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ACTIVITIES NEGATIVELY INFLUENCING RETENTION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS AND LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES TO INCREASE RETENTION

MELVAUGHN THOMPSON

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**ACTIVITIES NEGATIVELY INFLUENCING RETENTION OF AFRICAN
AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS AND LEADERSHIP
STRATEGIES TO INCREASE RETENTION**

Doctoral Dissertation Research

Submitted to Graduate Faculty of
National Louis University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education Organizational Leadership

By

Melvaughn Thompson

June 2022

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to recognize the decrease in retention of African American college students. What are some of the reasons for a decrease in retention and what do the leaders do about it? Leadership can develop and implement to recruit and increase retention of some of these African American academic students. The college dropout rates on college campuses overall are 40%, with 30% of these students being freshman and sophomores. The theoretical framework for this study is based on the expectancy theory of motivation which is a process theory of motivation (Vroom, 1964). An individual's motivation (Valence) is affected by how much they value any reward associated with an action. An individual's motivation is affected by their expectations of the future and its bounty. The individual's expectancy will motivate them to put more effort into something that they may perceive will be able to generate good results. The goal of this study is to increase the retention of African American college students through leadership strategies and practices. The study's design and methodology instrument used for the findings were a theoretical framework based on the expectancy theory of motivation and a development theory of step-by-step reasoning toward motivation (Vroom, 1964). To help enlarge the scope of *Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention*.

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DEDICATION

The chairman Dr. Pender Noriega, committee Dr. Kathleen Cornett, and Professor Chris Bower. Pastor Danielle Jones, Pastor Eldridge Ford. My brother James West Thompson, my sister Brandee Dyson, my auntie Rosemary Barnett, and then, a prior classmate that achieved her doctorate degree then became my dissertation coach Dr. Robin Amankwah. My NLU school advisor, Laura Zuniga, close friends Dr. Don Jackson, Arketha Gordon, Linda Ray, Gwendolyn Golliday, Angela Champ, and Valerie Rountree. My recognition to Professors Raymond Leger, Jaclyn Riviera, and my first chairman Roberto Castaneda added the greatest continuous educational hardships imaginable to me as a student that diligently worked through my academic weaknesses. From their leadership styles, they taught me, and I learned how to add more sugar and a lot of ice cubes to make the greatest sweet, strong lemonade. There's no progress without struggle. In the whole of good leadership, realism-reality is there are two sides of a coin. May you the reader never have to experience very bad educational leadership.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to identify some of the reasons for a decrease in the retention of African Americans in college and to try to find some of the strategies that leaders can develop and implement to recruit and increase the retention for some of these students. The specific intent of this qualitative phenomenological study is to consider the issues of decreased retention, and then, consider a theoretical framework of different variables for the exploratory advancements toward increasing this retention with African American adult students. The different innovative leadership techniques, team development, ethical practice, and civic-mindedness will prepare students for better self-development. This part of importance will be expressed in descriptions of how these study questions stimulate participants' reflective thoughts. The study's design, methodology and instrument findings, interpretation, and subsequent discussions will be detailed.

The data shows individuals with a bachelor's degree make a higher income than those with only a high school degree. Only about 16% of high school graduates earn more than half of the workers with a bachelor's degree (Dickler, 2021). During this era with a downturn in the economy, it is important to try to gain a 4-year college degree and this is even more important for African Americans. During the pandemic, African American men's enrollment declined twice as much as women. According to the latest spring 2021 enrollment data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, while female enrollment dropped about 4%, the enrollment for male students dropped about 8.9%. Therefore, while there is a larger decline in male enrollment compared to the enrollment reduction in females, there is an overall decline in African American

enrollment overall (Weissman, 2021). During the pandemic, a downturn in the economy, and an increase in attrition of African American students in college, identifying the different facets contributing to this ongoing decrease in retention is progressively more critical (Campbell et al., 2019). During the last 25 years, African Americans have experienced systematically devastating results in social, educational, and economic outcomes at a higher rate than economic outcomes and mutual education (Small, 2005). A study pertaining to why the attendance of African American students in a 4-year college degree program are decreasing is extremely significant.

Problem Background

The presence of African Americans students in college cannot only be seen in a lack of their entrance into college but also in their dropout rates (Hanson, 2021). The college dropout rates are a part of the shortage at colleges and there will be a third of college freshmen drop out before their sophomore year (Casanova et al., 2018). The overall dropout rate for undergraduate students is about 40% with 30% of these students being freshmen dropping out of their sophomore year in 4-year colleges (Hanson, 2021). African American students have the highest dropout rate of about 54% with 38% of these students indicating their reason for dropping out is due to financial pressure (Small, 2005). There is a larger decline in male enrollment compared to the reduction in African American females' enrollment in 4-year colleges (Weissman, 2021). During the pandemic, the economy continued declining as the attrition of African American students increased due to the contribution of low rates of educational support and ongoing poor economics (Small, 2005). The importance of African American students remaining in college and then earning a 4-year college degree has inclusive social opinions attached

and these social factors have strong ties connected to college environments (Weissman, 2021). Some African American college students find an additional sense of belonging when there is an opportunity to be a member of the socialization of fraternities and sororities (Brown et al., 2021).

Research has shown that African American students' involvement in a student organization can improve the academic and psychosocial outcomes of African American students (Ford, 2014). With the presence of some Black Greek-letter Organizations (BGLOs) on a campus this could provide institutions with an opportunity to enhance retention with African American students and this could benefit the social activity of fraternities and sororities with having African American students in attendance and can increase retention (Cheek et al., 2020). Leadership in educational institutions is expected to add their skill tenets to increase retention within institutions where success can be affected. This can be especially right when it comes to attracting and motivating students through barriers. Kouze and Posner (2007) found this to be especially true when other faculty personnel added their skilled training to attract students and influence their motivation. A significant character trait in transformation leadership style inspires students and increases retention, this is patience, and contributes to students remaining in college (Cheek et al., 2020). More information needs to be addressed pertaining to why students make certain decisions when processing their best college selection (Kouze and Posner, 2007).

Collected data and material in leadership studies that pertain to different teaching styles may be applied for more effective understanding when working with African American students (Ford, 2014). Leaders in their studies can better identify

what activities negatively affect retention with African American college students, and then, consider strategies and different methods that could increase retention with African American students (Cheek et al., 2014). Example of some strategies such as displaying good listening skills, resilience, and positivity. Methods such as open-mindedness, self-awareness, and flexibility (Cheek et al., 2014; Ford, 2014).

Prior sources in this literature recognize reasons for the decrease in retention of African American students and examined the negative issues so they could understand the impact on retention. (Townes, 2007). Putting the negative issues in different categories Townes (2007) suggested is a good idea to identify the negative issues. He recommends creating columns for each issue presented, and then, breakdown the impact effects in each row and describe the degree of the effects in the lived experiences of African American college students (Townes, 2007). Examples could be columns for social disorders, related impacts, no peer relations, no one-on-one sessions with leaders and the psychological effects cause overwhelming emotions, struggles in communications, poor course learning, and a feeling of not belonging (Malcolm, 2006). These are lived experiences African American college students go through and could experience difficulty dealing with negative issues in college (Mark, 2021).

History reveals that racial inequality raises unfavorable impacts with African American students and cause some students to give up and drop out (Lerner, 2006). Students' genetic predisposition person-to-level risk factors such as drug addiction, exposure to alcohol can get out of control and these factors can negatively impact self-image, self-control, and competence that often played a part with decrease retention (Mark, 2021). Exhibited in educational history books are African American

students that dealt with many underlying issues and three being unvigilant, showing poor memory retrieval, and acting emotionally withdrawn from situations (Chiwandire & Vincent, 2019). According to Martinez et al. (2020) reduction in enrollment occurs because groups and individual students become overwhelmed by the level of work they are given, and then students feel they will never be able to complete the coursework (Mark, 2021). Some college leaders attempt to extend a helping hand to prepare students for college life, but other leaders are not as helpful, they believe students should be self-motivated and accountable, this is a very sad but real disservice to African American students (Martinez et al., 2020).

Some surface issues presented in education history, and today students experience very low-quality connection and peer engagement at their schools' (Chiwandire & Vincent, 2019). In addition, a very broad lens looks at the effect decreases in retention (Salisky et al., 2021). These experiences are barriers that are hazardous and forms of discrimination that effect retention with African American students (Hatcher, 2007; Wang et al., 2018). Currently, historical trends showing up today with African American students being poorly underfunded in financing, and poor resources with lack of opportunities that continue to affect decrease in retention sustaining a high attrition rate with African American students in college (Salisky et al., 2021). Additionally, African American students maybe coping with poor home environments, no structure, no positive respect for them or for who they are (Chiwandire & Vincent, 2019). In the background, there are also those opinions and perceptions that African American cohort of students have a tendency of being lazy, always getting low grades, cognitively slow, and they do not understand the course curriculums (Lerner, 2006).

Whites' persistence ratio to decrease in retention compared to African American students' persistence to decrease in retention is a 58% difference and compared to Mexican Latinos Hispanic persistence ratio to decrease in retention Latino Hispanics are higher 37% compared to African American students' persistence to decrease in intention that is significantly lower than both of the other ethnicity groups (Chenoweth, 1999; Chiwandire & Vincent, 2019; Hatcher, 2007; Lerner, 2006; Malcolm, 2006; Mark, 2021; Salisky et al., 2021).

According to Johnston, Poulsen, and Forrest (2007), ideology is a collection of ethical ideals, theories, beliefs, and doctrines derived from over a century of central conceptions based on factual political truths. Referring to minority college students in college institutions today there is a standard concept structured blueprint of social conditioning that affect minority students and they are expected to adhere to and uphold their college institutions standard (Walter, 2020). African Americans, Latino Hispanic, and Asian-origin students all suffer when they fail a college course, and a domino effect seems to occur when students try to turn their performances around. There is a lack of direction and guidance for these struggling students (Gross, 1993). A portion of minority students' anxiety, stress, and uncertainty were not recognized when the 2020 Covid-19 phenomenon happened. Some faculty offered the extra assistance to students who needed to survive this unfortunate pandemic, but some students were lost along the way (Bilal et al., 2021). Genealogy from yesterday's ancestry shows that unforeseen events that happen affect African Americans, Latino Hispanic, and Asian students differently, and history has always revealed that minority students were affected the greatest opposed to Caucasian students (Gross, 1993). Examples in research reveal how minorities unlike

Caucasian students are emotionally distressed and have fewer effective tools to help them cope (Bilal et al., 2021). In difference with students of color indicated by Gross, (1993) is that Caucasians' effective coping tools are not the same and Caucasian students are supportively upheld differently from minority students by professors and other faculty leaders when faced with circumstantial academic challenges (Harnish, et al., 2000).

History literature suggests there is a difference between avoidance coping and cognitive coping (Gross, 1993; Mark, 2021). Avoidance coping is when a person consciously avoids dealing with a stressor in order to protect oneself from the difficulties the stressor presents. Mark (2021) concurs mostly minority students take this route. Cognitive coping is when a person uses a mental action to deal with a stressor and does this to overcome the difficulties the stressor presents. Mark (2021) concurs most Caucasian students use this cognitive coping strategy. These coping variations are utilized differently among African Americans, Latino Hispanic, and Asian student groups (Gross, 1993; Harnish et al., 2000; Mark, 2021). Lessons must be learned from history of prior literatures. Rapid Qualitative Research (RQR) progressively requires continuous information to be updated by researchers that make decisions in schools to advance the education process from history trends. Absence of clarity around what objective studies involved can relate to with the methodological processes and current everyday considerable challenges students that are left to cope with must be addressed (Luciani et al., 2021). In continuing to make changes now still the alternatives in our educational delivery systems future somehow avoid the intrusive effect of what happens to many students led some prior students to their failures in 2019 to 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Luciani et al., 2021). In 2022 students are struggling through these new e-

learning courses trying hard to understand the conceptual frameworks and identify ways to be successful in e-learning courses (Voitko & Mazanko, 2021). The way students learned when they were in blended courses are different. All students must adapt to the new and unfamiliar form of e-learning instruction using their desktops, tablets, laptops, cell phones, and other technological devices (Voitko & Mazanko, 2021). During 2022 there may not be any more blended classes; all college classes may remain online. For some students that are older may remain challenged in their struggles until they adapt (Luciani et al., 2021).

This transition for nontraditional students is still difficult in 2022, but with attention to their learning needs educators today can be successful with more attention being offered to them (Harnish et al., 2000). Millennials are a collective of learners who have connected to symbols and a variety of technology-based media through their learning. They are more exposed to e-learning utilizing this method of learning through their education development whereas nontraditional students are not (Fisher, 2020). A platform that will gradually bridge and assist this e-learning gap between nontraditional older minority students and the millennials must be built and bring together both cohorts of African American students to assure they can successfully survive. These nontraditional older students are significant and intelligent, and they want to achieve their goal of completing their education. They on the other hand, need exposure to some different types of learning. This research study suggests innovative course examples of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) teaching, Computational Development (CD) teaching, and Thinking for a Change (TC) as short course teaching.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify some of the reasons for a decrease in the retention of African Americans in college and try to find some of the strategies that educators can develop and implement to recruit and increase retention. The significance of endurance that African American college students bring forth to attain a college education in face of their struggles is an important encouragement.

Leadership in some educational institutions are exploring more ways to incorporate different kinds of interests where educators and advisors may be able to employ further assistance to student's motivation. Where leaders can initiate practical concepts that will increase retention of African American college students will be encouraged to remain in school and continue to work toward their degree. Preparing this group of African American college students for the future in order to contribute to their communities and society means new leadership efforts must be more empathetic. Additionally, there must be new innovative courses incorporated into academic curriculum in schools, examples are CBT teaching, CD teaching, and TC course teaching (Gomez, 2013). These innovative concepts will be far more influential and long lasting to students' benefit. What an advantage that university that pilots this concept is that the college name and reputation is from this specialized teaching (Gomez, 2013). Princeton, Yale, and Columbia are examples of students that contribute and represent their university and become the leaders who they are today (Gomez, 2013). Hence, the specific intent of this qualitative phenomenological study is to consider the issues in the complexities of decreased retention, and then, consider a theoretical framework of different concepts of interest for exploratory advancements toward this decrease in

retention with African American adult students. To identify some of the reasons for a decrease in retention with African students there are racial inequality, positive/negative' self-image, self-control, and competence (Lerner, 2006).

There can be several personal reasons which can influence retention.

Recognizing some of the possible reasons for this decrease in retention categories where problems may occur are educational social disorders, psychological causes, and emotional struggles with students being diagnosed with mental issues (Lerner, 2006). Some African American students deal with drug addictions and exposure to alcohol as they face their own self-image, self-worth, and self-control. These students face poor memory retrieval and action of emotional withdrawal which impacts a decrease to retention (Townes, 2007).

Presently, one major decrease of retention with African American students in institutions is dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic that affected some students to fail courses (Mohlman et al., 2021). Failure of the courses placed disparity on this minority group of students' and caused apprehension, trauma, agonizing, and uncertainty (Mohlman et al., 2021). Poor class attendance and attitudes that were negative can influence a decrease in retention. Students that have been seriously exhausted and unable to concentrate in their classrooms could also suffer with decline retention (Liebowitz, 1988). Limited health disparity such as some African American outpatients living with HIV, their care contributed to racial disparities in retention (Banks, 2018).

Unemployment rates from students not graduating affected a decrease in retention.

Socioeconomic consequences with students who drop out of college significantly impact the economy and are a direct effect on a decrease in retention (Zandiatashbar & Hamidi,

2018).

Not only do those students who do not have a higher education remain in low-income brackets they also struggle to advance in the labor market. Research uncovers how minorities are emotionally distressed and have far fewer coping strategies as opposed to Caucasians' indicator coping tools and the different ways, they handle situations and go from circumstance to another situation (Harnish ed al., 2000).

Leadership in education became very difficult to operate as teachers in 2020 and students dealing with recruitment and retention difficulties had to cope with that as well. What leaders can do to implement increase retention is put into place new innovative academic curriculums and create fundamental structures that would provide secondary and higher educational learning. All innovation where African American students can be taught, trained, and learn step by step could come through CBT, CD, and TC added to the academic curriculum with leaderships' accountability and proficiency-based learning that will stimulate and open other parts of African American students' brains.

In learning contracts for college adult students through norms of transactional to transformational leadership techniques, there is an important need to change (Bass, 1990). Other instruments to increase retention would be to add different psychologist theories such as psychologists Gagne's conditions of learning or Vygotsky's theory of learning (Eun, 2019). The development of a professional adopting stance like Piaget's theory about cognitive educational development with this young group of African American adult students. Bloom's domains of learning, and Jerome Bruner learning theories in education offer five qualitative theory learning approaches to increase this African American student group decrease in retention (Creswell, 2007). Strategies

leadership can build upon to increase retention would be to construct as previously suggested different evidence-based *qualitative approaches* through leadership accountability and relevance in higher education leadership (Dartey-Baah, 2015). Constructed in this research study as previously suggested are CBT learning, CD learning, and TC new academic curriculum to be set in schools teaching.

To increase retention some strategies that leadership could develop are implementing 30-minute online learning. This concept could minimize some challenge learning and help students to adjust to online teaching as they learn. These short sessions could help a group of African American students think about change with different goal developments and engage with students teaching them commitments to excellence through leadership responsibilities to their quality visionary teaching (Proctor et al., 2018). Other strategy leaderships can develop and implement to increase retention and to teach students habits for success that define and develop goals, and leadership can implement CD learning practices, teaching students how to gather program data effectively and put that data to good use (Watkins et al., 2018). The significance of this study is to make others aware and understand the decrease in retention with African American students in institutions and to consider all the attributes that affect this retention. It is important to make more attempts to move away from the different attributes of decrease in retention and embrace new techniques through adult development by offering new academic curriculum into the school systems teaching TC Team-Based Learning approaches (Proctor et al., 2018). Leaders are needed to be patient, kind, and attentive. This group of failing African American students must connect with that type of leadership in the segment of the whole where these students

have sadly been connected to very bad non-ethical professional leaderships.

The harsh reality is African American students are spoken to differently and looked upon differently than Latino Hispanic, Asian and Caucasian/European students. Leadership plays major roles in promoting higher education of students and exposing resources to those who return back to college institutions. Leaders work with students through beginning of their term to the end with those students who are persistent to get to the next course through completion. A leaders' input is important to this process that influences students, and this may minimize retention rates. This study can provide identifiable ways leadership can help students and illustrate that they are valued in this process. Leadership that minimizes retention by defining practical terms have teachable conversations about difficulties they encounter helping students understand that difficulty and therefore leaders are so valuable to this research study topic.

Significance of the Study

The significant aim is to ensure that African American college students who attempt to attain a college education are always afforded the opportunity and have fundamental support to get through the program and achieve their 4-year degree. The results of this study may provide information and strategies for 4-year colleges to enhance their processes in being able to attract and retain African American students in their college curriculum. One of the potentially important issues of this research study is to try to clarify some of the reasons why there is a decrease in the 4-year college retention rate by African Americans. Some areas of decreased retention are enrollments, attendance, and then, dropout rates. Other areas are with African American students' suspensions, reading comprehension levels, academic understanding efforts, and students

that are not effectively supported by staff in their freshmen year. The existing theory to leadership enhancements and strategy applications for leaders. Leadership must focus on undergraduate teaching and learning assessments, internal retention strategies, and track persistence patterns of students that identify difficult courses and what new different ways students' brains can assess in other ways to perform better. Leaders must dig deeper than just identifying difficult courses for this group of African American students' growth, by making headway through the gaps of attention deficiencies. While beginning to stimulate these students' visual and thinking compartments of their brains through leadership stimulating, African American student's lateral thinking this teaching concept could ignite this group of students thinking toward new innovative learning.

Leadership teaching skills could work in a reverse way toward African students preconceived internal tracks and support development of new internal tracks. These African students' decrease in retention rates have them facing many hindrances. With academic curriculums set in place as new test models where many African American groups can benefit from. The University that pilots these models will reap rewards from its computational, cognitive integrated thinking, and new academic curriculums through leaders teaching. Leaders that consider set measurable retention goals and learning management programs that monitor students' progress, predicted successes, and students' statistical failures. Work with college freshman before they drop out of college. With this research understanding that students who quit school, fail courses, and transfer from school to school all connect in a correlation that contribute to continuing negative influences on education and retention. Leadership and their strategies are the hope for turning this negative education retention around with increasing education retention

through leaders' expertise skills, innovative techniques, team development, ethical practice, and civic mindedness that will prepare students for better self-development. Information in this study will have a potential contribution to the existing theories and applications from other venues. This is the importance and a description of where this qualitative phenomenological research study will investigate.

Overarching Research Question

The research questions have been developed to address the purpose of the study, which is to identify some reasons for decrease in the retention of African Americans in college and to try to find some of the strategies that leadership can develop and increase retention of some of these students.

Research Questions

RQ1: What are some of the reasons for a decrease in retention of African Americans in college?

RQ2: What are some of the strategies that leaders might be able to implement to recruit, motivate, and retain African American students?

The various activities that might have an influence on increasing retention of this cohort of African American students in four years colleges begin with leader's implementation of positive reinforcement methods. Through the encouraging initiatives leadership can work to modify one approach to another approach. This should increase the retention rate of African American students as they develop in knowledge toward achieving their degrees.

Definitions

Terms that may be unfamiliar to the reader, unique to this study, or are technical

in nature are defined as follows:

2020 Covid-19

A pandemic that had an impact on social activities, dormitories and all classes may have been shut down and everyone had to keep distance proximity from each other. This national phenomenon changed the institution systems and every human way of life. This proves to be a regression model that contributed to the decrease in retention in colleges, schools, and universities (Mohlman et al., 2021).

Barrier

A hindrance African American experience based on student equality, ethnicity, racial heritage, limitations, and religious preferences, whether actual or perceived (Jenkins, 2016).

Counter-stories

Narrative are archives, depositions, or discussions that marginalized groups use to respond to stories previously espoused by the dominant group (Delgado & Stefancic, 2016).

Critical race theory

An introduction African American Students: Inclusion factors of nontraditional students, African American students related needs (Sheared, 1999).

Decrease Retention

Attrition rates being build online doctoral students continue to enrolled at slow rates (Studebaker & Curtis, 2021).

Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS)

African American Students Living with HIV: there are African American students living with HIV/AIDS. This is a huge and critical health condition and culturally they

keep this health issue quiet and among themselves as work is being done to develop new strategies to better cope. All their medical appointments and treatment regimens are consistently done (Banks, 2018).

Failing Courses

Initially, African American had low scores from poor performances and the conditions were such too they failed their courses. Subsequent tests and on the final examination pattern of performance remained the same. These students still struggle with overcoming the biases to change their academic outcomes in 2021 (Noel, Forsyth & Kelley, 1987).

Leaders

Commitment to Resources through different styles, that emphasis organizational leadership to enhance all of aspect of organizational needs of the educational institutions that were created to assist in serving the educational needs (Miško et al., 2021).

Leadership

Leadership is considered as the focus of group procedures, as a matter of personality, as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of encouragement, as particular behaviors, as a form of influence, as a power relation, as an instrument to achieve goals, and as many combinations of these definitions (Bass, 1990). In leadership faculty and professors practice listening to young and older adult students of lower socioeconomic status (Clark & Statham, 2005). This engagement is important being a form of occupation therapy that fosters; is patient where students feel a sense of belonging as faculty and professors' attention to students concerns encourage students to feel safe (Clark & Statham, 2005).

Model of Anxiety

Due to all social activities needed to stay distance in proximity from one another college students identified their vulnerability as valid. Properties throughout populations revealed multi-factors, additional psychometrics, and illnesses and contamination (Mohlman et al., 2021).

Retention

Defined in this study is the percentage of students who return in the following Fall semester, among first-time, full-time degree seeking students who enrolled at 4-year degree-granting institutions (Manly et al., 2020).

Strategy Leadership Development

Being able to define practical terms by what is taught and learned conversations about things that work and the difficult conversations about things that are not working (Lewis & Farrell, 2005).

Significance of the Study

The significant aim is to ensure that African American college students who attempt to attain a college education are always afforded the opportunity and then, vital support is given to get them through the program to achieve their 4-year degree. The results of this study might provide information and strategies for 4-year colleges to enhance their processes in being able to attract and retain African American students in their college programs. One of the potentially important issues of this research study is to clarify some of the reasons why there is a decrease in the 4-year college retention rate by African Americans. Some areas of the decrease in retention are enrollments, attendance, and dropout rates. Other areas are with African American students' suspensions, reading

comprehension levels, academic understanding efforts, and students that are not supported through their freshmen year. The existing theory to leadership enhancements and strategy applications for leadership is to address this issue with African American students in college.

Leadership must focus on undergraduate teaching and learning assessments, internal retention strategies, and track persistence patterns of students that identify difficult courses and the ways students can assess another way to perform better. Leaders can consider and invest deeper than just identifying difficult courses with this group of African American students' growth by making headway through the gaps of academia attention deficiencies. With beginning to stimulate these students' visual and thinking parts of their brain through leadership stimulating African Americans students lateral thinking. This teaching concept could ignite this group of students thinking toward new innovative learning. Leadership teaching skills could work in reverse with African students preconceived internal tracks and support development of new internal tracks. With the new academic curriculums set in place as test models where many African American groups will benefit. The Universities having adopted these concepts will hand this product out to communities, hence, strengthening of students from their advance leadership teaching.

The University that pilots these models will reap rewards from its computational, cognitive integrated thinking new academic curriculums through leaders teaching. It is even important in this study to consider college freshman drop-outs before their sophomore year and examine African American students drop-outs at 4-year colleges before their sophomore year to distinguish the differences and consider the similarity

themes. With this research understanding that students who quit school, fail courses, and transfer from school to school all connect in a correlation one from another that contribute to continuing negative influences on education retention.

Leadership and their strategies are the hope for turning this negative education retention around with increasing education retention through leaders' expertise skills, innovative techniques, team development, ethical practice, and civic mindedness that will prepare students for better self-development. Information in this study will add a potential contribution to the existing theories and applications from other venues. This is the importance and a description of where this qualitative phenomenological research study will investigate.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review of the literature was to investigate some of the reasons and difficulties African Americans may be confronted with when trying to enter a 4-year college program and to investigate what strategies leaders might be able to implement to assist in motivating these individuals to enter college and complete their college degrees.

Key subjects used to locate relevant studies pertaining to barriers entering college in general with African American students, supportive activities to motivate these individuals to remain in college and complete their degrees are investigated. Through the different styles and many strategies that leadership might implement to assist and keep African students motivated to remain in college are determined in this literature review. The main date parameters for the literature review were set from 2015 to 2022. However, other pertinent literature associated with this topic may be reviewed regardless of date.

The search engines and databases used in the search for relevant literature were Google, EBSCO-host (Academic Search Premier, Business Source Elite, PsycARTICLES, ERIC, MasterFILE Premier databases), FirstSearch (ArticleFirst), and Expanded Academic ASAP. Additionally, organizational related websites such as governmental sources and especially the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics were reviewed for statistical data pertaining to reviewing student success, activities associated with strategies for increasing retention, and maximizing student engagement was of importance.

Barriers

The use of technology has put education for students in a transitional position where they can do abstract learning but still there remain to be barriers with learning for African American students in college. Soland and Kuhfeld (2021) point out the top four barriers are as follows: (a) Under-preparation, (b) Institutional barriers, (c) Personal non-academic barriers, and (d) College tuition costs. These are four of the main reasons, but there are additional barriers that may have an impact on African American students as well.

Barriers to African Americans

This literature review indicates that additional barriers must be considered for some of the reasons for nonattendance and a decrease in retention of African American college students. For example, the college institutional environments of higher education that are the Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) are very challenging and most times quite a difficult factor for black Doctoral students (Elliott et al., 2021). Leaders that try to increase retention find their work to be very difficult when trying to have African American students overcome various barriers. There are often three classifications of African American college students, and they are as follows: (a) Working adults with families considered non-millennium, (b) First generation students considered second behind their parents that did not graduate from college and get a degree, and (c) Millennium students coming straight out of high school. All three types of African American students making this transition into college have direct and indirect barriers awaiting them, these include uncertainty and anxiety about themselves becoming a college student (Parker et al., 2020). The students that increase retention rates in college

by doing a good job through academics will improve degree attainment and better prepare themselves for a more successful and satisfying post-academic life (Parker et al., 2020). This group of African Americans' that will achieve are the students that exhibit fortitude through the various barriers they will face and must overcome (Parker et al., 2020). These students face disappointments as they show no traits of tenacity, durability, or did they show perseverance during difficult periods. It is clear African American students headed toward college need a helping hand and support to be successful in college because these students are left to figure out for themselves how they must get through the various barriers (Parker et al., 2020). African American students often face not having prepared to overcome these barriers (Parker et al., 2020).

Soland and Kuhfeld (2021) reported that groups of African American students who are associated with unstable school leaders and faculty will perform poorly and will tend to increase retention at college and universities. Additionally, according to Katrechich and Arugyete (2017) African American students quickly find coursework to be overwhelming and stressful and this represents a barrier. Moreover, African American college students experience difficulty with academic coursework and become less competitive, and this barrier becomes harder to break over time. Ocean (2021) posits African American students must take an entry level test that shows their level of learning, if students pass this test, they can make an appointment to see a school finance advisor, they learn about the best financial eligibility packages being offered.

Financial Barrier

The long-term financial loan packages with high interest high ratio of a school pay out are detrimental to African American students (Ocean, 2021). Recognized in this

study are emerging higher-education reports of poor leaders' influences, lack of college preparation, and poor readiness with lack of school resources and are barriers to African American students (Townes, 2007). African students face barriers understanding college processes and lack support to bring them into better understanding and knowledge about college (Atherton, 2014; Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, 2008). African American students typically are more likely to be tardy and, in the course, adjusting to the vigorous academic coursework (O'Shea, 2015). Leadership in higher education that work with first-generation students transitioning into schools' goal is to be the best helper to the cohort of students' growth and understanding as possible however, there are times leaders overlook other leadership techniques needed for learning or better understanding a subject (Everett, 2015; Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, 2008).

Filling out necessary college business forms with advisors can be a barrier because students do not always have a clear understanding of what they are signing (Everett, 2015). Yue et al. (2018) stated the disadvantages of resources and opportunities that affect their process holding them back that is a barrier. PWIs do not provide a familial environment to African American college students as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) do, and Townes, (2007) believed PWIs have no programs that focus on retaining that as a barrier with African American college students. At PWIs, African American students' graduation rates face barriers and are significantly lower than those students at HBCU because resources and opportunities for growth are higher at HBCUs for African American students (Yue et al., 2018). There is a leadership technique that is overlooked, and most times never used at PWIs with African American students that (Soland & Kuhfeld, 2021) suggest is Social Emotional Learning (SEL). A

skill taught that considers students' intellectual consciousness levels in thinking, reasoning, understanding, and remembering and this leadership method that goes unnoticed really is a disservice and barrier to African American students as a whole (Soland & Kuhfeld, 2021). All students must feel and have a sense of need to belong and African American students have this common need to belong to some sort of group or body of project at PWIs college schools where they do not get this, and this stands as a barrier to first generation students (Horowitz, 2017). African students have challenges with lack of patience through guidance. This barrier prevents students from recognizing their academic weaknesses (Smith, 2006). In being, annoyed students do not clearly listen to leaders when they are talking to fully understand and get the jest of what the leader is saying (Smith, 2006).

Leaders and school governors continue in table discussions to synthesize better standards but the condition of education ethics and standards through institution organizations motto in social conditioning keep many barriers erected in front of African American students today. All these difficult conditions are significant obstructions and are barriers African American students continue to cope with (Atherton, 2014; Everett, 2015; Horowitz 2017; Katrevich & Arugyete 2017; Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, 2008; Ocean, 2021; O'Shea, 2015; Smith, 2006; Soland & Kuhfeld, 2021; Townes, 2007).

In analysis of this study from research the major greatest barrier of all other barriers that most times break African American spirit; stop them right in their tracks to press through and agree for students to maintain responsibility of a 3.0 GPA score that part of the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) ratio criteria (Katrevich & Arugyete

2017; Parker et al., 2020; Soland & Kuhfeld, 2021). This stipulates if a student's GPA drops below a 3.0 that student's financial aid stops immediately (Parker et al., 2020; Soland & Kuhfeld, 2021). Students must pay out of pocket to continue their courses; this is a designed barrier appearing to be the worst of all barriers known to the educational system (Katreviceh & Arugyete, 2017). Where students must sign a document that grades will be nothing less than an A to restart their financial aid, getting a B is no longer an option despite a B is a passing grade (Parker et al., 2020). The prevailing struggle just trying to obtain a B and now must get an A is a deliberate sabotage to African American students (Ocean, 2021). This is the greatest barrier reference in all colleges because if a student struggles to get a B is harder to acquire an A (Katreviceh & Arugyete 2017).

Key topics for leadership assistance while working within their institution's is to help African American students through registering to college (Ey et al., 2021). Be supportive of students and motivate students; be proactive with students in their learning (Huang, 2021). With influencing students to remain in college and reduce retention, leadership might implement skillful and efficient teaching procedures such as Transformational, and Visionary learning, and leading by example with African American students, help to meet their needs and be specifically kind and respectful to this cohort of student (Luyten & Bazo, 2019). Teach these students skills of the best ways to gather, interpret data, and understand the data they have gathered while showing these students how to improve their writing, vocabulary, and communication skills (Hollinrake et al., 2019). Critical thinking, organizational and imagination skill sets are what leaderships should teach African American students (Ey et al., 2021). This literature introduces these empirical leadership approaches that will effectively influence students

to remain in college with reducing retention and will minimize several barriers African American students face when entering colleges and universities to get their degrees.

Cost of College

In applying a model that reflects the effect of education costs Harahap et al., (2021) agreed that students must show extreme concern in decisions to choose a college. It is smart and valuable for students to decide where they can achieve their educational goals by looking at the cost of colleges and that college's diverse course of curriculum (Davidson et al., 2020; Harahap et al., 2021). African American students' involvement with enrolling into a regional university is not an easy task for African students and there are barriers in the cost of colleges that should be considered (Davidson, 2020; Harahap et al., 2021). In transferability when future college students visit a campus to evaluate the school, they do not feel so assured (Davidson, 2020). Considering the lack of financial aid offered today and the minimal support from institution organizational leaderships, college students see the obvious barriers and conclude the cost of college is not worth their efforts (Davidson, 2020). There needs to be a perspective, focusing on understanding the cost of college directives and processes because this specifically affects low-income students' financial lives more than any other cohort of students (Foster, 2013). Foster (2013) presented Jack White saying, "Colleges today amount of money are \$40,000, college governments make that possible by borrowing out to students \$45,000 in loans a year for tuition this makes sure tuition would not drop" (p. 120).

College institution governments bind-in struggling students under a government signed contract for the next 30 years to pay back the same as purchasing a house (Foster, 2013). Trying to keep costs of colleges down at any point is futile Foster, (2013)

furthermore he says now, "cost of college is discombobulated down through financial aid packages, not based on need but on the dubious term merit" (p. 120). When President Obama was in office, he and Chris Nelson agreed that change must happen with this exorbitant cost of a college education not being affordable to low income nor several middle-class students. According to Foster (2013) in one of President Obama's State of the Union addresses he warned, "Let me put colleges and universities on notice: If you can't stop tuition from going up, the funding you get from taxpayers will go down" (p. 120). President Obama believed loan debt was a very bad thing for a graduate then having to struggle to pay the money back after entering a new career this would be a detriment to students.

College Costs monitored by bureaucracy are not lowering college costs, they are raising costs higher (Foster, 2013). Baked into tuition costs come from federal government impediments and state involvement support of grants and loan money available to students through competition of free market on purpose to drive up costs of colleges (Davidson et al., 2020). For those students who identify with any postoperative mental prognosis is offered as an alternative to 4-year general university colleges to enroll in Recovery Colleges that are more cost effective helping students save money as they work toward obtaining their college degrees and students can address underlying mental health or uncontrollable emotional issues (Cronin et al., 2021). Recovery Colleges as an alternative have always been around, they promote students' personal health as that student journeys on through their experiences obtaining their college degrees (Cronin et al., 2021). Recovery College's net cost was \$269 per student a year being a saving in their college cost, gauging students through their health issues and

decreasing mental health service and Emergency Department (ED; Cronin et al., 2021).

In providing an alternative analysis effective cost benefit of Recovery and Wellbeing for those troubling students that deserve a college degree The Recovery Wellbeing College is one in southeastern Sydney where students can go to (Cronin et al., 2021).

Adjustment to College

Each group of students' adjustment experiences do vary by a group of students' background, prior schooling, and experience. Adjustments to college vary by institution's questions of their size and mission. How is that college or university teaching intensive versus research intensive, and that is the organization's religious affiliation? These are very important questions students may have before enrolling than making that adjustment to the college choose (Bunbury, 2020). In adjustment to the college the research presents as a fact student who leave high school to join college full-time, with living on campus tend to experience the most challenging adjustment (Kaur & Sharma, 2021). Younger student travelers still living at home that maintain high school friendships experience less change adjustment to college, and adult students who go to school part-time and balance full-time jobs with work with family mostly require least adjustments to college transitioning experience (Davies et al., 2021). Adjustments of specific colleges involve changes of social demands, relationships, academic demands, and different roles. The new role taken in college will bring an adjustment of students to learn new habits. There is an adjustment for the African American students, will walk into the new role of being a college student (Grayson, 2018). In considering relationship adjustment to PWI's colleges with African American students Grayson, (2018) proposed these and other students of color may struggle to fit into an institution's norms, interchanging with

disability students, gay, and lesbian students, and international students because there are times African American students go through marginalization.

Sandoval et al. (2021) reports there is a responsibility of students as independent learners to intellectually collaborate and develop dialog with other students as they too engage in social activities where students can create bonds with others including forming relationships with faculty and leaders. Kaur and Sharma (2021) stated these students are required to adjust to academic demands and transitioning in their courses that will need to become an academic habit. Students are going to be expected to study harder and take school more seriously to improve their study habits (Davies et al., 2021). Instructors have different teaching styles; in these large classes some students learn quicker than other students. Instructors need to help slower students rise above and if those slower students do not grow, sadly they will be left behind or left out completely (Bunbury, 2020). Balancing priorities will be an adjustment for students in transitioning to college with setting times for studying, reading, and in-depth researching (Kaur & Sharma, 2021).

Adjustment is very critical, and this process works through stages of students' cultural change. Poor college adjustment can be the result of low academic performance and failing courses (Kaur & Sharma, 2021). To achieve positive adjustment in college there must be interpersonal support available to university students and the need for a relationship between academic faculty, leaders, and students needs to be supported for a healthy adjustment to college change (Kaur & Sharma, 2021). Students are embarking into a different way of life where more control is allotted to them of what courses they want to take and what academic programs they choose (Bunbury, 2020). In this

adjustment students must have a greater interest in their decisions of what they sign up for; what programs they want to spend their time of study in, and what courses they will need to take (Bunbury, 2020). Many students make this adjustment to college slow and easily. Other students find this adjustment to college painful, needing more effort than they know how to give to it (Bunbury, 2020). This change will involve disengaging from old roles and establishing new routines for these students. In other lower-level schools' students may have been social leaders of an activity group or on an athletic team (Grayson, 2018). Now transferring over to college requires a transitioning development over to different social skills, conditioning a set of regulations and culture. Students must actively process the different stage changes in the most conscious way possible (Grayson, 2018).

Adjustments mean transitioning from what and how you did something before. An adequate time frame change is about 2 weeks for students to get their bearings straight of where everything they need and how to get there and as students' progress, they will gain better habits through the process (Bunbury, 2020). Students will make new friends and develop new peer groups in college by meeting new and diverse people (Kaiser et al., 2021). Students will need to look at this change as a learning experience (Davies et al., 2021). Students must stop for a moment to take in the beauty of the campus. In this adjustment to college students must keep an open mind, not be afraid to come out of their comfort zone, and engage with people different from themselves (Bunbury, 2020). Students must be cognitive of different ethnicities, race, and socioeconomic status of others (Bunbury, 2020). There are four rules for helping a college student adjust:

Rule # 1. Do not be concerned so much about them being depressed with wanting to call home or write letters (Davies et al., 2021).

Rule # 2. Evade questioning them if they are home sick (Davies et al., 2021).

Rule # 3. Ask them some questions but not a whole lot (Davies et al., 2021).

Rule # 4. Expect the student to make change but not quickly (Davies et al., 2021).

In the “First Generation adjustment to college” Grayson (2018) stated their perspective will be supportive interactions with peers to where they will be influenced overall academically through developing students' will acknowledge acquisition and building better self-esteem. Adjustment will enable students to improve their social lives, and seek out career opportunities (Grayson, 2018). In college the first few weeks in the adjustment period are challenging, and the first semester is the most crucial in this college transition (Grayson, 2018).

Adjustment means there will be rigors, routines, and classroom expectations (Bunbury, 2020). The students must expect during this adjustment prior classroom learning will be more challenging in college courses (Grayson, 2018). College students will find their stride and through confidence achieve adjusting to college. Students' instincts are powerful and close group friends will increase academic performance, motivation, lower stress, and support students through assignment work (Kaiser et al., 2021). Here are a few tips for students for academic success: (a) students should be able to adjust expectations with themselves, (b) students will gain more if they study outside college courses, (c) students reading, thinking and solving problems should be thought through first, (d) students must identify their mentors addressing them by name, (e)

students must take out time just for themselves, and (f) students should show selfcare through good coping skills (Davies et al., 2021).

Adjusting to college can be an amazing journey opening doors to new and different ways of thinking, embracing different cultures, expanding ones learning and skills, and then, and preparing to go out in the business world and be a leader. Inclusive curriculum is a good teaching practice that aids all students adjusting to college, regardless of background and immutable characteristics, with an equal opportunity to achieve the learning outcome of their programs being challenged on purpose in adapting to studies at their university of choice (Bunbury, 2020). Students' adjustment to college entails much conscious thinking. In this overall transitioning students must identity, reform, and re-establish their adjustments to the involvement of transformation (Sandoval et al., 2021). A cognitive understanding is an interesting learning theory that focuses on thought. Cognition encourages students to "think about their thinking" as a means to help them unlock a concept or subject they struggle with (Bunbury, 2020). In this study all these steps, techniques, and suggestions are sound and reasonable methods from scholarly authors.

Factors Influencing First Generation Student in College

First Generation students are college students whose parent(s) did not complete a 4-year college degree and now these students, the first generation, are entering college. There are different perspectives about first-generation college students' during their first-semester empirical narratives that speak directly to the facts of how important academic plan-readiness is for first generation students (Atherton, 2014). Students are influenced through emotions and their desires of a college education (Boden, 2011). The fact of a

student wanting to learn more and gain more experience is the optimate influence above any other (Atherton, 2014). Other factors such as external inspirations should come from family and friends encouraging a student to go to college (DeAngelo & Franke, 2016). Students will explore a whole new world called the academic life that are factors that await students with exposure to different curriculums they may be interested in (Atherton, 2014). Students starting college after the transition from high school most times have feelings of confusion and insecurity that are factors (Boden, 2011). According to DeAngelo and Franke (2016) students first semester is considered the toughest influence factor of all because the first semester sets the stage of grounding attitude, drive, determination, and will forward into sessions that coursework applications within this term and terms that follow (DeAngelo & Franke, 2016). Students who yearn for greater understanding and more life experience are students who will do well to achieve their degree and obtain better things in life (Atherton, 2014).

Factors of Influence

Influence factors that affect first generation students in college are the college universities accessibility zones and distance from home factors with transportation when a first-generation student wants to be with family for times like holidays (Vozenilek & Burian, 2016). Cost and fees or asking about college financial aid, plus Grants, merit money, local scholarships, and opportunities of renewable scholarships in combination of loans for first generation students at a college or university of their choice (Lowry, 2021). Factors on influence of need for an academic readiness plan is what first-generation college students would benefit from (Atherton, 2014). Lei and Dean (2020) agree that social culture will be a great influence on first generation students and how students

position themselves into college groups as a factor on what level of rank in a college group. According to Atherton (2014) the first semester of college for students starts with many expectations as students' exposure widens more doors open to several other discoveries of influence. Some of those discoveries are better understanding of context and more open-mindedness to see things from different perspectives (Atherton, 2014). One factor of great significance for students in their first term is to start each day of class being on time, even a bit early. This is good practice that influences discipline toward other academic areas for positive growth (Boden, 2011). Curricular and extracurricular readiness will be key point factor influencers present because a whole set of courses in the major and minor programs will be expected of students to face (Atherton, 2014). For better effectiveness first-year students should be exposed to a series of methods of assessment confirms that students have different ranges of contexts ability (Davies et al., 2021).

Categorized through four methods: personal communication, selected response, essays, and performance assessment (Davies et al., 2021). According to Davies et al. (2021) these four main context methods are unmeasurable to a student's learning growth and success, they are used in educational facilities as the high stakes learning, inclusiveness, understanding, and clear-thinking assessments skills (Davies et al., 2021). These assessments are characteristically given to show accountability, and students consistency through enrollment of first semester and on to next semesters growing in assurance (Davies et al., 2021). In all university components of change in learning set in place and effectively priceless are these methods (Schmidt, 2021). First generational students' responsibility is to learn, develop crucial communication skills, and gain more

knowledge from instructional direction (Schmidt, 2021). Poor communication cannot be objectively measurable. Displaying inadequate communication is significantly costing schools, and universities; adequate communication must be taught (Schmidt, 2021). In transition of discussion about first-term experiences and first year experiences there are differences. Researchers agree first year experiences of first-generation students must establish social condition patterns that will help their next 3 years be a smooth transition (Atherton, 2014; Boden, 2011; DeAngelo & Franke, 2016; Lei & Dean 2020). Atherton (2014) and Boden (2011) believe first year practices after the last day of first term should be characteristic factors of accountability, reliability, efforts to change, involvement, and focus. They go on to say students must exercise behavior control. Good listening methods are suitable skills and are sufficient with accurate interaction skills, and first-generation students must keep an open mind to new discoveries (Atherton, 2014).

The 2-4 years out in their education the factors of influences are significant to all students' influences and aid students toward establishing good conditioning patterns for success (DeAngelo & Franke 2016). According to DeAngelo and Franke (2016) students attend universities for various reasons, but for first-generation students on average, their reason for attending college is to make more money throughout their lifetime. For first generation students in college these previous factors of influence are good and should be understood. Diverse students will need to show kindness by being thoughtful about other ethnicity students unlike them (Mitchall & Jaeger, 2018). African and Mexican American first-generation college students have come a long way as they continue learning to adjust through the various college obstacles (Atherton, 2014). There

are many approaches to different methods of influence to how students can stay positive and motivated while in school:

- When it gets tough keep going forward toward graduation (Mitchall & Jaeger, 2018).
- Team up with other classmates to get through the processes (Franke et al., 2017).
- Always keep your mind on your end goal (Lei & Dean 2020)
- Continually consider where you want to be, and not at where you were.
- Connect to other students who are ahead of you thinking this is possible for you to and knowing why this is possible for you to win (Vollet & Kindermann, 2020).
- Support yourself through this process by being kind to yourself (Franke et al., 2017).
- Follow steps of another student's positive examples that led them to success and stay encouraged by their positivity vibes (Franke et al., 2017).
- Stay focus on where you want to be no matter who believes it is not possible (Mitchall & Jaeger, 2018).
- Encircle yourself with groups of individuals who get good grades, follow the rules, that stay out of trouble and always appear to have a positive attitude (Lei & Dean 2020)
- Get to know other students, make friends with your classmates to be able to lean on them and they lean on you throughout the curriculum programs (Franke et al., 2017).

Every first generational student before made it through to the end and graduated by never giving up and never give in through their struggles. This suggested list of methods (Sandoval et al., 2021) is a road map for first generation students that should be followed, and they should celebrate their footwork and always be open to learn more along the way as their professors and advisors who promote persistence are willing to help them achieve their educational goals (Vollet & Kindermann, 2020).

Discrimination

Diversity

Diversity in education identity categories Rozado (2019) conceptualizes diversity as a wide range of different identities that exist in a group of people. This cohort are people in society, communities, schools, and universities. Identity categories of diversity according to Rozado (2019) include class, religion, race, sexual orientation, and different genders and more. Diversity in education explains identity categories by Rozado (2019) and conceptualizes diversity as a wide range of identities that exist in a group of people. Online Conceptualization Diversity exists at university institutions, as well all are people in society, communities, schools, and universities. This group are people in society, communities, schools, and universities, and online platforms in categories (Peplinski & Brown, 2020).

Diversity education means leaderships reference identity range by existing group of people. Education diversity represents a group of people, their comprehensive levels, their ideas and initiatives in learning and creativity. Diversity in institutions mean safe environments where inclusiveness and equitable learning resided environments for many different identities of students (Peplinski & Brown, 2020). Diversity residents in communities where colleges exist are colleges that govern by The Association for Supervision and Curriculum development (ASCD) where open discussions define education, in term of diversity about recognizing different type of student needs including those of different socioeconomic, class, ethnicity, language, and gender (Phelps, 2020).

Diversity affects education in it studies of education, that show particularly diverse differences in education from one college campus to another. Effects of diversity

improve “intellectual and cultural engagement, self-motivation, and citizenship.

Diversity education impacts academic skills like improving writing, problem-solving, and critical thinking of all races of students for adapting to adaptive quality learning" (Phelps, 2020, p. 160). Diversity directly impacts students' education and enhances their performance. Studies show that students perform well in a diverse environment (Phelps, 2020). Phelps (2020) and Rozado (2019) concur that students' concentration levels are greater, and they push themselves further in the presence of other people from different backgrounds working alongside them. Diversity is important in teaching because it prepares students culturally by exposing students to various people from other backgrounds and social groups. Teaching prepares students globally with enhancing their learning, Social Justice curricular and comprehensive skills (Miller & Holliday-Millard, 2021). Diversity types are the differences among students. This is types of ethnicities, race, language, religion, family structures, gender, socioeconomic status, and physical characteristics being types of difference (Peplinski & Brown, 2020).

This study considers four types of diversity organizational, worldview, internal, and external. To aim to understand all four types of the rest in the business worldview where college prepares students to go. In adjustment to college students are taught these concepts of diverse psychology that help students work through global diversity in the workplace and on college campuses (Phelps, 2020). Enrich learning is exploration and incorporation of different diversities in college and university classrooms. What is met by a diverse classroom is defined as classroom diversity understanding that each student brings unique experiences, strengths, and different ideas to our classroom. Leadership contributions to diversity can come by meeting the needs of diverse students through

different methods (Rozado, 2019): (a) make sure you as leader are giving the best methods as possible for student growth, (b) encourage active learning, (c) embrace small group and learning group stations, (d) group by learning styles not ability, (e) promote project-based learning, and (f) provide alternative testing options.

This qualitative study recognizes college institutions discrimination to populations of diverse students speaking on discrimination from a student diverse perspective Rodriguez et al. (2021) reports Mexican American college students receive encouragement and help from their families in coping with challenges of discrimination and this provides a solid and strong base for first generation Mexican American students to lean on through times of discriminant actions toward them. Coping with college discriminatory Rodriguez et al. (2021) reports first-generation Mexican college students know this all too well plus from watching discrimination actions done to African American students. Mexican students and their neighboring friends', African American, students have this commonality theme they both share as diverse students (Rodriguez et al., 2021). Mexican American students' friends' close neighbors, and family members all share an integral part to Mexican students' process as they cope with this complicated role recognized as racial discrimination (Rodriguez et al., 2021). Another way Mexican American students adjust in dealing with this issue Rodriguez et al. (2021) indicates through built relationships at school with peers of color and connecting then participating with faculty and leaderships and their schools.

Bunbury (2020) relates it is very importance for Mexican students and African American students' to be mindful of different ethnicities, race, and socioeconomic status of other students as these students of different nationality customs are to them. This

method can play a part in minimizing discrimination between peers. There seem to be a reproduction that continues through inequality (Henry, 2021). First-generation students must put their big girl and big boy pants on when entering colleges to adjust and cope with this real race problem in colleges (Henry, 2021). Rodriguez et al. (2021) implied that to deal with college prejudice there must be more user-friendly methods toward better integration as a strategy through colleges, universities, Mexican students, and African American student issue of discrimination.

The Fair Housing Act, in relations to higher education institutions, forbids the use of any practice that without cause results in discriminatory consequences on other students (Custer, 2018). Felony conviction for students rarely are the students doing wrong on-campus and they still are the easy targets administrators, and policymakers go after always targeting these students with criminal backgrounds (Hussain, 2021). Twenty years have passed, still proliferation of policies are done in colleges institutions at federal and state, levels (Buckworth, 2019). In different college universities crimes are being committed daily, students with criminal backgrounds should not be hauled in and checked out, that is discrimination. A person is supposed to be innocent until proven guilty (Hussain, 2021). Custer (2018) conveys it is inherently discriminatory for institutions where students apply to live in campus housing commonly are viewed as criminals. The Department of Housing Fair Act demands justice to students who are ex-offenders living on campus. With recognizing college institutions administrators, and policymakers' issue of discrimination with prior felony students' further investigation is done.

On other hand, across the world according to Henry (2021) argues that educational disparities in British educational systems that reflect blame on students and educators for their British institution racial inequity. In their table discussions some interviews have come out hoping to shed light on what needs to be done to correct disparities of discrimination and stop the blame of students and educators for British institution racial inequities (Henry, 2021). According to Henry (2021) in British institutions where The British educational system contributors are stakeholders who are invested in the students schooling but more interested in the institutions not the students and continue to blame students (Henry, 2021). British educational systems express the importance of having a positive black presence in their teaching and learning environments but first they must stop placing institution disparities of discrimination and institution racial inequities blame on their college students and educators (Henry, 2021). More investigation is continuing with The British educational system.

Leadership

Outstanding leadership by educators plays a major role in the retention process. As stated by Doris Gomez, "Student attrition, although some to be expected, comes at a high cost. Failure to complete studies is recognized as a personal loss for the individual, an economic loss for universities, and an intellectual loss for society" (Gomez, 2013, p. 42). Therefore, not only does leadership play an important role in retention and success of the educational institution, but leadership style can also play a major factor in the success of both.

Leadership Style

Leadership styles are important in education for teachers, governing members, and school administrators to build an effective framework that defines a win-win successful approach (Phelps, 2020). Leadership styles must pursue toward creative and promising initiatives that will enhance their institutional practices and student outcome toward completion (Clark, 2005). With using these different styles determining how to make decisions, prioritize goals and how to interact with others do work (Miller & Holliday-Millard, 2021). Different styles in this list help solve complex problems with resolving conflicts quickly to change the course of a situation (Clark, 2005). Good leadership will maintain a sense of transparency in admitting to one's own mistakes then correct it for more trustworthiness (Phelps, 2020). Leadership that chooses one or more styles in this list must communicate objectives early on to ensure growth and success of students to their completion (Miller & Holliday-Millard, 2021).

Various Leadership Styles

Leadership Affiliate style solely focus' on others rather than own goals completely in support of the others need be it student or faculty of whom depend on that leader (Vesterinen et al., 2012). Affiliate style cultivates trust among others, creates strategies as directives, empowers and builds continuance on trusting the process and believe in devotion of carrying a project or plan out to its completion (Vesterinen et al., 2012).

Leadership Authoritative style operates under an already established college institution strict policies and rules (Iqbal, 2021). This style lead through ensuring those people under the college institution social conditioning follow this authoritative system

required large-scale vision and short-term goals (Iqbal, 2021). This leadership style delegates certain guidelines for different people to reach college institution goals and projects. Authoritative style leadership closely monitor performance, process and expertise in an-demand are where this style can prove itself worthy (Iqbal, 2021).

Leadership Autocratic style sometimes called ‘authoritarian’ is a very aggressive leadership style that demands total control and nothing else (Peker et al., 2018). This style leaves only one person to change being strong-willed and not caring about another person nor students’ feelings (Peker et al., 2018). This style expects promptness even perfection from other persons and students with not giving feedback, an opinion nor offering an idea to anything (Peker et al., 2018). There is no flexibility, obedience in this environment is strict. Like being in the military and if you’re under this leadership style you must be obedient and do what is said and keep your mouth shut on whatever you see (Peker et al., 2018).

Leadership Bureaucratic style is postulated in a structure of supervision whereby students or subordinates are to act as they are told and follow specific rules of authority from their superiors (Diamond, 2020). This style is in conjunction with authoritative leadership and Autocratic leadership styles (Diamond, 2020). Where these leadership styles function from strict official regulations ordered by institutions organization higher authority figures (Diamond, 2020).

Leadership Charismatic style presents a genuine interest in others with being inclusive toward building a student or others charisma (Olson, 2021). This style offers eye contact, but not too much.as this style pay attention to different body languages and practice warmth and goodwill (Olson, 2021). Leaders who display a charismatic style

inspire and influence students to do their best work possible. It helps improve communication skills, increase productivity, enhance application, and promote team-relationships' (Olson, 2021). This style is in conjunction with Democratic, Instructional, and Transformational style leaderships.

Leadership Coaching style takes the mentoring role for students and team members. This style builds up and strengthens bonds with students to aid in keeping students focused and developing their skills (Yarborough, 2018). Leadership Coaching recognizes areas of weakness with students and shows the student how to improve that area. This style is empathetic to student's needs, capabilities, and goals (Yarborough, 2018). Leaders that coach maintain focus on organization goals and practice to carry them out.

Leadership Democratic style offers others to share their creativity, offer feedback, present an opinion, and share a range of ideas (Liggett, 2022). This style is a participative kind of style where students can part-take in a decision because fresh thinking and collective knowledge is welcome (Liggett, 2022). Democratic Leadership understands the very importance of exchanging information student ideas, opinions, and critical decisions (Liggett, 2022).

Leadership Emotional style pinpoints a person's feeling as a leader and as an attribute skill know and practice Emotional Intelligence (Karasneh & Al, 2020). This style understands how to interpret, read, and sense keen intellectual knowledge of how students feel (Karasneh & Al, 2020). This style's understanding can motivate another through their feelings and emotions knowing the other person or student wants to experience a change (Karasneh & Al, 2020). Leadership Instructional style embraces

improving teaching performance and student progress at the same time (Haile, 2020). Leaders that work through this style are proactive in responsibility for development while enhancing students' performance (Haile, 2020). Instructional Leaders closely monitor, identify, evaluate, and arrange any extra needed training (Haile, 2020). With pushing students toward higher expectations offering incentives in greater performance (Haile, 2020). This style identifies students' strengths and improves other areas one-on-one through guiding the student (Haile, 2020).

Leadership Laissez-Faire style presents a hands-off/or free-rein approach wherein full freedom rests with students or subordinates to act out what the leader defined about program operation, institution goals, policies and limitations all left up to students or subordinates to accomplish on their own (Iqbal, 2021).

Leadership Pace-Setting style works best with students who have both experience and motivation to complete projects, plans and goals (Iqbal, 2021). Leaders using this style set timelines and improve skills by acquiring new objectives and talents (Iqbal, 2021). This style Increase productivity and development toward innovative educational practices (Iqbal, 2021). Leadership Strategic style considers the long-term approach in planning, analyzing students' and classroom performance with goals set in place to reach better results (Iqbal, 2021). This styles importance is based on the greatest effects through leader considering collaboration and partnering with others to accomplish any essential goals (Iqbal, 2021).

Leadership Transactional is like considering or having a business agreement (Karasneh & Al, 2020). This style cause leaders to go under a business exchange

expectation with students and do provide any additional resources and supports within limits that will set students in line for success (Karasneh & Al, 2020).

Leadership Transformational style sets a collaborative approach that empower others through visual strong role modeling communicating on every level of interacting with other (Karasneh & Al, 2020). This model style delegates tasks and large-scale objectives with not having to closely monitor other student performance as students are stimulated emotionally and intellectually (Karasneh & Al, 2020). Also, this leadership style cultivates common trust, loyalty, and respect among their students and teams they lead (Karasneh & Al, 2020).

All these leadership styles describe similarities to one another and difference of others to another about leadership styles. Leaderships characteristically should use understanding, responsiveness, development with putting students first in leadership. Leaders' tactful skills and helping hands of service is what will influence students learning, change students' behaviors and aid students in performing better. These leadership styles suggested below are the win-win styles were students and leaders' bond and students grow. These styles will enhance, motivate, and move students to act. In these styles direct guidance, and good management from leaders can be learned. Lastly, these leadership styles will motivate students to perform better, be creative, and imaginatively innovative. This research considers these as best leadership styles for change and growth: (a) transformational style and Strategic style, (b) emotional style and charismatic style, (c) coaching style and Affiliate style, and (d) instructional style and Pace-Setting style.

Though several other leadership styles are presented to make us aware of the various facets' different leadership styles under different names works in the same way as other styles. A different name for example Authoritative and Laissez-Faire are leadership styles in association of employee thriving at the workplace styles of conscientiousness. These six leadership styles build up low-self-esteem, stimulate students' consciousness, encourage optimist point of view, teach students readiness skills, support students through weaknesses, motivate students through challenges, teach critical thinking, how to problem solve and activates students' perseverance to continue on course of action without regard to prior failures, discouragements, barriers, and opposition in front of first generational students and all college students. Leadership is important as it can often determine whether an organizational culture is perceived as supportive or not.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is made up of shared values, principles, and theories about how the governing in institutions work, act together, and should obey the rules (Huang et al., 2021). Organizational culture key factors are their history bottom line of an institution culture. How has the culture worked, what were the activities in the culture and how to continue carrying everything out (Huang et al., 2021). Colleges and universities operate through social conditioning within the structure of their companies by way of psychology and ethics of that organization experiences (Huang et al., 2021). Organizational culture reference to purpose of goals and expectations with guiding its faculty members and keeping systems in place that empower and promote productive performance (Huang et al., 2021). There are two types of organizational cultures'

material culture and physical things produced by a society, and nonmaterial culture, intangible things produced by a society. The society as such leaders, students, grounds keepers, faculty, professors, and so forth. is the organization because there must be people (a society) to create a company or organization (Huang et al., 2021). This is where students come in because the various forms of different class, ethnicities, social backgrounds, economics, and different nationalities as the campus culture in a university (Huang et al., 2021). Characterized by individuality, creativity, openings, academics, features, and variety where academic culture (the people) enhances the construction of the campus culture (Huang et al., 2021). What this has to do with first generation students is a college institution must have a mission, vision, structure, and long-term academics plans that influence, motivate, encourage, guide, and teach students entering their facility (Huang et al., 2021). Organizational commitment transformational and contingent leaders' reward programs have improved and commitment roles at a university with faculty members' have increased being more committed (Huang et al., 2021). With mediating on a psychological empowerment role more conducted studies confirm empirical effects of academic leaders' contingent empowerment commitment to universities organizational culture that is a very good thing (Huang et al., 2021).

Perceptions of African Americans

This study examination reveals there are many African American college faculty's underrepresented, and white students' perception identify no influence of this black authority figures (Parker & Neville, 2019). In the classrooms students regarding Blacks authority figures have very limited interaction with this body of faculty. There is no environmental stimuli and actions in response to these stimuli influencers. Racial

identity in classrooms are received with negative attitudes and inappropriate behavior in the face of African American faculty (Parker & Neville, 2019). There seeks an understanding where this perceptions stem from White college students' perceptions of African American professors and other blacks' authority figures (Parker & Neville, 2019). Social estrangement through a wide range of educational outcomes is felt by African American college students' perceptions (Campbell et al., 2019).

Identity development with African American students make racial incidents more salient that occur off college campuses because what occurs on college campuses have emerging identity development (Campbell et al., 2019). There is more research needed in conducting this matter of racial identity development around perceptions of African American authority figures and professors at colleges and universities (Parker & Neville, 2019).

Resistance to Change

Standards for a distance learning library asks distance learning librarian resistance to change to be an advocate for an institutional culture and support distance learners. The learning librarians' initiations and participation in institution-wide projects struggle with change and this affect their ability of resistance to change (Breitkopf, 2018).

Standards to guide collaborative projects needs to be better understood for librarians that work with the institutional culture strategically (Breitkopf, 2018). The major barrier to creating a supportive institutional college culture is resistance to change recommendations are for skilled leaderships to join project management tasks. Standards for distance learning at college academic institutions must convince more colleagues to participate and be more supportive in the collaborative projects to seeing how one online

learning librarian learners can distance out this leadership project (Breitkopf, 2018). This collaborative with both individuals and the institutional organizations can minimize resistance to change and better support the online distance learners (Breitkopf, 2018).

Current Issues

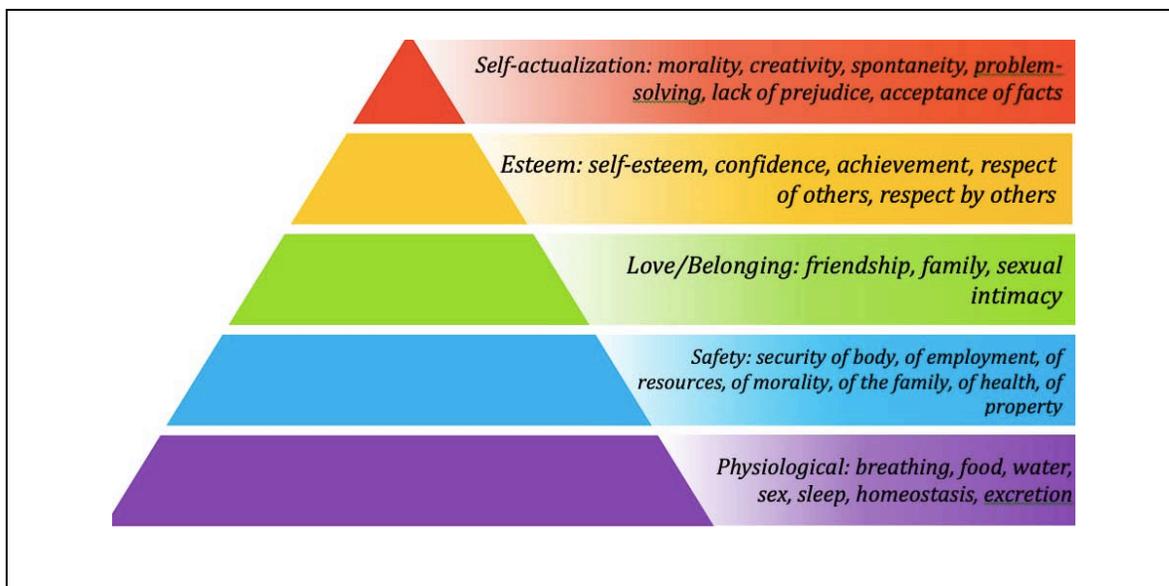
Many African American students face various barriers that are causing a decline in their enrollment in colleges and universities. In this study mental health issues are important and a current issue that is a fact. Black college students are influenced by current issues of mental health and the sociocultural factors that surround mental health. African American college students concern about mental health issues and interpersonal communication with other African American individual students are important as they address mental health issues interpersonally in discussions through open internet platforms (Dai & Morgan, 2021). Current concerns about mental health issues in student studies can also influence African American college students at universities, they consider anxiety to be a most prevalent cause by overwhelming feelings, and different life experiences (Dai & Morgan, 2021). Students seek single dorm rooms because of this condition but this is not like a disability, it is a universal human experience and they do not always get a single dorm room (Dai & Morgan, 2021). Current issues of depression are considered and interpersonal communication mental health issues with African American college students they say "simply talk" about it, though difficult it can be done African American college students believe mental health issues are a current issue and must be discussed (Dai & Morgan, 2021).

Motivation

Students being motivated plays a strategic part as to whether they will attend

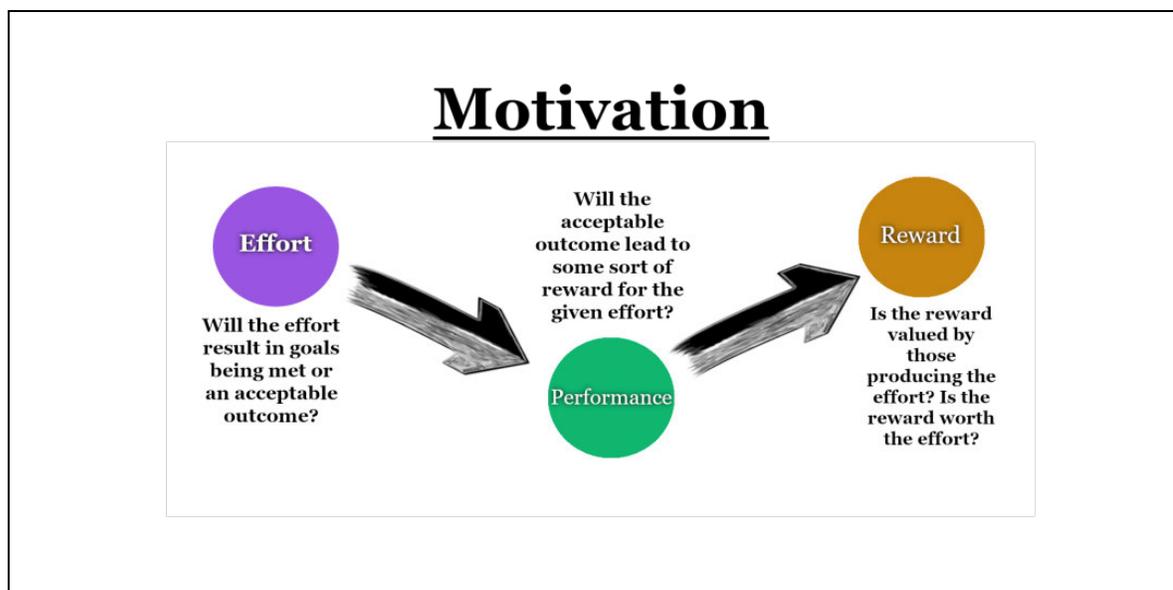
college (Jaschik, 2016). This same kind of motivation played a calculated part in Donald Trump U.S. presidential victory.

Leaders believe inner motivation self-determination set students psychologically up to enroll in college, do well in courses, and complete college while getting their degree (Jaschik, 2016). This is very important because the reasons students seek a higher education is to improve the quality of their lives and increase retention in college a big way (Jaschik, 2016). There are numerous theories about motivation, but the most recognized theory of motivation is based on the hierarchical order of needs by Abraham Maslow (Lussier, 2019). Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a form of human needs in a certain order, and this plays a very important part in increasing retention and retaining this order with African American students in college. Lussier (2019) believes because of his third level of pointing out the importance of belongingness and friendship. Several African American students will attend and remain for completion because of these attributes especially because of some of the organizations that have those Greek Fraternities and Sororities (Brown et al., 2021).

Figure 1*Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*

Note. Sherri Hartzell, Study. com

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (figure 1) may be insightful in trying to encourage African American student to attend and remain for degree completion because of belongingness Vroom Expectancy will be a theoretical framework as the underpinning goal is to understand motivational and expectation factors in the decision-making processes for attendance and retention (Lussier, 2019). Maslow's hierarchy of needs through belonging and creating new friendships play a very important part in drawing a person's interest and then, maintain African American students' attention to stay in college (Lussier, 2019). Through self-actualization African American students in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs are better equipped to cope with barriers of unfairness and prejudice through having good communication within their friendships.

Figure 2*Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation*

Note. from Joshua Render (July 8, 2019)

Types of Motivation

According to Corpus, Robinson, and Wormington (2020) progression development resembles physical action trajectory of different motivation types and pivotal for students during their first year of college gauging through their personal development and academic courses. Students' autonomous motivation start high but then lessen throughout the first year of college students' academic courses of study (Corpus et al., 2020). Identified are irregular changes in motivation known as avolition, a psychological condition defined as reduction in motivation that continues in goal-directed behaviors there is no conclusive research to point out this cause in a psychology it is known to just happen (Corpus et al., 2020). There are various types of students' motivation that enables students to sustain reward value of actions into bright reliable futures with optimist thinking (Corpus et al., 2020). In motivate and dominate four

motivation strategies to increase productivity are: (a) trust thyself, (b) reward self-system, (c) create happiness for self, and (d) seek career advancements (Corpus et al., 2020).

Though design for working people these five power action motivation starters to be of value apply to college students that increase their academic skills working to toward their degree. The five motivation drives are: (a) affiliation with self, (b) security of self, (c) power in self, (d) achievement of self, and (e) adventure with self (Corpus et al., 2020).

According to Corpus et al. (2020) intrinsic motivations are personal and key cores to success that are controlled motivation that starts in moderate and embark on slow increasements over the first year of students' college life that are: (a) being of help to other students through volunteer of time, (b) helping another expecting nothing in return, (c) being opened to learning new skills, (d) improving one's diet, (e) going to the gym to exercise, and (f) getting much rest. Motivation comes from internal factors that meet students' personal needs being (Intrinsic motivation) is inherent satisfaction rather than separable consequence that will remain with students over their lifetime that started when they became first generation student in college and students will excel in whatever they do after college (Corpus et al., 2020). This is what progression over time development resembles and this physical trajectory of a college student motivation.

Self-Perception

In contemporary civilization people in this economy deal with challenges within their lives and attempts towards managing those challenges in their own lives come through counselling and or good support systems (Barros, 2018). Many students who have graduated and become professionals try to help other individuals manage their own

life (Barros, 2018). College educated people with counselling degrees possess salience with self-esteem and positive self-perceptions (Barros, 2018). They acquired good education and present self-acknowledgement, self-worth, with valuing and respect for themselves (Barros, 2018).

In society there are two sets of people, business owners and people that work for the businesses. These two sets of people in society think from totally different mind-sets (Barros, 2018). First generation students and working people that yet do not have college degrees can work through self-help methods that build up self-esteem and motivate their self-perception (Barros, 2018). People that work paycheck to paycheck have no college degrees and suffer with many issues such as low self-esteem and low self-perceptions (Barros, 2018). Self-actualization is the key to good self-perception whether educated or uneducated people in this economy that deal with challenges. They can learn much from humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow that believe self-perception builds through a process of becoming more self-aware that can be described through Maslow's hierarchy of needs, a theory of human motivations (Barros, 2018).

Incentives

College students that seek and work toward education incentives will vary based on different demographics, backgrounds, and different personality of students. Some students' choices can be incentivized by financial rewards (Steinhorst & Klöckner, 2018). First generation students love to online shop, and they can be incentivized by selective e-gift cards to Amazon, a popular online shopping store. College universities can consider intrinsic motivation rewards as a driving force for students' incentives that get good grades (Steinhorst & Klöckner, 2018). First generation students genuinely work hard,

and it helps to have incentives set in place to accommodate those students who continue to do well in their academics.

Schaffhauser (2018) states that the use of Drones in education will captivate abstract learning through different technology concepts with students. As for incentive options several different state grants will be afforded for students (Steinhorst & Klöckner, 2018). Full time students can file for Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) this is a 2022 Education Grants and Online College Grants. This is FSEOGs for undergraduate students with exceptional financial need targeting lower-income students. These grant programs include combined support from a federal Pell Grant, financial aid, and federal Work-Study grant programs, these are incentives that could be used for school materials housing cost, technology, health care, and food. Again, college incentives depend on different students' demographics, students' backgrounds, and students' personality (Steinhorst & Klöckner, 2018).

Academic Advising

Academic advising is a big role in students' college lives and students share the responsibility between themselves and their school advisors (Yenney, 2020). In higher education sense of belonging and rurality are very important both being separate issues. In research little has been explored in the area of belonging through the lens of rurality (Yenney, 2020). Academic advising is a one-on-one service and is not easy to understand the influence of a school advisor's responsibility. Literature surprisingly supports relationships and interactive support of academic advisors and stress the value and importance of such a union (Yenney, 2020). Studies specify that strong faculty or staff member relationships can present a very encouraging effect on

a college students' thinking and college lived experiences (Yenney, 2020). The importance of belonging is the core factor and academic advisors' commendations for that first-generation college student linking up with leadership services (Yenney, 2020).

Preparation Development

Preparation development means an up front and center curriculum to get college students there. Goodman & Kallenbach, (2018) convey a study was done in New England, a career development blend preparation program with adult students, this project was demonstrated over a two-year period that focused on non-academic barriers and academics with college adult learners. In this program there were 66% partakers who completed the program out of 397 adult learners who enrolled in the program study (Goodman & Kallenbach, 2018). The 69% of participants, from the 397 adult learners, who enrolled attained college level reading skills and other students who enrolled in another program had poor math skills and made the lowest levels of progress in that program with math (Goodman & Kallenbach, 2018). The remaining students left from the 397 participants that attained college level math and reading skills later enrolled in college, but they still struggled with poor reading and math levels and had to build up to a college level (Goodman & Kallenbach, 2018).

Leadership training

Leadership training are specialized programs and courses designed for leaders to help students learn and be the best academic students they can be (Nutov et al., 2021).

Leadership training presents new techniques and refine old skills to run a team and include assertive communication, coaching, motivation methods (Nutov et al., 2021).

One great Leadership specialization is experiential learning that is a technique

process of learning through one lived experience (Nutov et al., 2021). This leadership learning characterized as learning through reflection on doing. This self-training style is very similar to first generation students entering college they learn firsthand with being involved in the transitioning of learning (Nutov et al., 2021). Through this process leaders are encouraged to reflect as they go through the experiential processes.

Experiential learning is a comparatively passive role. Here are leadership training assessments that leaderships' gain knowledge and extra training from: (a) possessing necessity, (b) internalizing conceptualization, and (c) having the learning that validates (d) accountability, (e) change management, and (f) communication. Experiential learning unlike specialized training programs and courses that are designed for leadership training is an extra benefit for the leader and college students (Nutov et al., 2021).

Mentoring

Mentoring is not just having an overseer it also forms translating research into practice that involve intervention mentoring research practice. That evaluation evidence-based works for research mentors upon improving trainees' various forms of communication skills (Dahlstrom et al., 2022).

Leadership mentoring skills are: (a) listening actively, (b) building trust, (c) encouraging, (d) instructing/developing, (e) inspiring, (f) providing correct feedback, (g) managing tasks and taking risks, (h) translating intervention practices, (i) evaluating evidence-base work, and (j) developing trainees (Dahlstrom et al., 2022).

Formal and Informal

Formal and Informal leadership derive their authority from different sources. For formal leaders their authority stems from the hierarchy in which they operate (Donitsa-

Schmidt & Zuzovsky, 2020). In contrast informal leaders have less authority and non-formal has L]no influence at all (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky, 2020). Informal leadership is perceived as leaders because of their credibility, influence, and reputation in an environment, but informal leaders hold no position of power and do not control who follows them. They only can influence those around them (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky, 2020). Formal leaders have titles, authority, power, position control, and lead others by what they know about. Non-formal leaders have nothing, and no one follows them (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky, 2020).

There are five very common leadership styles: (a) transformational, (b) transactional, (c) authoritarian, (d) participative, and (e) delegative. These formal and informal leaderships methods are the main styles although there are many such as leaders to students and employer to employees and then, there is non-formal. Non-formal is the least effective lowest form of leadership being very ineffective but still can be considered a part of informal and formal (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky, 2020).

Coaching

Coaching leadership is one characterized by collaboration, support, and guidance (Zhenglong et al., 2019). Coaching focuses on bringing out the best in students, teams, and groups by guiding them through obstacles and struggles. This style creates a culture of high performance through empowering collaboration, and fulfillment to students (Zhenglong et al., 2019). Coaching incorporates a mindset of behaviors', that cultivate, and develop. Leaders who coach are viewed as valuable they build up strength in others and show commitment (Zhenglong et al., 2019).

Tutoring

Founder of Edworks Tutoring is Edwin Toussaint, he appeared in the "New York Amsterdam News" periodical last year (Long, 2021). Edwin Toussaint small, grant funded an organization that created a tutoring program pathway for students who desire to become the scholars of tomorrow as he leads them today (Long, 2021). Edwin Toussaint is stationed in Brownsville in Brooklyn where he tutors in school district 23, low in proficiency state the city's Department of Education (Long, 2021). Edwin Toussaint current concentrate his tutoring program in Brownsville neighborhood tutoring students to become tomorrow scholars and be leaders in their communities. Here are 9 examples of good tutoring skills to build up students to be good leaders, patience, positivity, empathy, active listening, problem solving, time management, confidentiality, good communication skills, and technical knowledge (Long, 2021).

Time Management

Understanding the importance of time management helps students to understand how important this is in being able to successfully complete the different assignments and obligations. Involving students of the importance of this will help them to learn how to prioritize how things should go, set boundaries when needed, and diligently build good working skills. The time management skills of Organization, Prioritization, Goal setting, Communication, Planning, Delegation, and Stress, can help you develop a new sense of competency. Time management skills can help to break down barriers and more importantly prepare them for other task and also help to develop their leadership skill for the future (Keiling, 2021).

Modeling

Literature in research have given less attention context of the classroom where social modeling occurs (Brady & Jung, 2022). In modeling students' participation in the classroom's activities are constituted and shaped through their culture of beliefs and values about the negotiated system of modeling (Brady & Jung, 2022). This crucial task of the classroom modeling culture approaches is significant to the contribution of the modeling that occurs as defined through students' individual cultures, learning, and development.

How students coordinate with one another across their different social levels is how modeling works but it is not all about the teacher doing and the students watching. It is the teacher doing while involving the students in the thinking, the doing and all aspects of the process (Brady & Jung, 2022). Here are some steps essential for the modeling process with students: (a) break down the skill into small learnable segments; (b) be sure students have the background knowledge what tasks to perform; (c) think aloud as you show each step; (d) allow students to ask questions, have opportunities, and get clarification; and (e) check for student understanding with making important connections between steps (Brady & Jung, 2022).

Emerging Barriers and Support Activities

African American students Soland and Kuhfeld, (2021) report who shows unstable leadership and faculty picks up on this and theorize that these students will perform poorly. This is an emerging barrier in the long run, this will continue to decrease retention at college and universities. According to Katrechich and Arugyete (2017) African American students quickly find coursework overwhelming and stressful this

represents an emerging barrier because there were no pre-readiness steps taken to make these students more prepared (Soland & Kuhfeld, 2021). Dealing with disabilities and the challenge around a disability is another emerging barrier along with students trying to manage suicides on campus and related obesity involving weight gain and weight loss among students these are all emerging barriers (Soland & Kuhfeld, 2021).

Support Activities

College today has situational interest in students that are helpful and supportive that help students in the long run down the road for 4 years of schooling (Walter, 2018). Colleges link students to community school-based resources that can coordinate with students effectively through their social support coordinators assigned to get students through their academic activities of interest. These students' complete course after course having these support activities set in place aid students through this academic journey helping them to win and graduate (Walter, 2018).

Synthesis of Literature

In combining these authors into pieces of one whole on the topic of this research leadership strategies to motivate and impact retention of African Americans' college students (Dahlstrom et al., 2022; Nutov et al., 2021; Zhenglong et al., 2019). This explains how positive inputs through more concertation with using various leadership styles positively increase retention with African Americans' college students. With leadership using controlled motivation methods through their physical intervention involvement incorporating modeling, tutoring, and special ccoaching leadership techniques these methods recondition African Americans' college students and reverse decrease retention with this ethnicity group of students where more students will

graduate. As this research study is examined evidence in this literature assess prove these results.

Gaps in the Literature

The gap in the literature evolves around the facts that African Americans' college students' current issues with decrease retention does not stem from students' laziness, uninterest, students nor African Americans' students having no readiness skills. The gap that is not discuss enough or more is better guidance more involvement and interested leadership that is concerned for this group of students willing to make that above and beyond investment in African American students with taking more time, extending themselves deeper for the best interest of this cohort. Presented is this qualitative phenomenological study research literature gap.

Summary

Because a large volume of African American students' retention in 4-year college programs is decreasing at alarming rates, gathering information on the lived experiences of many individual students that had undergone disadvantageous calamities in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic virus, these students lived experience tribulations were very essential to this qualitative phenomenological study research. There were other students with different experiences some had successful school transfers, course changes to e-learning and Zoom platforms making friends connections. While another population still is currently in the process with experiencing struggles and working their way as best, they can passing courses, they previously failed. All these lived experiences are trials passed on in this phenomenological research and all information is important and essential to this qualitative study. Interesting enough this study goal is to present this

discussion about these students detrimental lived experiences with better understanding how and why than to advance this creative topic to this field for further study to lessen the gap. This researcher was able to locate articles and other written material, which explored the impact of attendance and different level of retention. Leaders may be able to proactively interact with African Americans students to increase retention through new practices and effective strategies. This can result in a very positive impact on attendance and retention with African American 4-year college students. As leadership works through their skills and knowledge successfully and turn this decrease retention around for African American students and those activities that negatively influence retention of African Americans' college students' leaders' strategies will motivate retention and increase retention for African Americans' college students' success.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This section of the study presents the qualitative design of the proposed study, and why this design was selected. The reason for selecting the population, sampling strategies, and an overall description of the importance of population demographics are discussed. The qualitative design used interviews and focus groups to collect the data to garner the lived experiences pertaining to phenomenon of retention. Interview topics, investigative procedures, methods, process, and importance of concern are presented.

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to identify what are some of the reasons for a decrease in the retention of African Americans in college and to find some of the strategies that leadership can develop and implement to recruit and increase retention of some of these students. Leadership in these institutions are exploring more ways to incorporate different kinds of interests where governances and advisors may be able to employ student's motivation to a more positive process of initiatives that will increase retention of African college students in different institutions. Since the purpose of the study was to help leaders develop strategies for increasing retention the motivational expectancy theory of Vroom (1964) was the theoretical framework for the study.

Research Design

A qualitative design was used for the study because it has the possibility of providing a rich description of complex issues pertaining to the phenomena when explanation was required. Hence, a phenomenological strategy of inquiry in which the researcher was trying to investigate real lived experience of each participant was necessary. According to Creswell (2009), this method was appropriate for a small

sample size and provided the desired results to engage in meaningful contributions to the research questions.

Participants

The sample size was 12 individuals who fit the following criteria: an African American that has graduated from an educational institution which provides at least a 4-year college degree and has completed the requirements for their 4-year degree within the last six years. Twelve individuals were interviewed one-on-one, and three individuals were asked to participate in a focus group. A purposive sampling method was used to select the participants from the researcher's personal network of professionals using personal contact information.

In order to make the anticipated sample size, the snowball effect was utilized where participants were asked to make referrals of others from their own personal professional network that met the selection criteria. Through this process the number of participants increased with each additional person, the snowball effect was able to provide the required number for this study (Hennink et al., 2011). None of the participants were contacted through their place of employment. Data collected pertains to the participants' individual lived experiences and perceptions of their experience not the perceptions of others. A journal was maintained throughout the interview process to record and collect any additional information that was offered. The one-on-one interview, along with the focus group, and the maintenance of a journal provided triangulation which added validity to the study.

Research Questions

Since the inquiry was pertaining to two activities of concern, the decrease in retention, and strategies for increasing retention, the two overarching researching questions were as follows:

RQ1: What are some of the reasons for a decrease in retention of African Americans in college?

RQ2: What are some of the strategies that leaders may be able to implement to recruit, motivate, and retain African American students?

Process

Data was collected pertaining to the participants' individual lived experiences. During the interviews a journal was maintained to record and collect any additional information the participants ordered. The one-on-one interviews, focus group, and maintenance of the journal provided for triangulation to increase the validity of the study. The open-ended questions used for the one-on-one interviews and for the focus group were as follows:

Instrument

The following questions were used to guide both the individual interviews and to lead the focus group discussion.

1. What activities or issues you found distracting when trying to enter college and that almost caused you to change your mind about entering or remaining to successfully complete your 4-year degree program? What were they?
2. What obstacles or barriers were you confronted with when trying to enter college and what were they?
3. What were some of the obstacles and barriers - such as personal, social, racial, or a lack of services - that you may have encountered throughout your academic journey that may have caused you to consider quitting or dropping out?

4. *Research Probe:* Did you come straight from high school to college and if so, do you think you were actually prepared for college? If not, why?
5. From a financial point of view did you perceive any economical difficulties in trying to afford college and do you think there were services the educational institution could have provided more assistance and what kind?
6. *Research Probe:* Do you think the cost of tuition is fair and if not why?
7. From your experience of attending a 4-year degree-offering educational institution, what important strategies would you say an educational institution leader can implement that might have the most influence in motivating African American students to enter and remain there to complete their 4-year degree?
8. *Research Probe:* Were you a first-generation college student?
9. What have you found to be one of the most effective motivational incentives that might encourage African American students to want to enter college and pursue a 4-year degree?
10. *Research Probe:* Are there any social affiliations or organizations that may have been attractive or encouraging that motivated you to enter a particular educational institution?
11. As an African American, what were some of the services, activities, or events that may have given you a sense of belongingness that you felt were a positive influence in your remaining at your college and motivating you to complete your degree program?
12. *Research Probe:* Do you think that your expectations to obtain a 4-year degree have fulfilled your expectations of earning the degree? If so, how? If not, why not?
13. What activities or obstacles that leader's control might have the largest influence on African American students not seeking entry or retention to obtain a 4-year degree? What suggestions might you recommend for removing these obstacles?
14. Is there any additional information you would like to add pertaining to the reason for the attrition of African American students at some educational institutions?

The previous questions, in addition to descriptive and non-identifying demographic

questions, comprised the research instrument (Appendix A).

Sampling Strategies and Population Demographics

To prevent bias as much as possible the sample size was as large as possible to evaluate the two research questions as thoroughly as possible within the estimated time allotted. I continued to use the snowball process until I obtained 12 participants in my sample size. This provided me with an adequate number of qualified African Americans with a 4-year college degree within the last six years. In accordance with Creswell (2006, 2009) the sample size of 12 is large enough for this type of qualitative study. Interviews were conducted with individuals meeting the aforementioned criteria for inclusion, and, therefore, the total number of interviews determined the sample size. All available responses were included in the study data and findings, is typical for qualitative studies (Creswell, 2006).

Validity and Reliability

The demographic variables included are related to the study topic and stated purpose in order to achieve the goal of qualitative research (Creswell, 2009). Additionally, several methods were used to implement validation of a qualitative study. A respondent exercise or triangulation was used. A respondent exercise was used wherein they had reading of drafts, made considerable demands on participants' time, and depended on the research topic and content of transcripts (Barbour & Huby, 1998). For this researcher's study, participants had the opportunity to read the transcripts from their taped interview. This helped to ensure that the transcripts were transcribed correctly and are accurate. For the purpose of this study triangulation was used to increase validity. Validating each participant's qualifications met with the criteria and participation was

important to the accuracy of findings to ensure that the data were not compromised (Creswell, 2009) and if further validation was necessary according to Buchinder (2011). Secondly, it was common to have a follow-up, *validation interview* that was, in itself, a tool for validating the findings and verifying that they were applied to individual participants, "in order to determine outlying, or negative, cases and to re-evaluate your understanding of a given concept" (Buchbinder, 2011, p. 106).

Data Collection Methods

The data was collected via one-on-one personal interviews, which was one of the most significant procedures in the qualitative research process (Creswell, 2009). Invitations were sent to the most probable 4-year African American graduates through an email introducing the researcher and the topic of the research. The applicants were interviewed in their natural setting so that they had the opportunity of interacting with the applicant pertaining to the individual responses and observe their behavior and it allowed for probing for additional information pertaining to the questions on the instrument. This allowed the applicant to provide additional information.

The focus group met at a later time to provide any additional information they may have recalled from other applicants' responses. Through interviews in the participants' natural settings, the researcher had the advantage of interacting with respondents, observing their behaviors, and probing any item on the questionnaire for feedback and further discussion. The focus group provided for triangulation which was an important element towards achieving credible and reliable data (Creswell, 2009). Triangulation was accomplished through the literature review, the one-on-one interviews

using open-ended questions, and the focus group. A journal was maintained in case a respondent wanted to provide an artifact or additional information (Creswell, 2009).

Recordings were made to assist in generating correct input and to verify the transcription of data. The recording also helped with data coding to look for patterns, categories, and concepts. All interviews were transcribed, and applicants were informed of this before the interviews. Prior to interviews, participants were made aware that their participation and data would be kept confidential. No identifiers were used, instead, a code number was created for each participant for the researcher's use only during data collection, tracking of interview transcripts, analysis and possible follow up for further clarification of interview responses, and for reference during the write up of findings and discussions.

Research Ethics

The process of informed consent was a crucial part of this study's methodology and design. A letter of informed consent was provided to all potential participants, clearly identifying the researcher, title, purpose of the study, and project supervisor as well as detailing the study's procedures, handling of study materials, assurance of confidentiality, how data was used and safeguarded and any potential risks and benefits of participation. No individual was admitted into the study without showing that they have been fully informed by signing and returning the informed consent form (Appendix B).

The researcher played an essential role in this study as she was the data collection instrument by conducting one-on-one interviews to collect data. In addition to garnering consent, other ethical guidelines were adhered to pertaining to privacy and

confidentiality, such as: (a) ensuring interviews occurred in a private and comfortable setting for each participant; (b) safeguarded confidentiality by not collecting any individually identifying information; (c) assigned a simple code for each participant in lieu of names, and kept the list in a secure location separate from the study materials; (d) properly secured study materials so that the researcher was the only one with access, (i.e., passwords) under lock and key; and (e) will follow the requirement that after three years, all study related materials will be appropriately destroyed (Yaeger, 2021).

In qualitative design studies, credibility was extremely significant - the credibility of the data, the analysis, and the researcher. The researcher was cognizant of this and took precautions to remain objective and set aside preconceived biases. Regardless of the type of study or design, a researcher must always be aware of their biases and preconceptions and make note of them so that they do not bleed over into their analyses. As the researcher was the instrument in this study, this awareness was crucial when moving into the analysis and interpretation of findings stages of the study. According to Creswell (2006)' reflexivity (awareness of biases) and bracketing (setting aside preconceived notions) are activities to enhance credibility and trustworthiness of findings.

Limitations and Delimitations

There were several potential difficulties and limitations to this study, but the researcher attempted to mitigate these limitations to the greatest extent possible. Some of the limitations of qualitative research are that it is time-consuming, you cannot verify the results, it is labor-intensive, it is difficult to investigate causality, and it is not statistically representative, considered, such as a low response rate, a slow response rate, difficulty

scheduling interviews, or an inability to complete an interview. According to Atieno, (2009) some of the problems and limitations of qualitative research are as follows:

- The aim of qualitative analysis is a complete, detailed description. No attempt was made to assign frequencies to the linguistic features which are identified in the data, and rare phenomena receives (or should receive) the same amount of attention as more frequent phenomena. Qualitative analysis allows for fine distinctions to be drawn because it is not necessary to shoehorn the data into a finite number of classifications (Coulter et al., 2021).
- Ambiguities, which are inherent in human language, can be recognized in the analysis. For example, the word "red" could be used in a corpus to signify the color red, or as a political categorization (e.g. socialism or communism). In a qualitative analysis both senses of red in the phrase "the red flag" could be recognized (Jirak et al., 2021).
- The main disadvantage of qualitative approaches to corpus analysis is that their findings cannot be extended to wider populations with the same degree of certainty that quantitative analyses can. This is because the findings of the research are not tested to discover whether they are statistically significant or due to chance (Butcher, 2022).

One of the major delimitations of this study was that the study only focused on the decrease in retention of African American students when other ethnic groups could be faced with some of the same problems. The delimitation which was the scope of the study was but one of the reasons the study was not generalizable to the whole population (Miles & Scott, 2017).

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data began with examining, sorting, coding, and labeling the information. The results of the collection were examined for clarification. Clarification was important in order to garner the real meaning of what the participants intended to contribute. This was important to the study in order to develop the richest and most accurate data possible. Once the data collection was completed, the data was transcribed, sorted, and grouped according to similarities of themes derived from the interviews and focus group. Then the central themes that emerged from a description of an understanding of the phenomenon were discussed (Creswell, 2014). Then the information was sorted. During this process the goal was to condense phrases into their core meanings through decoding and encoding. During this coding process the researcher was aware that “When you search for patterns in coded data to categorize them, understand that sometimes you may group things together not just because they are exactly alike or very much alike, but because they might also have something in common” (Seldana, 2009, p. 6). Therefore, during coding and labeling we had to group things alike because they had something in common. Hence, coding was a part of the analysis process (Burnard et al., 2008; Gough et al., 2000).

Using computer software for the coding process worked in the same manner. The software counted the number of times unique words appeared in the text. To code using the software the researcher first identified all the unique words in the text and then used the software to count the number of participants who mentioned similar or different words Bernard and Ryan (2010). By using the process, the computer word count assisted the researcher in finding themes and patterns among the participant responses (Bernard &

Ryan, 2010). Therefore, the research used the same process by hand, which was a little more arduous, but the end results were the same. After the coding process the researcher delved deeper into the codes and created sub-codes (Creswell, 2006). As the data were coded, the researcher began to classify the data into smaller manageable units of data, such as categories. Similarly coded data was compiled into categories to further structure the data. These categories also assisted the researcher to look for themes and patterns (Burnard et al., 2008).

Further Data Analysis

The potential importance of the research wanted to explore the lived experiences of African American students in colleges who faced many barriers that may decrease retention and impact graduation. Gain clear understanding of the reasons decrease retention happens and how leadership could overcome retention barriers. With leadership's contribution to minimizing this and the input of supporting methods that beneficially affect with college retention toward success. The purpose of the study was to identify some of the reasons for a decrease in the retention of African Americans in college and to try to find some of the strategies that leadership could develop and implement to recruit and increase retention of some of these students. This study contributed to the body of knowledge by finding further support on reducing African American students' retention with enhancing the relationship between leadership methods in delivery of styles to this group. The entire academic organizational staff commitment to reduce the decrease in retention toward African American students in universities must change with new academic curriculum set in place as test models. It further demonstrated that leadership concentration partially transmits in this

phenomenological qualitative study question how African American students were affected by barriers that erect decreased retention.

Summary

The study's design, methodology, and instrument have been detailed in this chapter. Analyses, findings, interpretation, and subsequent discussions follow in the next two chapters. African American students in this qualitative phenomenological study research are in these 4-year colleges to enhance their skills, learn in these colleges, and these programs in the colleges, and are there for the attraction to African American students. Because one potential important issue of this research study was to try to clarify some of the reasons why there is a decrease in the 4-year college retention rate by African Americans students. African American college students' goals are to finish college and get their degrees. Some techniques of the leaders for retention goals and learning management programs are to monitor students' progress, predicted successes, and chart students' statistical failures. It was even important in this qualitative study research to consider college freshman drop-outs before their sophomore year and also examine African American students drop-outs at 4-year colleges before their sophomore year looking at the similarity themes. Other areas are with African American students' suspensions, reading comprehension levels, academic understanding efforts, and students that are not effectively well taken care of in their freshmen year. The existing theory to leadership enhancements and strategy applications for leadership this research addresses were undergraduate teaching and learning assessments, internal retention strategies, and track persistence patterns of students that identify difficult courses. Understanding this research and then, explaining why particular students of a group quit school, and/or fail

courses and consideration was taken to those students who transfer from school to school. All the connected correlation on the continuing negative impacts on education retention were investigated. This study hopes from leadership that they will use their strategies to turn this negative education retention around with increasing education retention through use of leader skills, and expertise. Information in this study added a potential contribution to the existing theories and applications from other venues.

This study explained the different innovative leadership techniques, team development, ethical practice, and civic mindedness that prepared students for better self-development. This was the importance and a description of what this qualitative phenomenological research study investigated. The study's design, methodology and instrument findings, interpretation, and subsequent discussions are detailed in chapters 4 and 5. Analyses findings about African American students in this qualitative phenomenological study research are about these students being in a 4-year college and the conditions and circumstances that the reader expected to be present that were not. How leaderships successfully, through their skills and knowledge, could turn this decrease in retention around for African American students. Those activities negatively influence retention of African American college students and leadership strategies to motivate retention for these college students.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Restatement of the Purpose

The purpose of the study was to identify what are some of the reasons for a decrease in the retention of African Americans in college and to try to find some of the strategies that leadership can develop and implement to recruit and increase retention of some of these students. Hence, the specific intent of this qualitative phenomenological study was to consider the issue of the decrease in retention, and then, consider variables of action toward increasing retention with African American adult students.

Analyses findings about this group of African American students in this qualitative study research are about these students being in a 4-year college and the conditions, barriers, and circumstances that were presented. How leadership will successfully through their skills, knowledge, and leadership strategies that will increase retention for these college students. One of the significant underlying urgencies for the need of this study was illustrated by the data whereas according to the latest spring 2021 enrollment statistics from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center stated, while African American female student enrollment dropped about 4% the enrollment for African American male students dropped about 8.9%. The results of this study provide information and strategies for colleges offering 4-year degrees to enhance their processes in being able to attract and retain African American students in their college programs. One of the potentially important issues of this research study was to try to clarify some of the reasons why there was an increase in attrition in the 4-year college programs by African Americans. Additionally, what were some of the positive reasons that motivated them to attend their college and remain until degree completion.

In conducting this study entitled, *Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention*, nine interview questions were developed to collect data to identify factors that influenced students and motivated them to remain in school as well as identify any factors that demotivated them and led them to leaving school. The two research questions of this study are:

RQ1: What are some of the reasons for a decrease in retention of African Americans in college?

RQ2: What are some of the strategies that leaders might be able to implement to recruit, motivate, and retain African American students?

Results Presented by Research Question

Participants

The sample size was 12 individuals who met the criteria of being an African American student that had completed an undergraduate degree within the last 6 years. Twelve individuals were interviewed one-on-one, and three individuals were asked to participate in a focus group. A purposive sampling method was used to select the participants from the researcher's personal network of professionals using personal contact information. For the anticipated sample size, the snowball effect was utilized wherein participants were asked to make referrals of others from their own personal professional network that met the selection criteria. No participants were contacted through their places of employment. The data collected pertained to the participants' individual lived experiences and perceptions of their experience not the perceptions of others. A journal was maintained throughout the interview process to record and collect any additional information that participants wanted to share. The one-on-one interviews,

along with the focus group, and the maintenance of a journal provided for triangulation which added validity to the study.

The Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was based on the expectancy theory of motivation which forms a process theory of motivation (Vroom, 1964). An individual's motivation or valence was affected by how much they valued any reward associated with an action. Hence, an individual's motivation was affected by their expectations of the future and its reward. Therefore, individuals' expectancy motivated them to put more effort into something that they believed generated good results. Afterward, once they realized that attending college and remaining to complete their degree had a bearing on the motivation of the expectation of earning a 4-year college degree, they considered the benefits of receiving the reward economically and socially.

Reliability

The interview questions guided the procedure to ensure that the information provided a life like picture of the lived experience of the African American students gaining a 4-year degree. The barriers and other positive and negative factors that were encountered during the way had to be revealed to analyze the process of overcoming the phenomenon of dealing with the problem of increasing retention. Maintaining validity and reliability during the process of data collecting were imperative. Therefore, it was important to ensure participants were aware of adequate information before consensus (Kress et al., 2013). To enhance reliability, it was very important to use a record all interviewing procedures as sampling to determine the validity and reliability (Harmel et al., 2010). Olluwatayo (2012) indicated that audio-recording also helps to decrease errors

during coding and other analysis procedures and can really assist with supporting reliability.

During the process of audiotaping the recordings responses participants offered was clear and understandable. This was extremely important because it allowed replay to ensure clarification of response. Oluwatayo (2012) found this process of reviewing with validity and authenticity. The ability to replay responses was also a method of enhancing the triangulation process and Wiener (2009) emphasized the significance of triangulating data could help to develop a strong validation and reputation. The phenomenon being studied kept emphasis on reasons to decrease retention. The interview protocol ensured every participant of confidentiality, and that no deception would be used. The interview questions were semi-structured and open-ended to invite participants to provide descriptions of their lived experiences. This helped the researcher in clarifying, analyzing, coding, and interpreting the information being collected (Saldana, 2009). The individual interviews were also asked of the focus group to compare the answer responses with the responses previously given. It was observed that the responses from the focus group were very similar to responses given by individual participants.

The collection of responses assisted the researcher in identifying the shared themes for the study. Distinguishing the themes help emerge the information with utilizing a layering process (Creswell, 2012). The data triangulation was composed of interviewing each participant through the one-on-one process, taking field notes, reviewing responses from both individuals and focus group for common comparisons (Creswell, 2006). This helped with coding described by Saldana (2009) as being a method of breaking down pieces of the data for interpretation. During this process, each

question was coded according to the participant's feedback and placed into categories that were laid out according to the associated themes. Similar patterns were discovered to improve clarity in descriptions of participant responses. Characteristics of theme's replies providing rich depth reliability (Creswell, 2012).

Coding & Themes Analysis

Saldaña (2018) stated that a researcher “must read a paragraph, interpret it and decide to which dimension the information should be assigned” (p. 17). The details incorporated in the data analysis carried relevancy to the research questions. Due to the repeated procedure, a straightforward strategy led to an infinite chance of documentation compilation. The procedure enabled the narrative of contributors' familiarities with decrease retention and their perceptions about the qualitative research norms (Wiener, 2009). The interviewing queries assisted in learning the participants' true outlooks and openness about one institutional barriers of college tuition costs during the mutual conversations. This helped the researcher in clarifying, analyzing, coding, and interpreting the information being collected (Saldana, 2009). The adaptation of multiple techniques aided the researcher with the examination progression. Saldana (2009) mentioned that the analysis of interview data requires the selection of a coding system and appropriate consideration was taken to consider if NVivo software would be best to use. Bergin suggested using NVivo to help the researcher put themes in an organized way. The analysis made room for Wiener's (2009) usage of norms. There was also space to affectively record the participants and then, study what each of the 12 people and the one group session expressed. Saldaña (2018) maintained flexibility must be presented in a framework for the analysis of complex narrative data to take core themes

and stories of experience into account in their original form.

The use of codes helps in establishing and cataloguing transcripts. The coding system helped with finding similar words as well as paths related to formed themes. Themes originated from participants presenting similar or adjacent to their answers. The researcher formed themes by rereading answers to every question recurrently. Declarations were acknowledged and inspected to evaluate whether they connected with the themes. The precise declarations concerning every theme were recognized by expanding contributors' ciphers. After all themes emerged, an outline was established for every theme relating to steady elements. The background data were appraised to make sure declarations were consistent with themes as well as steady elements. All transcripts were revised employing this technique; the material abetted the researcher in evaluating the written documents in the interviews. When evaluating scholarly writings, Hall et al. (2015) referenced that to accurately do qualitative analysis of data the researcher would need to critically do self-reflexivity. Identifying the participants meaning to why they approached different situations the way they did were examined (Hall et al., 2015). Organization of this qualitative data was done for information to be analyze and set in groups (Saldaña, 2018). Researching would have to begin by transcribing the conversations and replaying the interview recordings for clear and actual clarity listening for the slight differences in the themes (Hall et al., 2015). Methods of thorough assessments with studying how 'making meaning of the data through inconsistencies were carried out (Saldana, 2018).

Demographics

There were eight female participants and four male participants in the study. The

age group varied from 18 to 49 years of age. Their level of education, and the position they currently hold are presented in the table 1. Those who worked in their education degree field are described. Only one participant did not work in the field of their degree, and another participant was unemployed.

Table 1

Study Participants Total: 12

Participant Code	Age Group	Gender	Ed Level	Present Position	Work In Field or Out of Field
Participant 1	40-49	F	MS	Home Healthcare	Out in Field
Participant 2	8-29	F	MS	System Engineer	Work in Field
Participant 3	39-39	M	BS	Business Owner	Work in Field
Participant 4	30-39	F	BS	Assoc. Teacher	Work in Field
Participant 5	40-49	F	BS	Hotel Assistance	Work in Field
Participant 6	18-29	F	MS	IT Specialist	Work in Field
Participant 7	40-49	M	BS	Pastor	Work in Field
Participant 8	30-39	F	BS	Hotel Manager	Work in Field
Participant 9	40-49	M	BA	A Clerk	Work in Field
Participant10	30-39	F	BS	A Teacher	Work in Field
Participant 11	40-49	M	BA	Unemployed	Not Working
Participant 12	30-39	F	MS	Administrative	Work in Field

Analysis Triangulation

This researcher appreciated this type of Thematic analysis, a method of analyzing qualitative data. It was applied to a set of passages, group interviews, and transcripts. This researcher carefully examined the data from what was collected from the 12 interviews. Recognized were common themes – issues, thoughts, and patterns of meaning that repeated. Thematic analysis offers various approaches to conducting the analysis of literature Creswell, J. (2006).

The researcher posed a question to the contributors' and their narratives about decrease retention and their perceptions went like this: "What are some of your ideas and opinions with decrease retention of black female and male students? Contributors' 1 thru 6 conveyed, "We all feel discrimination experiences on campus come from receiving poor resources, lack of support, and no genuine help from the facility." We feel in a great sense invisible. Many times, faculty walk right past us and do not speak. This decrease retention among us as a black body of students shows a commonplace with us, a norm. Discrimination of African American students are more publicly identifiable and because of these African American students must be careful and mindful (Michener et al., 2020). The researcher doing interviews considered working through a Thematic analysis as a good approach to research evaluations when collecting the data samples from the interviews (Michener et al., 2020). The researcher had considered if NVivo software would be the best to use. Vivo could help the researcher put themes in an organized way but the Thematic analysis could answer: How, what, and why to what degree questions. The assessment opened more room for Wiener (2009) usage of norms. There was also space to compartmentalize collected data from the 12 people and the one group session.

In a framework there was a development built around all stories. The coding method was by far the best technique to use with maintaining flexibility for the framework to bring the data alive in the development underlying subject questions and participant lived experiences as the building takes place.

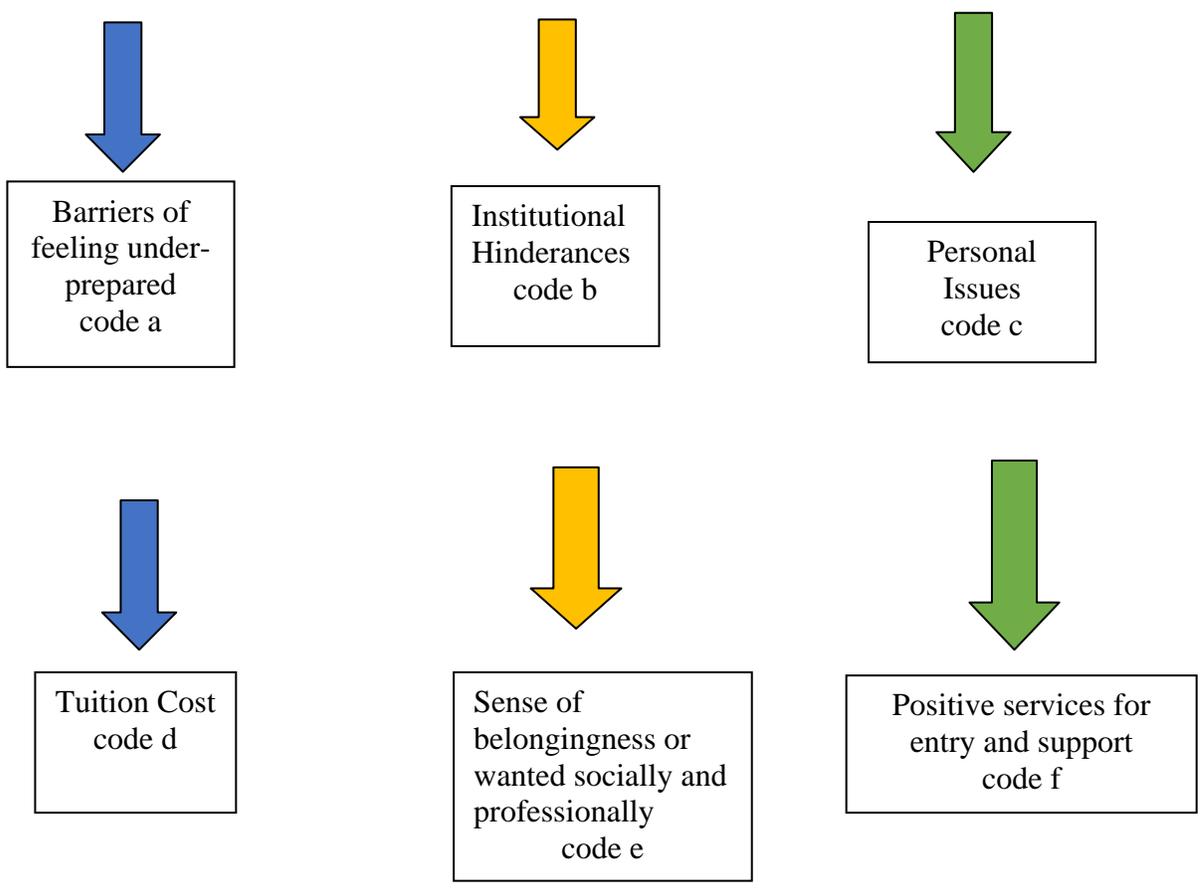
The use of codes helped in establishing and cataloguing transcripts. The coding system helped with finding similar words as well as paths related to formed themes. Themes originated from participants providing similar or adjacent answers. The researcher formed themes by rereading answers to every question recurrently. Declarations were acknowledged and inspected to evaluate whether they connected with the themes. The precise declarations concerning every theme were recognized by expending contributors' ciphers. After all themes emerged, an outline was established for every theme relating to steady elements. The background data were appraised to make sure declarations were consistent with themes as well as steady elements. All transcripts were revised employing this technique; evaluating the documents to be reviewed.

The responses provided by African American graduates compiled a total of four themes that emerged. The following themes identified were barriers of feeling under-prepared due to their socio-economic background, effecting institutional hinderances and personal issues outside of school, and then, back into school with tuition cost.

All those participants that said what led to the emergent themes are above each individual table. The results from the data collected and the analysis of the data are provided starting in tables two through tables six and the frequency (percentages) of the data collected, are provided in each emergent theme tables to the right of the tables.

Figure 3

The Emergent Themes



Findings

Theme 1: Barriers of feeling Under-preparation

The First Question

What obstacles or barriers do you think you were confronted with when trying to enter college and what obstacles were you confronted with upon reaching the educational institution if any? *Research Probe:* Did you come straight from high school to college, and do you think you were prepared for college? If not, why? Some of the relevant

comments of the participants lived experiences collected from data analysis results are as follow:

Emergent Themes: Barriers of Under-preparation Personal Issues plus Tuition Cost

I was not prepared and was confronted with both educational and economical obstacles to deal with. I had no money; transformation and I did not feel academically up to par to meet my college courses at first. It took some time right after my first semester. No, I did not transfer straight from high school to college. I received a GED because I dropped out of high school due to pregnancy, I have nothing more to say about that. Participant 1 (personal communication)--Q1. Yes, I started college straight from high school P4-Q1, P5-Q1, P6-Q1

Emergent Themes: Barriers of Under-preparation Personal Issues plus Tuition Cost

I was not prepared academically, I had math issues. This educational obstacle I was confronted with, and I faced it. As soon I finish high school I went and got a job and stayed employed for over a year. No, college, was not a first choice for me. I come from a working-class generation of uncles, older brothers, father, and grandfather laborers. Participant 7 (personal communication)--Q1

Emergent Themes: Barriers of Under-preparation Personal Issues plus Tuition Cost

Educationally, I was not prepared I had other issues at that time. I really do not want to go into. No, I did not come straight from high school going into college. I dealt with mental health and some other depressions and this obstacle with some other things took some time for me to work through. After some time, I did work through and enrolled in college. Participant 8 (personal communication)—Q1

Emergent Themes: Barriers of Under-preparation Personal Issues plus Tuition Cost

I was confronted with economical obstacles when I first tried to enter college. I was having stable housing issues. Straight from high school I was kicked out of my mom house. I was not prepared period for college? I lived from couch to couch for a while, but later things got better, and I was able to make better choices. School was one choice I was able to make later. Participant 9 (personal communication)—Q1

Emergent Themes: Barriers of Under-preparation Personal Issues plus Tuition Cost

I enlisted into the National Guard straight from high school my obstacle was economical. I just did not have money. I sure did not come straight from high school into college. It took me some time to pass the physical

National Guard test. I was not mentally prepared for college; I was working a physical preparedness later I was able to go and fill out admission papers for college. Participant 10 (personal communication)—Q1

Emergent Themes: Barriers of Under-preparation Personal Issues plus Tuition Cost

Barrier that confronted me when I tried to enter college was economics. I needed money right out of high school. I did not go straight to college. Money and housing issues was a hefty issue for me. I went to work to make money Participant 11 (personal communication) —Q1

Emergent Themes: Barriers of Under-preparation Personal Issues plus Tuition Cost

Having no car, getting back and forth to college on public transportation, maintaining housing, paying for school was distracting. Participant 12 (personal communication)—Q1

Participants 2 and Participant 3 were ready to start their plan to enter college, P2 and P3 had no code b problems. P2 and P3 experience no code c issues, and P2 and P3 both had scholarships, no code d responsibility. Both P2 and P3 explained they had no negative concerns with code e, and code f, Emergent Themes.

Theme (A): Barriers of feeling under-prepared

This researcher data analysis revealed there were only three themes totally alike among many of these participants with question 1. This study of African American participants showed the same challenges and barriers of economic issues, educational obstacles, and employment with at least 10 Participants, except Participants 2 and 3. Table 2 shows a list of the impact and perception how barriers of feeling under-prepared experiences affected these 10 participants. The associated effectiveness of each Emergent Themes with the 10 participants presented differences one from another participant. Participants in the economic barrier was at the highest percentage at 90%. While generated through leading question number 1 the factor of educational obstacles

showed a smaller percentage, 40% of participants that had found educational obstacle difficult. The next individuals' emergent themes were separate barrier cases that affected feeling of being under-prepared. Table 2 set a visual demonstration of similarity and the frequency development. This research offers specific analysis about what each participant said, and the themes triangulation of the data was presented by this researcher that shows familiarity that was consistent in the different themes.

Theme Analysis

Table 2

Theme 1: Barriers of feeling under-prepared

Response of Emergent Themes	<i>n</i>	Frequency Percentages
Economical Issues	All Participants except P2 and P3	90
Educational obstacles	Participant 4	40
Employment Jobs	Participant 7	30
Housing issues	Participant 11	19
National Guard testing	Participant 10	9
Transformation	Participant 1	20
Mental Health	Participant 8	75

Theme 2: Institutional Hinderances

The Second Question

What obstacles or barriers were you confronted with when trying to enter college and if so, what were they? Confronting extreme college hinderances affect student's psyche. Envisioning these different obstacles or barriers are important and can be highly

destructive to a student's spirit and state of mind. Steinhorst and Klöckner (2018) agreed that complex low decentralized institution conditionings affect student's environmental behaviors and can implicate student emotional state of mind. Racial obstruction, disconnection from college community, and seeking academic advisement hinderances seriously affect a student determination and persistence. The result was that many students just quit and dropped out. Relative comments of some participants institutional hinderance issues led to a continuing barrier are in the responses that follow.

For this individual they experience degree requirement information that was poorly described. It was difficult and hard to understand what would be expected of them through being in this degree program. There were some racial discriminative leaders that affected me when they talked down to me. I was very frustrated for a time. I experienced feelings of distress because of mean leaders the inability to do something that could change my poor situation and bad information descriptions I had received.
Participant 1 (personal communication)—Q2

This experience is sad in colleges that continue between students and the institution that is race disparity. Affect students personally and some students going to school from that as a great hinderance that later affect student African American students' behaviors. This participant used to drink and felt triggered to state back drinking This experience damaged them, and they needed to seek professional help.
Participant 6 (personal communication)—Q2

Disconnection from college community events and the people is a great hinderances.
It is a good thing when students show need of other students. The get peer on peer support and engaging that inspired vision on purpose from each-other can go a long way. In the mist of institutional hinderances students needing other students is a change engine that could affect positive change in the long run. Participant 9 (personal communication)--Q2

Impact recognized as hinderances *were* racial disparity, I always dreamed and had good perceptions about someday going to college, but this institutional *racial obstruction* was one obstacle, I found myself confronted. I come from the inner-city ghetto area and have some self-esteem problems. This *racial obstruction* affected my confident and feelings of safeness. I have a child at home and had to be in a good mind-set after leaving school to come home and care for my child. I cannot be

thinking of my racial roadblocks' issues and stressing. This is a distraction for me to better care and nurture my child. Participant 5 (personal communication)—Q2

I experience no obstacles or major barriers that confronted me when I was coming right into college. Participant 2 (personal communication)—Q2

I do not recall any obstacles or barriers when I encountered going right in to start my college career. Participant 3 (personal communication)—Q2

Table 3

Theme 2: Institutional Hinderances (The Impact)

Response	<i>n</i>	Frequency Percentages
Racial obstruction	Participant 7	26
Race disparity	Participant 11	20
Disconnection from college community	Participant 9	30
Information poorly described	Participant 1	15

Theme 3: Personal Issues

The Third question

What were some of the obstacles and barriers - such as personal, social, racial, or a lack of services - that you may have encountered throughout your academic journey that might have caused you to consider quitting or dropping out? *Research Probe:* Did you come straight from high school to college and if so, do you think you were actually prepared for college? If not, why?

With envisioning personal issue barriers and confronting them are extremely important. Casanova et al. (2018) alluded that many factors determine a student's persistence and seriously affect the student's dropout rate. Resources can be a big key when trying to enter college. Having a connection of resources inspire and motivates

individuals. When faced with confrontation trying to enter college having a practical guide could really help students as well. When students are trying to enter college so many different things *pop up* and some things that students did not see that one coming. Relative comments of some *participant's emergent issues* that led to their barriers are in responses that follow. Some of the relevant comments of the participants lived experiences collected from data analysis results are as follow.

One obstacle, I was confronted with when trying to enter college was personal due to being pregnant earlier before. No. I did not come straight from high school to college. I had a baby, and I came from the urban ghetto area. I always dreamed and had good perceptions about someday going to college. I had some self-esteem problems and was not confident as I should have been. There were some leaders that did not make things better because there were racial discriminative leaders that talked down to me and this was difficulties. In spite of all that and having a child with some thinking issues that distracting me, still I was determined and pushed through to get through. Participant 5 (personal communication)—Q3

Time is my issue though I felt as if I were not prepared for college my time to commit to going to college was just not there. No. I did not come straight from high school to college, but I had good perceptions that someday soon I would go to college. Time management is my distractor when trying to enter college things would not fall into place. I almost had given up, but things changed, and I was able to enter college. Participant 12 (personal communication)—Q3

I come from a single parent household. My mother needs help keeping bills paid on time. I needed to work and work overtime, to help ends meet. Going to work, helping to keep bills paid and working overtime was a lot. No. I did not come straight from high school to college. With these issues trying to enter college back than it was just a dream. Though I was distracted because of having an inspired vision after some time, I was able to restructure my life and enter college to get my degree. Participant 4 (personal communication)—Q3

This experience is sad disconnection from college community events and the people. I personally knew some students that were going to school and experienced this great hinderances started bad behaviors. Their drinking increased and behavior changed. This experience damaged them, and they

needed to seek professional help.
Participant 6 (personal communication)—Q3

There really were no serious personal issues or lack of service barriers that made me want to quit or drop out of college. Participant 2 (personal communication)—Q3

I do not remember any real individual situations, lack of service obstacles or any social barriers that made me want to quit my college career or drop out of college. Participant 3 (personal communication)—Q3

Table 4

Theme 3: Personal Issues

Response of Emergent Themes	<i>n</i>	Frequency Percentages
Personal Issues	Participant 5	22
Social perceptions	Participant 9	16
Racial Challenges	Participant 6	40
Lack of services	Participant 4	29

Theme 4: Tuition Cost

The fourth question: From a financial point of view did you perceive any economic difficulties in trying to afford college and do you think there were services the educational institution could have provided more assistance and what kind? Research

Probe: Do you think the cost of tuition is fair and if not why?

I felt it was economic difficulties trying to afford college because. There were some racial discriminative leaders that talked down to students this was on top of the economic difficulties. And in my life, I had many other financial commitments. It would have been of a great help if my college could have provided more assistance to me. Some added services would have helped me more like making things a little easy such as a \$25.00 gas card. Even a free food lunch card would have been fine with me. I believe the cost of tuition is not fair. Why? The cost of a course for 6 to

10 weeks once uses to be \$1,600.00 to \$1,900.00 dollars and today that is crazy courses are a strapping \$2,500.00 to \$3,000.00 dollars no, school cost is not fair. Participant 12 (personal communication)—Q4

While I successfully completed a 4-year degree I was challenged on every front. It was hard hanging in there every day. I had economic difficulties in trying to afford college. The educational institution did not provide me with good assistance. The school services provided somewhat but it was not enough. I signed up with the National Guard and this part of my schooling became better. No, I think the cost of tuition was not fair. Why? African American students received poor attention and for the money that was being paid there should have been better attention. Participant 10 (personal communication)---Q4

After a long delay I got my 4-year degree health issues and problems arose. Life became more financially challenging. My health became more distracting. I also was unemployed. I went through many economic difficulties in trying to afford college. No, to school was not a great help. I feel my institutional education services could have provided more assistance to me. No, think the cost tuition is not fair. Why? They are ridiculously just to high. Participant 11 (personal communication)---Q4

I almost had a change of mind about staying in school from my monetary problems I was challenged with my studies, and I think there were services the educational institution should have provided me with. There were some racial discriminative leaders that talked down to me on top of the economic difficulties. In my school provided assistance was slack on greatly there were resources I miss. No, I think the cost of tuition is not fair and way to high. Why? Because not many at all came pay cash for the price of courses today. Participant 8 (personal communication)—Q4

I was prepared and had a 4-year scholarship. I was self-assure not feeling any distractions my mental condition was on point focus ready to remain in college seeing myself complete and receive my 4-year degree. I feel there were still some services my educational institution provided was ok with me. I would have liked to benefit more from the math assistance, but it was ok, I passed the class. I think cost of tuition is not fair. Why? Many African American students are not made aware of extra cost for other resources. They cannot find out by word of mouth from their own peer to peers because they do not know. Leaderships are really not concern about cost of tuition neither. Participant 3 (personal communication)—Q4

Table 5*Theme 4: Tuition Cost*

Response of Emergent Themes	<i>n</i>	Frequency Percentages
Economical services	Participant 10	30
Financially challenging	Participant 11	73
Economic difficulties	Participant 12	50
Was tuition fair	All Participants said No!	100
Monetary problems	Participant 8	6
4-year scholarships	Participants 2 and 3	100

Theme 5: Sense of belongingness or wanted socially and professionally*The Fifth Question*

From your experience of attending a 4-year college, offering educational institution, what important strategies would you say an educational institution leader can implement that might have the most influence in motivating African American students to enter and remain there to complete their 4-year degree? *Research Probe*: Were you a first-generation college student?

In my third semester I notice my educational institution backed, behind and stood up front for this one student test model adaptive course ran by this female leader. She was very well liked and presented strategies in this test model program that was exceptionable. This course model was most influence targeted to first semester African American students. Students in this program seem as if they were having so much fun in learning. This course was an innovative visionary influence program course. Yes, indeed I believed the first semester students who entered were encouraged to remain in school to complete their 4-year degree. I am a first-generation college student. Participant 1 (personal communication)—Q5

Sense of belongingness or wanted socially and professionally
Most important leadership strategies I say an educational institution can implement to influence in motivating with African American students and

help them remain in school to complete their 4-year degree are Coaching, democratic, and Laissez-faire technique strategies. These styles aid in a sense of belonging in being a part of. I am a first-generation college student. Participant 2 (personal communication)—Q5

In attending a 4-year college I believe African American students entering to remain and get 4-year degree the leaderships should implement the Transformational style method. This is most influential and motivating to African American students. I know because that style helped me. Yes, I am a first-generation college student. Participant 3 (personal communication)—Q5

At my university motivating African American students to remain in college was important. Leadership strategies I witness was out on the field day events. We students would all travel in one group to different place for a whole day and the lunch meal was on the university. We had so much fun with our leaders. Our leaders were kind patient and listened to us. We felt special. We felt like we belonged. This would influence and motivate African American students to remain in school to complete their 4-year degree I am a first-generation college student. Participant 4 (personal communication)—Q5

My experience at my 4-year college was leadership implementing coaching styles. Our leaders created a culture of high performance. We would sometime complete with each other this sharpen our learning. We were better learners for this coaching style from leadership at our educational institution. This time many African American students were not left behind. I am a first-generation college student. Participant 5 (personal communication)—Q5

I am a first-generation college student. educational institution leadership strategies were to listen to students. This cause us to feel like we mattered when our voices were heard. There were many African American students from low-income households. Student brought their non-educational problems to school and need someone just to listen. I believe this is a good leadership strategy. My Participant 6 (personal communication)—Q5

All other individual Participants, their numbers not in any order, were first-generation college students. Every single Participant 1 thru 12 was from their individual families that first time college student and who had graduated.

Theme 5: Sense of belonging or wanted socially and professionally

Table 6

Sense of belonging

Response to Emergent Themes	<i>n</i>	Frequency Percentages
Sense of belonging courses	Participant 7	38
Leadership that listened	Participant 6	69
Leader coaching styles	Participant 4	50
Leadership adaptive model	Participant 1	42
Leadership field day events	Participant 5	27
Transformational style	Participant 8	72

Theme 6: Positive services for entry and support

The Sixth Question

What have you found to be one of the most effective motivational incentives that might encourage African American students to want to enter college and pursue a 4-year degree? *Research Probe:* Are there any social affiliations or organizations that may have been attractive or encouraging that motivated you to enter a particular educational institution?

Me as an African American student I found one good organization most effective and kept me motivated as an incentive. I keep my social affiliations open with that organizations because I value and support the female friends I have. That organization services were positive and supportive in a very good way. It was a motivational incentive that kept

me encourage during my university time. The Association for Women in Community Colleges group also helped me feel safe in my environment. Participant 5 (personal communication)—Q6

I used to drink more than I should have my campus having AA meetings on the campus was to me a big motivational incentive. AA meetings affected me the services were positive and supportive in a very good way. I benefited from this program my university offered and it was a good incentive to me. For me social affiliations were our university Friday dances party. I was attracted, encouraged and these daces keep me motivated. Participant 6 (personal communication)—Q6

The most effective motivational incentive that encourage me as an African American student was the university diversity clothing store on campus. This store was a motivating incentive to work there. I became very popular and well-known. There were some racial moments, but I was able to cope and get pass it. The social affiliation organization was the chess campus organization. I was a good chess player this organization support me and provided me with nice service incentives and my affiliation with the chess organization social club was a motivational incentive to me. Participant 7 (personal communication)—Q6

The social organization that I am affiliated with is the student association society. It is a motivational incentive because I have right-of-passage that other African American students do not because of my affiliation. This is a good incentive and very motivative. Participant 8 (personal communication)—Q6

Theme 6: Positive services for entry and support

Table 7

Positive services

Response to Emergent Themes	<i>n</i>	Frequency Percentages
Association for Women in Community Colleges	Participant 5	29
AA Meetings and NA Meetings	Participant 6	40
The Chess campus organization	Participant 2	59
The student association society	Participant 3	60

All those participants that said what led to the emergent themes are above in each individual table. This study data analysis continues with what participants said relevant to the research study questions. All comments on the participants' lived experiences are documented, constructed from beginning to end, and arranged below. Questions 7, 8, and 9 have no emergent themes attached and are answered by participants, and this study's research questions are as follow:

Question 7

As an African American, what were some of some of the services, activities, or events that may have given you a sense of belongingness that you felt was a positive influence in your remaining at your college and motivating you to complete your degree program?

Research Probe: Do you think that your expectations to obtain a 4-year degree have fulfilled your expectations of earning the degree? If so, how? If not, why not?

The different scholarships designed for African American students helped fund some of my education. I felt this was a positive influence that kept me remaining in my college motivating me to complete my degree program. These African American student scholarships activity services was afforded to me. The scholarships are designed for minority students and will target African Americans students long after me. The scholarships services will give those students a sense of belongingness that feel good and is positive. This was my positive influence experience. As for the *Research Probe:* question No, I do not think nor feel my expectations to obtain a 4-year degree has fulfilled my expectations of earning the degree. Why? I continue to struggle financially; I am working in home healthcare not really in the field of my BS degree and, I feel like I am still impoverished, now what do I do with that? Participant # 1 (personal communication)

As an African American student what provided a sense of belongingness that was a positive influence and helped me remain to get my degree was having some interpersonal relationships. A sense of belongingness came through having some interpersonal relationships, kept a positive influence over me and motivated me to complete my degree program. Yes, my

degrees are fulfilling my expectations of earning the degrees. I have a MS degree and I am a Senior System Engineer. I am currently in a good financial place. I had to relocate to another state for better employment opportunities. The state I got my degrees in afforded no good opportunities for college graduates. Participant # 2 (personal communication)

Two of my prior professors' services that invested a discipline identity action with me gave me a sense of belongingness that was a positive influence that remained over as motivation to complete my degree program. Yes, my 4-year and master's degree is fulfilling my expectations of earning the degrees, I am a Business Owner above the impoverished line. I am freer because of my work ethics and college degrees. Participant # 3 (personal communication)

My classroom activities increased my educational success and created a sense of belongingness that I felt. This was a positive influence over me and helped me make it to completion of getting my degree. I am an ass. teacher with a BS degree. No, my 4-year degree has not fulfilled my expectations of earning these degrees, I still have a large loan debt. I continue to feel impoverished because a substantial part of my paycheck goes straight to my monthly payment loans. I personally feel I should have gone to work got employed and not this huge school debt. Participant # 4 (personal communication)

A state of mind place reflections and how I formed my attachments to others in my college environment through different events and campus activities provided that sense of belongingness for me. For this reason, it helped me to complete getting my degree. I have a BS degree and am a hotel ass. worker. The expectations to get a 4-year degree have not fulfilled my expectations of earning the degree. The Vroom satisfactory theory has not worked in my favor. Participant # 5 (personal communication)

I felt accepted and valued by this study group I was a part of at my prior university. Through this one peer-to-peer study group I felt like I belonged. We all were a positive influence on one another and when one fell down, we as a group would support our fellow student. This was a motivating force between us at an active group and all of us got our degrees. No, the many prospects it took to gain my degrees are not fulfilling my expectations of earning the degrees. I am an IT Specialist with a master's degree and reason is I still face financial barriers. Participant # 6 (personal communication)

The services of one professor who supported me and made me feel valued by him is what provided a sense of belongingness and was a positive

influence on me. As for the *Research Probe*: question No, I do not think nor feel my expectations to obtain a 4-year degree has fulfilled my expectations of earning the degree. Why not because though I have this BS Degree and am a Pastor, I feel I have not met that higher economic Vroom satisfactory theory. Though, I am psychologically fulfilled, I continue to struggle financially and sometimes emotionally. Participant # 7 (personal communication)

There was a teacher that created a intentional inclusion space and place through this teacher strategic strategies thinking. This activity service provided from this one teacher helped many students back than and added to us all a sense of belongingness. I am ever grateful. I am a hotel manager with a BS degree. No, my expectations are not fulfilled from earning my BS degree. Why? I struggle at every pay period that is why. Participant # 8 (personal communication)

There was a teacher that created a intentional inclusion space and place through this teacher strategic strategies thinking. This activity service provided from this one teacher helped many students back than and added to us all a sense of belongingness. I am ever grateful. I am a hotel manager with a BS degree. No, my expectations are not fulfilling my earned BS degree. Why? I struggle at every pay period that is why. Participant # 8 (personal communication)

I was a part of an underrepresented student group my institution. A few faculty members reached out to us, and we felt a sense of belongingness. This small faculty group brought joy, hope and possibility to us. We were positively motivated and made it to graduate. No, my expectations are not fulfilling my earned degrees because I am still not making the money I would like to be making. Participant # 9 (personal communication)

At my university a free inclusive course was offered to any students that wants to join. The criteria stipulation is students could not miss any days. I joined and learned this free course afforded students feelings of security and support and a sense of acceptance. Students could bring their authentic self to this free course. This free course was a positive influence and a sense of belongingness with good services and activities. We all as students looked forward to this course events. Do I think my degree have fulfilled my expectations of earning it? Yes and no. Yes, from the knowledge I have that no-one can take from me and no because I am no making to pay, I seen myself making by now. Participant # 10 (personal communication)

As an African American, I struggled with college activities and events I have a BS degree. In my extreme struggling, I felt no sense of

belongingness final after some time I achieved my degree. No, my expectations about my 4-year degree have meet none of my expectations of earning the degree. I have psychological; emotional and financial struggles and I am unemployed right now. Participant # 11 (personal communication)

Being able to remain seen for my uniqueness and acknowledgement of my contribution to my courses added a sense of belongingness to me. This was a positive influence and kept me motivated all the way to the finish line of getting my degree. No, my expectations to obtaining my degree do not meet my expectations of earning degree. Why? I am not making the wages I hoped to be making by now. I am not fulfill with my earned degree. Why? I am being under paid. Participant # 12 (personal communication)

Question 8

What activities or obstacles that leader's control might have the largest influence on African American students not seeking entry or retention to obtain a 4-year degree?

What suggestions might you recommend for removing these obstacles?

Participant # 1, Participant # 2, Participant # 3, Participant # 4, Participant # 5, Participant # 6, Participant # 7, Participant # 8, Participant # 9, Participant # 10, Participant #11, and Participant # 12. All agree (Unite) in (Unity) together in this one thought. That these obstacles leader's control that was a huge influence on African American students not seeking entry to obtain a 4-year degree are. Leaders have very big control over resources and are not talked about or known to African American students some other opportunities. We all as students can only rely on university leaders to know our resources and opportunities. Today we as students must talk to peers to get word of mouth information about resources and opportunities for leadership to pass us by. What all of the 12 students recommend was to remove these obstacles give them a platform where (universities) would hear their voice and listen to all their perspectives, and ideas.

Question 9

Is there any additional information you would like to add pertaining to the reason for the attrition of African American students at some educational institutions?

Participant # 1, Participant # 2, Participant # 3, Participant # 4, Participant # 5, Participant # 6, Participant # 7, Participant # 8, Participant # 9, 11 and 12 agreed on one same thought. That the reason for the attrition of African American students at some educational institutions was due to the number one factor of leaders that are not accountable and do not have some African American students' best interest up front nor focus of this group of students best educational care in mind. Where was the accountability for bad leadership? Though this list of bad leadership was small when one student was faced to have to deal with that uninterested leader on their behalf this only hurts that student, and that student can do nothing about it. Either find inner strength to deal with bad leaderships drop courses or quit school all together. Going to the Dean gets that one student and their one voice heard, but the abuse goes on.

This experience has caused many students to quit which leads to decreased retention. Looking to the future universities must weed out these bad leaders for students to not quit school. Leader's control influences on African American students as leaders by offering more resources, and opportunities continue to make education amongst this group of African American students very hard as a whole at every individual university. This was the additional information all 12 participants in this research study added (Unite/Unisys) together pertaining to the reason for the attrition of African American students and the reason for decreased retention.

Emergent Themes

Participants revealed the six themes and their codes. The six codes were: (a) feeling under-prepared, (b) institutional hindrances, (c) personal issues, (d) tuition cost, (e) sense of belonging or wanted socially and professionally, and (f) positive services for entry and support. Code (a) feeling under-prepared 8-participants communicated what they dealt with. Diverse inclusivity should be something to aspire to and suggest of students be prepared for when going into higher education (Mark, 2021). Most participants mentioned they just were not academically prepared. Their reasons were all different, but the same theme was common for most of them.

Atherton (2014) believed first-generation college students that started college being academically prepared to get students off to a good start and their outlook toward success was more likely. Different perspectives were discussed among participants about institutional hindrances (b) the same theme of few resources with not revealing the various opportunity to help African American students was another emergent. All 12 participants related a similarity to (c) personal issues, (d) tuition cost, and (e) sense of belonging. Barros (2018) posits salience in college with students stem from personal issues of self-perceptions and life values. Then participants in this study have the role of coping with finances, student loans and wanting to be accepted. Only about 4 participants out of 12 expressed the same commonality emergent of code (f) Positive services for entry and support. The participants conveyed professor-student communication was internally important at all African American student's college universities. College leader motivation and students' self-motivation mix toward more

probable student increase enlistments and complete of degree success. The highest frequencies in this study lied with codes (a), (c), and (d).

Common Themes

From out of the emergent themes data analysis report the common core themes with this study participants are initially codes: (a) feeling under-prepared, (b) institutional hinderances, (c) personal issues, and (d) tuition cost. For tuition costs, participants in this study continued to face economic disadvantages. Then these difficulties converted to wrap-around barriers and obstacles as these participants continuously struggled through the core emergent themes in persistent consistency to achieving their 4-year degrees.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to identify what are some of the reasons for a decrease in retention of African American college students in these universities and to try to find some of the strategies that leaders can develop and implement to recruit and increase retention of some of these students. Chapter four found results from the researcher's data analysis collected present what participants said and what led participants to the emergent themes. Participants' expressions are relayed throughout chapter four by showing participants' data analysis frequency (percentages). The data results of this study explain the different innovative leadership techniques, team development, ethical practice, and civic-mindedness that will prepare students for better self-development (Dartey-Baah, 2015).

This study rests on the fact that "Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention." Research data analysis walked readers through different innovative leadership techniques,

team development, ethical practice, and municipal mindedness. Resilient leadership and transformational-transactional leadership help prepares students for better self-development (Dartey-Baah, 2015).

The importance of this data came from the findings and the concluded results descriptions how this study findings stimulate participants reflective thoughts. The design, methodology and instrument findings, interpretation, information, details, and reliability subsequent opening for discussion rich thorough information applied. Working-class respondents drew on hopefulness was uncertain — hope for college admissions with this group of students remain uncertain. Specific assistance was needed for change in this matter with this systematic devastation of this last 25 years with African American students decrease retention that continues to be a hardship and leadership strategies must be put in place (Simpkins, 2020). The crisis in encourages us to fight to ensure that all students thrive through and defined where, what ways and how as college leadership in the U.S. can provide post-secondary education in the country (Simpkins, 2020). “Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention”

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study identified various reasons for a decrease retention of African Americans college students. The qualitative approach used was through identifying lived experiences of students in decreased retention and progression development resembles physical action trajectory of different motivation types. Those types of concern are techniques, development, ethical practice, and civic mindedness. According to Corpus et al. (2020) the progression development that resembles different physical motivation types that are pivotal for students who are first year college students and that was practicing personal development and academic in courses. Students' autonomous motivation start high but then lessened throughout the first year of college students' academic courses of study (Corpus et al., 2020). Identified are irregular changes in motivation known as avolition, a psychological condition defined as reduction in motivation that continues in goal-directed behaviors where no conclusive research can point out cause in the psychology mind where things are known to just happen (Corpus et al., 2020). One underlying significant urgency for the need of this study was according to the latest spring 2021 enrollment statistics from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, data illustrates African American female student enrollment dropped about 4% and the enrollment for African American male students dropped about 8.9%. Results of this study college 4-year degree programs must be able to attract and retain African American students in their college programs.

There were several innovative leadership tools identified to support the preparedness of student's self-development. Those tools were concerning techniques, development, ethical practice, and civic mindedness. Upon the responses provided by the

participants the following themes emerged: (a) barriers of feeling under-prepared, (b) institutional hinderances, (c) personal issues, and (d) college tuition cost.

Review of the study revealed racial identity in teaching space was received with negative attitudes and unacceptable approaches in the face of African American students (Parker & Neville, 2019). Understanding this perception of how White college students' form their opinions of African Americans authority figures professors and Black students must change (Parker & Neville, 2019). African American college students feel a broad range of social estrangement and separateness (Campbell et al., 2019).

There was an emerging identity development identified with African American students that make racial incidents more salient (Campbell et al., 2019). The matter of racial identity perception occurring off college campuses because what occurs on college campuses needs to be addressed and that was why this literature review was created. Investigation of this literature review was to examine some of the reasons and difficulties African Americans college students may be confronted when trying to enter a 4-year college program. Strategy leaders might be able to implement motivation in these individuals to enter college and complete their college degrees.

Key subjects used to locate relevant studies pertaining to barriers were African American students entering college in general could have some supportive activities to motivate them to remain in college and achieve their degrees. Through difference styles of leadership many strategies were implemented to assist and keep African students motivated to continue in college. From a whole other side, the main date parameter for this literature review was set to be displayed June 1, 2022. However, that did not happen other literature was added setting this literature date display to today June 14, 2022.

Utilizing the study questions helped stimulate participants reflective thoughts. The study's design, methodology a qualitative instrument used for the findings were (Vroom, 1964) a theoretical framework based on the expectancy theory of motivation which was a development theory of reasoning toward motivation. An individual's motivation or Valence affect the degree that was valued by the expected reward associated with an action. Hence, an individual's motivation was affected by their expectations of the future and its reward. Therefore, individuals (Expectancy) motivated them to put more effort into something that they perceived would generate good results.

In applying a model that reflects the effect of education costs Harahap et al. (2021) agreed that was important to where they can achieve their educational goals by looking at different costs of colleges (Davidson et al., 2020). This was smart, wise and a valuable judgment for African American students to make (Harahap et al., 2021). African American students' involvement with enrolling into a regional university was something that was not an easy task for African students and there were barriers in the cost of colleges that should have been considered (Davidson, 2020; Harahap et al., 2021). In transferability when future college students consider a snapshot look at the whole picture of things and school support structures it was perceived that they did not feel so assured (Davidson, 2020). Considering the greater lack of financial aid offered today and the minimal support from institution organizational leadership, college students see the obvious barriers and concluded the cost of college was not worth their efforts (Davidson, 2020). There needs to be an emic perspective, focusing on understanding the cost of college directives and processes because this specifically affects low-income students' (Foster, 2013).

The group of 12 African American students in this qualitative study research are about these current African American students being in a 4-year college and due to the conditions, barriers, and circumstances they considered dropping out for whatever reasons. The findings through this research study analysis and the 12 participants revealed a serious issue about failing African American students. The blame was being exclusively placed on the heads of the African American students' groups. Where are they? The overlooked leaders' that teachers were to offer reliability, trustworthy, and accountability to all students. Leaders play their part in this fallen group. Leaders need to successfully improve their skills, knowledge, and leadership strategies in this 21st century to improve and motivate this group of students and increase retention which was the objective of this research study.

Observations of participants identified both genders of African American male and females. It was determined that the men were close to twice recidivism of decrease retention than African American females. According to the latest spring 2021 enrollment data analysis from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center female enrollment dropped about 4% whereas, male enrollment dropped about 8.9%. Data analysis showed this great difference of gender enrollment and obtained an assumption that factored the reasons for the decrease of retention in African American males compared to African American females. While there was numerous barriers for not entering college or remaining in college, Soland and Kuhfeld (2021) pointed out that the top four barriers were under-preparation, institutional barriers, personal non-academic barriers, and college tuition costs.

This has contributed to low graduation rates because of a lack of a supportive educational system and on-going poor economics. Other contributing factors were due to social disorders, no peer relations, and no personal sessions with leaders to result in a decrease of retention. In relation this causes psychological effects with students' development creating overwhelming mental and physical emotional conditions (Weigel & Shrout, 2022). African American students struggle in online computer technology which minimized their communication skills which was another course and premise in this study. In a broader perception many faculty facilitators and professors offered no extra assistance to African American students in 2020. Though there was some progress, the overall benefit from the additional help aided in survival of African American students in 2021 was very minimal and unfortunately not enough to match the degree of negative conditions with African American students. These students that once were scholar students found themselves lost and struggling along the way.

To interpret what this study results showed was that there were barriers, obstacles, and challenges of various kinds with this group of decreased retention of African American students from needy backgrounds. These students were thought of as being lazy, leaders seeing students as cognitively slow and that they would struggle through new e-learning courses. Results also revealed that African American students had received low grades, did not navigate well through course curriculum, and struggled through conceptual framework and new e-learning courses. The greatest results in this study exposed faculty members leadership professors, and the educational system as a whole, even the cost of colleges tuitions and various institutional hinderances with great racial disparities were the greatest barriers, obstacles, and challenges for this group of

African American students. Those tools were concerning techniques, development, ethical practice, and civic mindedness could work. Through difference styles of leadership many strategies were implemented to assist and keep African students motivated to stay in college this was one point this literature review determined.

Now what does this mean in relation to the two research questions in this study?

1. What are the various activities that might be implemented by leaders to increase the completion rates of African American men receiving doctoral degrees?

There must be a serious table discussion of what methods, set-of-goals, negotiations, prioritizes, and guiding principles actions are needed. That can be identified in a long-term plan aimed toward the interest and means of changing this decrease retention to increase retention with these dropouts, quitters, and no enrollments of this group of African American college students. This related to the first research question to what and how, and in what ways change can start, which must begin with a table discussion of serious strategic thinkers.

2. What types of activities can be implemented to encourage African American men to become more motivated to seek a higher degree and encourage others to do likewise?

The types of activities that could be implemented to encourage African American men were to support cultural ways that affirm and not depict, present inclusive diversity interceptions, establish personal mentorships, create rite-to-passage courses, generate an activity dynamic classroom or on-line meeting room space, build a trusting relationship, and make black men identities visible.

The results match up to this literature written by the researcher in the way that scholarly resources displayed their critical validity and reliability to this researcher's thoughts, opinions, and concepts in research and findings. All scholarly resources and this systematic investigator that created this dissertation did not differ from what this literature revealed through explanations.

Recommendations

Schools need to find strategies that leadership can develop and implement to recruit and increase retention of African American students. Data analysis in this research shows benefits of students getting involved by becoming pro-active in college organizations promoting positive change. For example, joining sorority and fraternity groups throughout their college experience. These appealed to African American student socialization which enhanced a sense of belonging. That provided opportunity for good psychosocial outcomes and increased retention that can further advance academic stability. Leadership strategies development that are implicated to change decrease retention to increase retention presented a new recruitment program. This specialized program introduces students to leadership training. That setup is designed for leaders to help students learn and be the best academic students they can be (Nutov et al., 2021). Leadership training could present new academic curriculums that could be test model courses under research review for their effectiveness to change. There are process learning techniques in these suggested course curriculums that are passive comparative experiential learning system (Nutov et al., 2021). This leadership learning was characterized as *learning through reflection of doing*. This leadership self-training style was very similar to the first-generation students entering college with learning firsthand

how to be involved in the transitioning of learning (Nutov et al., 2021). Through this new learning process leaderships can encourage students to reflect as they go through the experiential processes. This experiential comparative passive role presents hope for change and continue growth. This includes assertive communication, coaching, motivation methods and Leadership specialization techniques that were all a process lived experience method of learning (Nutov et al., 2021).

Recommendation for Future Research

To help enlarge the scope of Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention, the researcher requested that in a future study the focus should be on African American students point of reference to why they do not receive the proper resources and important course readiness teaching for college preparedness which identified as this gap in the research study (proper resources and targeted course readiness teaching). There was clear-cut resolutions at hand as options to experiment that could decrease retention and they were presented in this conclusion.

Conclusion

This study identified the reasons for a decrease in the retention of African Americans in college and the importance of finding strategies that leadership can develop and implement to recruit and increase retention, also identified is the gap in this research study. The participants within this study struggled through new courses while trying to understand conceptual frameworks around old courses. The results contributed to get low grades that affected the retention rate. Sadly, faculty facilitators and professors offered no extra assistance to African American students. Student attrition has become a

serious problem for higher educational institutions across this U.S. In the U.S., universities lost revenue as a result of students exiting programs early. The theoretical framework for this study was based on the expectancy theory of motivation which was a process theory of motivation (Vroom, 1964). An individual's motivation (Valence) is affected by how much they valued any reward associated with getting good grades. Hence, an individual's motivation was affected by their expectations of the future and its reward. There must be a plan put in place to reverse this phenomenon and get this group of African American students back in college where they will work through framework expectancy theory of motivation (Vroom, 1964).

This study explains from data analysis of 12 participants that described through themes of barriers feeling not prepared, experiencing institutional hindrances, academic learning challenges and high tuition cost their roadblocks. Zhao (2022) maintained fostering problematic future application of Computational Development. This could increase diverse learning and intentionally prepare students to relate better to peers and improve their attention to learning (Gast, 2022; Zhao, 2022). Intentional concept, Culturally Responsive learning, and Thinking for a Change learning Gast (2022) and Zhao (2022) stated this could encourage these students to improve attendance and minimize the dropout rates if only given an opportunity. This proposed solid plan was a developmental idea from this research study findings and data analysis. Barriers of not being-prepared, experiencing institutional hindrances, academic learning challenges, and high tuition costs that continue to affect enrollment, attendance, and increase the dropout rates must start now in reverse. How can schools' benefit from taking a risk on this proposed plan from findings of this study and all the other data analysis that

representation of the various students that excelled in business and educational success they would openly announce, give all credit and benefit to their school that gradually instilled this higher learning education principles, morals, and ethics influence into them. In contrast to the United States Army that prepares people to (BE THE BEST THEY CAN BE). This researcher requested that future studies focus on all students, not just African American students, and prepare them to *be the best they can be*. The gap in this research study was that students do not receive the proper resources for college preparedness to achieve degrees and what various actions leaders could take to change this. As leaders focus back to students' best interest and well-being this is the contribution to this further field of study that would impact tomorrow's student leaders to move this U.S. of America by what innovative risk the educational system takes today. In Ida B. Wells Barnett autobiography, as she pushed her pen across the papers in her deep and rich expressions and quotes contributing to further field of history study to impact our tomorrows on the last page "Eternal Vigilance is the Price to Liberty" (Padnani et al., 2018, p. 4). It was often misattributed to Thomas Jefferson, but the real source of the quote is by Wendell Phillips, an abolitionist. Speaking to the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in 1852, meaning power is ever stealing from the many to give to the few. Attracts influential thinkers of history class liberalism education, social, political, theories and political economy (Padnani et al., 2018).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. INVITATION FOR PARTICIPATION

Hi, my name is Melvaughn Thompson and I am a doctoral candidate at National Louis University-Chicago working on a Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership degree. I am conducting a study entitled, *Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention*. The purpose of this qualitative study will be to examine the various influencing factors that may lead to increasing student retention among African American college students.

I am seeking 12 to 15 individuals who fit the following criteria:

- African American
- completed a 4-year college degree within the last 6 years
- at least 18 years of age

The participant's name will not be used in the material write-up so there will be no manner of knowing from where the participant works, nor will the particular organization's name be shared in the material write-up. Participants will be given pseudonyms such as Participant 1, Participant 2, etc. Should organizational names emerge in the interviews, the organizations will be given pseudonyms as well such as Organization 1, Organization 2, etc. and only the principal researcher will know to which participant or organization the pseudonym aligns.

This study will try to identify the influencing factors that may lead to African American college student attrition. Potential benefit of the study's findings may be the addition of information for educators and leadership to develop practices that might have an impact on increasing student retention.

If interested in participating and you believe you meet the study participant qualifications, please contact the researcher:

Melvaughn Thompson

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thank you in advance for your consideration and participation.

APPENDIX B. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Participant Number: _____

Date & Time of Interview: _____

General Demographics:

Age Group 18-29____ 30-39____ 40-49____ 50 and over____

Gender: M _____ F _____

Education Level: _____

How long did it take you to complete your 4-year degree? _____

What city were you living in when you finished high school? _____

Your current profession and position: _____

The following questions will be used to guide both the individual interviews and to lead the focus group discussion.

1. Were there activities or issues you found distracting when trying to enter college and that almost caused you to change your mind about entering or remaining to successfully complete your 4-year degree program? If yes, what were they?
2. What obstacles or barriers were you confronted with when trying to enter college and if so, what were they?
3. What were some of the obstacles and barriers - such as personal, social, racial, or a lack of services - that you may have encountered throughout your academic journey that might have caused you to consider quitting or dropping out?

Research Probe: Did you come straight from high school to college and if so, do you think you were actually prepared for college? If not, why?

4. From a financial point of view did you perceive any economical difficulties in trying to afford college and do you think there were services the educational institution could have provided more assistance and what kind?

Research Probe: Do you think the cost of tuition is fair and if not why?

5. From your experience of attending a 4-year degree-offering educational institution, what important strategies would you say an educational institution leader can implement that might have the most influence in motivating African American students to enter and remain there to complete their 4-year degree?

Research Probe: Were you a first-generation college student?

6. What have you found to be one of the most effective motivational incentives that might encourage African American students to want to enter college and pursue a 4-year degree?

Research Probe: Are there any social affiliations or organizations that may have been attractive or encouraging that motivated you to enter a particular educational institution?

7. As an African American, what were some of some of the services, activities, or events that may have given you a sense of belongingness that you felt were a positive influence in your remaining at your college and motivating you to complete your degree program?

Research Probe: Do you think that your expectations to obtain a 4-year degree have fulfilled your expectations of earning the degree? If so, how? If not, why not?

8. What activities or obstacles that leader's control might have the largest influence on African American students not seeking entry or retention to obtain a 4-year degree? What suggestions might you recommend for removing these obstacles?
9. Is there any additional information you would like to add pertaining to the reason for the attrition of African American students at some educational institutions?

APPENDIX C. FOCUS GROUP INFORMED CONSENT

My name is Melvaughn Thompson, and I am a Doctoral student at National Louis University. I am asking you to participate in this study, "*Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention*" occurring from 03/2022 –02/2023.

The purpose of this qualitative study will be to examine the various influencing factors that may lead to increasing student retention among African American college students.

In identifying these positive and motivational factors, it may be helpful to educators when developing strategies to improve African American student retention to complete their degree programs. This form outlines the purpose of the study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

By signing below, you are providing consent to participate in a research project conducted by Melvaughn Thompson, doctoral student, at National Louis University, Chicago campus.

Please understand that the purpose of the study is to examine the various influencing factors that may lead to increasing student retention among African American college students. Participation in this study will include:

- Participants being invited to participate in the panel of a focus group session.
 - Focus group session will last up to 45-60 minutes and include approximately 9 questions to identify best leadership practices that positively impact teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and teacher retention in an elementary school setting.
 - Participants may view and have final approval on the content of focus group sessions transcripts.

Your participation is voluntary and can be discontinued at any time without penalty or bias. The focus group will take place virtually on Zoom. The researcher will be behind closed doors in her home office and ask that all participants to do the same in a similar location where they can participate in private and comfort. The results of this study may be published or otherwise reported at conferences and employed to inform educators of the major factors that influence African American college student motivation and retention (data will be reported anonymously and bear no identifiers that could connect data to individual participants).

Precautions will be taken to safeguard your confidentiality. A password will be required for entry to the Zoom meeting, only audio will be used, video will be disabled, and you will be provided a generic number as an identifier. However, due to the nature of a focus group, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed for after the focus group concludes. By agreeing to participate and signing the informed consent, the researcher asks all participants to safeguard each other's confidentiality outside of the focus group session.

To ensure confidentiality of your responses all digital documents and recordings will be password protected, and all hardcopy files and notes will be secured in a locked cabinet, all housed in the researcher's home office. Only the researcher, Melvaughn Thompson, will have access to study related data and materials. Three years following study completion, all study related materials will be appropriately destroyed through digital purging/erasing and shredding.

There are no anticipated risks or benefits, no greater than that encountered in daily life. Further, the information gained from this study could be useful to educators in enhancing strategies to positively influence African American students' motivation and retention. This information could also contribute to the current body of knowledge pertaining to strategies and practices to increase African American student retention in post-secondary education.

Upon request you may receive summary results from this study and copies of any publications that may occur. Please email the researcher, Melvaughn Thompson at [REDACTED] to request results from this study.

In the event that you have questions or require additional information, please contact the researcher, Melvaughn Thompson, a [REDACTED] or call [REDACTED].

If you have any concerns or questions before or during participation that have not been addressed by the researcher, you may contact the dissertation chair: Dr. Pender Noriega, email: pnoriega@nl.edu; the co-chairs of NLU's Institutional Research Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, email: Shaunti.Knauth@nl.edu, phone: (312) 261-3526; or Dr. Christopher Rector, email: CRector@nl.edu, phone: (312) 621- 9650. The co-chairs are located at National Louis University, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL.

Thank you for your consideration.

Consent: I understand that by signing below, I am agreeing to participate in the study, *Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention*. My participation will consist of the activities below during the 03/2022 –02/2023 time period.

- Join in a focus group panel discussion, lasting approximately 45-60 minutes.

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

APPENDIX D. PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

My name is Melvaughn Thompson and I am a Doctoral student at National Louis University. I am asking you to participate in this study, "*Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention*" occurring from 03/2022 –02/2023.

The purpose of this qualitative study will be to examine the various influencing factors that may lead to increasing student retention among African American college students.

In identifying these positive and motivational factors, it may be helpful to educators when developing strategies to improve African American student retention to complete their degree programs. This form outlines the purpose of the study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

By signing below, you are providing consent to participate in a research project conducted by Melvaughn Thompson, doctoral student, at National Louis University, Chicago campus.

Please understand that the purpose of the study is to examine the various influencing factors that may lead to increasing student retention among African American college students. Participation in this study will include:

- One individual interview scheduled at your convenience in the spring of the 2021-2022 academic year.
 - Interviews will last up to 45-60 minutes and include approximately 9 questions to identify factors that influence student motivation, retention, and/or attrition.
 - Participants may view and have final approval on the content of interview transcripts.

Your participation is voluntary and can be discontinued at any time without penalty or bias. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, interviews will be conducted privately by telephone or virtually on Zoom (at your preference and convenience). To safeguard privacy and confidentiality, the researcher will be behind closed doors in her home office and ask that all participants to do the same in a similar location where you can participate in private and comfort. The results of this study may be published or otherwise reported at conferences and employed to inform educators of the major factors that influence African American college student motivation and retention (data will be reported anonymously and bear no identifiers that could connect data to individual participants).

To ensure confidentiality of your responses all digital documents and recordings will be password protected, and all hardcopy files and notes will be secured in a locked cabinet, all housed in the researcher's home office. Only the researcher, Melvaughn Thompson, will have access to study related data and materials. Three years following study

completion, all study related materials will be appropriately destroyed through digital purging/erasing and shredding.

There are no anticipated risks or benefits, no greater than that encountered in daily life. Further, the information gained from this study could be useful to educators in enhancing strategies to positively influence African American students' motivation and retention. This information could also contribute to the current body of knowledge pertaining to strategies and practices to increase African American student retention in post-secondary education.

Upon request you may receive summary results from this study and copies of any publications that may occur. Please email the researcher, Melvaughn Thompson at [REDACTED] to request results from this study.

In the event that you have questions or require additional information, please contact the researcher, Melvaughn Thompson, at [REDACTED] or call [REDACTED].

If you have any concerns or questions before or during participation that have not been addressed by the researcher, you may contact the dissertation chair: Dr. Pender Noriega, email: pnoriega@nl.edu; the co-chairs of NLU's Institutional Research Board: Dr. Shaunti Knauth, email: Shaunti.Knauth@nl.edu, phone: (312) 261-3526; or Dr. Christopher Rector, email: CRector@nl.edu, phone: (312) 621- 9650. The co-chairs are located at National Louis University, 122 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL.

Thank you for your consideration.

Consent: I understand that by signing below, I am agreeing to participate in the study, *Activities Negatively Influencing Retention of African American College Students and Leadership Strategies to Increase Retention*. My participation will consist of the activities below during the 03/2022 –02/2023 time period.

- Join in 1 of 12-15 interviews, lasting approximately 45-60 minutes

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date