share my story. I want to speak to kids." You

give them the opportunity and that's it. They share their story and they're done.

They just want to get their story out of them. They just want to speak one time.

No, no that's not mentoring. You want to go be a motivational speaker you can go

speak and motivate these kids, but if you want to be a mentor son you must

commit. You have to change your lifestyle to be a part of mentoring. You can't

expect these kids to follow you if you're just speak to them one time. They need

you to be there consistently. Just like they are at the school consistently, you

should be at the school consistently.

On the contrary, Harry described a collaborative approach to mentoring in which

mentees were included in decisions while mentors guided them towards their goals.

Harry shared the following:

As a mentor your greatest responsibility is to try and guide your mentees to their

destination not to force them, not to give them all the answers but to help them

develop their own answers based on the available information. You really are

more of a facilitator of learning than someone who's dictating, well you should do

this, or this is how you should think about this. You know just, you're a guide.

Whereas, James advised potential mentors to have an open mind and to enter into

a mentoring relationship without any preconceived notions about potential mentees.

James provided the following recommendations for potential mentors:

Go in and be open. I think the mentor has to be open to tell their life story first.

Don't go in thinking these kids are bad and they don't want to be open and share

their story because the kids are not going to be open to them. I just think they

have to be open and think of different ways to reach them (mentees).

Furthermore, Kevin also provided potential mentors with some much needed

advice. He encouraged potential mentors "to evaluate it (the mentoring program). To look

at what's required of them, be willing to work the program, and to come in with a positive

attitude."

Improving the Boys to Men Mentoring Program. Even though the *Boys to Men*

Mentoring Program has been in existence for the past 10 years, improvements need to be

made to the program. Originally, the mentoring program did not have a formal training

program for mentors because it was self-sustaining graduate school project. Seven of the

mentors in this study were original mentors in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*,

while the other two were mentees who had come back to serve as mentors. One

participant transferred in but was a mentor in another organization. Participants had

several recommendations for improving the Boys to Men Mentoring Program.

Alex noted that in order for the program to improve, there needed to be an increase in the number of African-American males who entered the field of education as a profession. Alex said, "The biggest step, we need more males. That's hard because males are not really going into education now."

Barry's recommendation for program improvement was to enlarge the territory. He suggested "…really implementing this program, to put it out there so that the community of Birmingham knows more about it. I would suggest opening it up now to other schools. To other schools, other school districts."

Nonetheless, Calvin proposed allowing mentees to log service points. He also recommended maintaining an appropriate ratio of mentors and mentees. He suggested the following: "Service opportunities, looking at scholastic achievement, and also looking at socialization skills. There should be a ratio that is kept. And also as a mentor, that you have someone else serving alongside you as a co-mentor."

Additionally, David, a former mentee who now mentors in *the Boys to Men Mentoring Program,* added new policy requirements when he first starting mentoring. He stated:

> One of the things, we changed the policy where we enforce more respect.
> Respect, because the kids, the male students, lacked the aspect of respect. They didn't care about themselves. They didn't care about their teachers. We wanted to institute respect, and we actually made a law and called it 3D effect.
> Determination, discipline, and decision-making skills.

In addition, Enoch served as a lead mentor during implementation of the original program. He recommended the following program improvements:

Bring more outside agencies to the kids, having people from the health

department, runaway agencies, abuse, and homeless shelters. Because when the

kids leave the school, they go home to the real world. They need to know where

to turn when things go wrong. I would say that would be a plus if they knew

where they can get help for anything. You're hungry. You need something to eat

where can you go, who would you call?

In view of returning after being away for several years, Fred stated, "If I had any

recommendations, it would be more structure. We lost something that I've picked up

since I've been back here." The structure has diminished due to changes in the faculty. In

the same fashion, Harry, whose role changed from Assistant Principal to Principal, during

the course of the mentoring program, offered the following recommendations:

To have an effective program one that has longevity is that the program has to

feed itself. Mentors have to help develop the next generation of mentees so that

they become mentors themselves and the process then continuously evolves and

grows. Certainly as you see yourself as a receiver of this valuable relationship

then at some point you should become the giver so that it can be sustained over a

long period of time.

Finally, Kevin recommended the following program improvement:

Have an open discussion with each class after the first month of school. Give

them (students) a chance to get adjusted, let them know what the mentoring

program is about. Send out some type of correspondence to their parents. Explain

it to them, (that) you'd like for their child to participate in the mentoring program.

Hopefully they will consider it. There shouldn't be any additional work they have

to do besides their regular homework.

In summary, giving back to the community was important to the 10 African-

American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American males. These

men volunteered in the community, recruited other African-American men to either serve

in the mentoring program or to come speak with their mentees during one of their group

sessions. After recruiting new mentors, participants provided them with advice.

Additionally, mentors discussed strategies to improve the *Boys to Men Mentoring*

Program.

Summary

10 African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-

American male youth provided insightful information concerning what motivated them to

mentor. Although these mentors grew up in diverse family structures, they shared the

same goal. Mentors in this study wanted to help African-American male youth become

productive citizens who were successful in their communities. They identified five

themes, and 17 sub-themes as a catalyst to accomplish the goal.

On the condition that serving as a mentor in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*

was a requirement to participate in this study, the program and its history was provided.

Originally, the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* is specific to one middle school in

Alabama, but several of the mentors would like to expand the program to other schools

and or districts. More importantly, African-American men in this study see the value of

mentoring and would like to continue the mentoring program at their current location as

revealed in the findings.

Chapter 5

Summary and Discussion

Mentoring has been identified as a preferred strategy to assist African-American male youth to change undesired behaviors. Although a challenge was made by the 44th President of the United States, there remains a gap in the availability of mentors for African-American males seeking mentorship (Daniels, 2012). Even before the challenge was made by the President and before Trayvon Martin and George Zimmerman were household names, there existed a successful mentoring program in a small middle school in Alabama, *the Boys to Men Mentoring Program*. Although the program was developed by a female teacher who was fulfilling a graduate school project, its success was due to the mentors who developed positive relationships with the mentees they served.

This current study focused on the motivations of 10 African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama. Qualitative research methods were used to conduct this case study which was phenomenological in nature. An in-depth description of the phenomenon was gathered through individual interviews and a focus group interview session. Participants' views and experiences as mentors were collected during the interviews. As a result of data analysis, five major themes and 17 sub-themes were identified. This final chapter presents findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further study.

Summary of Major Findings

Findings from research suggest that participants in this study were motivated by a desire to help mentees create a healthy balance, overcome obstacles, create positive relationships, to lead by example, and give back to the community. Mentors noted that their motivations were based on a desire to help secondary school-aged African-American males become productive citizens.

To foster a healthy balance, participants described many different types of mentoring supports they provided such as: listening to, advising, sharing information, and helping mentees make connections which may have changed the trajectory of some of the secondary school-aged African-American males' lives. Dondero (1997) defined a mentor as a person who listens to, cares for, advises, and shares information about life, careers, and other experiences with another, usually a younger person who requires assistance. Characteristics of study participants truly epitomize Dondero's definition.

By combining the sub-themes being supportive, having faith, having good communication skills, and making connections to past experiences/events led the researcher to concluded that these skills are present in someone who has a balanced life that is healthy. A person who has a healthy balanced life is able to make wise choices, using the skills identified as sub-themes, that lead to favorable outcomes especially when faced with adversity.

In as much as the information from descriptions of mentoring sessions, revealed that mentors unknowingly determined mentees' stage of moral development. As previously noted, Kohlberg wanted to find out from children why they thought a character was morally right or wrong (McLeod, 2013; Sincero, 2012). Similarly, learning

what motivated students to take certain actions may have helped mentors choose the best option for mentees to transition to a more desirable behavior.

Comparatively, as an educator who encounters secondary school-aged students daily, the researcher has witnessed questionable and unrealistic choices made by African-American male students. With this in mind, the researcher may be able to determine why those choices were made (using Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Reasoning), and choose strategies to use with the student based on which stage he falls. Also, by sharing Kohlberg's Theory with other educators, will empower them with knowledge to combat anti-social behaviors which may occur in their classrooms.

However, by using McClelland theory which identified that humans have three motivating drivers: a need for achievement, a need for affiliation, and a need for authority (Eyre, 2008), with Kohlberg's theory will provide mentors with a better picture of mentees. But to get a complete picture of the mentee, the mentor must also take into account the mentee's worldview. The mentees' worldview can be determined by using the African-American personality theory, whose development has is origins in one of three philosophies, European/European-American, Pseudo-Africentric, and Africentric (Kambon & Reid, 2010). If there is a mismatch between any of these theories, a healthy balance will not occur.

Conducting this study brought innate information to the frontal lobe of the researcher's brain. Dealing with secondary-school aged students, particularly African-American males, these theories opened up a way to organize how a person reasons, what drives him, and from what perspective he views the world. By using this information, the researcher is able to obtain a better picture of the person with whom she is interacting.

103

Also, by knowing this information allowed the mentor to provide a more reasonable intervention for the mentee.

In as much as most African-American males think athletics is their ticket out of a low socio-economic situation, and never consider that an injury or illness may occur, mentors highlighted the idea during their interviews. African-American men in this study described strategies they used to help mentees overcome obstacles. Obstacles have been characterized as bumps in the road, caution lights, and actions that slow down or stop progress. Mentors discussed coping skills they used when faced with adversities such as the death of a loved one, a crippling injury, and when trying to change the way a person thinks about a situation.

Overcoming obstacles often require the help of another person which involves some type of relationship. If relationships are the adhesive that connects mentors to mentees, as the findings of this study suggest, then the relationship should be positive. As noted in Chapter 4, the first relationship a person has is with his parents (initial caregivers). According to Farrell, Henry, Mays, and Schoeny (2011), parental values and expectations have significant influences on a child's belief system and behaviors. In addition, study participants candidly discussed their relationships with their parents. In as much as some of the study participants did not always have positive relationships with his parents, as he grew older and became more knowledgeable about life their relationship with their parents improved.

Mentors in this study discussed the examples of their parents and teachers and they knew the importance of leading by example. In an effort to model the concept of "leading by example," they communicated high expectations, had 100% commitment,

and modeled positive behaviors under all circumstances. Based on the six tenets of the African-American Male Theory (Bush et al., 2013), individual and collective experiences, behaviors, outcomes, events, phenomena, and trajectory of African-American boys' and men's lives are best analyzed using an ecological systems approach.

Notably, there is something unique about being male and of African descent; there is a continuity and continuation of African culture, consciousness, and biology that influences the experiences of African-American boys and men; African-American boys and men are resilient and resistant; race and racism coupled with classism and sexism have had a profound impact on every aspect of the lives of African-American boys and men; and the focus and purpose of study and programs concerning African-American boys and men should be the pursuit of social justice. The African-American men in this study met all of the tenets in the African-American Male Theory.

Finally, mentors sought to give back to the community through their time and service. Mentors participated in service projects in the community as well as other mentoring programs such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, the largest youth mentoring organization in the United States (Luckert, 2006) and by using the My Brother's Keeper Initiative to develop new mentoring programs in other locations.

Men in this study realized the impact mentoring had on secondary school-aged African-American males. It is evident in the fact that all of the mentors have carried mentoring to the next phase in their careers. Some have either started a mentoring program, are in the initial stages of starting a mentoring program, or are mentoring in an established mentoring program.

Research Questions

This qualitative study was designed to explore the perspectives of African-American men concerning the experiences that motivated them to mentor secondary school-aged African-American male youth. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 mentors to address a set of research questions. In an attempt to gather additional data, a small focus group interview was also conducted. The central research question was: What are the lived experiences that motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama? The sub-question for this study included:

How did lived experiences influence the beliefs and core values of the mentor?

Research Questions Answered

Central Question

The central question explored what are the lived experiences that motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama? As indicated in the study the need arose as a result of the No Child Act of 2001, which granted students in a failing school to transfer to a non-failing public school. During the 2004-2005 school year a large number of students transferred to a small public school in central Alabama. These students brought on new challenges for the faculty, whose goal was to remain in control. This lead to the implementation of a mentoring program, which was developed as a graduate school project.

Seven African-American men developed mentoring relationships with 30 African-American males identified by faculty and staff members in the school. The program became such a success during it 10-year tenure until boys who were not identified wanted

to participate, girls wanted to join, former mentees can back after graduating from high school as mentors, and the program was featured in the Birmingham Magazine.

However, the most important experience that motivated these African-American males to mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama was their desire to help their mentees become productive citizens and not become involved in the school-to-prison pipeline.

Sub-Question

The sub-question explored how the lived experiences influenced the beliefs and core values of the mentors. All 10 African-American mentors described their belief system as solid. They indicated that mentoring was needed to help lead and guide secondary school-aged African-American males in a positive direction, so that they would be able to function successfully in society, not become a statistic, but become productive citizens.

Garza (2014) described the Black Lives Matter movement as an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. In order to help save the next generation of African-Americans, particularly males, school-based mentoring programs serve as an intervention to help keep African-American youth from entering the school-to-prison pipeline. The *school-to-prison pipeline* represents the intersection of the K-12 educational system and the juvenile justice system (Kim et al., 2010).

Summary of Questions Answered

For this study, a qualitative research designed was used to explore the experiences that motivated African-American men to mentor secondary school-aged African-

American males in Alabama. Data and findings from semi-structured, open-ended interviews and a focus group interview are limited to the perspectives of the 10 key participants and should not be generalized beyond the scope of this investigation.

Data collected and analyzed throughout this study suggested that the 10 participants shared common characteristics and experiences that motivated them to become mentors. For mentors, creating a healthy balance was central to their mentees' growth and development and to prosper in society. Participants stated the belief that when secondary school-aged students create a healthy balance, they are able to communicate more effectively and make connections with others, as exemplified in the choices they make.

According to participants, the ability to overcome obstacles was equally important for mentees. African-American male youth need to be able to communicate, make connections, and have faith in order to overcome the various obstacles they will face in the future. However, mentors reported that creating positive relationships was of paramount importance to establishing a strong foundation of mentoring.

For these African-American mentors, it was important for them to lead by example, be men of integrity, be honest, and help others. Finally, these mentors wanted to give back to the community. They showed this by participating in community events, recruiting other African-American men to mentor youth, providing training opportunities for new mentors, and improving the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program*, where most of them began their mentoring relationships.

As I reflect on the on the process, it is evident that these 10 African-American men were honest and sincere in their motives to assist secondary school-aged African-

American males. This group of men voluntarily used their time and resources to help mentees reach goals which otherwise may not have been attainable.

Implications of the Study

High profile deaths of unarmed African-American male youth during the years 2012 through 2015 led to significant discourse across America. It was the center of conversation in churches (Banks, 2014; Tillman, 2015) and schools (Emerson et al., 2015; Hagopian, 2015; Perry, 2015), as well as by adults with their children. African-American male youth were being killed by police officers and others who were hired to protect and serve.

During this same period of time, African-American male youth were also performing at extremely low rates academically. Only 18% of African-American students in Grade 4 performed at or above the Proficiency level in Reading and only 15% of the same students performed at or above the Proficiency level in Math (The Nation's Report Card, 2013).

In Alabama, the graduation rate of African-American males during the 2012-2013 school year was 56.7% as compared to 60.5% for Latino males and 72.2% for White males (Schott, 2015). Further, African-American male students are more likely than any other population to face discipline leading to suspension or expulsion (Gregory et al., 2010; Lewin, 2012; Noguera, 2008; Rudd, 2014). To save this subgroup of students, an intervention has to be put in place immediately.

One traditional approach to meeting the needs of African-American male youth is through mentoring. According to the research literature, through mentorship, African-

American males who are culturally responsive in nature are afforded opportunities to create strong adult relationships (Kafele, 2012; Kunjufu, 2005).

During the 2004-2005 school year, the researcher developed the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* which targeted African-American males. Upon returning to the school for a site visit, the researcher was surprised to see that the mentoring program she started was still in full swing. The researcher remembered the challenges she encountered as she sought mentors.

Although the mentoring program was effective for ten years, the researcher was applauded that it was not being implemented during the 2015-16 school year. Some of the reasons given were: we've have numerous changes in the faculty, there are not enough males on the faculty, we no longer have specials in our schedule, just to name a few. While brainstorming possible time periods for meetings, I realized that the buy-in of teachers, administrators, and other stake holders were important in order to have a successful mentoring program. During this transition period, the school where the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* originated was not at the stage to implement a mentoring program.

However, as I reminisced on hearing President Obama's launch the *My Brother's Keeper Initiative* and challenge communities, states, and agencies, the researcher wondered what motivated the African-American men who participated in the mentoring program to share their time and resources with mentees. Afterwards the following actions pursued: Insights were derived from posing research questions. Implications emerged from thematic analysis of this phenomenological case study which included: creating a

healthy balance, overcoming obstacles, creating a positive relationship, leading by example, and giving back to the community.

Creating a Healthy Balance

According to participants, African-American males may provide beneficial information about creating a healthy balance for African-American males, their parents, administrators, schools, districts, and the Alabama Department of Education. Even though some school-aged African-American males have been labeled, study participants were resolute that the school-to-prison pipeline did not have to be the end result for their mentees. Mentors suggested that if African-American men would be supportive, exemplify faith, possess strong communication skill, and help mentees make connections to previous events, they could help mentees create a life that has a healthy balance.

The researcher recommends that school districts provide a time for mentoring during the school day throughout middle school until the sophomore year in high school. In doing so, there must be training for teachers that includes information about Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Reasoning, so that teachers and mentors understand why students take certain actions. Training may also include McClelland's Motivation Theory, since learning what motivates students can help guide students in ways that are beneficial in the area of academics as well as social arenas.

The African-American Male Personality Theory and the African-American Male Theory need to be further studied by educators since most of the districts in Birmingham have large numbers of African-American students. Of those students, African-American males are failing miserably, being suspended or expelled for long periods of time, and not

finishing school altogether. A balance must be created in order to save this subgroup of students.

Overcoming Obstacles

Study participants reported that teaching mentees how to handle obstacles was one of the most important skills that mentees can possess. Hoerr (2013) noted that before his son received his driver's license, he was taught what to do *when* not *if* he was stopped by a police officer. Many African-American parents have the nonsexual "talk" with their children, especially the males in hopes that they will remember what to do when facing adversity.

The researcher recommends that schools, districts, and administrators create or purchase training materials that contain different scenarios for teachers and students to use during mentoring sessions. After reading and discussing scenarios, teachers can chart student actions based on Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Reasoning, McClelland's Motivation Theory, and the African-American Personality Theory. After teachers have analyzed the chart(s), they can talk in small groups about the most effective strategies to handle student situations.

Creating Positive Relationships

Participants in this study identified creating positive relationships as vital to the success of the mentoring program. Having a positive relationship with someone who is a member of the same sex and same race offers a sense of security. It provides an outlet for individuals to discuss personal issues and not be judged. Both the mentor and mentee may benefit when discussing topics. However, mentoring has been credited for helping

adolescents build self-esteem, become more resilient, and become better at solving their own problems (Converse & Lignugaris-Kraft, 2009).

As such, the researcher recommends that a list of mentors be given to identified students so that they can choose a mentor. Once they have chosen their mentor, agreement forms should be made available to the mentee for him and his parents to sign as well as the potential mentor. If the mentee misses three sessions, his choice is taken away and he should be assigned a new mentor.

Leading by Example

Study participants stated that they should lead by example. All of them agreed that students pay close attention to the actions of their teachers. Participants also noted that mentors should be men of integrity and honest, presenting themselves in a positive light at all times.

The slogan used by many members of the 100 Black Men of America, Inc., "What they see is what they will be" (Kelly, 2011) is often true. African American male youth need to see successful African-American males for themselves. Therefore, the researcher recommends that a school staff member identify successful African-American men and alumni in the community and/or in neighboring state who would be willing to speak to and spend time with African-American males. This would afford African-American youth opportunities to interact on a personal level with successful African-American men.

Giving Back to the Community

Study participants said that they had an obligation to give back to the community. All of them indicated that had help reaching their level of success. All but one of them

stated that they had at least one mentor as a child and several as adults. Community-based mentoring programs are designed with a specific goal to transform a community (Parker & Maggard, 2009). Therefore, the researcher recommends that secondary school-aged African-American male students who participate in a mentoring program receive some type of service credit when they participate in service events in the community.

Recommendations for Future Research

This qualitative research was limited to 10 African-American men in a central city in the state of Alabama; however, findings from the study may provide insights for future research. The researcher recommends that the study be expanded to include other African-American men who have mentored secondary school-aged African-American males. A comparative study could also be piloted with men of different races and ethnicities who mentor secondary school-aged African-American males.

Furthermore, the researcher noted that study participants were volunteering in a school-based mentoring program and were frequently concerned about the conduct of African-American males in society, a community setting. Future researchers are encouraged to focus on community-based mentoring programs as another way to increase the academic performance of African-American males.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of African-American men who mentored secondary school-aged African-American male youth. The researcher recognized that mentors in the *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* had a desire to assist secondary school-aged African American males create healthy balance in their lives. The researcher also noted that a key motivator for mentors was to help mentees

overcome obstacles. Mentor actions led youth to create positive relationships, which

mentors described as paramount to this study. African-American men in this study

stressed the importance of leading by example in all situations. Study participants also

sought to give back to the community by participating in service activities.

The *Boys to Men Mentoring Program* has significantly diminished at the school

where it once thrived due mainly to a change in staff and administration. Where there

were at least two male teachers on each hall and in related arts classrooms, there are only

three in the building, excluding custodial staff. The absence of African-American males

has a deleterious effect on the conduct and academic performance of African-American

male youth.

The findings of this study are intended to encourage African-American males to

mentor African-American youth and prompt those in leadership positions to include

mentoring in the master schedule, especially during the middle and high school years.

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT LETTER

Participant Recruitment Letter

Dear Mentor,

My name is Tonya Wheeler Anthony; I am a doctoral student in a joint program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the University of Alabama. I am conducting research entitled, "From the Mouths of Mentors: A Qualitative Case Study Examining the Perspectives of African-American Men Who Mentor African-American Male Youth". The nature of this research is to provide experiences, events, and other vital information that motivated African-American men to mentor African-American male youth in the *Boys to Men* Mentoring Program.

You have been selected for this study based on your current or former role as a mentor in the "*Boys to Men* Mentoring Program" at a middle school in the Birmingham metropolitan area. You are invited to participate in an interview scheduled at your convenience, which will last no longer than an hour. The interview will be face-to-face and audio recorded. A copy of the interview questions will be provided to you in advance for your review via email. Two months later, you will be invited to participate in a focus group, which will consist of other African-American men who have served/are serving as a mentor in the program. The focus group session will also be face-to-face; audio recorded, and will last no more than two hours.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and there is no compensation for your time given to this study. You may withdraw at any time during the process. You can refuse to enroll, or withdraw after enrolling at any time before the study is complete.

There will be no direct benefit to you, but your participation may lead to a better understanding of what motivates African-American men to mentor African-American male youths. The only risk to your participation is the potential for loss of confidentiality. The records that I gather as a result of your participation will be kept in a secure location accessible by my faculty advisor and me only. However, research information that identifies you may be shared with the UAB Institutional Review Board (IRB) and others who are responsible for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations related to research, including people on behalf of the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). The results of the research may be published for scientific purposes; however, your identity will not be given out. All interview tapes and written transcripts of our communication will be kept locked and all electronic correspondence will remain on a password-protected computer.

Please contact me by email (twa@uab.edu) or call (205-907-9836) me to schedule an interview if you are interested or if you have any further questions.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, or concerns or complaints about the research, you may contact the UAB Office of the IRB (OIRB) at

(205) 934-3789 or toll free at 1-855-860-3789. Regular hours for the OIRB are 8:00 – 5:00 p.m. CT, Monday through Friday. You may also call this number in the event the research staff cannot be researched or you wish to talk to someone else.

Sincerely,

Tonya Wheeler Anthony

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR MENTORS

Interview Protocol for Mentors

Interviewer: _____   Interviewee: _____

Date: _____   School: _____

Time: _____   Position: _____

Location: _____   Years of Experience: _____

Introduction:

Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions today. The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of African-American men who mentor secondary school-aged African-American males in Alabama. Mentors in this study are African-American men who have served as/are serving as mentors in the *Boys to Men Mentoring* program. I will be asking you several questions and would like for you to be as open and honest as possible. I am very interested in your perspective, so please feel free to discuss your views, impressions and feelings. You should know that your name will remain confidential in the study and the data from this interview will be available for you to review within 72 hours. I may ask some additional questions that you have not reviewed, in order to clarify what you mean. Should you be interested in the completed study, a copy will be made available upon your request. Do you consent to this interview being recorded?

Are you ready to begin?

[Test the recording device.}

[Conduct the interview}

APPENDIX C

TELEPHONE SCRIPT

Telephone Script

Hello _____, my name is Tonya Wheeler Anthony. I am a doctoral student in a joint program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the University of Alabama. I am conducting research entitled, "From the Mouths of Mentors: A Qualitative Case Study Examining the Perspectives of African-American Men Who Mentor African-American Male Youth." The nature of the research is to provide experiences, events, and other vital information that motivated African-American men to mentor African-American male youth in the Boys to Men Mentoring Program.

You have been selected for this study based on your current or former role as a mentor in the Boys to Men Mentoring Program at a middle school in the Birmingham metropolitan area. You are invited to participate in an interview scheduled at your convenience, which will last no longer than an hour. The interview will be face-to-face and audio recorded. A copy of the interview questions will be provided to you in advance for your review via email. Two months later, you will be invited to participate in a focus group, which will consist of other African-American men who have served/are serving as a mentor in the program. The focus group will also be face-to-face audio recorded, and will last no more than two hours.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and there is no compensation for your time given to this study. You may withdraw at any time during the process. You can refuse to enroll, or withdraw after enrolling at any time before the study is complete.

I know I provided you with a lot of information so, if you would like to call me later to schedule an interview my phone number is 205 ###-####. If you are sure that you would like to participate we can schedule an interview now…let me grab my calendar?

If you have any further questions my contact information is email: twa@uab.edu or phone: 205-###-####. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or concerns or complaints about the research, you may contact the UAB Office of the IRB (OIRB) at 205-934-3789 or toll free at 1-855-860-3789. Regular hours for the OIRB are 8:00-5:00 p.m. CT, Monday through Friday. Yu may also call this number in the event the research staff cannot be reached or you wish to talk to someone else.

Thank-you for your time and please have a good day.

Good-bye for now.

APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

Institutional Review Board for Human Use

Form 4: IRB Approval Form
Identification and Certification of Research
Projects Involving Human Subjects

UAB's Institutional Review Boards for Human Use (IRBs) have an approved Federalwide Assurance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). The Assurance number is FWA00005960 and it expires on January 24, 2017. The UAB IRBs are also in compliance with 21 CFR Parts 50 and 56.

Principal Investigator: ANTHONY, TONYA W.

Co-Investigator(s):

Protocol Number: E150702011

Protocol Title: *From the Mouths of Mentors: A Qualitative Case Study Examining the Perspectives of African-American Men Who Mentor African-American Male Youth*

The above project was reviewed on 7/9/15 . The review was conducted in accordance with UAB's Assurance of Compliance approved by the Department of Health and Human Services. This project qualifies as an exemption as defined in 45CF46.101, paragraph 1 .

This project received EXEMPT review.

IRB Approval Date: 7/9/15

Date IRB Approval Issued: 7/9/15

Cari Oliver
Assistant Director, Office of the
Institutional Review Board for Human Use
(IRB)

Investigators please note:

IRB approval is given for one year unless otherwise noted. For projects subject to annual review research activities may not continue past the one year anniversary of the IRB approval date.

Any modifications in the study methodology, protocol and/or consent form must be submitted for review and approval to the IRB prior to implementation.

Adverse Events and/or unanticipated risks to subjects or others at UAB or other participating institutions must be reported promptly to the IRB.

470 Administration Building
701 20th Street South
205.934.3789
Fax 205.934.1301
irb@uab.edu

The University of
Alabama at Birmingham
Mailing Address:
AB 470
1720 2ND AVE S
BIRMINGHAM AL 35294-0104

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form

Project Title:	
From the Mouths of Mentors: A Qualitative Case Study Examining the Experiences of African American Men Who Mentor Secondary School-Aged African American Males	
Principal Investigator: Tonya W. Anthony, Doctoral Learner	Organization: University of Alabama at Birmingham Birmingham, Alabama 35
Location of Study:	Telephone #: XXX-XXX-XXXX (*The researcher's original telephone number was included in the original document but is deleted here).

I have read the attached Summary of Study presented to me by Tonya W. Anthony, ED.D. Learner, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, Alabama. Additionally, the researcher has explained the nature of the study, the value of the research to the community, and my role as a participant. The researcher allowed me to ask questions I may have about the purpose and uses of the study. I freely agree to participate in this research study. My consent does not take away any of my legal rights in the case of negligence nor does it replace any federal, state or local law that may apply. I am aware that I can leave the study at any time.

I fully understand that my commitment is for a one-hour interview, an observation, and a thirty-minute follow-up interview. Additionally, the researcher has agreed to protect my identity and will not use any personal information to identify me in the study. In the final reporting of data, codes will be used to maintain confidentiality for participants and no demographic data or other identifying information will be collected as a part of this study.

I am under no duress of financial commitment for participating in this study. I also

understand that my participation is voluntary, that I may withdraw from this study at any

time without consequence and that the objective of this study is to advance knowledge in

the field of educational leadership. If I withdraw, the researcher agrees to immediately

destroy any records or data related to me.

I further agree ☐ do not agree ☐ to have any audio tape made of my responses for the

purpose of later review and use in research analysis by Tonya W. Anthony, the principal

researcher. Additionally, I agree ☐ do not agree ☐ to review a summary of my

interview. I will have thirty days to review and return my review of the summary of the

researcher. Failure to respond within 30 days will be accepted by the researcher as giving

consent. No payment of any kind will be made to participants.

Participant Name (printed) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Principal Researcher's Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F

LETTER TO INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

105 Rosebud Road
Birmingham Alabama 35215
June 22, 2015

Birmingham City Schools
2015 Park Place North
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Dr. Spencer Horn,

My name is Tonya Wheeler Anthony; I am a doctoral student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. I am conducting research entitled: "From the Mouths of Mentors: A Qualitative Case Study Examining the Perspectives of African-American Men Who Mentor African-American Male Youth". The nature of this research is to provide experiences, events, and other vital information that motivated African-American men to mentor African-American male youth in the *Boys to Men* Mentoring Program.

African-American men, who have served or are serving as mentors in the *Boys to Men* Mentoring Program is the targeted group. Many of them are employed at various elementary, middle, and high schools throughout the Birmingham City School District. If granted permission, hey will be invited to participate in an individual interview, which will last no longer than an hour. They will also be invited to participate in a focus group interview, which will last no longer than two hours. Their participation is strictly voluntary and there is no compensation involved with this study.

There is no direct benefit to the participants, however, their participation may lead to a better understanding of what motivates African-American men to mentor African-American male youth. The only risk is the potential for loss of confidentiality. The records I gather will be kept in a secure location accessible by my faculty advisor and me only. However, research information may be shared with UAB Instructional Review Board (IRB) and others who are responsible for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations related to research, including people on behalf of the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). The results of the research may be published for scientific purposes. All interviews tapes and written transcripts of our communication will be kept locked and all electronic correspondences will remain on a password-protected computer.

Please contact me by email(twa@uab.edu) or call 205-907-9836 if further clarity is needed.

Sincerely,

Tonya W. Anthony

APPENDIX G

LETTER TO TEAM LEADERS

Letter to Team Leaders

January 23, 2005

To: All team leaders
From: Tonya Anthony

As I mentioned in faculty meeting on Monday, I am trying to implement a mentoring program for African American boys here at Huffman Middle School. I need your assistance in this great endeavor. I need the following information from your team so that I can begin the implementation.

When you have your next team meeting please compose a list of at least 10 African American boys who have the potential to excel, have an excessive number of write-up, and/or is not working up to his ability. Please send this list to me as soon as possible.

Also, if you know of any African American males in or around this community who may have time and is willing to commit to mentoring boys, please include their name and a means by which I can contact them.

I would like to thank you in advance for your continued assistance.

Mrs. Anthony

APPENDIX H

PERMISSION FORM

Permission Form

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your son_____has been selected by his teachers to participate in a mentoring program at Huffman Middle School. He was chosen because of his ability and potential to excel.

This program was initially a part of a graduate study by one of our teachers. The faculty saw a need and wanted to implement it. In this program your child will encounter successful African American businessmen in Birmingham. These men are from many diverse backgrounds. They are willing to share their time and stories to help us inspire your son to become successful in school as well as in life.

If you wish for your son to participate in the ***Boys to Men Mentoring Program*** please write your child's name in the space provided, check yes, and sign below. If you do not want your child to participate write your child's name in the space provided, check no, and sign.

Thanks,

Mrs. Tonya Anthony
Huffman Middle School

____Yes, I want my son, _____, to participate in the
       Boys to Men Mentoring Program.

____ No, I do not want my son _____, to participate in the
       Boys to Men Mentoring Program.

_____   _____
    Signature of Parent/Guardian   Date

APPENDIX I

TEACHER EVALUATION FORM

Teachers Evaluation Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Circle the appropriate prefix concerning your feelings or beliefs about the Boys-2-Men mentoring program.

SA   if you strongly agree
A   if you agree
N   if you do not agree nor disagree
D   if you disagree
SD   if you strongly disagree

1. I would like for the mentoring program to continue.   SA A N D SD

2. The topics discussed are beneficial and needed.   SA A N D SD

3. The mentors were helpful.   SA A N D SD

4. The fieldtrips were useful for the mentees.   SA A N D SD

5. The speakers shared valuable information.   SA A N D SD

6. The information learned in the program is needed.   SA A N D SD

7. The information learned has helped the boys.   SA A N D SD

8. The boys enjoyed being a part of the mentoring program.   SA A N D SD

9. The mentoring program is needed in all middle schools.   SA A N D SD

10. I have seen a difference in the mentees at school.   SA A N D SD

APPENDIX J

PARENT EVALUATION FORM

Parent Evaluation Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Circle the appropriate prefix concerning your feelings or beliefs about the Boys-2-Men mentoring program.

SA   **if you strongly agree**
A   **if you agree**
N   **if you do not agree nor disagree**
D   **if you disagree**
SD   **if you strongly disagree**

1. I would like for my son to continue in the mentoring program. SA A N D SD

2. The topics discussed are beneficial for my son and me.   SA A N D SD

3. The mentors were helpful.   SA A N D SD

4. My son learned a lot from the fieldtrips.   SA A N D SD

5. The speakers shared valuable information.   SA A N D SD

6. My son uses the information learned in the program.   SA A N D SD

7. The information learned has helped my son.   SA A N D SD

8. My son enjoyed being a part of the mentoring program.   SA A N D SD

9. The mentoring program is needed in all middle schools.   SA A N D SD

10. I have seen a difference in my son at home.   SA A N D SD

APPENDIX K

STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

Student Evaluation Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Circle the appropriate prefix concerning your feelings or beliefs about the Boys-2-Men mentoring program.

> **SA**   **if you strongly agree**
> **A**   **if you agree**
> **N**   **if you do not agree nor disagree**
> **D**   **if you disagree**
> **SD**   **if you strongly disagree**

1. **I would like to continue in the mentoring program.**   **SA A N D SD**

2. **The topics discussed were beneficial to me.**   **SA A N D SD**

3. **The mentors were helpful.**   **SA A N D SD**

4. **I learned a lot from the fieldtrips.**   **SA A N D SD**

5. **The speakers shared valuable information.**   **SA A N D SD**

6. **I use the information learned in the program.**   **SA A N D SD**

7. **The information learned has helped me.**   **SA A N D SD**

8. **I enjoyed being a part of the mentoring program.**   **SA A N D SD**

9. **The mentoring program is needed in all middle schools.**   **SA A N D SD**

10. **I would like to serve as a mentor for other boys.**   **SA A N D SD**