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**RACE TO THE TOP: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CHALLENGES  
AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES FACE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

by  
Samuel Jay

A Thesis

Submitted to the  
Department of Educational Services and Leadership  
College of Education  
In partial fulfillment of the requirement  
For the degree of  
Master of Arts in Higher Education  
at  
Rowan University  
June 2, 2018

Thesis Chair: Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

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## **Abstract**

Samuel Jay

### **RACE TO THE TOP: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CHALLENGES AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES FACE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

2017-2018

Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

Master of Arts in Higher Education

The primary purpose of this study was to better understand the struggles African American males encounter in higher education. A secondary purpose was to analyze the social and academic struggle African American males face at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. This study also looked at the past, present and future of the African American males selected to participate in this study. Convenience sampling was used to select participants. Selection criteria included male African American undergraduate students, who have sufficient grades and enrolled full time at Rowan University during the 2015-2016 school year.

A total of 376 surveys were distributed with 190 completed for a return rate of 50.53%. The survey used for this study contained a total of 78 items which were divided into three parts (Demographics, Cross Racial Attitude Scale, General Campus Climate). The study found that a majority of the subjects encountered racial experiences of some form at Rowan University. Also, the study found mixed responses regarding their racial attitudes.

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## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

Americans currently living in the United States have the opportunity to accomplish anything they put their minds to, after all the United States is known as the “land of opportunity.” However, this is not the case, particularly if one is an African American male or female. From the very creation of the United States in 1776, Black people were very limited in the opportunities they were allowed to seek and accomplish. In education, African slaves were not allowed to be educated or have the ability to read and write (Williams, 2005). Even in this present day, while Blacks are allowed to obtain an education, there are significant issues, such as high dropout rates from high schools and colleges/universities, high incarceration rates, and living in low income environments.

### **Statement of the Problem**

African American males face significant obstacles, challenges, and adversities in adequately receiving an education compared to their peers of other races. Dropout rates for African American males are at 41% nationwide, in comparison to their White peers who have a dropout rate of 20% (Superville, 2015). African American males contain the highest percentage of students to be classified as being mentally retarded at 20%, while they only make up 9% of the entire student population (National Education Association, 2015). Black males are three times more likely to be suspended or expelled from school than their White peers, which makes them miss crucial time in the classroom (National Educational Association, 2015). In the education field, Black males are often connected

with multiple negative stereotypes, specifically aiming at their intelligence and intellect. In the United States, African American males have been often labeled as dangerous, dumb, deviant, disturbed, and deprived (Gibbs, 1988). Despite the fact that most Black male students do not fit into those negative labels, educational experiences of White instructors pertaining to Black male students have them labeled as such. As a result, African American students are taught differently and have different learning outcomes than their fellow White counterparts. This is a societal chain that African American male students have gone through in elementary school, middle school and high school levels. Since they face these barriers, those who go on to attend college are often unprepared academically compared to their White counterparts. The difference in being taught combined with the institutional racism towards African Americans contributes to the struggles of African American males in higher education.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to understand what challenges African American males face in pursuit of a Bachelor's degree. A secondary purpose was to analyze current Rowan University Black male undergraduates and their previous educational preparation, involvement, and goals. This study also investigated how their prior environments, behavior, and values impacted their college experiences.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study investigated a significant and timely topic that offers hope for Black who are at a disadvantage in achieving success in higher education. This study examined the adversities and achievements Black males go through during their undergraduate

years at college both socially and academically. Are Black males receiving the proper guidance and mentorship from professionals while attending a four year institution? What academic and social resources are available for those Black male students who have a hard time adjusting to the academic and social aspects of college? The answers to these questions could help the leaders at colleges and universities better understand African American males and how to devise a solution to the prominent issue of African American males and their challenges in college.

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

The sample size was limited to African American males enrolled at Rowan University during the 2015-2016 school year. Quantitative methodologies were used to explore the challenges and obstacles of African American males at Rowan University. Surveys were conducted with selected African American males at Rowan University. This entailed Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior African American male students enrolled full time at Rowan University. Potential bias may be present in the findings, because this sample did not represent the entire population of African American males enrolled in colleges/universities throughout the United States. A potential for researcher bias exists, because I am an African American male who attended Rowan University as an undergraduate and graduate student. However, the researcher comprehends the sample population is limited to one institution as a means of controlling mixed institutional viewpoints. Researcher bias can be present, due to the fact my racial background correlates with this topic.

## **Operational Definitions**

1. Achievement Gap: The difference between African American females and males who are exceling in education and employment.
2. African American Males: Black male students in this study who were enrolled full time undergraduates at Rowan University.
3. Census: A population survey conducted by the United States Government every decade.
4. Culture: Social and academic way of life at a university/college.
5. Division I: The highest level of athletic competition in the National Collegiate Athletic Association.
6. HBCU: (Historically Black College/University): An institution that contains a high enrollment of African American students.
7. K-12: Kindergarten through 12th Grade.
8. Low Income Background: People who live in a poor area in which their family does not earn a significant amount of income in their household.
9. NCAA: National Collegiate Athletic Association.
10. Professionals: Individuals who work in the EOF/MAP, EOF and Admissions Department at Rowan University.
11. PWI (Predominately White Institution): An institution which contains a majority white student population.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What do selected African American males report about their attitudes regarding Internalization Afrocentricity, Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive, Pre-Encounter Assimilation, Pre-encounter Miseducation, Pre-Encounter Self Hatred, Immersion-Emersion Anti White?
2. What do selected African American males report about their experiences in academic study at Rowan University?

## **Overview of the Study**

Chapter II contains a review of literature pertaining to this study. This section includes a brief description of the present status of African American males in higher education, along with the impact of negative stereotypes they encounter within the culture of a university.

Chapter III discusses the study methodology and procedures. This entails the data collection related to the topic and data analysis.

Chapter IV discusses the findings of the study. A profile of the sample is examined, and analysis of the data using statistical analysis are presented in order to address the research questions posed in Chapter I.

Chapter V summarizes and discusses major findings of the study along with conclusions and recommendations for practice and further research. It begins with the summary of the study, discussion of the findings, conclusions, recommendations for practice, and recommendations for further research.

## **Chapter II**

### **Review of Literature**

#### **Current Status of African American Males in Higher Education**

The issues pertaining to African American males in colleges/universities are subtle. There are no straightforward answers to the present condition of Black males in higher education. Statistics show that Black students' graduation rate nationwide is 39.5% in a four to six year timeframe (Quinton, 2014). Essentially, 60.5% of Black college students who enroll into a four year university, drop out or do not finish. The total population in the United States as of 2010 was 308,745,538 (Census, 2015). Of that total amount 42,020,743 identify as African American/Black. African Americans represent 13.6% of the United States population. Also, African American males take up 31.4% of all Blacks enrolled in four year institutions, and only 3.1% of the total college enrollment (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2011). In comparison to Black women, who have experienced significant enrollment gains in colleges/universities, Black males lag in enrollment patterns.

Negative stereotypes and are commonly attributed to African American males, due to the fact they are significantly outnumbered by African American women in enrollment (Cuyjet, 2006). In higher education, Black men are the minority by default, for a variety of reasons. It is evident that the enrollment figures for African American male to female ratio is the most skewed of any racial group (Cuyjet, 2006). Overall, the solutions to this ongoing problem of African American male enrollment in higher

education receives little attention, because of their low representation and stereotype threat.

### **Demographics and Mental Health of African American Males in Education**

A significant number of African Americans reside in poor, low income, urban areas or suburban areas which contain a high Black population. In these areas the quality of education that these Black students receive is subpar at best. According to statistics that were released in 2012, 37.9% of African American children lived in poverty in 2012, in comparison to 12.3% for white children (Strauss, 2013). The education that poor, urban students in public schools receive is demonstrably insufficient to make them competitive with their more advantaged, middle and upper income peers (Hudley, 2013). According to Jawanza Kunjufu's book *Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys*, teachers and instructors are not properly taught the way to better understand the psychological structure of the African American male culture. As a result, Black males have a higher tendency to be racially discriminated against in comparison to male students of other races.

Research also shows that African American parents/guardians, live in the inner cities where their children attend elementary, secondary, and high schools (Boone 2010; Hall & Rowan, 2001). The U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics (2015) reports that 6.4 million students in K-12 school districts were classified in special education. Research has shown that Black males are more likely than any other ethnic group to be diagnosed and put into special education courses (Boone 2010; Hale-Benson, 1986; Kunjufu, 1986). Many teachers are unable to



understand the personalities of African American students, and as a result they are poorly judged in their academic courses. African American males are not given the fair and equal treatment in comparison to their White peers, regarding K-12 education.

### **Stereotype Threat**

Considering the adversity and discrimination that African American males endure during their K-12 and/or their college years, one factor that is typically not addressed is how the discrimination from instructors affects their wellbeing. Stereotype threat (STT) is a situational predicament in which people are or feel themselves to be at risk of confirming negative stereotypes about their social group (Inzlicht, 2011). Stereotype threat is an element experienced in both men and women of racial groups that would be classified as a minority, such as Black, Hispanic, Native American (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Pertaining to African Americans, stereotype threat is the risk of low test performance outcomes and overall academic underperformance (Howard, 2003; Steele & Aronson, 1995).

Research conducted on stereotype threat suggests that achievement gaps, racial differences, as well as gender variances in testing situations, especially those that are attached to high stakes tests are due to stereotypes that dispute the math and intellectual abilities of White women, African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and people from low income backgrounds (Coleman, 2011; Steele, 1992; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Stereotype threat is the theory which discusses that anyone who contends with stereotypes in certain situations, usually scholastic, risk conforming to a known stereotype in selected situations (Coleman, 2011). For most African American students, it

is the risk of low test performance outcomes and academic underperformance (Coleman, 2011).

Stereotype threat also plays a significant role in an individual's mental health and function. Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds compared to students from high socioeconomic backgrounds on intellectual tasks (Croizet & Claire, 1998; Harrison, Stevens, Monty, & Coakley, 2006). The consequences of STT include minority groups underachieving on classroom exams and tasks which were deemed to be "culture free" and relatively "pure" measures of cognitive ability (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Stereotype threat also plays a role in how one's self esteem operates. According to Nussbaum and Steele (2007), African American students under STT, became more disengaged and less motivated to learn. Moreover, African American students, who had STT in academics were more likely to withdrawal from school (Osborne & Walker, 2006).

Several educational researchers believe that acknowledging stereotype threat in academic settings can close gender and racial/ethnicity achievement gaps (Coleman, 2011; Kellow & Jones, 2005; Osborne, 2007). It has been shown that stereotype threat plays a significant role in explaining why African American male students underachieve academically. There are solutions to help African American students combat stereotype threat, such as increased positive school interactions for marginalized students (Coleman, 2011). Another solution is to improve in-school and out-of-school networks (Coleman, 2011; Harper & Tuckman, 2006).

## **Student Preparation**

Preparation for college ultimately begins in first grade, and one of the primary requirements for entrance into four year institutions is taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test or better known as the SATs. It is widely known that high schools that are located in urban areas usually do not have the resources to prepare students for SATs, ACTs or any other college related standardized test. This affects African Americans, because they might not be properly prepared to take the SAT, and when they do attempt to take the test, they likely will receive a low score. For both blacks and whites, as income increases, so do test scores. In 2005, 28% of all African American SAT test takers were from families with annual incomes below \$20,000. Only 5% of white test takers were from families with incomes below \$20,000 (Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 2012).

A significant contributor for the academic achievement gap is the fact African American students are hesitant to enroll in higher level course work (Coleman, 2011). Pertaining to African American males, teacher/instructor perception is very crucial in the way Black males are taught. Several scholars found that many African American and Latino students are taught differently than their White peers in K-12 schools. In Lleras' (2008) study, teachers working with African American and Latino students utilized a mainly didactic pedagogy which included teacher-led instruction, lectures, and single answer responses, in comparison to most White students who were taught using interactive pedagogy (Coleman, 2011).

## **The Academic Achievement Gap Between Black Men and Black Women**

There is a significant gender gap in academic performance between African American men and African American women. Research cited by *The Journal of Blacks and Higher Education*, shows that Black women currently earn about two thirds of all African American bachelor's degree awards, 70% of all master's degrees and more than 60% of all doctorates (2015). The growing enrollment, coupled with a significantly higher college graduation rate for Black women compared to Black men, shows that the gender gap will only increase (The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 2015). If present trends continue, a generation from now will contain Black women with a bachelor's degree outnumbering Black men 2 to 1 (The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 2015).

Another significant reason as to why there is such a large achievement gap between Black women and Black men is due to perceptions, expectations, and opportunities. African American males have been negatively stereotyped as aggressive, violent, and hard to deal with compared to Black women (Connell, Halpern-Felsher, Clifford, Crichlow, & Usinger, 1995). Research conducted by Gibbs (1992), shows the experiences of Black males are typically less favorable than Black women, in their family, school, and community environment. As a result, Black males are looked upon as having poor character and negative attitudes (Boone, 2010).

The lack of the chance for employment plays a significant role as to why the achievement gap is so large. Researchers have argued that African American males have had minimal motivation to pursue a college education, due to low employment

opportunities regardless of their level of higher education (Boone, 2010; Cross & Slater, 2000; Kunjufu, 1986; Ogbu, 1983). Black women usually have a higher chance of being employed, because of the “double minority” standard (Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 1998). Currently, due to the thoughts of Black men not being successfully employed, Black women have nearly tripled the amount of going to school and successfully becoming employed.

### **African American Males and the NCAA**

One of the biggest trends affecting African American male college attendance that has been occurring in recent years is the significant number of Black men who at first graduate high school and then go straight to the National Basketball Association (NBA). In 2005, then NBA Commissioner David Stern instituted a rule in which high school athletes had to attend one year of college in order to declare for the NBA Draft (Sheridan, 2005). This rule combined with the numerous African American male athletes who idolize these professional athletes, will do whatever it takes in order to achieve their goal. The current issue is the pipeline between African American high school athletes, the NCAA and the NBA. Across four cohorts, 50.2% of Black male student-athletes graduated within six years, compared to 66.9% of student athletes overall, 72.8% of undergraduate students overall, and 55.5% of Black undergraduate men overall (Harper, Williams, & Blackman, 2013). Since few black basketball athletes know from the very beginning they only have to do one year at an institution in order to be eligible for the NBA Draft, they ultimately do not graduate from these colleges/universities.

African American students make up a very small percentage of college enrollments in Predominately White Institutions. Black students make up around 8.7% of college enrollments and only 5.7 % of black college graduates (Justiz, Wilson, & Bjork, 1994). According to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I schools reported that there are 45% more black women enrolled than black men (158,095 women versus 108,606 men). However, when it comes to those who are student athletes, men make up more than women at 12,195 men compared to 3,591 women (Person & LeNoir, 1997).

From a racial perspective possessing athletic talent is sometimes the only way Black men can enroll into colleges/universities. According to the National Collegiate Athletic Association in 2010, the percentage of African American male student athletes in Division I schools has significantly increased over the last decade (O'Brien, 2012). Specifically, the increase occurred in the sports of football and basketball (O'Brien, 2012). As a result, schools are making significant revenue off of the student athletes, specifically through jersey sales, ticket sales, and other athletic merchandise. This can be perceived as both a positive and a negative, because while the student athletes are being rewarded with a full ride scholarship, they are not receiving any of the monetary benefits the institutions are making from the athletes being exploited.

### **School Segregation and Institutional Racism**

Another significant reason as to why African American males are struggling to succeed and achieve in the United States is due to the historic problem of school segregation. In the landmark ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, the United

States Supreme Court ended segregation of all public schools in the United States (Strauss, 2013). This required all 50 states in the United States to have students attend public schools regardless of their race. Sixty-one years later, the United States still suffers from public school segregation, which has a negative effect on students of color living in urban/low income areas (Lee & Loherke, 2014).

According to the Civil Rights Project report, Louisiana, Virginia, Wisconsin, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey are some of the states that contain the highest percentage of segregated school districts in the United States (Lee & Loherke, 2014). The segregation puts African American males at a very strong disadvantage in regards to receiving a quality education from instructors and teachers. Schools that contain an increased number of African American students and living in an urban area contain fewer experienced teachers, and far less resources in comparison to those students who live in middle and upper class areas (Strauss, 2013). According to the 2010 Census, 43.2 million people living in the United States are living in poverty. The amount of African Americans living in poverty are 10.7 million which represents 27.4% of the Black population in the United States (Census, 2010).

As a result of the differences of location between Black students and their peers, White students have gifted and/or accelerated programs frequently available to them. Accelerated programs are not as frequent in urban areas compared to suburban areas. In many school districts in areas that contain a significant White population, the access to accelerated programs is what keeps wealthier families from abandoning the public school system entirely (Kohli, 2014).

Institutional racism is an element that has a long and deep history within the United States. The notion of superiority between Whites and people of color living in the United States has historic origins. Institutional racism is that which covertly or overtly, resides in the policies, procedures, operations and culture of public or private institutions reinforcing individual prejudices and being reinforced by them as well (Lawrence, 1999). In regards to African American males and education, institutional racism helps the continuous oppression that they encounter on a daily basis. The institutional racism African American male's encounter in an educational setting begins early from Kindergarten and follows them through their college years.

### **Mass Incarceration and the Student to Prison Pipeline**

According to the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* in regards to undergraduate higher education, the most recent U.S. Department of Education figures show that African American women account for 63.6% of all African-American enrollments. In higher education, while the average age of high school graduation is 18 years old, by the time African American males are 18 years old, 30% have been arrested (McCormack, 2014). And, by the time African American males are at the average college graduation age (22-23), over 49% have been arrested (McCormack, 2014). The school to prison pipeline refers to the term given by The New York Civil Liberties Union to describe what they view as a widespread pattern in the United States of pushing students, especially those who are already at a disadvantage, out of school and into the American criminal justice system (New York Civil Liberties Union, 2007). There have been legislative bills that have been passed into law, which systematically oppresses people of



color, specifically African American males. California enacted a very controversial law system in 1994, called the three strikes law.

The three strikes law was approved by California voters in response to the murders of Kimber Reynolds and Polly Klass. African American males were targeted the most under this new law. According to the nonprofit center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, African Americans made up 43% of the 1200 “third strike” defendants imprisoned under the law as of Dec. 31, 1995 (Kikorkian, 1996). Also, under the three strikes law, African Americans were being imprisoned for a third strike 17 times more often than whites in Los Angeles and 13 times more often than whites living in San Francisco (Greenwood, 2002).

### **The Black Family Structure, Black Relationships and Impact on Children**

Slavery had the worst impact on African American men and women from the time it began in 1620 until it was deemed illegal in 1865. However, the after effects of slavery still have a strong impact on African Americans presently. This is especially true in the areas of life from education, finances, personal wealth, and family structure. According to research conducted for the Annie E. Casey Foundation approximately 67% African American children lived in a single parent family structure in 2013 in comparison to only 25% of White children (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2013). The typical family structure consists of a Mother, Father, and children living in a home, and those children who grow up with both parents tend to be more developed emotionally, intellectually and socially (Amato, 2005).

African American males who grow up in a single parent household are typically lacking in those areas. The lack of a nuclear family structure also plays a significant role in the development of a Black child's life. The relationships between Black men and Black women are lacking and very much damaged. African American men and women who are classified as successful, with a good job, education and location typically will not date each other. According to a study conducted by Daniel Schneider, found that those African American individuals who are successful usually date outside of their race, because of the accumulation of wealth (Hallett, 2011).

Pertaining to African American men and marriage, Black women usually want an individual who is college educated, has potential and is working to better their lives. However, African American males deal with significant obstacles, such as mass incrimination, negative stereotypes, and low employment opportunities. Black women have the lowest rates of "marrying out" across race lines, in part because of racist attitudes to inter-marriage. Just 49% of college-educated black women marry a well-educated man (i.e., with at least some post-secondary education), compared to 84% of college-educated white women (Rodrigue & Reeves, 2015). Black-white gaps in marriage rates reflect different levels of education by race, but there is an important gender gap too. Young white women aged between 25 and 35 are the most likely to have at least a Bachelor's degree (37%), followed by white men (29%), black women (23%) and black men (16%), according to our analysis of the ACS (Rodrigue & Reeves, 2015).

This has a very strong influence and impact on the perception of marriage for Black women. Essentially, Black women feel as though they do not have to get married

in order to have a successful life. However, when children are involved, there is a significant need for the nuclear family to be intact. According to government statistics, 72% of black babies are born to unmarried mothers (Washington, 2010). This statistic has a significant impact on the young Black males who are born to them, because they are more prone to perform poorly in school, go to prison, use drugs, be poor as adults, and have their own children out of wedlock (Washington, 2010).

### **The Black Church and the Impact on African American Males**

Historically the church has always been a cornerstone in the lives of African Americans and their families. The church has been a significant guide of hope and faith for the African Americans dealing with the racial injustices, discrimination and economic obstacles while living in the United States. Originally, the Black church began as a spiritual sanctuary and community against the violent and destructive character of the Holocaust of enslavement (Karenga, 2002). The impact spirituality and church has on the African American community is very significant, especially to those who are prospective college students or already enrolled. There is growing recognition in which spirituality is a significant but overlooked part of college student development (Chandler, Holder, & Kolander, 1992). College students use their faith in god and their experiences from the church to help them overcome obstacles they potentially face in their lives.

Church leaders have always had a significant impact for African Americans seeking the opportunity to obtain an education. During the middle of the 1950s into the 1960s, the Civil Rights movement took place in the southern region of the United States. The primary purpose of the Civil Rights Movement was to establish equal professional

and educational opportunities, as well as legal rights, for Blacks and Whites in America (Fashoro & Johnson, 2003). Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X were two prominent leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, who instilled a sense of religion, pride, and perseverance into the Black community (Fashoro & Johnson, 2003). Martin Luther King, Jr., had a significant impact on the African Americans who were Christian, while Malcolm X had more of an impact with those African Americans affiliated with the Nation of Islam.

While the impact of churches on African Americans in obtaining an education was significant, the use of churches for Blacks has drastically changed. African-American students at predominately White institutions report higher levels of spirituality and religiosity than White students at predominantly White campuses (Walker & Dixon, 2002). Therefore, it would seem that opportunities to practice one's religion or engage in acts of spirituality are beneficial for African-American students attending majority institutions (Herndon, 2003). African Americans usually embrace the value of religion, its liberating power, the reliance on a higher power, and the practical application of spiritual principles in life (McAdoo, 1993).

In contrast, White Americans tend to view religion from a theoretical perspective (Thistlethwaite & Engel, 1990). European Americans do not necessarily place less value on spiritual matters, but may be more inclined to view spirituality from an intellectual, abstract, and highly conceptual perspective (Herndon, 2003). This plays a very significant role, because the role of religion in Black and White people's lives are very different, especially in how they deal with obstacles and adversity. On a college campus, there is a

higher rate of African Americans who use religion and prayer to help them prosper through the college years. African American men at PWIs also need emotional support, which may be viewed as the form of support individuals received during life's stresses and strains (Herndon, 2003). This support can take the form of providing assistance with coping or serving as a buffer in times of crisis (Cohen & Willis, 1985).

### **Conceptual Framework**

The importance for Black males to reach their academic goals has resulted in need for Black educational leaders (Boone, 2010). For example, in a school where educational instructors are uncertain of their role, students may be confused about their purpose and reasons for being enrolled in school, potentially causing underperformance in their scholastic activities with regard to their personal and school expectations (Boone, 2010).

The adjustment African American males have to make from living in their own environment to a college campus can be one that is very intimidating and daunting. In becoming their own individual and identifying their blackness, it becomes a significantly lifelong process. *The Cross and Fhagen-Smith Model of Black Identity Development* is a theory which is a model looking at the progression of identification of African American individuals as they move towards a healthy black identity (Cross, 1971). The different components of the Cross and Fhagen-Smith Model are Infancy and Childhood in Early Black Identity Development, Preadolescence, Adolescence, Early Adulthood, Adult Nigrescence, and Nigrescence Recycling (Cross, 1971).

The first sector is called Infancy and Childhood in Early Black Identity Development, which includes multiple factors such as family income, traditions and

practices; social networks like schools and churches and the historical events that have contributed to the early socialization experiences of black children (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). The factors that were listed make up the human ecologies of black children who are unaware of racism or a racial identity (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). The second sector is called Preadolescence, which discusses the three phases/identity types that can occur to African American children while growing up. The three identity/phases are low race salience, high race salience, and internalized racism (Evans et al., 2010).

African American children who fall under the low race salience have few to no messages from their parents/guardians in regards to race, race relations and they put no importance on being black except for the fact that their physical features make them black (Evans et al., 2010). The black children who categorize with the high race salience, come from homes where the parents/guardians have heavy discussions about race and racism with the children. The internalized racism part develops when children see different trends and patterns of negativity toward being black or toward black people in their immediate family. This is a very important stage of the identity model, because if the black child/children are not taught or properly told about racism and what it means to be black in America, they can have a negative lasting perception.

The third sector is Adolescence which is when a significant amount of black children accept that the identity that they have chosen is one of a result of their socialization (Evans et al., 2010). Also, at this point African American teenagers, usually have their own beliefs and views on certain aspects of society such as racial issue and

sexuality. There is a point throughout this sector that African American go through and it is the moratorium, which is when they begin to have the exploration process to figure exactly who they are from a personal perspective. There are usually different outcomes for those black teenagers who deal with the low race salience, high race salience, and internalized racism.

The fourth sector is Early Adulthood and it is similar to the pre-adolescence sector, because all three of the identity are present in this as well. The one difference is this vector relates to the African Americans with high race salience identities, because they have grown to develop a love for black race and culture (Evans et al., 2010). The black individuals with low race salience typically will not see race as a big deal or a major issue, while the blacks who deal with internalized racism must have a conversion in order to create a healthy black identity and race salience. Those who might not ever have a conversion, will likely not experience adult nigrescence (Evans et al., 2010). The fifth sector is Adult Nigrescence which involves four stages: pre-encounter, encounter, immersion/emersion, and internalization /internalization commitment. The sixth vector is Nigrescence Recycling, which entails when an individual's preexisting black self-concept is called into question.

The specific area of this model that pertains to African American males adjusting to colleges is early adulthood. The average age of traditional first year college students is 18 years of age (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015). For African American males that would put them into the early adulthood component of the Cross-Fhagen Smith model. This component discusses low/high race group of peers with the same

values as black culture (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). There were numerous studies conducted using the Cross-Fhagen Smith theory and African American males in higher education. For instance, authors from Miami University hypothesized that given the opportunity to develop African American self-consciousness, they would then have the necessary foundation to achieve academic excellence (Robinson & Biran, 2006). Their study confirmed that women appeared to exert more effort towards academics and were more connected to their communities than African American men. If researchers and scholars were to pair this study to Cross and Fhagen-Smith's model of black identity development, a foundation could be laid for the justification of making black identity development an important aspect of the college experience (Robinson & Biran, 2006).

The *Cross Racial Identity Scale* (CRIS) is the main research tool of this study. CRIS includes the following categories, Internalization Afrocentricity, Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive, Pre-Encounter Assimilation, Pre-encounter Miseducation, Pre-Encounter Self Hatred, Immersion-Emersion Anti White.

### **Summary of the Literature Review**

African American males face significant challenges, obstacles, and adversities in the pursuit of higher education. The challenges African American males endure stem from their societal treatment throughout the history of the United States. Black males from the time they started school in Kindergarten are deemed to be more violent, labeled to be either mentally retarded or diagnosed with other mental disorders such as ADD or ADHD. Thus, throughout their 12 years of school, African American males are perceived to be a threat in the classroom and to society.



While already at a socioeconomic disadvantage in their living environments, the quality of education African American males receive is lacking to say the least. Public schools systems that contain a high rate of African American students in the school districts tend to be subpar, in comparison to those that contain a low rate of African Americans in the school districts. The end result is that African American males are typically not successfully academically prepared for the rigor colleges present as compared to Whites.

In addition, African American males are perceived to be the minority at a predominately white institution. Since the average African American male knowingly cannot financially afford to attend college, they usually go through different avenues such as athletics in order to help pay for tuition, room and board. African American males are targeted when it comes to mass incarceration and the student to prison pipeline. Law enforcement typically targets innocent Black males, to help populate local prisons and jails. Also, law enforcement justifies their actions by the laws that were passed, such as the three strikes law.

Throughout all of these obstacles Black men encounter, their faith in God keeps them grounded and hopeful for the future. The churches were found to have a historical and significant role for African Americans living in the United States. African American church leader such as Martin Luther King Jr., have played a significant role in pushing for African Americans to have an equal opportunity to receive an education and have equal rights in the United States. In conclusion, while progress for African American males have been made, there are still significant changes that have to occur.

The research problem is to better understand the Black male social and academic experiences at Rowan University looking at different factors in which have affected them in their past and personal lives that could contribute to their issues and challenges. There has not been a research study done on the struggles of African American males attending Rowan University, which is a gap in the knowledge base that warrants further investigation.

## **Chapter III**

### **Methodology**

#### **Context of the Study**

The study was conducted at Rowan University in Glassboro and Rowan University's Camden campus. Rowan University is a state-designated public research institution with campuses in Glassboro, Camden, and Stratford, New Jersey, that offers bachelor's through doctoral programs to 15,152 students (Rowan, 2016). Rowan is divided into 12 different schools, including Business, School of Biomedical Science & Health Professions, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Communication & Creative Arts, Cooper Medical School of Rowan University, Education, Engineering, Global Learning & Partnerships, Humanities & Social Sciences, Performing Arts, Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine, Science & Mathematics (Rowan, 2016).

As of the 2015-2016 school year there were 13,116 undergraduates enrolled at Rowan, with 10,756 whites, 1,665 African Americans, 1,510 Hispanics, 1,014 Asians, 709 who were listed as other, and 156 American Indians (Rowan, 2016). The campus also includes, Rowan Boulevard, 220 Rowan Boulevard, The Whitney Center, Rowan University Townhouses, James Hall, The Samuel H. Jones Center in the South Jersey Technological Park, and the Holly Pointe Commons which opened in August 2016. In 1992, Glassboro State College became Rowan University after a \$100 Million Dollar donation from Henry M. Rowan and his wife Betty Rowan. The Rowan Gift provided a significant change to what was then known as Glassboro State College, in the aspects of college growth, rising enrollment, and acknowledgement (Rowan, 2015).

## **Population and Sample Selection**

The target population were all African American males in New Jersey. The available population were African American males enrolled at Rowan University during the Fall 2015/Spring 2016 school year. The sample included 376 of the 580 African American male students attending at Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ. Convenience sampling was used to choose the subjects. The selection criteria entailed African American undergraduate students enrolled at Rowan University, who had sufficient grades, and were considered full time students.

## **Data Collection Instrument**

This study used a quantitative methodology to explore the factors of low college attendance for African American men, and to see how the academic preparation of African American male students influenced their college performance. Data were collected over a course of two months during the Spring 2016 semester. The surveys for this study originated from a dissertation by Dr. Tonisha Hamilton regarding understanding the Black student college experience (Hamilton, 2009). The survey has multiple parts to it, including demographical information of the individual being surveyed (Appendix A), which included information about their background history, family educational background, current grade point average range, and the racial background of their high school. The next survey was the *Cross Social Attitude Scale* (Appendix B), which measured the subjects' perspectives of their identity from a multicultural standpoint. Topics in this survey focused on their identity, how they felt about their Blackness, Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive, and Relationships with other Races.

The next survey consists of 28 items, and specifically focused on their college experiences from an academic, social and institutional perspective (Appendix C). The topics ranged from campus involvement, challenges faced at Rowan, and previous academic preparation.

The surveys ranged from 5-10 minutes to complete. I had a faculty member in the Higher Education department examine and give me feedback about the instrument. This faculty member is proficient in research, higher education, and difference evaluation strategies.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

I conducted a pilot test with two local colleagues to ensure the instrument was clear and valid. After, an application was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Rowan University, once approved the study was able to begin. The African American males were recruited by visiting numerous student organizations, African American fraternities, and departments at Rowan University's campus. The student organizations included the Black Culture League (BCL), Council of African American Studies (CAS), and The National Advancement for the Association of Colored People (NAACP).

The fraternities included Alpha Phi Alpha, Fraternity, Incorporated, Omega Psi Phi, Fraternity, Inc., Phi Beta Sigma, Fraternity, Inc., and Iota Phi Theta, Fraternity, Inc. African American male students were also recruited through the Educational Opportunity Fund/Maximizing Academic Potential (EOF/MAP) office which distributed the survey to their African American male students in their caseload.

The data were collected from the survey distributed to the African American males at Rowan University. Subjects were encouraged to answer all questions, and all subjects were made aware of the confidentiality of this study. Subjects who were willing to participate viewed an alternate consent form, informing them that their identities would not be released publicly. All surveys were administered during the Spring 2016 semester at Rowan University. Each survey took 5-10 minutes to complete.

### **Data Analysis**

The independent variables in this study included gender and college institution. The dependent variables included the attitudes towards higher education and factors affecting attendance in higher education for African American men. The surveys were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This software analyzed data according to frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations of the data provided from each survey.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Findings**

#### **Profile of the Sample**

The subjects for the study were the African American male students enrolled full time at Rowan University, Glassboro, New Jersey during the fall 2015/spring 2016 school year. A total of 376 surveys were distributed with 190 completed for a return rate of 50.53%. The demographics included the following: age, generation of college attendance, current academic standing, racial background, current grade point average, where they grew up, racial demography of their high school, and whether their parents/guardians attended college.

Table 4.1 shows the demographic information reported by the selected African American male subjects at Rowan University. In terms of age, the subjects were between the ages of 18-24, with 31.4% being 20 years old. Regarding the generation of college attendance, 57.4% identified being first generation college students, and 40.3% identified being second generation college students. The majority of the African American male subjects reported being juniors, which came in at 33.2%. Sophomores resulted at 30%, Seniors at 20%, and Freshman at 16.8%. The highest grade point average was 2.0-2.9 with the subjects reporting at 65.3%, 3.0-3.9 reported at 24.2%, and 1.0-1.9 reported at 10.5%.

Regarding where the African American male subjects grew up, there were three geographical locations in which they were to choose from (urban, suburban, rural). A majority of the subjects reported they grew up in an urban environment at 52.6%, while

44.2% reported growing up in a suburban environment, and 3.2% reported growing up in a rural environment. A majority of the subjects reported attending a predominately Black high school coming in at 58.4% and 41.6% of the subjects attending a majority White high school. A total of 53.2% of the subjects reported having no parents or guardians attend college, while 32.6% reported having one parent or guardian attend college. Thirteen point two percent of the subjects reported having both parents attend college, and 1.1% reported having three or more attend college.



Table 4.1

*Demographics of Sample (N=190)*

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Age</b>		
18	15	7.9
19	35	18.4
20	60	31.6
21	40	21.1
22	22	11.6
23	12	6.3
24	4	2.1
25	1	0.5
40	1	0.5
Total	190	100.0
<b>What generation are you in terms of college attendance?</b>		
First	109	57.4
Second	77	40.5
Other	4	2.1
Total	190	100.0
<b>Which racial background do you identify with?</b>		
African American	190	100.0
Multiracial	0	0
Total	190	0

Table 4.1 (continued)

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
<b>What is your current Grade Point Average?</b>		
1.0-1.9	20	10.5
2.0-2.9	124	65.3
3.0-3.9	46	24.2
4.0+	0	0
Total	190	100.0
<b>Where did you grow up?</b>		
Urban	100	52.6
Suburban	84	44.2
Rural	6	3.2
Total	190	100.0
<b>Please describe the racial demography of your high school?</b>		
Predominately White	79	42
Predominately Black	111	58
Total	190	100.0
<b>How many of your parents/guardians attended college?</b>		
None	101	53.2
One	62	32.6
Two	25	13.2
Three or more	2	1.1
Total	190	100.0

## Analysis of the Data

**Research question 1.** What do selected African American males report about their attitudes regarding Internalization Afrocentricity, Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive, Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, Pre Encounter Self-Hatred, Pre Encounter Miseducation, and Pre Encounter Assimilation?

Tables 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 used the *Cross Social Attitude Scale*, which related to the African American male subjects' attitudes and was divided into six factor groupings. Table 4.2 displays the first factor grouping regarding Internalization Afrocentricity, and each item listed in the table is arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. The item with the highest mean score with 62.6% either strongly agreeing, agreeing, and somewhat agreeing was, "I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective." Conversely, the lowest mean score item with 50.6% either strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing was, "Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than hard work."

Table 4.2

*Cross Social Attitude Scale: Internalization Afrocentricity (N=190)*  
*(Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Somewhat Disagree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Agree=5, Agree=6, Strongly Agree=7)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective. <i>M</i> =4.89, <i>SD</i> =1.37	19	10.0	55	28.9	45	23.7	41	21.8	19	10.0	9	4.7	2	1.1
Black people cannot truly be free until our daily lives are guided by Afrocentric values and principles. <i>M</i> =4.74, <i>SD</i> =1.84	35	18.2	52	27.1	25	13.2	28	14.7	19	10.0	19	10.0	12	6.
When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial makeup of the people around me. <i>M</i> =4.57, <i>SD</i> =1.78, Missing=2	32	16.8	30	15.8	44	23.2	36	18.9	19	10.0	14	7.4	15	7.9

Table 4.2 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
During a typical week in my life, I think about racial and cultural issues many, many times. <i>M</i> =4.48, <i>SD</i> =1.79	16	8.4	58	30.5	33	17.4	30	15.8	16	8.4	21	11.1	16	8.4
Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective. <i>M</i> =4.43, <i>SD</i> =1.74, Missing=2	8	4.2	50	31.6	46	24.2	22	11.6	17	8.9	20	10.5	17	8.9
I respect the ideas that other Black people hold, but I believe the best way to solve problems is to think Afrocentrically. <i>M</i> =4.32, <i>SD</i> =1.95	26	13.7	37	19.3	35	18.2	27	14.1	20	10.5	21	11.1	23	2.1

Table 4.2 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of my racial group. <i>M</i> =4.28, <i>SD</i> =2.03	22	11.5	55	28.9	25	13.2	20	10.5	14	7.4	29	15.3	25	13.2
As an African American, life is good for me. <i>M</i> =4.17, <i>SD</i> =1.32, Missing=1	3	1.6	29	15.3	51	26.8	49	25.3	33	17.4	25	13.2	1	0.5
Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them. <i>M</i> =4.12, <i>SD</i> =1.93	30	15.6	23	12.1	25	13.2	34	17.9	27	14.2	34	17.9	16	8.3

Table 4.2 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that do not involve crime. <i>M</i> =3.92, <i>SD</i> =1.85, Missing=1	33	17.4	4	2.1	28	14.7	43	22.6	22	11.6	51	26.8	9	4.7
I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black. <i>M</i> =3.75, <i>SD</i> =2.20, Missing=4	25	13.2	40	20.8	11	5.8	24	12.6	4	2.1	49	25.8	37	19.5
African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems. <i>M</i> =3.74, <i>SD</i> =1.84	13	6.8	26	13.7	28	14.7	34	17.9	30	15.8	35	18.4	24	12.6

Table 4.2 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than hard work. <i>M</i> =3.54, <i>SD</i> =1.84, Missing=2	16	8.4	20	10.5	19	10.0	39	20.5	22	11.6	49	25.8	25	13.2

Table 4.3 illustrates what the subjects reported about Internalization

Multiculturalist Inclusive. Each item listed in the table are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. The highest mean score item with 47.3% either strongly agreeing, agreeing, and somewhat agreeing was, "I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays & lesbians, etc.)."

Conversely, the lowest mean score item with 31.6% either strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing was, "When I read the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues."



Table 4.3

*Cross Social Attitude Scale: Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive (N=190)*  
*(Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Somewhat Disagree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Agree=5, Agree=6, Strongly Agree=7)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays & lesbians, etc.). <i>M</i> =4.13, <i>SD</i> =1.96	15	7.8	52	27.4	23	12.1	34	17.9	11	5.8	28	14.7	27	14.2
When I have a chance to decorate a room, I tend to select pictures, posters, or works of art that express strong racial-cultural themes. <i>M</i> =3.96, <i>SD</i> =1.98	22	11.6	28	14.7	35	18.4	27	14.2	21	11.1	27	14.2	30	15.8

Table 4.3 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, which is inclusive of everyone (e.g, Asians, Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Whites) <i>M</i> =3.88, <i>SD</i> =1.58	7	3.7	20	10.5	37	19.5	60	31.6	28	14.7	22	11.6	16	8.4
As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.). <i>M</i> =3.49, <i>SD</i> =1.61, Missing=2	12	6.3	9	4.7	28	14.7	35	18.4	58	30.5	24	12.6	24	12.6

Table 4.3 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
As a multiculturalist, it is important for me to be connected with individuals from all cultural backgrounds (Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Native-Americans, Asian-Americans, etc). <i>M</i> =3.75, <i>SD</i> =1.88, Missing=1	15	7.9	28	14.7	29	15.1	32	16.8	22	11.6	36	18.9	28	14.7
When I read the newspaper or magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues. <i>M</i> =3.28, <i>SD</i> =1.70, Missing=1	9	4.7	30	15.8	21	11.1	22	11.6	44	23.2	51	26.8	25	13.2

Table 4.4 displays the third factor grouping regarding Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, and each item listed in the table are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. The item with the highest mean score with 7.9% either strongly agreeing, agreeing, and somewhat agreeing was, “My negative feelings towards White people are very intense.” Conversely, the lowest mean score item with 85.2% either strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing was, “I hate the White community and all that it represents.”

Table 4.4

*Cross Social Attitude Scale: Immersion-Emersion Anti-White (N=190)*  
*(Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Somewhat Disagree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Agree=5, Agree=6, Strongly Agree=7)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I believe it														
My negative feelings toward	4	2.1	7	3.7	4	2.1	9	4.7	28	14.7	85	44.7	53	27.9
White people are very intense.														
<i>M</i> =2.28,														
<i>SD</i> =1.36														
I hate White people.	6	3.2	6	3.2	3	1.6	10	5.3	26	13.7	52	27.4	87	45.8
<i>M</i> =2.12,														
<i>SD</i> =1.49														

Table 4.4 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I believe it White people should be destroyed. <i>M</i> =1.97, <i>SD</i> =1.60	12	6.3	5	2.6	5	2.6	19	10.0	11	5.8	65	34.2	28	14.7
I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people <i>M</i> =1.88, <i>SD</i> =1.46, Missing=2	10	5.3	1	5.3	1	5.3	9	4.7	72	37.9	47	24.8	50	26.3
I hate the White community and all that it represents. <i>M</i> =1.85, <i>SD</i> =1.57	1	0.5	17	8.9	2	1.1	8	4.2	1	0.5	36	18.9	125	65.8

Table 4.5 illustrates what the subjects reported about their Pre Encounter Self-Hatred. Table 4.5 displays the fourth factor grouping regarding Pre Encounter Self-Hatred, and each item listed in the table are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. The highest mean score item with 40.9 % either strongly agreeing, agreeing, and somewhat agreeing was, “I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.” Conversely, the lowest mean score item with 72.7% either strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing was, “When I look in the mirror at my Black image, I sometimes do not like what I see.”

Table 4.5

*Cross Social Attitude Scale: Pre Encounter Self-Hatred (N=190)*  
*(Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Somewhat Disagree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Agree=5, Agree=6, Strongly Agree=7)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I believe it														
I go through periods	25	13.2	40	20.8	11	5.8	24	12.6	4	2.1	49	25.8	37	19.5
when I am down on myself because I am Black.														
<i>M</i> =3.75,														
<i>SD</i> =2.20,														
Missing=4														

Table 4.5 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I believe it														
I sometimes struggle with	12	6.3	16	6.3	30	15.8	14	7.4	25	13.2	56	29.5	37	19.5
negative feelings														
about being Black.														
<i>M</i> =3.21,														
<i>SD</i> =1.87,														
Missing=1														
Privately, I	6	3.2	24	12.6	13	6.8	23	12.1	23	12.1	40	21.1	61	32.1
sometimes														
have														
negative														
feelings														
about being														
Black.														
<i>M</i> =2.91,														
<i>SD</i> =1.88														
When I look	9	4.7	16	8.4	11	5.8	16	8.4	23	12.1	71	37.4	44	23.2
in the mirror														
at my Black														
image,														
sometimes														
I do not feel														
good about what I see.														
<i>M</i> =2.81, <i>SD</i> =1.76														

Table 4.6 illustrates what the subjects reported about their Pre Encounter Miseducation. Table 4.6 displays the fifth factor grouping regarding Pre Encounter Miseducation, and each item listed in the table are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. The highest mean score item with 40.9 % either strongly agreeing, agreeing, and somewhat agreeing was, “Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.” Conversely, the lowest mean score item with 50.6% either strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing was, “Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than hard work.”

Table 4.6

*Cross Social Attitude Scale: Pre Encounter Miseducation (N=190)*  
*(Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Somewhat Disagree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Agree=5, Agree=6, Strongly Agree=7)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I believe it														
Many African Americans	30	15.6	23	12.1	25	13.2	34	17.9	27	14.2	34	17.9	16	8.3
are too lazy														
to see														
opportunities														
that are right														
in front of them.														
<i>M</i> =4.12,														
<i>SD</i> =1.93														



Table 4.6 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I believe it														
Too many														
Blacks	33	17.4	4	2.1	28	14.7	43	22.6	22	11.6	51	26.8	9	4.7
“glamorize”														
the drug trade														
and fail to														
see opportunities														
that do not involve														
crime.														
<i>M</i> =3.92,														
<i>SD</i> =1.85,														
Missing=1														
African	13	6.8	26	13.7	28	14.7	34	17.9	30	15.8	35	18.4	24	12.6
Americans														
are too quick														
to turn to crime														
to solve their														
problems.														
<i>M</i> =3.74,														
<i>SD</i> =1.84														
Blacks place	16	8.4	20	10.5	19	10.0	39	20.5	22	11.6	49	25.8	25	13.2
more emphasis														
on having a good														
time than hard work.														
<i>M</i> =3.54,														
<i>SD</i> =1.84,														
Missing=2														

Table 4.7 illustrates what the subjects reported about their Pre Encounter Assimilation. Table 4.7 displays the sixth factor grouping regarding Pre Encounter Assimilation, and each item listed in the table are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. The highest mean score item with 58.4 % either strongly agreeing, agreeing, and somewhat agreeing was, “My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.” Conversely, the lowest mean score item with 43.7% either strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing was, “I am not so much a member of a racial group as I am an American.”

Table 4.7

*Cross Social Attitude Scale: Pre Encounter Assimilation (N=190)*  
*(Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Somewhat Disagree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Agree=5, Agree=6, Strongly Agree=7)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I believe it														
My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.	37	19.5	42	22.1	32	16.8	30	15.8	17	8.9	21	11.1	11	5.8
<i>M</i> =4.71, <i>SD</i> =1.83														

Table 4.7 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
My relationship with God plays an important role in my life. <i>M</i> =4.62, <i>SD</i> =1.83, Missing=1	34	17.9	42	22.1	30	15.8	29	15.3	21	11.1	24	12.6	10	5.3
If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be "American," and not African American. <i>M</i> =4.14, <i>SD</i> =1.81	17	8.9	32	16.7	35	18.2	41	21.6	19	10.0	26	13.7	19	10.0
I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American. <i>M</i> =4.09, <i>SD</i> =2.01	21	11.1	44	23.2	22	11.6	23	12.1	23	12.1	32	16.8	24	12.6

Table 4.7 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I have developed an identity that stresses my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group. <i>M</i> =4.08, <i>SD</i> =1.9	22	13.6	25	13.2	34	17.9	36	18.9	24	12.6	23	12.1	29	15.3
If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am an American, and second I am a member of a racial group. <i>M</i> =3.92, <i>SD</i> =1.92	18	9.5	33	17.4	29	15.3	27	14.2	27	14.2	30	15.8	26	13.7

**Research question 2.** What do selected African American males report about their experiences in academic study at Rowan University?

Tables 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, 4.13 contain information describing the general campus, academic, and racial climate at Rowan University. This survey was adopted from Dr. Tonisha Hamilton's dissertation "*Understanding the Black College Student*," and it asked the subjects to rate their overall feelings about Rowan University from an instructional, racial, and university perspective. Each item listed in the tables are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. This survey used a seven point Likert scale with 1=Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3=Somewhat Agree, 4=Neither, 5=Somewhat Disagree, 6=Disagree, 7=Strongly Disagree. The survey was split into six factor groupings: General Campus Climate, Instructor, Perceptions of Seriousness, Perceptions of Respect, Racial Experiences, University Perceptions.

Table 4.8 contains information describing the General Campus Climate reported by the African American male subjects at Rowan University. The highest mean score with 45.1% either strongly agreeing, agreeing, and somewhat agreeing was, "I have found the atmosphere at this university to be very friendly." Conversely, the lowest mean score item with 49.5% either strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing was, "In general, I fit in with students here."

Table 4.8

*General Campus Climate (N=190)*

*(Strongly Agree=1, Agree=2, Somewhat Agree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Disagree=5, Disagree=6, Strongly Disagree=7)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I have found the atmosphere at this university to be very friendly. <i>M</i> =3.69, <i>SD</i> =1.87, Missing=1	27	14.0	42	21.8	18	9.3	32	16.8	31	16.3	27	14.2	13	6.8
I feel very left out of things at the university. <i>M</i> =3.87, <i>SD</i> =1.92, Missing=2	23	14.2	37	19.5	28	14.7	25	13.2	26	13.7	33	17.4	18	9.5
If I had to do it all over again, I would still attend the university. <i>M</i> =4.01, <i>SD</i> =1.74, Missing=1	18	9.5	22	11.6	36	18.9	39	20.5	29	15.3	31	16.3	29	15.3

Table 4.8 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
In general I fit in with students here. <i>M</i> =4.32, <i>SD</i> =1.91	13	6.8	33	14.4	23	12.1	26	13.5	32	16.6	34	17.6	29	15.3

Table 4.9 contains information describing the instruction reported by the African American male subjects at Rowan University. The highest mean score item with 64.7% either strongly agreeing, agreeing, and somewhat agreeing was, “My work is evaluated fairly.” Conversely, the lowest mean score item with 57.4% either strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing was, “In general, my instructors show little interest in my opinion.”

Table 4.9

*Instructor (N=190)*

*(Strongly Agree=1, Agree=2, Somewhat Agree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Disagree=5, Disagree=6, Strongly Disagree=7)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
My work is evaluated fairly. <i>M</i> =2.87, <i>SD</i> =1.63	47	24.7	51	26.8	25	13.2	33	17.4	19	10.0	11	5.8	4	2.1
The advisors here are sensitive to student needs. <i>M</i> =3.27, <i>SD</i> = 1.91, Missing=3	38	20.0	52	27.4	20	10.5	27	14.2	20	10.5	20	10.5	13	6.8
I feel free to participate in class by asking questions or making comments. <i>M</i> =3.27, <i>SD</i> = 1.68	34	17.9	37	19.5	39	20.5	30	15.8	29	15.3	15	7.9	12	6.3
I feel comfortable approaching my instructors for advice and assistance <i>M</i> =3.41, <i>SD</i> = 1.80, Missing=2	35	18.4	38	20.0	22	11.6	46	24.2	20	10.5	17	8.9	12	6.3



Table 4.9 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I feel my instructors show little interest in my opinion. <i>M</i> =4.01, <i>SD</i> =1.77	15	7.9	31	16.3	31	16.3	37	19.5	32	16.8	24	12.6	20	10.5
In general, my instructors show little interest in my opinion. <i>M</i> =4.65, <i>SD</i> =1.80	15	7.9	15	7.9	16	8.4	35	18.4	33	17.4	46	24.2	30	15.8

Table 4.10 contains information describing the Perceptions of Seriousness reported by the African American male subjects at Rowan University. Items listed in the table are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. The highest mean score item with 58.4% either strongly agreeing, agreeing, and somewhat agreeing was, "Other students view me as a serious student." The lowest mean score item with 62.5% either strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing was, "I feel less confident as a student now than I did in High School."

Table 4.10

*Perceptions of Seriousness (N=190)*

(Strongly Agree=1, Agree=2, Somewhat Agree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Disagree=5, Disagree=6, Strongly Disagree=7)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Other students view me as a serious student. <i>M</i> =3.14, <i>SD</i> = 1.52	31	16.3	42	22.1	38	20.0	43	22.6	24	12.6	8	4.2	4	2.1
My instructors view me as a serious student. <i>M</i> =3.14, <i>SD</i> =1.40	24	12.6	50	26.3	32	16.8	55	28.9	20	10.5	7	3.7	2	1.1
I am progressing as well as the other students in my major. <i>M</i> =3.61, <i>SD</i> = 1.64	16	8.4	41	21.6	40	21.1	36	18.9	28	14.7	19	10.0	10	5.3
I feel somewhat out of place in the classroom. <i>M</i> =3.84, <i>SD</i> =1.76	25	13.2	35	18.4	23	12.1	42	22.1	17	8.9	24	12.6	24	12.6

Table 4.10 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I am called on in class as often as other students. <i>M</i> =3.84, <i>SD</i> =1.94	26	13.7	33	17.4	31	16.3	41	21.6	24	12.6	24	12.6	11	5.8
I feel less confident as a student now than I did in High School. <i>M</i> =4.82, <i>SD</i> =1.82	14	7.4	15	7.9	14	7.4	27	14.2	32	16.8	55	28.9	32	16.8

Table 4.11 contains information describing the perceptions of respect reported by the African American male subjects at Rowan University. Items listed in the table are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. Regarding the statement of being treated unfairly on this campus, a total of 51.1% agreed with the statement. A total of 61.6% of subjects disagreed with the statement “Other students make fun of me sometimes.”

Table 4.11

*Perceptions of Respect (N=190)*

(Strongly Agree=1, Agree=2, Somewhat Agree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Disagree=5, Disagree=6, Strongly Disagree=7)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I have been treated unfairly on this campus. <i>M</i> =3.47, <i>SD</i> =1.90	34	17.9	44	23.2	19	10.0	34	17.9	23	12.1	22	11.6	14	7.4
When I try to speak up in class, I am sometimes interrupted or ignored. <i>M</i> =3.47, <i>SD</i> =1.90, Missing=1	14	7.4	17	8.9	14	7.4	48	25.3	27	14.2	41	21.6	29	15.3
I have had instructors encourage me to major in their field. <i>M</i> =4.26, <i>SD</i> =1.76, Missing=1	15	7.9	20	10.5	32	16.8	32	16.8	33	17.4	40	21.1	18	9.5

Table 4.11 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Other students make fun of me sometimes. <i>M</i> =4.74, <i>SD</i> =1.78	11	5.8	19	10.0	20	10.5	23	12.1	26	13.7	67	35.3	24	12.6

Table 4.12 contain information describing the Racial Experiences reported by the African American male subjects at Rowan University. Items listed in the table are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. Regarding the statement of the subjects experiencing racial insensitivity from other students, 68.9% of the subjects agreed. In comparison, to 33.2% disagreeing with the statement, “The interracial climate on this campus is tense.”

Table 4.12

*Racial Experiences (N=190)*

(Strongly Agree=1, Agree=2, Somewhat Agree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Disagree=5, Disagree=6, Strongly Disagree=7)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
I have experienced racial insensitivity from other students. <i>M</i> =2.91, <i>SD</i> =1.54	31	16.3	66	34.7	34	17.9	26	13.7	18	9.5	11	5.8	4	2.1
In my opinion, this campus is more racist than most. <i>M</i> =3.09, <i>SD</i> = 1.69	28	14.7	65	34.2	29	15.3	25	13.2	22	11.6	14	7.4	7	3.7
I have experienced racial insensitivity from faculty. <i>M</i> =3.45, <i>SD</i> =1.66	23	12.1	34	17.9	49	25.8	44	23.2	10	5.3	18	9.5	12	6.3
The interracial climate on this campus is tense. <i>M</i> =3.96, <i>SD</i> =1.69	19	10.0	26	13.7	14	7.4	68	35.8	26	13.7	21	11.1	16	8.4

Table 4.13 contains information describing the University Perceptions reported by the African American male subjects at Rowan University. Items listed in the table are arranged by agreement level from most positive to least positive. Regarding if the university has made a special effort to help students of color feel like they belong on campus, a total of 48.4% of the subjects strongly agreed, agreed, or somewhat agreed. Conversely, 48.9% either strongly disagreed, disagreed, or somewhat disagreed with the statement, “The university makes a genuine effort to recruit racial and ethnic minority students.”

Table 4.13

*University Perceptions (N=190)*

*(Strongly Agree=1, Agree=2, Somewhat Agree=3, Neither=4, Somewhat Disagree=5, Disagree=6, Strongly Disagree=7)*

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
The university has made a special effort to help students of color feel like they belong on campus. <i>M</i> =2.96 <i>SD</i> =1.69	27	14.2	41	21.6	24	12.6	18	9.5	17	8.9	53	27.9	10	5.3

Table 4.13 (continued)

Variable	Strongly Agree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Neither		Somewhat Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
The university fosters respect for cultural differences. <i>M</i> =4.09, <i>SD</i> =1.95	27	14.2	24	12.6	22	11.6	28	14.7	28	14.7	44	23.2	17	8.9
The University makes a genuine effort to recruit racial and ethnic minority students. <i>M</i> =4.19 <i>SD</i> =2.11	23	12.1	39	20.5	17	8.9	18	9.5	12	6.3	54	28.4	27	14.2



## **Chapter V**

### **Summary, Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

#### **Summary of the Study**

This study investigated the challenges and obstacles selected African American males encounter in higher education and the obstacles they faced leading up to college. Some of the subtopics that were discussed were stereotype threat, academic achievement gap between Black men and Black women, and relationships between Black men and Black women. The study focused on African American males enrolled full time at Rowan University and their identity and attitudes about Rowan University from an academic, social, and racial perspective. This study also presented the results and findings of the survey conducted for this study.

The subjects in this study were 190 full time African American male Rowan University students at the main campus in Glassboro, New Jersey. The study took place during the month of March 2016 at Rowan University, using a convenience sample. A total of 376 surveys were distributed with 190 returned which equaled a return rate of 50.53%. The survey used for this study contained a total of 78 items which were divided into three parts (Demographics, *Cross Racial Attitude Scale*, General Campus Climate).

The demographic section contained eight questions which focused on the subjects' age, living background, grade point average, racial background of the high school attended, and which generation of college they were. The *Cross Racial Attitude Scale* consisted of 40 items using a seven point Likert scale and was divided into six factor groupings about their Internalization Afrocentricity, Internalization Multiculturalist

Inclusive, Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, Pre Encounter Self-Hatred, Pre Encounter Miseducation, and Pre Encounter Assimilation.

The final section of the survey was the Hamilton's *General Campus Climate*, which was divided into six parts. This section of the survey asked the subjects about their thoughts about the friendliness of Rowan University, how they felt from an academic perspective, and how they felt about Rowan University from a racial/social standpoint. In total this section of the survey contained 28 items arranged along a seven point Likert scale.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

The majority of the African American male subjects who participated in this study were first generation college students reporting at 57.4% and 53.2% had no parents who attended college. This finding aligns with the notion African American college students usually come from a background with no parents/guardians having attended college and the students being the first ones in family to attend college. From an academic standpoint, African American males, tend to perform less well in the classroom especially if they are from an area that identifies as having a low socioeconomic status, inner city with lacking educational materials. A total of 58% of the subjects attended a predominately Black high school; a total of 52.6% of the African American male subjects grew up in an urban area. The struggles in which African American males face during their lives before becoming enrolled at a four year institution, is a significant reason as to why a percentage have academic and social obstacles.

According to the Realize The Dream educational organization, New Jersey is the fifth most segregated state for African Americans, with 50.8% of Black students in extremely segregated schools (2016). The enrollment rate in public schools in New Jersey for Black students is 18.97% in comparison to the White student enrolled population of 57.43%. This has a strong correlation between the segregation of public schools in the United States and institutional racism. As mentioned in the literature review of this study, institutional racism is that which covertly or overtly, resides in the policies, procedures, operations and culture of public or private institutions reinforcing individual prejudices and being reinforced by them as well (Lawrence, 1999). This condition has a very negative effect on African American males attending colleges. According to the Education Trust, Rowan University's graduation rate gap increased by 13.9%, but the black graduation rate had fallen 5.5% among African Americans enrolled at Rowan (Lai, 2016).

**Research question 1.** What do selected African American males report about their attitudes regarding Internalization Afrocentricity, Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive, Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, Pre Encounter Self-Hatred, Pre Encounter Miseducation, and Pre Encounter Assimilation?

The findings showed a strong majority (62.3%) of the subjects surveyed reported positively regarding their Blackness in the Internalization Afrocentricity section of the survey with a mean score of 4.23. According to Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokley, and Cross (2001), individuals who are engulfed in the IA phrase embrace an Afrocentric ideology, and seek other ways of thinking outside the typical Eurocentric worldview

(Hamilton, 2009). Regarding Pre-Encounter Miseducation, 50.6% of the subjects disagreed with being associated with condescending stereotypes about being lazy and criminals with the average mean score of 3.83. A total of 47.3% of the subjects reported satisfaction with the Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive portion of the survey, with the average mean score being 3.75. Individuals in the IMCI phase embrace two or more identities in addition to their blackness and therefore may be inclined to seek-out other cultural groups besides African American (Hamilton, 2009).

For Pre-Encounter Assimilation, a total of 58.4% subjects reported positively with the role religion and God plays in their life with an average mean score of 3.47. Students in the PA stage are at the very beginnings of identity formation and have not yet learned to embrace and accept themselves; in fact, they lack the desire to explore their identity, and deny certain aspects of their background in order to assimilate into Euro-American culture (Vandiver et al., 2001). In regards to Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred, 72.7% of the subjects disagreed with their image being an issue with an average mean score of 3.17. Regarding Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, a total of 85.2% of the subjects reported disagreeing with being against White people and White culture, with an average mean score of 2.02. During the anti-white phase of IEAW, individuals tend to adopt an attitude that denigrates Whites; encounters with racism cause feelings of enragelement and may, in turn, fuel students' motivations to perform well academically, and thereby insulate themselves from disparaging, racist encounters (Hamilton, 2009).

The findings from my study support those findings of Hamilton's (2009) study which used the *Cross Racial Identity Scale* to measure the attitudes of selected African

American students. In Hamilton's study, a total of 189 African American students participated with the average age of the students 21.2, in comparison to my study of about 20. Cross' six sections produced the following mean scores: Internalization Afrocentricity, 3.78, Multiculturalist Inclusive, 5.30, Anti-White, 2.21, Self-Hatred, 1.67, Miseducation, 3.21, and Assimilation 2.24 (Hamilton, 2009).

This demonstrates that the subjects of the Hamilton study, had a slightly lower sense of Afrocentricity, in comparison to the subjects of my study who accumulated a mean score of 4.23, which shows a higher level of Afrocentricity. Regarding Multicultural Inclusive, Hamilton's study shows a significantly higher level of being multicultural than the participants in my study. Both studies indicated that participants strongly disagreed with the notion of being "Anti-White." Both studies demonstrated that the participants did not have a strong feeling of Self - Hatred. Regarding Miseducation and Assimilation, participants from both studies have levels that show disagreement.

**Research question 2.** What do selected African American males report about their experiences in academic study at Rowan University?

The findings demonstrate a mixed response from the subjects regarding their experiences in academic study at Rowan University. A total of 68.9% of subjects agreed with the statement, "I have experienced racial insensitivity from other students." Also, a total of 66.3% of the subjects agreed with the statement, "In my opinion this campus is more racist than most." From the Perceptions of Respect section, a total of 51.1% agreed with the statement of being treated unfairly on campus. From the University Perceptions section, a total of 48.9% disagreed with the item of "The university makes a genuine

effort to recruit racial and ethnic minority students.” However, 45.1% of the subjects agreed with the statement “I have found the atmosphere at this university to be friendly.” Also, 64.7% of the subjects feel as though their work is fairly evaluated.

These findings show a potential harm to the mental health of the subjects. African American males have been negatively stereotyped and encountered racism throughout their educational journey, which could lead to stereotype threat. As previously mentioned in Chapter II, stereotype threat plays a significant role in an individual’s mental health and function. Nussbaum and Steele (2007), state that African American students who experience stereotype threat, become more disengaged and less motivated to learn. As a result, the subjects’ self – esteem could be in jeopardy. The combination of stereotype threat and the racial experiences on campus could be damaging to their psychological state.

## **Conclusions**

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that a selected portion of African American male students enrolled at Rowan University have experienced some form of racism, whether it was from their own peers or faculty members. Black male collegians, like many other students of color on predominately White campuses, are expected to experience psychological stress and have tumultuous college adjustment experiences (Harper, 2009; Hinderlie & Kenny, 2002). According to Kunjufu’s (1986) argument, educators have not been trained to consider the psychological structure of the Black male culture; therefore, Black males are likely to be discriminated against within the United States school culture (Boone, 2010). Farley and Allen (1989), claim

“American society has historically discriminated against Blacks, and Blacks over time come to expect such discrimination as normative (p. 208). In a study conducted by Loo and Rolison (1986) the minority students were more socioculturally alienated than White students. African American males already endure a significant amount of negative stereotypes in the classroom, from being labeled as “difficult,” “academically challenged,” and being suspended from schools at a higher rate than their peers from different races.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

Based on the findings presented from this study and previous research on the topic, the following recommendations for practice of working with African American male students are presented:

1. Create opportunities for students to have discussions regarding racial issues, racial discrimination, and prejudice facing not just African American males, but students of color in general.
2. Have a better understanding of the challenges and obstacles African American males encounter before they enroll into a college/university.
3. Have multicultural departments who deal with students of color, make a better effort to recruit students from their first year and working with them until they graduate.
4. Have African American male faculty and staff members make a more conscious effort to understand and better mentor the Black male students during their academic tenure.

5. Present the findings of this study to Rowan University administration to potentially be used as a research tool for the future.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

1. Future studies should be done on campus pertaining to the treatment of African American males from a social and academic standpoint.
2. Future studies should be done at Predominately White Institutions regarding the racial climate to determine what the potential issues are and how to solve them.
3. A study should be conducted at Rowan University using a mixed method approach, which would incorporate surveys and interviews.
4. Formulate a long term study at Rowan University to see how the racial climate can change within the next 5-10 years.



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**Appendix A**  
**Demographic Survey**

Please fill out the following information:

1. How old are you? (Please Indicate)
2. What generation are you in terms of college attendance?  
A. First                      B. Second                      C. Other
3. What is your current academic standing?  
A. Freshman                      B. Sophomore                      C. Junior                      D. Senior
4. Which racial background do you identify with?  
A. African American/Black                      B. Multiracial
5. What is your current Grade Point Average?  
A. 1.0 – 1.9                      C. 3.0-3.9  
B. 2.0-2.9                      D. 4.0
6. Where did you grow up?  
A. Urban                      B. Suburban                      C. Rural
7. Please describe the racial demography of your high school?  
A. Predominately White                      B. Predominately Black  
    % White Students \_\_\_\_                      % Black Students \_\_\_\_
8. How many of your parents/guardians attended college?  
A. None                      B. One  
C. Two                      D. Three or more

## Appendix B

### Cross Social Attitude Scale

**Instructions:** Read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings, using the 7 point scale below. There are no right or wrong answers. Base your responses on your opinion at the present time. To ensure that your answer can be used, please respond to the statements as written, and place your numerical response on the line provided to the left of each question.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>

- \_\_\_ 1. As an African American, life is good for me.
- \_\_\_ 2. I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of my racial group.
- \_\_\_ 3. Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that do not involve crime.
- \_\_\_ 4. I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.
- \_\_\_ 5. As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).
- \_\_\_ 6. I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people
- \_\_\_ 7. I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective.
- \_\_\_ 8. When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial makeup of the people around me.
- \_\_\_ 9. I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.
- \_\_\_ 10. I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.
- \_\_\_ 11. My relationship with God plays an important role in my life.
- \_\_\_ 12. Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than hard work.
- \_\_\_ 13. I believe that only those Black people who accept an Afrocentric perspective can truly solve the race problem in America.



- \_\_14. I hate the White community and all that it represents.
- \_\_15. When I have a chance to make a new friend, issues of race and ethnicity seldom play a role in who that person might be.
- \_\_16. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, which is inclusive of everyone (e.g, Asians, Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Whites, etc.)
- \_\_17. When I look in the mirror at my Black image, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see.
- \_\_18. If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be “American”, and not African American.
- \_\_19. When I read the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues.
- \_\_20.. Many African – Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.
- \_\_21. As far as I am concerned, affirmative action will be needed for a long time.
- \_\_22. Black people cannot truly be free until our daily lives are guided by Afrocentric values and principles.
- \_\_23. White people should be destroyed.
- \_\_24. I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays & lesbians, etc.).
- \_\_25. Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.
- \_\_26. If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am an American, and second, I am a member of a racial group.
- \_\_27. My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.
- \_\_28. African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.
- \_\_29. When I have a chance to decorate a room, I tend to select pictures, posters, or works of art that express strong racial-cultural themes.
- \_\_30. I hate White people.
- \_\_31. I respect the ideas that other Black people hold, but I believe the best way to solve problems is to think Afrocentrically.

\_\_32. When I vote in an election, the first thing I think about is the candidate's record on racial and cultural issues.

\_\_33. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, because this connects me to other groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).

\_\_34. I have developed an identity that stresses my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.

\_\_35. During a typical week in my life, I think about racial and cultural issues many, many times.

\_\_36. Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.

\_\_37. Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective.

\_\_38. My negative feelings toward White people are very intense.

\_\_39. I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.

\_\_40. As a multiculturalist, it is important for me to be connected with individuals from all cultural backgrounds (Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Native-Americans, Asian-Americans, etc).

## Appendix C

### General Campus, Academic, and Racial Survey

Instructions: Read each of the following statements carefully and indicate how you feel about each statement.

1 = Strongly Agree   2   3   4   5   6   7=Strongly Disagree

#### *General Campus Climate*

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. In general, I fit in with other students here.                         | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 2. If I had to do it all over again, I would still attend the university. | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 3. I have found the atmosphere at this university to be very friendly.    | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 4. I feel very left out of things at the university.                      | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |

#### *Instructor*

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 5. I feel my instructors show little interest in my opinion.                    | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 6. In general, my instructors show little interest in my opinion.               | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 7. The advisors here are sensitive to student needs.                            | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 8. My work is evaluated fairly.   | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 9. I feel comfortable approaching my instructors for advice and assistance.     | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 10. I feel free to participate in class by asking questions or making comments. | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |

#### *Perceptions of Seriousness*

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 11. My instructors view me as a serious student.                      | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 12. Other students view me as a serious student.                      | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 13. I am progressing as well as the other students in my major.       | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 14. I feel somewhat out of place in the classroom.                    | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 15. I am called on in class as often as other students.               | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |
| 16. I feel less confident as a student now than I did in high school. | 1   2   3   4   5   6   7 |

### *Perceptions of Respect*

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 17. Other students make fun of me sometimes.                                | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 18. I have had instructors encourage me to major in their field.            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 19. When I try to speak up in class, I am sometimes interrupted or ignored. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 20. I have been treated unfairly on this campus.                            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

### *Racial Experiences*

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| 21. I have experienced racial insensitivity from other students.           | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 22. I have experienced racial insensitivity from faculty.                  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 23. The interracial climate on this campus is tense.                       | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 24. In my opinion, this campus is more racist than most.                   | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 25. Students of other races or ethnic groups seem uncomfortable around me. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

### *University Perceptions*

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 26. The university makes a genuine effort to recruit racial and ethnic minority students.                 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 27. The university fosters respect for cultural differences.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 28. The university has made a special effort to help students of color feel like they “belong” on campus. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |

**Appendix D**  
**Alternate Consent Form**



I am inviting you to participate in a research survey entitled “**General Campus, Academic, and Racial Survey**”. I am inviting you because you are an African American male attending Rowan University full time). In order to participate in this survey, you must be 18 years or older.

The survey may take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in this survey, do not respond to this paper survey. The number of subjects to be enrolled in the study will be 190 individuals.

The purpose of this research study is to better understand the struggles and adversities African American males face in a higher educational setting.

Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey.

There are no risks or discomforts associated with this survey. There may be no direct benefit to you, however, by participating in this study, you may help us understand the challenges African American males encounter while enrolled in an institution of higher learning. Your response will be kept confidential.

We will store the data in a secure computer file and the file will be destroyed once the data has been published. Any part of the research that is published as part of this study will not include your individual information. If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact me/or the researcher at the address provided below.

Samuel Jay  
Email: [Jays05@students.rowan.edu](mailto:Jays05@students.rowan.edu)  
Office: 856-256-6860

## Appendix E

### EIRB Approval Letter



\*\* This is an auto-generated email. Please do not reply to this email message.  
The originating e-mail account is not monitored.  
If you have questions, please contact your local IRB office \*\*

#### DHHS Federal Wide Assurance

**Identifier:** FWA00007111

**IRB Chair Person:** Harriet Hartman

**IRB Director:** Sreekant Murthy

**Effective Date:** 3/10/2016

#### eIRB Notice of Approval

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#### STUDY PROFILE

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**Study ID:**

[Pro2016000887](#)

**Title:**

Race To The Top: An Investigation Of The Challenges And Adversities  
African American Males Face In Higher Education

<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	Burton Sisco	<b>Study Coordinator:</b>	None
<b>Co-Investigator(s):</b>	Samuel Jay	<b>Other Study Staff:</b>	None
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Department Funded	<b>Approval Cycle:</b>	Twelve Months
<b>Risk Determination:</b>	Minimal Risk	<b>Device Determination:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Review Type:</b>	Expedited	<b>Expedited Category:</b>	7

**Subjects:** 376

CURRENT SUBMISSION STATUS

<b>Submission Type:</b>		Research Protocol/Study		<b>Submission Status:</b>		Approved
<b>Approval Date:</b>		3/10/2016		<b>Expiration Date:</b>		3/9/2017
<b>Pregnancy Code:</b>	No Pregnant Women as Subjects	<b>Pediatric Code:</b>	Not Applicable	<b>Prisoner Code:</b>	Not Applicable	
	Not Applicable		No Children As Subjects		No Prisoners As Subjects	
<b>Protocol:</b>		<b>Consent:</b>		<b>Recruitment Materials:</b>		
Thesis Survey Protocol Alternate Consent		There are no items to display		Recruitment Script		

**\* Study Performance Sites:**

Glassboro Campus      201 Mullica Hill Road, Glassboro, NJ

**ALL APPROVED INVESTIGATOR(S) MUST COMPLY WITH THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Conduct the research in accordance with the protocol, applicable laws and regulations, and the principles of research ethics as set forth in the Belmont Report.
2. **Continuing Review:** Approval is valid until the protocol expiration date shown above. To avoid lapses in approval, submit a continuation application at least eight weeks before the study expiration date.
3. **Expiration of IRB Approval:** If IRB approval expires, effective the date of expiration and until the continuing review approval is issued: **All research activities must stop unless the IRB finds that it is in the best interest of individual subjects to continue. (This determination shall be based on a**

**separate written request from the PI to the IRB.) No new subjects may be enrolled and no samples/charts/surveys may be collected, reviewed, and/or analyzed.**

**4. Amendments/Modifications/Revisions :** If you wish to change any aspect of this study, including but not limited to, study procedures, consent form(s), investigators, advertisements, the protocol document, investigator drug brochure, or accrual goals, you are required to obtain IRB review and approval prior to implementation of these changes unless necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects.

**5. Unanticipated Problems:** Unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others must be reported to the IRB Office (45 CFR 46, 21 CFR 312, 812) as required, in the appropriate time as specified in the attachment online at: <http://www.rowan.edu/som/hsp/>

**6. Protocol Deviations and Violations :** Deviations from/violations of the approved study protocol must be reported to the IRB Office (45 CFR 46, 21 CFR 312, 812) as required, in the appropriate time as specified in the attachment online at: <http://www.rowan.edu/som/hsp/>

**7. Consent/Assent:** The IRB has reviewed and approved the consent and/or assent process, waiver and/or alteration described in this protocol as required by 45 CFR 46 and 21 CFR 50, 56, (if FDA regulated research). Only the versions of the documents included in the approved process may be used to document informed consent and/or assent of study subjects; each subject must receive a copy of the approved form(s); and a copy of each signed form must be filed in a secure place in the subject's medical/patient/research record.

**8. Completion of Study:** Notify the IRB when your study has been stopped for any reason. Neither study closure by the sponsor or the investigator removes the obligation for submission of timely continuing review application or final report.

9. The Investigator(s) did not participate in the review, discussion, or vote of this protocol.

10. **Letter Comments:** *There are no additional comments.*

**CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** This email communication may contain private, confidential, or legally privileged information intended for the sole use of the designated and/or duly authorized recipients(s). If you are not the intended recipient or have received this email in error, please notify the sender immediately by email and permanently delete all copies of this email including all attachments without reading them. If you are the intended recipient, secure the contents in a manner that conforms to all applicable state and/or federal requirements related to privacy and confidentiality of such information.



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Study.PI Name:

Study.Co-Investigators:

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