The Perception of Emotional Support of Young Adult Black Males in Predominantly White Jesuit High Schools and Their Transition to Post-Secondary Education

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The Perception of Emotional Support of Young Adult Black Males in Predominantly White Jesuit High Schools and Their Transition to Post-Secondary Education

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ABSTRACT

“In the 21st century America, Black males’ perception of and experiences with the openness at PWI (predominantly White institutions) can have a significant impact on students’ learning experience” (Sinaan, 2012, p. 1). However, the true understanding of the kinds of experiences and support that Black males feel they receive directly from the institution is limited in its scope. The transition from high school to college presents the need for the kind of emotional support Black males receive in high school. Educational experiences are important for Black students to pave their educational journey. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of adult Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at a predominantly White Jesuit high school that facilitated transition to an institution of higher learning. More precisely, through a qualitative methodology and utilizing House’s theory of social support, this study explored emotional support as it pertains to aid, affect, and affirmation. Major findings revealed teachers were seen as the most affirming source of emotional support by Black males. The study showed that connecting cultural competence with pedagogy is a way to connect with students. Similarly, the literature evidences the need for the administrators to be fully engaged in the life of Black males following a targeted approach (Davis, 2015). Black males felt that administrators should go beyond just providing resources and aim to establish a more personal connection. The limitation of this study was its small sample size, which means the findings are not transferable and limited solely to the research site. However, the need for White Jesuit high schools to create a more culturally competent environment through pedagogy and professional development to meet the needs of Black males is evident from the results.

Keywords: Black Males, Emotional Support, Predominantly White Institution, High School, Perception
DEDICATION

First and foremost, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my daughter and two sons, Zoë, Elijah, and Micah. Your presence on this earth and the potential you possess were the motivation I needed to make this dissertation possible. To my husband, Shay Thomas, thank you for your encouragement and motivation; thank you for believing in me when I did not believe in myself. To my heavenly Father for the blessings of my parents, Noel Watson, Sheron Hunnighan, and Phyllis Watson. To my brother and sister, Leanardo Watson and Thereleza Ellington, thank you for demonstrating the academic zest and intellectual zeal needed to excel in the field of academia. Specifically, I would like to thank my cousin Susan Gibson for being an example of a strong woman who showed me at the age of four that there are no mountains too high. To my dear friend Dr. Tasheka Cox, thank you for igniting the fire that started this journey; for listening to my dream in its raw state and pushing me to pursue this accomplishment. Lastly, to my committee chair, Dr. Patricia Buxton, I thank you for seeing this project through to its completion; I am grateful for your guidance, patience, and belief in me. Thank you for your leadership, support, and patience.
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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

This study sought to investigate the perceptions of adult Black males regarding the emotional support they may have experienced in predominantly White Jesuit high schools that facilitated or impeded their transition to an institution of higher learning. Studies on Black males in predominantly White schools have been conducted in the past, but no research has explored the dynamic as it pertains to Jesuit high schools (Simmons, 2012). This study aims to inform policymakers, administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the stressors experienced by Black males in predominantly White Jesuit high schools in order to inspire those students in these institutions, to help stakeholders to find ways to promote their success through a better understanding of their academic experience.

In this chapter, the researcher highlighted the background of the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical foundation, conceptual framework, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and limitations, the significance of the study, significance for practice and social change, and summary of the chapter.

Background of the Study

Inherent to this study is the issue of racial diversity as it directly impacts the foundation of this study – the many complexities posed by diversity have been the focus of an ongoing debate for years (Holst, 2016). Brown vs. the Board of Education (1954) officially ended segregation in schools, which meant that children of all races could be educated in the same school setting. The beginning of this era marked the first time that the education system was charged with the reality of educating students from different races. In predominantly White Jesuit high schools, non-Caucasian students are often classified as being racially marginalized, hence misrepresented (King, 2017). Students are marginalized due to cultural differences,
knowledge gaps, and socio-economic status. This, in turn, leads to the need for support services within the educational environment (Holst, 2006). Institutional strategies center on practices that allow student support within the scope of the larger learning community (Akin & Neumann, 2013). Black males struggle of fitting into an environment dominated by White or what most may perceive as mainstream culture. Matrenec (2011) observed that Black people find themselves needing to dissect their racial identity microscopically (personal or individual identity or traits at the personal level or at the familial or community level) and macroscopically (identity in relation to the larger context, their visible identity in relation to the outside world). Furthermore, it is important that educators are cognizant of the role race plays in their students’ development. “This understanding should also include and be examined from the point of view of the student-student assumptions regarding students’ ability levels are linked, consciously or unconsciously to race” (Cole, 2008, p. 227). It is important that Blacks be allowed to be in learning environments where they feel their personal experience is a contributing factor to their educational experience and environment.

Howard (2003) claimed that the best way to understand the experiences of Black males in schools is to allow them to tell their own stories, a method known as storytelling. Storytelling will allow the voice of the Black male to be heard, something that is often missed as most events are narrated through the perspective of the dominant culture. According to Howard (2003), “Black males’ accounts of their own school experiences have registered only a minor blip on the radar of social science research because it is assumed that they are unable or unwilling to tell it” (p. 64). Research connected to Black males and their educational experiences can allow evidence-based data analysis and offer insight for educational research (p. 65).
Arrington et al. (n.d.) highlighted four key points related to Black children in independent schools using the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS):

- The necessity that schools recognize the diversity among Black students in their community.
- Examination of how the context of whiteness and “niceness” surrounds and silences dialogue on race and how this concept impacts not only school programming for students of color but contributes to emotional distress Black students experience in schools.
- The number of students of color must increase in order for Black students and other students of color to feel their communities are represented to the same extent as the majority community in their schools; the number of students of color must increase.
- To enhance the emotional health of students, schools should identify programming that cultivates stronger connections between Black students and the school community at large.

Racial diversity in schools stretches beyond the scope of physiological identification as it shares a correlation with numerous other aspects. To singularly define and understand race as it pertains to the complexities of diversity in a school setting, race as a term should be treated as a social construct (Coleman, 2017). Predominantly White schools find themselves pondering over these same questions in relation to Black students. Diversity exceeds the bounds of defining a group of people biologically. Rather, it delves deeper into understanding the environmental factors associated with their racial constitution. Most predominantly White institutions (PWI) assume they are addressing the race issue and creating an inclusive environment merely because they have a certain number of Black students enrolled (Holst, 2006).
The literature lacks information regarding the social support that ameliorated the emotional stressors (resentments, fears, frustration, sadness, anger, and anxiety) experienced by Black males in predominantly White Jesuit schools (Ford, 2010; Reardon & Portilla, 2015; Ross et al., 2012; Wei et al., 2011). Caton (2012) established that zero tolerance (expulsion) policies result in an unfavorable school environment for Black males who dropped out of school. Similarly, Causey et al. (2015) identified that social support is essential for the realization of self-esteem among Blacks. This insight brought about clarity in understanding the types of emotional support that facilitated Black male students’ transition to an institution of higher learning.

**Problem Statement**

“In the 21st century America, Black males’ perception of and experiences with their openness at PWI (predominantly white institution) can have a significant impact on the students’ learning experience” (Sinaan, 2012, p. 1). Coleman (2017) found that parental involvement was crucial in supporting Black males. However, limited in its scope was the true grasp of the types of experiences and support that Black males felt they received directly from the institution. African-Americans find themselves in a complex place in these schools as they straddle the right road to take in an environment where they are not the most comfortable (Martrenec, 2011). “Unchallenged racist hegemony can lead to racist stereotypes that are perpetuated in school settings. These racist stereotypes can affect the identity development of Black males: that is how they see and define themselves as well as perceive themselves” (Martrenec, 2011, p. 239).

Stemming from the concept of social support, the emotional well-being of individuals is paramount to their life’s outcome. Kardemas (2006) stated, “Self-efficacy, optimism and social support have been consistently related to health and functioning” (p. 1281). This creates a sense
of optimism that impacts the way individuals shape their worldview. Wilkins (2014) claimed that Black men in predominantly White high schools oftentimes do not find themselves isolated because they are viewed by their peers as “socially acceptable”. “In the context of predominantly white schools, being seen as ‘cool’ paved the social mobility of black men, helping them achieve social comfort and mixed-race integration without compromising their commitment to school” (Wilkins, 2014, p. 182). However, the transition to college was different as they found themselves facing a difficult situation fitting in. The transition from high school to college leads to the type of emotional support that Black men receive while they are in high school.

Educational experiences are important for students to pave their future pathways, hence in the case of Black men, “They claimed harder working identities as professionally oriented college students, but their peers constantly challenged how they saw themselves, making it difficult for them to craft emotionally and academically supportive personal relationships” (Wilkins, 2014, p. 186). Therefore, the purpose of the qualitative case study will be to examine the perceptions of adult Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at predominantly White Jesuit high schools that facilitated the transition to an institution of higher learning.

**Purpose of the Study**

The emotional support for Black males received from their institutions and peers in predominantly White Jesuit schools is important as it is related to their transition into higher education (Holt, 2016). Racial enrollment has been a focus of public schools; however, there has been a dearth of information regarding racial enrollment patterns of students in private schools (Fahle et al., 2017; Flood et al., 2017; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2017). Bankston and Caldas (2000) established that school districts with a high number of non-public schools with Whites have public schools that have a high proportion of
minority population. The minority population is usually concentrated in public schools. It is important to learn about these patterns because (a) diversity in the United States is increasing; (b) private school enrollments are on the rise; (c) efforts are being made currently to legalize public aid for religious schools through voucher programs (Reardon & Yun, 2002). Unlike public schools, the data for racial diversity in private schools is lacking. From 1997 to 1998, the federal government instituted a Private School Survey that exposed the prevalence of high levels of segregation in private schools (U.S. Department of Educational Statistics, 2003). The key survey results noted:

- Black-white segregation is greater in private schools than public schools; within this group, it is greater among Catholic schools.
- White students are more racially isolated in private schools than in public schools and within this group. White students are more isolated in Catholic and other religious private schools (U.S Department of Educational Statistics, 2003).

Despite the explicit racial segregation prevalent in private schools, a growing trend of Black students entering private institutions (National Center for Education Statistics) can be observed. The common school movement in the United States focused on ensuring that all public schools are free and managed appropriately. However, despite these efforts and costs, some families are opting to send their child(ren) to private schools. Hope for better education, upward mobility, and exposure to a more racially diverse setting are cited as reasons by parents for the choice (Reardon & Yun, 2002).

Even though there has been an increase in the Black population in both private and religious schools, there is a lack of evidence regarding whether the adaptation of the group in this particular environment is beneficial or not (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018; Dotterer et al., 2009).
Among the prominent works, Davis (2003) established a significant academic achievement gap, behavioral problems, and poor performance among Black students as compared to their White counterparts. Additionally, coming to the different streams of education, Ford (2013) argued that there is an underrepresentation of Black students in gifted education. Moreover, it has been reported that school administrators respond inadequately to the cultural needs of black students (Ford, 2010). Further research is needed to examine the lives of these students during their post-secondary years. It has been recommended that:

The leaders of the nation’s religious and secular private schools examine the isolation of their significant minority enrollments as well as consider recruitment and transportation policies that could promote more diverse educational experiences for students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds (Reardon & Yun, 2002, p. 46).

Therefore, research is required to examine this phenomenon. The purpose of this qualitative case study is to investigate the perceptions of adult Black Males regarding the emotional support they may have experienced at predominantly White Jesuit high schools that facilitated their transition to an institution of higher learning. Data was obtained through the use of a critical narrative inquiry, a process employed to lend voice to marginalized groups whose stories remain often untold (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Qualitative data’s thematic analysis involved the task of recording themes or patterns embedded within the narratives via a coding system (Creswell, 2002) according to House’s theory of emotional support.

**Overarching Research Question**

**RQ.** What are the perceptions of young Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at a predominantly White Jesuit high school that facilitated the transition to an institution of higher learning?
Research Sub Questions

RSQ1. How do young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from peers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid in a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

RSQ2. How did young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from teachers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid while attending a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

RSQ3. How did young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from administrators as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid in a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

RSQ4. Which element of emotional support did young Black males perceive best facilitated transition to their institution of higher learning?

Theoretical Foundation

This study was based on House’s theory of social support (House, 1981). Social support as described by House (1981) is broken down into three categories, (a) emotional support (b) esteem support, and (c) network support. In order to understand support, all three criteria cannot be treated as an independent entity and hence should be seen as the same. These three elements of emotional support as components of House’s theory served as the framework for this study. The elements of affect, affirmation, and aid were addressed within the research sub-questions. For future studies, esteem support and network support should be explored within the same context.

To advance one’s understanding of social support, its interpersonal nature should be addressed within the concerned context. House (1981) defines the interpersonal nature of support as (a) affect (b) affirmation, and (c) aid. Combining all approaches strengthens the theory by
adding a “tangible” as well as an “intangible” element to the study. Therefore, affect was defined under the same criteria as emotional and esteem support. Affirmation was defined as two people being under the same agreement as it qualifies under the same service rendered to a person. Aid was determined under the actual support services that are provided to particular individuals, including, but not limited to, academic support, emotional support, and financial support.

Studies suggest that the best way to understand support is to ask the people directly receiving forms of support. For example, Gottlieb (1978) questioned 40 single mothers in Canada about their experience receiving social assistance. These women were asked to identify the personal problems they were experiencing and identify the most important. According to House (1981), each person was asked:

1. How has X become involved in helping you deal with the problem or your feelings about it?
2. Is there anything about X as a person or about his / her way of dealing with the problem that stands out to you?

Perceived support refers to a type of support that can be measured. It is when individuals feel their needs are being satisfied with attainable tools. Finding ways to measure emotional support in schools can lead to definitive forms of assistance for certain students within the population. As House stated, “More refined measures will allow researchers to identify the specific amounts and kinds of support, and the specific sources of support that are most helpful in alleviating certain kinds of problems such as occupational stress and health” (1981, p. 39).

Conceptual Framework

This study focused on Black males’ perception of their experience of emotional support at predominantly White Jesuit high schools. The research was based on House’s theory of social support (1981) and the need to measure the perception of services rendered to an individual.
Roles may vary from people who provide informal to professional and semi-professional support. In this research, informal support from peers as well as professional support from school support services constituted the primary focus of the study.

**Figure 1**

*Social Support-Contextual Framework*

![Diagram](attachment:image.png)

*Note.* This figure demonstrates how House’s theory of social support (1981) is used as a framework in this study.

**Nature of the Study**

Situated in the context of constructive inquiry, this was a qualitative investigation exploring the perceptions of young Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at a predominantly White Jesuit high school. I used the verbs ‘perception’ and ‘experience’ to hone in on the focus of my inquiry, which allowed young Black men to narrate their own experiences.

The investigation was constructivist in nature as it concentrated on the interpretation of 12 adult Black men and their experiences in a predominantly White Jesuit high school. Through a small sample size, the researcher was able to attain the saturation required and described the phenomenon under study. Utilizing a constructivist worldview allowed the researcher to reflect on the data collected to form a better understanding through the lived experiences of the subjects.

To perform this qualitative case study, a total of 12 Black males were identified in the age group 18–24 who graduated from predominantly White Jesuit high schools (grades 9–12) in the Northeast part of the United States. All participants were Black males from the graduating classes of 2014–2018. Participants were invited to join the study through my social media
networks (LinkedIn and Facebook) or word of mouth. Participants underwent the informed consent process in which they were provided an in-depth idea of the study and confidentiality was ensured.

Data was collected through focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and open-ended questions. Prior to the focus groups, participants were asked to write a one page narrative of their experience prompted by a few questions. All responses were transcribed using three stages of coding (open, axial, and restricted) and decoding for themes. Additionally, zig-zag coding for themes ensured that thematic data was saturated (Creswell, 2006).

**Definitions**

**Aid.** Tangible support services provided to an individual (i.e., material services that offered to a particular student to enhance their academic and non-academic experience (House, 1981)).

**Affect.** Two people being in the same agreement as it qualifies under the same service that is rendered to a person (i.e., the way a student felt he was cared for by academic and non-academic members (House, 1981)).

**Affirmation.** Two people agreeing under the same services that are being rendered (i.e., a student who believes his academic and non-academic needs were met (House, 1981)).

**Black or Black.** Largely the descendants of slaves: people who were brought from their African homelands by force to work in the New World. Their rights were severely limited, and they were long denied a rightful share in the economic, social, and political progress of the United States (Loury & Loury, 2016).

**Counter Storytelling.** A method of telling the stories of those whose experiences are not often told. Counter stories can be used to expose, analyze, as well as challenge deeply entrenched
narratives and characterizations of racial, sexual, or other such privilege, sex (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

**Emotional Support.** The ability to show empathy, compassion, and genuine concern for another person (House, 1981).

**Jesuit High School (Education).** A Jesuit education is a well-rounded education. Growth in faith; in a Jesuit institute, an understanding of God’s purpose in one’s life go hand-in-hand with their personal development in other areas. For this study, participants needed to be enrolled in one White Jesuit high school for four years (Why a Jesuit Education, n.d.).

**Marginalized.** To relegate an individual or group to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group (Wilkins, 2014).

**Peers.** A person who shares an equal standing with another or others, as in rank, class, age (American Heritage Dictionary, 2016).

**Perception.** A belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem (Merriam Webster Dictionary).

**Predominantly White Institutions (PWI).** Any institutions of higher learning that were not labeled historically as Black colleges or Universities prior to 1964. These institutions usually have student bodies constituted by mostly Whites, with small numbers from different races such as Black, Hispanic, Asian (US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2011).

**Young.** A person in the age group 18–24, who graduated from high school and transitioned to or graduated from college.

**Assumptions**

The emotional support received by Black males in Jesuit high schools has not been thoroughly investigated. Although the foundation of Jesuit schools lies in the principle of
educating men and women to serve the community, the true narrated experience of this marginalized group must be explored further. Black males in Jesuit schools fare well in comparison with other students, but often, their social acclimation throughout their high school education is limited (Simmons, 2012). There is no denying that most Jesuit schools are predominantly White, although they strive in their mission to include students of other races (Simmons, 2012).

The Secretary of Education for the Society of Jesus, Michael Garinzini, has set national goals for its educational ministry: to educate to diversity and provide “preferential option for the poor”. He further said, “As followers of Christ, we are challenged to make a preferential option for the poor, namely, to create conditions for marginalized voices to be heard, to defend the defenseless, and to assess lifestyles, policies and social institutions in terms of their impact on the poor” (Center for Social Concerns, p. 1).

It is evident that the fundamental principles of ensuring proper treatment of marginalized groups is one of the goals of the Jesuits; capturing the lived experience of these individuals through the narration of their experiences was the focus of this study. The following assumptions were made: (a) the survey questions to be used elicited reliable responses; (b) the respondents fully understood the questions they were asked; (c) the respondents provided honest expressions of their feelings.

**Scope and Delimitations**

This study focused on 12 Black males’ perception of their experience of emotional support received at predominantly White Jesuit high schools and explored the different types of emotional support extended to Black males during their tenure at these schools (Appendix A). The study aimed to identify and develop strategies in the areas of affect, affirmation, and aid as it
pertains to emotional support to implement a framework that can guide administrators and teachers to improve educational and social practices related to this population.

The participants in this study consisted of no more than 12 Black male students who attended a predominantly White Jesuit high school in the North-eastern region of the United States for grades 9–12. Participants in the study were selected based on the following criteria: (a) they were Black males; (b) they attended a predominantly White Jesuit high school in the North-east region of the United States; (c) they were between the ages of 18–24; (d) they graduated or were attending a post-secondary school; (e) they transitioned to post-secondary education upon completion of their high school journey. Initial contact with participants was made via the primary investigator’s social networks (Facebook and LinkedIn) and word of mouth. Once participants agreed to the study, informed consent forms were sent electronically and returned with each participant’s signature (Appendix B).

The researcher obtained IRB approval in January 2020 that permitted the process of data collection. Data collection for the study was conducted in January and February. The results from the study were compiled in March and April 2020. The researcher defended the dissertation in September 2020. This study, conducted for a doctoral dissertation, utilized a small sample; hence, the potential for transferability was significantly limited. Future research utilizing a far larger sample will increase the transferability to other predominantly White Jesuit schools.

Limitations

A major limitation of this study was its sample size. The researcher’s use of a small sample size was due in part to the saturation of data. Presumably, adding more participants to the study does not yield additional perspectives (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Although the size was small, the researcher sought to capture broad and rich data about the emotional experience of
young Black males. With Jesuit high schools present all across the United States, the study identified participants from the North-east of the country. Lastly, there may have been a gap since the time the participants graduated high school, and thus their personal account of their high school experiences might be a little less clear. However, narrative inquiry remains a valid tool for analysis given its ability to reflect on a person’s lived experience as it relates to them (Clandinin & Huber, 2010).

Participants were selected through convenience sampling using social media referrals (Facebook and LinkedIn), word of mouth, and emails. Participants were asked to tell their stories as they deem necessary, therefore limiting the number of participants was a key factor in the research.

Moreover, the role of the primary investigator was also a limitation (as well as a benefit) to the study. As a professional who works to provide various kinds of support to both students and faculty, researcher bias could have influenced the study; therefore, the investigation was not made into a personal critique. The primary investigator consistently ensured that the findings were constructive. Coding and decoding for themes, moving from field to field text, to interim and final research texts will be another factor (Huber, Clandidan, and Huber, 2006).

Significance of the Study

Findings from this study benefitted private Jesuit high schools with a predominantly White population. As communities are becoming a more integral part of a growing global society, there is a tremendous demand to understand the racial and intra-ethnic role of non-Caucasian students. It is believed that the use of emotional support contained within House’s theory of social support in combination with the critical narrative inquiry will bring forth a culturally responsive approach to the emotional support that can be applied in schools. Richards
Brown, and Forde (2007) highlighted the three dimensions of diversity: (a) institutional, (b) personal, and (c) instructional. These three dimensions serve as the implications for the institutions with regard to addressing the emotional needs of students enrolled in a school. As illustrated by Richard, Brown, and Forde (2007), the implications affected the following criteria:

- Organization of the school which includes the administrative structure and its relation with diversity and the use of physical space in planning schools and arranging classrooms.
- School policies and procedures that impact the delivery of services to students from diverse backgrounds.
- Community involvement in which families and communities are expected to find ways to become involved in the school rather than the school seeking connections with families and communities (Richard, Brown, & Forde 2007).

This study enabled the experiences of Black male students in a context where they did not form the racial majority to be heard. Critical narrative inquiry enriched their stories with regard to their journey and its impact on their post-secondary years. The literature observed that Black parents primarily send their children to private schools because they feel it results in better educational outcomes (Jackson, 2010).

Although there is research supporting the academic achievement of Black students in predominantly White schools, there is a dearth of information in this area in relation to private and independent schools. Furthermore, even though past research has examined Black excellence, it has not focused on the Black experience. Therefore, through their narrative, former Black high school students were able to share their lived experiences about (a) the social dynamics (i.e. emotional support) related to Black students in predominantly White Jesuit
schools and (b) specific aspects of Black males’ schooling experience to highlight certain areas that need to be addressed in the domain of emotional support (Coleman, 2017).

Results from this study will help contribute to the practice of diversity relations in Jesuit schools and would provide educational leaders with information that can be utilized to facilitate the emotional support of Black male students. Furthermore, this study advances diversity initiatives by building upon the theoretical relationship between emotional and social support, thereby providing a link to different types of support services required at these institutions.

**Role of the Researcher**

As the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion who offers various types of support services to both faculty and students at a predominantly White institution, my responsibility is partly to provide social support services to marginalized students. My job entails ensuring that students’ social and academic needs are met through a variety of academic support services and social retention programs. From my experience in this role, I can say that most Black students who graduate do not return to visit their school. The few who return express their gratitude for their academic experience as they could achieve academic success at the same rate as their college peers. However, whether they were emotionally supported or not remains a lingering concern. Hence, whether their emotional experiences as a minority in the school resonated in a sense of belonging or whether the academic prowess and curriculum design was solely the reason due to which they continued their education.

This work informed school policy regarding building a partnership with past students to bridge the gap with current students. Moreover, findings from this study informed the diversity practitioners of Jesuit schools as regards to practices needed to fulfill the emotional needs of
Black students. Only by listening to young Black men’s narration of their stories can one begin to understand the underlying phenomena.

**Significance for Social Change**

In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the desegregation of schools in Brown v. Board of Education. A few years later, the Elementary and Secondary School Act of 1965 was passed, ending legalized separation of Whites and Blacks in elementary and secondary schools. In the case of private schools, however, implicit segregation of Whites and Blacks continues to be prevalent. For instance, Emma Brown (2016) as referenced in the *Washington Post* in the Southern Education Foundations’ findings, states:

- Private schools have a greater White population than the overall school-age population in most states, particularly in the South and West.
- Black, Latino, and Native American students are underrepresented in private schools, particularly in the South and West.
- Private schools are more likely than public schools to be virtually all-White, defined as schools where 90% of students are White. A total of 43% of the nation’s private school students attend virtually all-White schools, compared to 27% Black students.

The issue of segregation, although not apparent, still exists, especially in the all-White private school arena. These schools often assume that race is not a factor, hence influencing the way the curriculum is taught. Overlooking the concept of multiracial education impacts not only Black students but also the White majority (Lewis, 2001). One can assume that this is due to financial constraints, environmental restrictions, or access. However, the real reason cannot be discovered until we ask honestly ourselves “why?” This can be best answered by hearing the actual voices of the under-represented population in this school, the voice of Black males. “The
facts do support that the issue of segregation in private schools does exist, and until we start having more of these difficult conversations about why that is. We might never be able to find a compromise leading to true equity among all races in our private education system” (Buchanan, 2016, p. 2).

**Summary and Transition**

This chapter introduced the study’s focus, Black males’ perception of their experience of emotional support received in predominantly White Jesuit high schools. It is evidenced that Black males in Jesuit private schools represent a small fraction of the population and most graduate to post-secondary education. However, the lived experience of Black males in this context had remained unexplored. Using House’s theory of social support and critical narrative, the researcher captured the lived experience of these individuals. Not only did the findings offer improvements to current practices for the researcher as the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, most importantly, it enhanced the diversity practices in a Jesuit Private school in the Northeast section of the United States.

The next chapter offers a detailed literature review on Black male students in private schools in relation to social support. Using the critical narrative lens, the following was discussed: (a) experiences of Black men in secondary schools, (b) transition from high schools to post-secondary schools, (c) types of support, and (d) students’ self-perception.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter examines the emotional support received by Black males in predominantly White Jesuit high schools. The importance of this study was underlined by the realization that information on this aspect in past or current literature is insufficient to explain this (Simmons, 2012; Thrash, 2014). As discussed earlier, Blacks enrolled in predominantly White schools are perceived as the marginalized group (Wilkins, 2014). Therefore, different types of support services are put in place to address the needs of the Black males in these institutions (Holst, 2006). Admittedly, personal stories can highlight the true picture of Blacks’ perception regarding their experience and emotional support (Racial Justice Allies, 2019). Ruzek et al. (2016) noted that Black males’ accounts of their schooling experience have been overlooked as it is often believed they are unable or unwilling to tell their stories. Researchers who focus on the Black male experience in schools would allow empirical evidence and educational research to delve deeper into the phenomenon of emotional support (Howard, 2003). Therefore, this qualitative case study aimed to critically review the narrative of 12 Black males’ in post-graduation regarding the emotional support they received at a predominantly White Jesuit high school and its impact on the transition to higher education.

In this chapter, different theories about human behavior and perception pertaining to the topic under study were examined. These theories explain human behavior and association among individuals in society (Bandura, 2018). To address this area, this chapter discussed various themes which included but were not limited to (a) perception of emotional support of Blacks enrolled in White high schools, (b) support and students’ self-perception, (c) experiences of Black males in post-secondary schools and emotional support, and (d) emotional support of Black males in predominantly White secondary schools. Through the exploration of these
themes, an enhanced understanding of the research topic was gained, which also formed the basis for discussion and synthesis of the pieces of literature that satisfied the selection criteria.

**Literature Search Strategy**

This section explains the methods used in the research process. Moreover, it offers a justification for the effectiveness of the selected method with respect to the research topic. The qualitative research approach was suitable for this study because it focused on opinions and a single race (Black men), meaning that it was specific in nature (Taylor et al., 2015). Furthermore, Lewis (2015) asserted that the qualitative approach is appropriate for research that attempts to seek abstract, intangible information. Therefore, the selected method was suitable since the current study attempted to examine the perception of emotional support received by Black males in predominantly White Jesuit high schools. Taylor et al. (2015) observed the advantages of this approach, such as reliability and quick information access. Further, information can be verified by cross-examination with different people. Nonetheless, they also argued that it may be difficult to make generalizations for a larger population owing to the lack of large samples and statistical analysis.

Taylor et al.’s (2015) guidelines for qualitative study were followed as a search protocol to extract the desired information from books, journals, and articles among other scholarly sources. The primary databases searched included Fairfield University library database, ProQuest, Eric, Educator’s Reference Complete, JStor, and Psychology Database. Combinations of different words such as Black male and White schools, emotional support and Black males and schools, support for Black males in schools, perception of Black males in White dominant schools, and Black boys’ transition to college among others. Furthermore, words such as Jesuit
school network, Black in White schools, and emotional support to Black men were searched. For quality search, the word combinations were periodically altered but the scope was maintained.

Excluding the seminal work by House (1986), the inclusion criteria for the current articles in the literature review contained all the scholarly sources published no earlier than five years. The reason for this approach is to root out outdated information and highlight the recent trends in a particular subject (Taylor et al., 2015). Furthermore, all searched articles needed to be published in English in a peer-reviewed journal. The study considered articles with themes related to emotional support for Black men in predominantly White schools and their subsequent transition to higher institutions of learning. As per the exclusion criteria, all articles older than five years from the time of the study, those published in a language other than English, and information excerpts were excluded. Furthermore, articles full of jargon were also eliminated.

The search resulted in total potential sources exceeding 800,000. After eliminating for language, publication year, and credibility, a total of 1,236 articles were obtained. Screening for the appropriate themes resulted in the elimination of 1,188, and the remaining 48 articles were reviewed. However, since the themes in a number of these articles overlapped, to avoid duplication, similar articles were discussed within the same context.

**Conceptual Framework**

The theory of social support developed by House (1981) will be utilized for this study. Stemming from the overarching concept of social support, emotional support was defined as a form of communication that meets a person’s emotional or affective needs. Social support is essential as it helps individuals cope with certain stressors in life and feel validated (House, 1981). The physical and psychological health of a person is determined heavily by the kind of support they receive (House, 1981). Emotional support is one of the primary forms of support
people think of when they hear the term support. House (1981) stated, “When individuals think of people being supportive towards them, they relate to emotional support” (p. 24). Therefore, it is critical for people to have a strong support system as it can lead to definite forms of action that need to be taken on an individual’s behalf.

Conversely, Albert Bandura’s social learning theory proposed that humans are learning animals who acquire behaviors from the surrounding environment (McLeod, 2016). Humans can develop a particular behavior through actions such as observation, modeling, as well as imitation (McLeod, 2016). Within the same paradigm, reinforcement, often regarded as stimuli, can be positive or negative. Positive reinforcement supports a particular behavior and vice versa. With regard to emotional support, an educational environment that is emotionally supportive is likely to foster good social results (Allen, 2014; Kurtessis et al., 2015). Thus, House’s theory was employed to explain the behavior and perception of Black male students in predominantly White institutions. Perceived emotional support determined whether the institution was satisfying the need of a particular group. Most people in any given situation perform well if they believe that others are willing to help meet their emotional needs (House, 1981). In such a scenario, the measurement of this type of support becomes an issue. In most cases, subjective forms of support are highlighted but are often not addressed. Understanding this phenomenon entails the challenge of understanding the types of emotional support services needed.

This study focused on Black males’ perception of experience in relation to the emotional support received in predominantly White Jesuit high schools. The research was based on House’s theory of social support and the need to measure the perception of services rendered to an individual. Roles may vary from people who provide informal support to professional and semi-professional entities. In this research, informal support (family and friends) as well as
professional support (school support services), formed the primary focus of the study (see Figure 1).

**Key Variables and Concepts**

The White-dominated education system has been framed on racial dimensions (Baldwin 2011). Research shows that racial discrimination prevails in White-dominated institutions and this severely affects the progress and outcome for people of color (Allen, 2014; Holst, 2016; Hope et al., 2014). In these studies, the authors concurred that persistent racial discrimination which dismantles the emotional support provided to Black students is an element of social stereotypes. However, Holst (2016) acknowledged that racial discrimination is not instinctual but is developed from preconceived notions prevalent in society. For instance, Hope et al. (2014) observed adolescence to be a period of “identity exploration” (p. 2). Thus, it is likely that adolescent Whites refine their beliefs and personal identity in multiple functioning fields such as morality, academics, as well as social relationships. In the same manner, students of color and especially Black males tend to believe that the segregated community disregards their need for empathy and consideration.

Most studies on the schooling experience of Black males tend to concentrate on the achievement gap, which is an alarming issue in itself (Allen, 2014). However, researchers often overlook the schooling experience of this population, especially that which is told from their perspective (Matrenec, 2011). Allen (2014) cited that contrary to the past, in recent times, the Black community has neglected the previous academic deficit identity and focused more on an asset approach in what was termed “a shift in the academic discourse on Black males” (p. 4). Considering this school of thought, Black males have been seen struggling to attain the academic status that matches that of their White counterparts (Schenke et al., 2018). This change in
discourse certainly is likely to divert the concept of schooling experience by people of color.

Nonetheless, from a psychological perspective, changes in the course affirm the concept of anti-deficit behavior as a coping mechanism.

Racial discrimination and African stereotypes in White-dominated high schools have often been discussed together based on different contexts (Davis, 2015). While discrimination is broader and can exceed socioeconomic and political contexts, stereotypes are normally tied to a particular community, and in the context of those tied to the Black community are prominent (Cooper et al., 2018; Holst, 2016). Givens et al. (2016) assessed the reimagining of Black male students in ninth grade through modeling as a means to dissociate stereotypical representations of Black males. Givens et al. (2016), similar to Hope et al. (2014), asserted that Black adolescents are under pressure to adjust their identity to accommodate mainstream White social stereotypes. Unlike Hope and his colleagues, Givens et al. (2016) believed that stereotypes are strongly linked to both racialization structures and realities prevalent among the students in the learning environment (Givens et al., 2016). However, this study suggests that emotional support could act as a catalyst for the restoration of the manhood of Black male students. Givens et al. (2016) recommended that Black male experiences need to be integrated into the curriculum to support the social requirement provision initiatives for the minority.

Notwithstanding manhood modeling, evidence suggests that Black male students in White-dominated high schools perceive emotional support to be deficient. To confirm the perception of supportive relationships in White-dominated high schools, Bottiani et al. (2016) studied 19,726 high school students (Black = 35.8 %, male = 49.9 %) across 58 schools using multi-level and latent variable analytical approaches. Compared to White male student respondents, a majority of the Black male students (over 70%) believed that White-dominated
schools were less caring toward them and showed low levels of equity (Bottiani et al., 2016). A similar observation was made by Assari (2018) that Black males are rarely supported in White-dominated spaces in a number of socioeconomic settings which include education and job opportunities. However, Bottiani et al. (2016) did not include robust statistical tools such as t-tests and analysis of variance (Bottiani et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2015). Thus, addressing these issues using the mentioned tools could yield a different picture. Assari (2018) and Bottiani et al. (2016) pointed out the need for the adoption of diverse interventions aimed at improving the perception of minority male students.

Zerega (2015) examined Black male students’ educational experience in a diverse school with 10 students as the subjects (grades 11 and 12). Consistent with previous studies, focus groups and in-depth results revealed that caring, unconditional trust, and empathy, the main features of emotional support were absent in the minority group. However, it is imperative to consider that the sample size was small (10 case studies), and this can increase the likelihood of a type 2 error (Tylor et al., 2015). Such a negative perception of emotional support has manifested in the academic performance of Black male students (Rolland, 2011). Although Zerega (2015) noted negative elements about the school climate in predominantly White secondary schools, Holst (2016) posited that belonging and experience can go far in establishing a good and supportive environment for the minority male students.

Practices for creating positive emotional support perception among Black students have been extensively studied (Bottiani et al., 2016; Holst, 2016). In these studies, Holst (2016) approached the issue of intervention from the environmental perspective, whereas Bottiani et al.’s (2016) study emphasized the reinforcement of teacher-student relationships instead of the entire sociopolitical environment. These studies are based on the premise that improved student-
teacher relationships facilitate the creation of a conducive and interactive environment (Hamdi 2018). Based on the social learning theory, Black students can develop a positive attitude toward Whites and academics in general (Bandura, 2018). Bandura’s theory assumes that the environment acts as a source of stimuli and positive stimuli reinforce behaviors. In this case, a good relationship is likely to translate to elements of emotional support such as institutional caring, equity, and high expectations from the students.

**Perception and Action**

Perception has been defined as the way our senses allow us to see and understand the environment we are in. Therefore, one’s perception is often indicative of the way they act within a particular context. People tend to see the world and their environment within the context of how they are empowered. Due to the advancements in psychology and neuroscience, people can now assess their racial reactions and measure the effect of “racial culture” on perceptions and behavior. Results from the Implicit Association Test (IAT) revealed that people associate the word good with White faces and the word bad with Black faces (Project Implicit). The test further showed that the darker the skin of a person, the lesser they fared on the test (American Values Institute). Research has demonstrated that a reduction in implicit bias is due in part to different types of exposure, one that is opposite to the generalized stereotype for a particular group (American Values Institute). Implicit bias can also lead to what is known as “stereotype threat”, which, in most cases, provides a sense of intellectual inferiority. A further explanation of this phenomenon is offered by the American Values Institute: a Black student feeling like they are less smart due to the internalized generalization that is imposed on them. A strong support system that fosters the contribution of students academically and socially has been known to lessen this feeling of inferiority.
McGauran (n.d.) noted six ways in which perception affects our lives: (a) first impressions, (b) negative stereotypes, (c) selective perception, (d) self-fulfilling prophecy, (e) confirmation bias, (f) and anchoring effect. The first impression is often translated to how people treat a person in a particular activity after the introduction. It is one of the hardest perceptions since it can be lasting. Hence, if someone starts with a negative first impression then it is likely that that behavior will continue. Stereotypes, the different labels one carries for another, can also be impactful. Labels are often situated in the context of age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, social status, and religion. Many of these stereotypes are often learned in earlier years and carried into other aspects of one’s life (McGauran, n.d.). Selective perception refers to when a person fails to comprehend the other aspects of a story. They tend to focus on one side instead of keeping an open mind. The self-fulfilling prophecy is when a person internalizes the expectations placed on them. This can have a positive or negative outcome depending on how the person views themselves in the context of the larger community. Confirmation bias happens when a person reacts to a certain stimulus in an environment due to a previous experience that they use to affirm their assumption. For instance, if a person had a negative experience with a particular individual, they may associate that with all individuals who exhibit the same physical characteristics. Anchoring effect, often known as generalization, is when we use one particular thing/experience to sum up the actual outcome of the broader experience.

Lewis (2001) revealed the importance of diversifying the school curriculum in a predominantly White school so that it accommodates an explicit context of race relations. The results of a year-long study in a high school showed that the lack of understanding of race relations had a negative impact on students of color. Without the support of the school personnel who were directly involved with the students, the level of anxiety for students directly increased.
The study found school personnel were concerned about the lack of diversity in the school given the fact their children came from an ethnically diverse background. The cry for a deeper analysis of the way race relations are taught was seen in this study. The need for critical multiculturalism as noted by Lewis (2001) should be at the forefront if one is to address the different needs of students in a particular community. This then can allow building an enhanced perception of students of color that can permeate an environment of inclusiveness (Milem et al., 2001)

**Support and Student Self-Perception**

The attitudes, expectations, and behaviors of educators play a significant role in enhancing educational mobility among Black students (Buckley, 2017). In relation to the theory of emotional support, Ruzek et al. (2016) and Kususanto et al. (2017) noted that the degree of educators’ emotional support is proportional to the learner’s outcome regardless of gender or race. However, Buckley’s (2017) arguments confirmed that educator’s responsive behavior greatly influences the performance of Black students as compared to White students. On the contrary, the educator’s behavior in the eyes of the Black students was considered a product of self-perception (Thomas & Wagner, 2016). Bush (2015) pointed out that self-concept is strongly related to Black stereotypes and this is likely to influence cognitive function. This is because the education system has seen children of the Black race as being poor in academics; therefore, this concept of “academic inadequacy” extends to the educators. Thomas and Wagner (2016) called for immediate action to enable the Black community to excel in the academic sphere.

Novel studies agree with the view that institutions of learning are never neutral terrains when it comes to culture (Banks & Obiakor, 2015; Ruzek et al., 2016; Watson et al., 2014). Thus, different norms, values, and behaviors are expected (Banks & Obiakor, 2015) from different groups. Using critical pedagogy theories to analyze findings in their quantitative study,
Daring to care: The role of culturally relevant care in mentoring Black and Latino male high school students, Watson et al. (2014) examined the perceptions of students, parents, and educators regarding the social, academic, and personal experiences of Black male students in two predominantly White high-performing secondary schools.

Through the use of focus groups with Black and Latino students, the author considered the environment to be disadvantageous for Black males and believed that leaders in those institutions should build mutual trust with the learners (Watson et al., 2014). Conversely, Banks and Obiakor (2015) posited that low expectations and tolerance level may indicate a lack of congruence between culturally diverse students and educational strategies employed in those institutions.

It has been well documented that attitudes, dispositions, and perceptions of educators regarding learners can promote or hinder student’s learning processes, achievement, and access to higher education (Allen, 2015; Knight-Manuel et al., 2018). However, in a White-dominated society, it is difficult for a Black male to prosper considering the preconceived notions held by leaders in institutions (Peel, 2017). For instance, Knight-Manuel et al. (2018) quoted Jennifer, a White female educator, stating that Black and Latino male students lack model exposure of “musicians, athletes or former president Obama” (p. 37). The assertion by Knight-Manuel et al. (2018) confirms the results of Hotchkins’ (2016) qualitative case study which demonstrated that Black male students in predominantly White education settings experience various forms of systemic racial micro-aggressions from White educators. Essentially, Jennifer’s perspective disregarded the existence of minorities’ connection to learners’ lived experiences as role models. With such a perception, it is likely that the same self-concept can be transferred to class and influence academic outcomes.
Moon and Singh (2015) examined Black males’ experiences with respect to the achievement gap in high school with 12 individuals as study subjects using a phenomenological approach based on the tenets of critical race theory (CRT). The study was based on themes such as parental support, environmental obstacles, resilience, individual motivation, and resource gap. Results revealed elements such as cultural nuance, feeling of rejection, lack of emotional deficit from educators and stereotypes by Whites. Kurtessis et al. (2015) argued that emotional support creates a culturally responsive environment that encourages personal growth and success. The U.S. Department of Education (2019) approximated Black male high school students’ dropout rate at 6.2% and Whites at 5.2%. This was attributed to factors such as cultural diversity, stereotypes about Black males, racial discrimination, and lack of formal and informal support (Racial Justice Allies, 2019). In the same strain, Bryant (2015) commented that a greater emphasis on achievements of Black male students and overlooking individual and social constructs, such as cultural as well as psychological orientations, may widen the achievement gap even further. These studies provide a good platform to develop approaches for problem-solving leading to a better educational experience for Black males.

Black Males and Emotional Support in Post-Secondary Schools

The number of Black males attending college is on the rise. Harrison (2014) cited the American Council on Education (ACE), stating that Black males’ college participation increased by 42.7% between 1993 and 2003. In the United States, Black males’ transition to college continues to be a major challenge towards achieving equality in education (Kring, 2017; Tsoi-A & Bryant, 2015). At predominantly White institutions (PWI), Black males often face racial stigma and a need for the creation of support services (Cooper et al., 2018; Holst, 2016). Even though Blacks have shifted their focus away from the academically deficit identity, it is
imperative to acknowledge that transition rates among Blacks and especially Black males continue to be low (Allen, 2014). This means that the environment created at the high school level can influence the number and rates of Black male enrollment in institutions of higher learning.

Using a qualitative approach, Britt (2014) explored Black men matriculating to predominantly White institutions and investigated different types of social support systems in place. Previous research has indicated that students achieve academic success when they feel they have social and emotional support (Britt, 2014; Hurd et al., 2016; Kring, 2017). While Britt (2014) argued for institutional support as a motivational factor for student achievement, Hurd et al. (2016) suggested the implementation of peer mentoring especially among minority groups to facilitate a smooth transition to college. Surely, in the absence of certain support systems in colleges, Black males face a higher probability of leaving college feeling dissatisfied. Again, some authors have linked minority institutional support to student competence in college and life after school (Britt, 2014; Tan et al., 2017). For instance, a qualitative analysis of 57 Black men by Britt (2014) recognized academic and non-cognitive factors for success among Black males at a higher level of education; some of these factors were “institutional attachment, personal, emotional and social adjustment” (p. 7). The mentioned elements are thus related to the supportive environment earlier discussed.

College readiness has been considered one of the critical factors for success in post-secondary education; it is determined by the support given to an individual during secondary studies (Falcon, 2015). Falcon defined college readiness as evidence-based knowledge “needed to be successful in higher education” (p. 1). Most Black male students come from a low socioeconomic background (Bush, 2015). Thus, Black men are characterized by low
socioeconomic status and represent a greater portion of the First Generation College Students (FGCS) group. Similarly, Falcon pointed out various obstacles faced by the FGCS group related to college transition such as a lack of college readiness, lack of emotional support, and financial instability (Falcon, 2015). Additionally, Stephens et al. (2014) observed other obstacles that include low self-esteem, racial stereotypes, minority status, and low academic success. This, in turn, increases the likelihood of college dropout.

Black men’s perception of emotional support in predominantly White colleges continues to be a hotly contested topic beyond high school. Previous studies have extensively examined Black male students’ perception of emotional support in college (Falcon, 2015; Tan et al., 2017). However, in most of these studies, identity processes and the intersection of class, race, gender, and the effect of these identity processes on the transition pathway have been partially assessed (Wilkins, 2014). Wilkins (2014) used identity transitions as a way to measure how students fared in their college transitions. Interviews on the subject revealed that Black men in college tend to have less positive outcomes due to a lack of emotional support (Wilkins, 2014). The reason for slow transition and poor outcomes is that Black males find it difficult to fit in with their peers; some experienced over-marginalization and found it difficult to locate spaces for racial integration (Wilkins, 2014). These results imply that social invisibility poses a threat to the emotional well-being of these students as they struggle to find their place.

Emotional Support of Black Males in White Secondary Schools

As schools strive to be more racially diverse, educators are trying to implement different strategies to gain a better understanding of students’ experience. What is most noticeable in these school settings is that parents and students may find it difficult to acquire the needed support (Davis, 2015). Davis addressed the question of exploring the learning experiences in place in a
suburban independent school that supports Black students and their parents. Culturally responsive environments allow students to feel safe in schools and feel like a part of the school community (Kurtessis et al., 2015). Davis (2015) used an interpretivist theoretical framework to understand the support provided to Black students in a private independent school and their parents. Findings concluded that emotional support was a critical factor when considering the learning experience of Black students. Participants in the study agreed that having school-wide support is vital for the emotional as well as the academic success of these students. Also critical is what is known as “targeted support”; in this case, a Cultural Diversity Director should directly provide emotional support for students and parents. Hence, emotional support by the Diversity Director would help the student navigate between home and their institutional environment.

The only study on Black males’ experience of emotional support with a particular focus on Jesuit schools that could be found was Robert Simmons’ (2012). He investigated the experiences of Black males enrolled in an elite private Jesuit high school. Although the research focused on the intra-racial context of students attending these schools, Simmons found that participants (10 Black males) linked their challenges to the lacking emotional support in the institution. Simmons called for the professional development of the staff that includes conversations pertaining to cultural competence and racial micro-aggressions. Therefore, it is imperative to understand the lived experience of these students within and beyond the school environment.

Lastly, it is important that Black males have a positive experience of school and educators understand this need (Bell, 2015). Although Bell’s research studied the schooling experience of males, he posited that there is a lack of attention to the sentiments of Black males about their schooling experience (p. 1267). Bell highlighted various beneficiaries of the current
study, including teachers, school administrators and counselors, parents as well as policymakers. Bell (2015) believed that the information could help assist the mentioned entities to “better address the academic needs of Black males” (p. 1267). Thus, it was essential to acknowledge that Black male students’ support is a core factor to attain better results in high school and also reinforce transition initiatives during college life. Nonetheless, racial dynamics and sociopolitical perspectives have been demonstrated to greatly shape the paradigm of student support, which, in turn, influences educational success and achievement among male students of color.

Summary and Conclusion

Most researchers considered school as a multicultural terrain (Banks & Obiakor, 2015; Ruzek et al., 2016; Watson et al., 2014). Due to this cultural diversity, racial discrimination was the most evident element in predominantly White institutions (Allen, 2014; Banks & Obiakor, 2015; Cooper et al., 2018; Holst, 2016). Moreover, the current works of literature established a strong relationship between emotional support given to Black male students and academic attainment (Britt, 2014; Hurd et al., 2016; Watson et al., 2014). The primary emotional support required by Black male students to excel in academics and hence achieve transition successfully included care and consideration (Bottiani et al., 2016), unconditional trust (Schenke et al., 2018; Zerega, 2015) and empathy and mutual trust between the educator and the learner (Bottiani et al., 2016; Watson et al., 2014; Zerega, 2015). However, Mendelson (2016) implied that such a state can only be attained in a neutral learning environment with a good teacher-student relationship. Conversely, the lack of emotional support can widen the achievement gap between Black male students and their White counterparts (Allen, 2014; Moon & Singh, 2015). Therefore, such relationships need to be developed.
Simmons (2012) sought to raise awareness among Jesuit school educators as they address and support the needs of racially marginalized Black students in their communities and to allow a level of recognition to determine whether their needs are being met so that they can transition to higher education smoothly. Therefore, it is crucial that educators understand the significance of Black males’ positive experience as a reflection of high school performance and college transition (Bell, 2015). Furthermore, an urgency for refining the educational environment, educator stereotypes of self-perception by the Black male students was noted, as this can guarantee equity and upward mobility in education for this minority group.

The current study was based on the concept that positive post-secondary outcomes were a partial function of perceived social support and institutional support. Human behaviors can explain the theory of emotional support proposed by Gotlieb and House (1981). This concept extensively explained emotional support and revealed a wide range of outcomes for the provider (predominantly White institutions and management) as well as the recipient (Black male students). Additionally, learning from direct experience (Bandura, 2018) augmented emotional support as it concerns learning; thus, secondary transition and post-secondary outcomes in relation to emotional and institutional support to Black male students can be well understood through these two theories. This investigation sought to answer the following primary research question: What are the perceptions of young Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at a predominantly White Jesuit high school that facilitated the transition to an institution of higher learning?

Volumes of literature have indicated that Black male students in schools with predominantly White populations experience low emotional support (Allen, 2010; Butler-Barnes et al., 2018; Caton, 2012; Causey et al., 2015; Dotterer et al., 2009). The literature demonstrated
that Black male students felt discrimination was common in social service provisions essential for transitional processes Black males thought that the reduced emotional support among Black male students led to poor performance which negatively impacted their transitional processes, including post-secondary performance (Allen, 2010; Bankston & Caldas, 2000; Butler-Barnes et al., 2018; Caton 2012; Causey et al., 2015; Davis, 2003; Ford, 2013; Graves, 2014; Wei et al., 2011). Emotional support from the institution and family can translate into improved performance (Allen, 2010; Bankston & Caldas, 2000; Butler-Barnes et al., 2018; Caton 2012; Causey et al., 2015; Davis, 2003; Ford, 2013; Graves, 2014; Wei et al., 2011). More importantly, personality attributes reduce the effects of the lack of social support which has been demonstrated by black male students in the white predominated schools (Allen, 2010; Butler-Barnes et al., 2018; Caton, 2012; Causey et al., 2015; Dotterer et al., 2009). Therefore, emotional support impacts the transition rate including post-secondary performance among Black male students as evidenced in numerous qualitative case study investigations (Assari, 2018; Bell, 2015; Britt, 2014; Davis, 2015; Holst, 2016).

The following chapter discusses the research methods employed. Specifically, the chapter describes the research design and rationale, the role of the researcher, participant selection and setting, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis plan. Furthermore, the chapter addresses the trustworthiness of the study in terms of internal validity, external validity, dependability, and confirmability. Lastly, the chapter addresses the ethical procedures of the study.
Chapter 3: Research Method

Designed as an exploratory research, this study drew from the theory of social support to examine the perception of emotional support received by Black males enrolled in a predominantly White Jesuit high school and their transition to college. The researcher used social constructivism to delve deep into the research findings. A shared dialogue with participants and the researcher provided different perspectives and presented a true understanding of the phenomena (Weinberg, 2014). The sample belonged to North-east U.S. A qualitative approach was taken to explore emotional support in the areas of affect, affirmation, and aid that were available to Black students.

In the following pages, the researcher covered the research rationale and design, research design, concept map, role of the researcher, methodology, setting, participant selection, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis plan, coding, internal validity, external validity, dependability, trustworthiness, and ethical procedures.

Research Design and Rationale

This study was designed to explore the emotional support that is in place in White Jesuit schools. The study explored the lived experiences of former black students who graduated in 2014–2019. The research attempted to answer the following overarching questions:

Overarching Research Question

RQ. What are the perceptions of young Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at a predominantly White Jesuit high school that facilitated the transition to an institution of higher learning?

Research Sub-Questions
RSQ1. How do young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from peers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid in a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

RSQ2. How did young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from teachers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid while attending a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

RSQ3. How did young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from administrators as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid in a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

RSQ4. Which element of emotional support did young Black males perceive best facilitated transition to their institution of higher learning?

Research Design

A qualitative case study design was adopted to determine the perception of emotional support received by Black males in White Jesuit high school as they graduated and transitioned to post-secondary schooling. This design allowed the researcher to take an in-depth look at the lived experience of this marginalized population. Due to the nature of the subject, a qualitative case study was the most appropriate design (see Figure 2). Maxwell (2005) pointed out that case studies can be utilized to investigate traditional phenomena embedded within real-life contexts; this is useful when the boundaries between the context and phenomena are unclear. Therefore, the case study in this situation facilitated the exploration and analysis of differences between and also within cases and thus provided an efficient method to address the research questions. “Researchers increasingly used a theoretical lens or perspective in qualitative research, which provided an overall orienting lens for the study of questions of gender, class, and race” (Creswell, 2014, p. 64). As the researcher completed the review for this study, the research on
the Black male experience of social support in college was found to be adequate but lacking with regard to Black males attending predominantly White Jesuit high schools (Simmons, 2012; Vega et al., 2015).

The researcher aimed to provide all-male Jesuit high school administrators and school personnel the best practices that can facilitate offering emotional support to Black students.
Constructivist Researcher and participants work together to create knowledge.

**Research Goal:**
To explore the lived experience of Black males enrolled at a predominantly White Jesuit high school and their transition to higher education

**Practitioner goal:**
Advance knowledge base to create best practices for different types of support for marginalized population in Jesuit schools.

**Theory:**
House’s Theory of Support

**Worldview:**
Constructivist Co-construction of knowledge. There is no absolute truth.

**Study Bound By:**

- **Time:** December 2019 to June 2020
- **Location:** One Jesuit high school (North-east)
- **Participants:** No more than 12 graduates aged 18–24
- **Topic:** Perception of emotional support in schools and transition to college

**Conceptual Framework**

**Overarching Research Question**
RQ. What are the perceptions of young Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at a predominantly White Jesuit high school that facilitated transition to an institution of higher learning?

**Research Sub questions**
RSQ1. How do young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from peers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid while attending a predominantly White Jesuit high school?
RSQ2. How do young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from teachers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid while attending a predominantly White Jesuit high school?
RSQ3. How do young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from administrators as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid while attending a predominantly White Jesuit high school?
RSQ4. Which element of emotional support do young Black males perceive best facilitated transition to their institution of higher learning?

**Validity/Credibility**

**Data Collection:**
1. Personal Essay Reflections
2. Focus Groups
3. Semi-Structured Interviews
4. Individual Interviews

**Trustworthiness:**
Internal validity, external validity, dependability, confirmability

Note. Concept map adapted from *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* by J. Maxwell, 2013, p. 5. Copyright 2013 by Sage.
It is important to note that there are a few motivating factors that drive the study to learn about the emotional perception of Black males in predominantly White Jesuit high schools. First, the researcher wanted to inform her current practice as the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at a predominantly White independent school. Black male students are a group within the organization that the researcher works closely with and wished like to explore whether their emotional needs are met through the program. Second, the researcher wanted to inform the school in the study to bolster their best practices for Black male students. Thus, this research also had a personal dimension for me, in addition to the larger professional and ethnic concern for my race.

Utilizing a constructivist approach, the researcher served an emic role wherein the findings were co-constructed between the researcher and participants (Creswell, 2014). As a Black woman, the researcher’s initial opinions might be skewed due to the racial sensitivity of the matter. To reduce bias, the researcher took the following measures: (a) triangulate and cross-reference themes from all respondents; (b) member check and take the final report to participants to ensure accuracy; (c) provide thick rich data; (d) present negative or discrepant information to the themes; (e) perform peer briefing and seek feedback from an individual not familiar with the study (Creswell, 2014). This study involved humans as the study subjects and thus required ethical scrutiny. The researcher sought prior consent from the study subjects. Subjects were informed on how data would be utilized and protected via the study’s informed consent form.
Table 1

Worldview Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worldview</th>
<th>Constructivism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontology: Reality is what exists and ways in</td>
<td>Emic co-construction of meaning. Each person’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which it can be represented.</td>
<td>reality is different. No absolute truths exist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistemology: Various sources of data.</td>
<td>Co-construction of knowledge about events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis depends on research questions, data,</td>
<td>occurs as a result of closeness: researcher and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>source, and purpose of the study.</td>
<td>participants collaborate to create knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Axiology</td>
<td>Researcher and participants recognize bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and negotiate their shared interpretations and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>their views regarding the value of the research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Researcher employs an analysis grounded in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>constructivism to build patterns, themes, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>general concepts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* This table demonstrates the researcher’s philosophy on how knowledge is produced.

**Research Methods**

This qualitative case study explored the perceptions of adult Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at a predominantly White Jesuit high school that facilitated the transition to an institution of higher learning. Data were collected through interviews and semi-structured focus groups. The questions were suitable for a qualitative inquiry. Initial open-ended questions were asked with follow-up questions based on the participants’ responses. This allowed the researcher to glean thick rich data for the study. This approach was particularly of interest because it lent itself to a more exploratory evaluation and not a close-ended one. Table 2 offers a visual representation of how the research questions drove data collection and analysis. “A matrix allows you to connect and show the connections between specific parts of each
component, such as how each research questions were related to specific goals, theories, methods, and validity issues” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 410).

Table 2

*Research Question Matrix*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Do I Need to Know? (Research Questions)</th>
<th>Why Do I Need to Know This (Goals)</th>
<th>What kind of Data Will Answer the Questions (Methods)</th>
<th>Analysis Methods</th>
<th>Potential Conclusions</th>
<th>Alternative Explanations (Validity Threat)</th>
<th>Methods to Investigate Alternative Explanations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did young Blacks perceive emotional support they received from peers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid while enrolled in a predominantly White Jesuit school?</td>
<td>To get information of respondents’ lived experience (subjective)</td>
<td>Interview: Structured and open-ended</td>
<td>• Group responses into themes • Cross-case themes • Develop matrix with respondents’ data</td>
<td>Co-construction between respondents and researcher</td>
<td>• Researcher bias: Influencing interpretation of data • Relationship with interviewer may interfere with responses.</td>
<td>• Peer review • Use follow-up clarifying data and cross references • Thick rich data • Member check (triangulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did young Blacks perceive emotional support they received from their teachers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid while enrolled at a predominantly White Jesuit school?</td>
<td>To obtain information about respondents’ lived experience (subjective)</td>
<td>Interview: Structured and open-ended</td>
<td>• Group responses into themes • Cross-case themes • Develop matrix with respondents’ data</td>
<td>Co-construction between respondents and researcher</td>
<td>• Researcher bias: Influencing interpretation of data • Relationship with interviewer may interfere with responses.</td>
<td>• Peer review • Use follow-up clarifying data and cross references • Thick rich data • Member check (triangulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did young Blacks perceive emotional support they received from administrators as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid while enrolled at a predominantly White Jesuit school?</td>
<td>To get information about respondents’ lived experience (subjective)</td>
<td>Interview: Structured and open-ended</td>
<td>Group responses into themes</td>
<td>Co-construction between respondents and researcher</td>
<td>Researcher bias: Influencing interpretation of data</td>
<td>Relationship with interviewer may interfere with responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which element of emotional support did young Black males perceive best facilitated transition to their institution of higher learning?</td>
<td>To get information about respondents’ lived experience (subjective)</td>
<td>Interview: Structured and open-ended</td>
<td>Group responses into themes</td>
<td>Co-construction between respondents and researcher</td>
<td>Researcher bias: Influencing interpretation of data</td>
<td>Relationship with interviewer may interfere with responses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. This table demonstrates the relationship between the research questions, goals of the study, and study design.
**Setting**

The interviews for this study took place over the telephone, in person, and virtually via Zoom. Individual face-to-face interviews took place in a private room with the door closed and a location determined by the participant.

**Participant Selection**

A total of 12 Black male students aged 18–24 who graduated and transitioned to college from an all-male Jesuit high school between 2014–2018 were selected as the participants. The participants came from a single school in the Jesuit Northeast Province (Appendix C).

Purposeful convenience sampling was employed. McMillan and Schumacher (2001) argued that in purposeful sampling, the researcher tends to “select particular individuals or cases because they will be particularly informative about the topic” (p. 110). Participant recruitment required the researcher to personally contact the participants and offer a succinct introduction and overview of the study, highlighting in detail the purpose of the study and the commitment required from the volunteer participants.

Participants in this study had graduated from a predominantly White all-male high school from the Northeast Jesuit Province and permission was granted to the researcher to access the school’s database (Appendix D). The participants’ names were culled by the researcher based on who initiated continued contact with the researcher since graduation. An email was sent to those individuals with an explanation of the study and the consent form (Appendix E). The initial request for participants did not yield the desired results (i.e. 12 respondents). Therefore, a second email was sent asking individuals to participate in the study (Appendix F). Once the study sample of 12 respondents was achieved, consent forms were collected from each (Appendix A), and the researcher scheduled a time to meet each person to conduct a face-to-face interview.
Once all interviews were complete, the researcher scheduled a focus group virtually via Zoom. Focus groups were appropriate for this study because they facilitated rapid information collection from individuals within a population and also elicited participants’ perceptions regarding emotional support in a place conducive for conversation. Previously, Vega et al. (2015) used a focus group to stimulate discussion with Black as well as Latino high school students regarding their perceived barriers to academic transition and outcome in White-dominated schools.

The purpose of the focus group, interviews, and reflection essay was to yield rich data on the types of affect, affirmation, and aid that may not have been discussed during the individual interview or in cases where conflicting viewpoints were shared.

**Instrumentation**

The recruitment for this study was based on a purposeful sample of convenience. Participants received two emails (containing an explanation of the study and an attached consent form; Appendix B; Appendix E; Appendix F). Three main conventional instruments were used to collect data: a researcher-developed interview protocol (Appendix G); a researcher-developed focus group protocol (Appendix H); a two-page participant essay that outlines the demographic profile (i.e. household income, education attainment, age) and types of affect, affirmation, and aid from peers, administrators, and teachers that immediately comes to mind that helped them transition to post-secondary schools (Appendix I). It was important to note the focus group protocol was developed in accordance with Maxwell (2005).

The 15-question interview protocol employed to collect in-depth interview data was developed by the researcher in consultation with various professional educators and university advisors. The protocol themes of affect, affirmation, and aid from peers, teachers, and
administrators and the influence of general emotional on participants’ transition to post-secondary school were explored.

**Data Collection.** Data collection was performed in a comfortable and private environment with minimal or no distractions. Essays and transcripts from interviews and focus group were analyzed and coded for themes using the NVivo software. Participants responded to the 15-question in-depth interview in which information regarding their perception of emotional support and influence on transition to post-secondary school was recorded. In the interview, data were collected using open-ended questions. Bogdan and Bilken (2007) asserted that in-depth interviews can be utilized to collect descriptive data that explain how individuals interpret their experiences concerning a particular phenomenon. The interviews took approximately 45 minutes. Focus groups assist in the stimulation of “talks from multiple perspectives so that the researcher can learn what the ranges of views are” (Bogdan & Bilken, 2007, p. 109). Thus, the focus group helped the researcher gain the participants’ trust and explore their perspectives. Any doubts or questions that came up during the essay or interview process were addressed in the focus group. Furthermore, this allowed the researcher to counter-check the data collected (Bogdan & Bilken, 2007).

Triangulation was employed to validate the data collected to ensure trustworthiness. Triangulation in research is essential to obtain a complete understanding of the topic under discussion. It involves the use of multiple methods of collection (Heale & Forbes, 2013; Natow, 2019). Bogdan and Bilken (2007) and Taylor (2015) observed that triangulation enhances data which allows the researcher to gain different views concerning a particular phenomenon.

**Data Analysis Plan (Using NVivo).** A consistent comparative approach was employed using inductive data analysis (Taylor, 2015). The information and response from the participants
were recorded using the NVivo software, interpreted by the researcher, and was coded to decipher emerging meaning, themes, and concepts. Starting with themes contained in House’s theory of support, core words such as affect, affirmation, and aid were used. Furthermore, these words had synonymous nodes to help with emerging themes as defined by this study as well as synonymous codes (words). The researcher individually examined every word and line to aggregate issues which were relevant to the theme formation while reserving conclusions, in particular, themes around the influence of emotional support in relation to affect, affirmation, and aid that participants attributed to peers, teachers, and administrators, which they believed impacted transition to post-secondary schools. Data was aggregated and thematically analyzed using the NVivo software, a product of CAQDS (Zamwe, 2015). This software allowed the researcher to cull important themes. Additionally, data triangulation via essays, interview, and focus group served as a checkpoint for ambiguous and emerging themes. In cases that appear discrepant, the researcher noted these for future study.

Descriptive analysis was an important component of this research. Qualitative studies are important because they provide deeper exploration into questions (Green, 2001). However, to gain the results of a qualitative study, it is imperative to quantify data. Coding for themes, looking for emerging patterns, and transcribing the data converted the data from linguistic to numerical form. The NVivo software allowed the researcher to quantify participants’ responses (Ozkan, 2004). The participants’ responses were organized and displayed in the form of matrices or charts supplemented by descriptive statistics.

**Coding.** Using NVivo software, words or phrases relevant to the phenomenon were identified. In each case and across all cases, similarities as well as differences were analyzed by the researcher using the data from the focus group, in-depth interviews, and individual essays.
Bogdan and Bilken (2007) observed that the researcher only arrives at new meaning regarding a particular case via direct interpretation and data aggregation.

During the next phase, data was aggregated into themes to reflect the voices and arguments of the participants with the help of NVivo software (Zamwe, 2015). The final coding phase required multiple and deeper examinations of the themes regarding Black students’ experiences and emotional perceptions. The researcher was able to reach a saturation point through collection of the repetitive phenomenon and thus likely increased the clarity of the data. With this foundation, the researcher developed themes.

In the two main menus of NVivo, the researcher used the Document browser and the Node browser, browsers beneficial to the researcher because they allowed an attribute feature helping in characterizing and quantifying the data, such as affect, affirmation, and aid. In the Document browser, the researcher uploaded and/ or created internal or external documents. In addition to the document browser, the researcher included additional notes in the “memos” section. All documents in the browser allowed the researcher to view all material in a database with a short description, the time it was created or modified, and how many documents were linked to each document (Ozkan, 2004).

**Interviews and Focus Groups**

The transcribed information from the interview focus groups was electronically formatted in the earlier parts of the study. They were converted from Word into rich text file format to enable their processing as NVivo documents. Hence, once the files were completed, they were uploaded into the Documents browser. The project files included observation notes, memo files, interview notes, and focus group notes. Each file had a description that included their size, nodes linked to the documents, and the date they were created and modified (Ozkan, 2004).
Reflection Essays. The narrative portion of the participants’ essay was imported as text files using the document browser of NVivo so that they could be coded and analyzed as previously described.

Write Up. The researcher is completely aware that although useful, NVivo is not a tool solely for data analysis. Throughout this process, the researcher decided which codes will form the major category and which will be designated as subcategories. Considering this, providing an in-depth explanation of each category was the researcher’s responsibility.

Trustworthiness

Reliability and validity are important concepts for solidifying qualitative research (Morse et al., 2002). Trustworthiness in qualitative research is based on Guba and Lincoln’s (1982) four aspects: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility (Internal Validity)

To achieve a higher degree of credibility, the researcher restricted introducing bias into the study through the use of a research journal, which was not utilized as a data source; it was simply a tool that the primary investigator employed to prevent introducing bias into the study. Member checking and accounting for the biases in the research was part of the process of collecting and analyzing data on a reciprocal basis. Additionally, member checking was conducted to allow for correction, amendment, or extension of the informants’ captured data. The researcher ensured the richness of the reported content through a description of various participant responses that enhance the data. Findings were recorded until the participants and the researcher reached an agreement (Burke, 1997). The researcher maintained impartiality regarding the participants’ perception of their experience on emotional support in the case study.
Rich description, in this case, was further expected to reinforce trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

**Transferability (External Validity)**

The current study was not transferable due to the small sample size; however, it can be safely applied to the concerned school. The study’s purposeful convenience sampling only applied to the school used in this study. A debriefing interpretation of the data was most important in this case. “During interpretation of the data, it is important to consider subjects who support emerging explanations and, perhaps more importantly, subjects who disagree” to fully inform the school administration and personnel regarding Black males perceptions of emotional support (Marshall, 1996, p. 523)

**Dependability**

Dependability implies that the research can be repeated by different scholars and similar or close results would be obtained; thus, the study is reliable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher adhered to scientific standards involving human subjects. The current study first sought the approval of Bridgeport University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) which examined the ethical compliance to protect the participants. The researcher addressed and also exposed any inherent biases that were likely to jeopardize worthiness. A reflective journal was utilized to compile the study logistics and the researcher’s thoughts. Additionally, the methodology employed in data collection was developed in consultation with professionals and was attributed to the qualitative research protocol noted by Taylor (2015).

**Confirmability**

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), confirmability requires objective research based on data; it should also reflect the true character of the population. To ensure true characteristic
representation and objectivity of data, triangulation of data was performed. The thoughts of the researcher were documented in the reflective journal and it provided an audit trail to allow the replication of the study in the future.

**Ethical Procedures**

Participants were informed of the current study and its purpose. Each was asked to sign a consent form prior to the start of the study. The form explained that participation in the study was voluntary and one could withdraw at any point. Participants were provided information regarding confidentiality. Each participant received a pseudo code that will only be used for record-keeping purposes. The researcher did not disclose the names of the participants or the school involved in the study. The researcher was the only one with access to the information and recordings. Information was stored on an encrypted file on the researcher’s computer.

Participants were notified that all recordings will be destroyed after six months of completion of the research. The risks to human subjects associated with this study were minimal. Participants in the study were over 18 years of age, in good mental health, and were able to perform the tasks required (Appendix B).

A proposal for the current research was submitted to the University of Bridgeport IRB for approval for ethics compliance. The researcher sought permission from participants through an invitation email describing the research’s intentions, participants’ requirements, and also rights of withdrawal. It was duly noted that this study was entirely voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw at any time (Appendix E).

All participants were guaranteed privacy after consent signing and inclusion into the study via the use of pseudo code. Additionally, the respective school was not identified in reporting and data interpretation. If a participant withdrew from the exercise, their pseudo codes
were removed. Furthermore, the timeframe of the study as described earlier was maintained and all raw data were destroyed once the study was published.

**Summary and Transition**

This study aimed to highlight the emotional support experienced by Black males enrolled at a predominantly White Jesuit high school in relation to affect, affirmation, and aid and their transition to post-secondary education. The goal of this chapter was to outline the research method used to answer the research question. Specifically, the procedure, study participants, data collection, and interview protocols were discussed. A constructivist qualitative approach was explained to gain insight into the lived experience of Black males with regard to emotional support in a White Jesuit school and their transition to post-secondary school. All study participants contributed to the study by sharing their experiences of being a Black male in a predominantly White Jesuit high school and the role it played in their transition to college.
Chapter 4: Results

Research Site Institutional Culture

The School

Founded by the Society of Jesus in 1942, the school is a college preparatory day school serving boys in grades ninth through 12th. It is an all-male school of about 750 students. The school was first accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges in 1945. Its current affiliations include: State of Connecticut Department of Education; Jesuit Schools Network; Connecticut Association of Independent Schools; National Catholic Education Association; New England Association of College Admissions Counseling; National Association of College Admission Counseling. Students are pooled from nearby 55 towns and 82 different middle schools in southern Connecticut. The school currently has 51 self-identified Black students (R. Goodwin, personal communication, October 2, 2020).

Statement of Goals and Purposes

Since 1942, the school embodies in its mission statement that it is a Jesuit, Catholic School of excellence forming young men of intellectual competence, who possess the conscience to make wise decisions, a compassion for others, and a commitment to justice in our global society. Furthermore, its vision statement states the school, strives to be a reflective community of faith, in which students revere their relationship with God and with one another. The school is committed to graduating transformational leaders who will respond to global and ecological challenges in an interconnected world marked by profound change (Home: Fairfield Prep).

Through a rich and rigorous college preparatory curriculum, the school strives to accomplish its mission and vision by demonstrating personal care and concern for all students, and by celebrating their unique gifts and diversity. In addition, the school aspires to: inspire in its
students a lifelong love of learning; offer its students the finest preparation for college; invite each student to deepen his relationship with God; encourage each student’s social, cultural and physical development; challenge its students to become leaders, living as men of competence, conscience, compassion, and commitment to justice (Home – Fairfield Prep, nd).

The social and academic programs seek to instill in each student the realization of his full potential within the nurturing environment of an Ignatian community—with maturity and growth students will be able to function wholly and positively within the complexities of the modern world, bringing to it moral insight, reasoned judgment, and a willingness to act as transformational leaders in the cause of human justice. Furthermore, the schools strives to develop each young man in its motto the Grad at Graduation—Open to Growth; Intellectually Competent; Religious; Loving; Committed to Doing Justice (Home – Fairfield Prep, nd).

**The Faculty**

The faculty defines and determines the quality of the school. The school seeks to attract and retain a faculty skilled in teaching, knowledgeable in their discipline, and committed to the fullest development of every boy. In addition to their teaching responsibilities, some faculty serve as coaches. The school currently employs 55–60 full-time faculty with the majority holding graduate degrees (Niche).

**The Administration**

The administration of the school comprises the President, Chief Financial Officer, Principal, Academic Dean, Director of Admissions, Dean of Mission and Ministry, and Special Assistant to the President. The Director of Diversity and Academic Support services (SEED Program) provides a dual role in the administrative and staff body. As the chief executive officer of the school, the President works with the Board of Directors to develop policies of the Board
of Directors and then has overall responsibility for the implementation of those policies, for the management of the school and for providing leadership to its educational mission and values consistent with the Roman Catholic faith and the Society of Jesus. The Chief Financial Officer provides guidance to the President of the school regarding the overall financial policies and business practices of the School. This position is responsible for all financial and business-related activities to assure effective and efficient resource management. The Principal is responsible for the policies, regulations, and procedures to ensure that all students are supervised and educated in a safe, traditional, Catholic and Jesuit college-prep environment that meets the approved curriculum and mission of the school. Responsibilities include scheduling, curriculum development, spiritual and co-curricular activities. The Academic Dean is directly responsible to the Principal for the implementation of the disciplinary policies and Rules of Conduct of the school. The Dean of Students serves as the Chief Attendance Officer and is responsible for coordinating on-campus and event supervision. The Director of Admissions coordinates and facilitates all admission inquiries and follows the application of a candidate until the student is accepted and enrolled in the school. In collaboration with the Director of Communication, oversees the institutional integrity of all publications, related marketing materials, press releases, branding, etc. of the school to prospective families. The Dean of Mission and Ministry promotes Fairfield Prep’s mission and to broaden the opportunities for Christian life experiences—to provide and coordinate spiritual, service and leadership programs within the context of communal responsibility and the experiences of religious faith. The Special Assistant to the President assists the President with special tasks, assignments, and projects. In the administrative body, the Director of Diversity and Academic Support Services (SEED) holds a dual position as both administrator and staff (Home – Fairfield Prep, nd).
**Director of Diversity and Academic Support Services (SEED Program)**

Having a diverse student body is an integral part of the school’s mission in forming young men of intellectual competence. The program is primarily focused on providing academic and social support services for students from diverse backgrounds, including socio-economic, racial, cultural, religious, and geographic. The Director of Academic Support Services interfaces with the Guidance Department to provide support for students who are academically at risk. The SEED Director works with faculty members who belong to the committee known as the Faculty Committee on Diversity to provide a racial and culturally inclusive environment for students. The academic component of the program hosts a summer program known as the SEED Academic Enrichment Program for rising 9th and 10th graders and provides additional academic support services during the school year. Students are assigned a Peer Tutor (member from the National Honor Society, who assists with subject related matter and serves as a big brother through the Brothers for Others Mentor Program. The SEED Director also supervises the racial affinity groups—African American Cultural Club (AACC), Asian Student Association (ASA), Hispanic Student Association (ASPIRA), and Respect, Education, and Inclusion for Gay and Non-Binary Students (R.E.I.G.N.). In sum, the SEED program, responds to the Jesuit challenge to educate diversity through the faculty, the student body, parents, and the community (Home – Fairfield Prep, nd).

**Data Analysis**

This study investigated the perceptions of the emotional support of Black males enrolled at a predominantly White Jesuit high school as it pertains to peers, teachers, and administrators. Data collected from 12 participants via semi-structured individual interviews, focus group, and personal reflective essays provided insight into their perception of emotional support. However,
by pre-determining the subsets of the responses, the researcher realized that participants’
responses were forced by if this method were to be employed. Instead, the researcher coded
participants’ responses for themes. Hence, the perspectives of emotional support of peers,
teachers, and administrators framed the results of this study. The researcher incorporated the
lived experiences of the perception of emotional support told by Black alums. The study
identified the perspectives through the theory of social support through the seminal work of
House (1981) and Gotlieb (1981). This theoretical framework served as the overarching lens and
provided the researcher with an avenue to answer the research questions in reference to the
perception of emotional support of young adult Black males that facilitated their transition to
higher education. This chapter presents the results of the three forms of emotional support
perceived by Black students as being received from peers, teachers, and administrators. This
chapter presents the result of the perception of emotional support as it pertains to the facilitation
to the institution of higher learning. The researcher depended on constant comparison to allow
for the most common themes and categories to emerge (Charmaz, 2008).

The following research questions were explored:

**Overarching Research Question**

**RQ.** What are the perceptions of young Black males regarding the emotional support
experienced at a predominantly White Jesuit high school that facilitated the transition to an
institution of higher learning?

**Research Sub Questions**

**RSQ1.** How do young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from
peers in a predominantly White Jesuit high school?
RSQ2. How did young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from teachers while attending a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

RSQ3. How did young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from administrators in a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

RSQ4. Which element of emotional support did young Black males perceive best facilitated transition to their institution of higher learning?

The remainder of the chapter will discuss the research setting, data collection, data descriptors, data analysis, an illustration of themes represented as tables and graphs, as well as study results, and summary.

Setting

The interviews for this study took place over the telephone, in person, and virtually via Zoom. Telephone interviews took place during mid-afternoon when the researcher was in a quiet office with the door closed. Participants were also similarly in a quiet location of their choice with no interruptions. Face-to-face interviews took place in a private room with the door closed at a location as determined by the participant. The focus group took place virtually via Zoom during mid-afternoon wherein participants entered the session using a pass code. A total of eight participants were currently in their undergraduate year pursuing their bachelor’s degree. Three participants were post-graduates and had been employed in their career field for a year. One of the participants was in a post-graduate program pursuing a doctoral degree. The lived experience of being a Black man who was previously enrolled in a predominantly White Jesuit High School may have played a role in the participants’ responses. The ability to answer the questions objectively may have been skewed due to their individual experiences (Velmans, 2010).
Therefore, each participant spoke directly about their personal experience and did not delve on one representative of the group.

**Data Collection**

A total of 12 Black male students aged 18–24 who graduated and transitioned to college from an all-male Jesuit high school between 2014–2018 were selected as the study participants. Purposeful convenience sampling was used, and all the participants came from a single school in the Jesuit Northeast Province (Appendix C).

McMillan and Schumacher (2001) argued that in purposeful sampling, the researcher tends to “select particular individuals or cases because they will be particularly informative about the topic” (p. 110). Participant recruitment required the researcher to personally contact the participants and offer a succinct introduction and overview of the study, highlighting the purpose and the commitment required of the participants.

Permission was granted to the researcher to access the school’s database (Appendix D). Names of participants were culled by the researcher based on who initiated continued contact with the researcher since their graduation. An email was sent to those individuals with an explanation of the study and the consent form (Appendix E). The initial request for participants did not yield the desired results, and therefore, a second email was sent, asking individuals to participate (Appendix F). Once the study sample was achieved (no more than 12 Black male students) and all consent forms were received (Appendix D), the researcher scheduled meetings. A total of 2 students met the researcher for an individual face-to-face interview, as they could not access Zoom, and the remaining 10 met the primary researcher via Zoom. There were 12 interviews in total, all held in private rooms with the door closed, at a location determined by the participant. Participants did not receive the interview questions beforehand. The interviews
lasted for no more than 45 minutes and were recorded using the record app on the researcher’s phone (for the two face-to-face participants) and the Zoom record function for the remaining participants. The interview protocol was designed by the researcher in advance of the questions. First, the researcher made sure that the questions were aligned with the study’s purpose and the intent to answer the research questions. The researcher wanted to make sure that the lived experience of the participants were captured in the process (Rubin & Rubin 2012). Secondly, the researcher constructed an inquiry based conversation by asking specific questions related to the study (Patton, 2015). Hence, the interview questions were based on the premise of what the researcher was hoping to gain from the questions (Maxwell, 2013). Thirdly, to gain feedback and to enhance the reliability as a research instrument, the researcher worked closely with her dissertation chair (Patton, 2015). The dissertation chair assisted with the vetting of the research questions by examining the protocol for structure and alignment with the theoretical framework. To further vet the process, the researcher asked a few people who were in similar environments and share similar experiences to “think aloud” through the questions (Maxwell, 2013 & Fowler, 1995). “This process of getting feedback from multiple sources aligns with the iterative nature of qualitative research whereby the researcher is seeking information, feedback, and closely listening for ways to continuously improve interviews to increase alignment with participants’ experiences and solicit relevant information for the study (Castillo-Montoya, 2016, p. 826). In the last phase of the protocol, the researcher piloted the interview questions—notes were taken as to ways to improve so that the execution of the questions are aligned with the study’s purpose (Maxwell, 2013). All 12 interviews were transcribed using the transcribe.wreally software.

Focus groups were appropriate for this study because they facilitated rapid information collection from individuals within a population and elicited participant’s perception of emotional
support in a place conducive to conversation. The single focus group included all 12 participants and was scheduled a week after all interviews. The participants were invited via email to participate in a Zoom conference (Appendix L). Two of the participants needed instruction on using Zoom, which the primary researcher provided. The focus group took no more than 45 minutes. The session was recorded using the Zoom record function and then transcribed using the transcribe.wreally software. Additionally, while the focus group was in process, the researcher recorded observations about the participants’ facial cues and body language in the researcher’s journal. To ensure the correctness of participants’ responses, the researcher sent them their individual transcripts to check for accuracy. The researcher wanted to explore the broad research questions in rich detail. To lay out the roadmap for the focus group, the research instituted a focus group protocol. First, the researcher gave a brief introduction to the group by reviewing the purpose, value, and details of the group. The researcher informed participants of the purpose of the group; the benefits of their participation to the Jesuit school community; and a reiteration that their participation will be anonymous and comments kept confidential. Secondly, the researcher set ground rules by allowing participants to know that there are no bad ideas; everyone gets a turn to speak; silence is not a bad thing; and to express disagreements respectfully. Thirdly, to bring a comfort level to the group, the researcher started with a warm-up activity. Participants were asked to share their names and some thoughts on the focus group topic. Lastly, the researcher proceeded with the research questions as set forth in the study (Appendix G).

The reflection essay question and prompts were sent via email to each participant after they consented to participate (Appendix H). Participants responded directly to the email with their answers to the essay prompts.
**Emotional Support from Peers, Teachers, and Administrators.** The emotional support from peers, teachers, and administrators were analyzed using initial, axial, and selective coding. In addition, the “constant comparison” method was used as a means to cull themes (Glaser and Straus, 1967). Table 4 shows the codes and operational definitions from peers. These codes had subthemes, resulting from the essay response, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. These subthemes were broken down into four major themes—each emergent theme and its operational definition within the context of this study appears in Table 5. Table 6 shows the codes and operational definitions from teachers. These codes had subthemes, resulting from the essay responses, semi-structured interviews and focus groups—each emergent theme and its operational definition within the context of this study appears in Table 7. Subsequently, Table 8 shows the codes and operational definitions from administrators from the essay response, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. These subthemes were broken down into three major themes—each emergent theme and its operational definition within the context of this study appears in Table 9. Prior to coding (identifying themes), the researcher used the perception of participants accounts of their experiences as it deems relevant to the research question. While reading through the interview transcript, the researcher looked for word repetition by reading the text and highlighted words or synonyms that were used frequently (D’Andrade, 1995). Using Indigenous categories, the researcher looked for terms that sounded familiar or unfamiliar (Patton, 1990). The researcher also used the constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) by reading respondents answers line by line and asking the question of what it is about and how it differs from previous statements (Charmaz, 1990). During the interview process, the researcher realized that participants used examples to describe their experiences. Therefore, the researcher used the concept of metaphors and analogies to search for themes across participants.
responses (D’Andrade 1995, Quinn and Strauss 1997). Lastly, the researcher utilized the pawing method by reading the transcripts thoroughly and highlighting responses with a different color highlighter—this allowed the researcher to gain deeper insight by looking at the data multiple times (Sandelowski, 1995). “By living with the data, investigators can eventually perform the interocular percussions test—which is where you wait for patterns to hist you between the eyes (Ryan & Bernard, nd). The researcher culled for themes to the point of theoretical saturation and researcher fatigue (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Once the themes were created, the codes were then created by taking a word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph and assigned an operational definition.

Table 4

*Emotional Support from Peers Code Names*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Code</th>
<th>Operational definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>To give assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Support</td>
<td>Ability to show empathy and compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Process of improving the quality of all human life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success/long term/short term</td>
<td>The accomplishments of one’s goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice (career; personal)</td>
<td>Opinion or recommendation offered as a guide to action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends/ Long Term.</td>
<td>A person attached to another by feelings of affection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal success</td>
<td>Achieving personal goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic success</td>
<td>Accomplishment of the learning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brotherhood</td>
<td>The quality of being brotherly; fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>People with whom one has social or professional contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>A group of people having particular characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comforting</td>
<td>Serving to alleviate a person’s feelings of grief or distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
<td>Susceptible to emotional attack or harm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared experiences</td>
<td>Seeing, hearing, or doing the same thing as someone else</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The initial coding phase yielded 14 codes which were from common responses from participants. These codes, as pertained to the perception of emotional support from peers yielded: support, emotional support, development, short term and long term success, personal
and career advice, long term friendship, personal success, academic success, brotherhood, connection, community, cultural awareness, comforting, vulnerability, and shared experiences.

With the data collection process, codes were then merged based on their similarities of the responses. Using the theoretical elements of emotional support by the seminal work of House (1981) and Gotlieb (1981), The researcher found common themes and combined the codes, resulting in four final emergent themes. The first code group included the themes of personal success, academic success, long and short-term success—these themes were categorized under personal and academic success. The second code group included the themes of shared experiences, brotherhood, connection, communities, and long and short-term friendship—these themes were categorized under brotherhood. The third code group included themes of support, emotional support, and advice—these themes were categorized under support. The fourth code group included themes of comforting, vulnerability, and development—these themes were categorized as development. The theoretical framework to interpret the study’s results was aligned with the discussion of codes and the explanation of emergent themes. The purpose of the study was to understand the perception of emotional support experienced through the lens of peers, teachers, and administrators. The theoretical framework lay the premise of the seminal work of House (1981) and Gotlieb (1981) theory of support as it pertains to emotional support. The theoretical framework played a very important role in defining the research questions.
Table 5

*Initial Code Groups and Final Emergent Themes- Emotional Support from Peers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Group</th>
<th>Final Emergent Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal success, academic success, long and short-term success</td>
<td>Personal and academic success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared experiences, brotherhood, connection, communities, long and short-term friendship</td>
<td>Brotherhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help, emotional support, advice</td>
<td>Help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comforting, vulnerability, development</td>
<td>Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final emergent theme from the data supports Datnow and Cooper (1997) who found the following:

the formal and informal peer networks of African American students in predominantly White elite independent schools support these students’ academic success, create opportunities for them to reaffirm their racial identities, and facilitate their adjustments to settings that are otherwise difficult for Blacks to fit into (p. 69).

RSQ1. Perception of Emotional Support from Peers

**Personal and academic success.** Personal and academic success was a code operationally defined as achieving personal goals and an accomplishment of the learning process. Personal and academic success was a recurring theme found throughout the interview data. Participant 12 stated:

*While not everyone is your best friend, I have fostered a group of six guys (African American) whom I speak to regularly—five years’ post-grad. I can attribute a substantial*
part of my personal and academic success to these men. We are competitive but most importantly we care about one another.

Participant 1 stated, "I knew I could call on them to help me study, provide advice on my career, or simply have my back.

**Brotherhood.** Brotherhood was operationally defined as the ability of being brotherly through fellowship. According to participants, the camaraderie they experienced from their peers was a perception of emotional support that was received while enrolled. Participant 5 stated:

> If I ever needed support I could go to my teammates. My teammates (within my grade) were there for me whenever I needed help whether it related to our sport or not. With “life” issues or more serious talks I could go to my four best friends who weren’t on the track team.

Participant 9 stated:

> In spite of the fact that we were no longer in the same classroom, I knew that I could call on them to help me study, provide advice on my career, or simply have my back.

> I made close friends who ended up becoming like my brothers, who grew up around my area. They were able to see and connect with me on a more personal level because they could relate to the things that were going on in a minority household compared to a Caucasian home.

**Help.** Help was operationally defined as to give assistance. In this case, peers emotional support from one another through the means of advisory and affirmation. Participant 9 stated:

> In spite of the fact that we were no longer in the same classroom, I knew that I could call on them to help me study, provide advice on my career, or simply have my back.

Participant 11 stated:
We shared our ups and downs with each other as far as our home and school life went. The main way in which we emotionally supported each other was by comforting one another when one experienced a form of discrimination.

Participant 2 stated:

I felt the emotional support of my peers outside of the school as well so much. So that one classmate allowed me to stay with him for a period of time and I’m very appreciative of that. So that just goes to show the form of emotional support.

Development. Development was operationally defined as the process of improving the quality of all human life. Participants in the study felt that the ability to show vulnerability to their peer provided a sense of comfort that aided in their emotional development. Participant 7 stated:

So for my peers, you know, I would say the ones that I surrounded myself (mostly Black) with I would say that I did feel a sense of affirmation...we all were able to relate to each other. We were an outlet for each other with situation that occur in the school.

Participant 3 stated:

In that community of colored men that was formed, we were taught my society not to show emotion, or weak actions such as crying. But within this group, nothing was of limits, at the end of the day we viewed ourselves as brothers and we had a mutual understanding that within school, we were all that we had in terms of emotional support.
The initial coding phase yielded 15 codes which were from common responses from participants. These codes, as pertained to the perception of emotional support from teachers yielded: support, emotional support, open door policy, accessibility, advice (career and/or personal), personal growth, academic growth, selective, relatable, help, availability, affirming, understanding, genuine, empathy, and development. With the data collection process, codes were then merged based on their similarities of the responses. The researcher found common themes and combined the codes, resulting in four final emergent themes. The first code group included the themes of support, emotional support, relatable, help, affirming, understanding, and empathy—these themes were categorized under *affirmation through emotional support*. The second code group included the themes of advice, personal growth, academic growth, and development—these themes were categorized under *personal and academic growth*. The third
code group included themes of open door policy and accessibility—these themes were categorized under accessibility. The fourth code group included themes of selective and favoritism—these themes were categorized as favoritism.

Table 7

*Initial Code Groups and Final Emergent Themes - Emotional Support from Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Group</th>
<th>Final Emergent Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support, emotional support, relatable, help, affirming, understanding, and empathy</td>
<td>Affirmation through emotional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice, personal growth, academic growth, and development</td>
<td>Personal and academic growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open door policy and accessibility</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective and Favoritism</td>
<td>Favoritism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final emergent theme from the data supports Patrick et al., 2004; Pianta & Allen, 2008; Pianta & Hamre, 2009) that emotional support from teachers extend beyond the scope of the classroom and comprises of teachers’ demonstration of genuine concern and care for their students, respect, desire to understand their feelings and perspectives as well as dependability.

**RSQ2. Perception of Emotional Support from Teachers**

**Affirmation through emotional support.** Affirmation through emotional support was operationally defined as giving assistance by demonstrating the ability to empathize and show compassion. Furthermore, to affirm one’s feeling within a relational context. Affirmation through emotional support was a recurring theme found throughout the interview data.

Participant 3 stated:
I think the support came from knowing that they had their students best interest at heart. I could always go to my teachers and ask for help, and they would be there when I needed it. I always knew that I could count on my teachers to look out for me.

Participant 7 stated, "I perceived emotional support from teachers as genuine during my time in high school.

**Personal and Academic Growth.** Personal and academic growth was defined as the guidance offered to excel in the classroom by taking an interest in students’ overall development.

Participant 2 stated:

*My teachers were constantly asking about my college process and what school I was leaning towards. I remember being in class, and students who have graduated would come back and visit. The teacher would remember their names and what schools they went to. I know that if I went back to visit, my favorite teachers would remember my name too.*

Participant 9 stated:

*They seemed to go the extra mile in terms of my education and getting to know me and even my parents during events. Even now as someone who comes back, interns, and visits, they continue to ask how I’m doing personally and what to be a part in every way.*

**Open door policy and availability.** Open door policy and availability was operationally defined as the means of fostering a physical environment that promotes a sense of openness and transparency. Participants in the study felt that the availability of teachers beyond the scope of

Participant 12 stated:
Many of my teachers welcomed me in their classrooms outside of class hours to speak with me, not only about academic related topics but just to be support for me and sometimes just give wise advice.

Participant 4 stated:

I was still fortunate to have teachers who opened their doors for me like before and after school...teachers were always there to lend a helping hand. They cared about me as a student and person.

**Selective and Favoritism.** Selective and favoritism was operationally defined as making the choice to assist a certain individual or group over another. Participants in the study felt that there were occasions where teachers only selected a handful of students to focus on. Participant 7 stated:

Overall, the emotional support from teachers taught me that people in places of power and influence will select a group that they will cater to, much like in politics, sports, and even religion in some cases. It is up to me to decide if that set is what I want to be a part of.

Participant 3 stated:

However, outside of that, most teachers had their “sets.” I argue that most teachers pick ten kids that they would focus on throughout the school year. This list is made up of top performers in the class, students whose personalities meshed well with the professor and one or two of the lowest performing student.
The initial coding phase yielded 13 codes which were from common responses from participants. These codes, as pertained to the perception of emotional support from administrators yielded: support, advice, personal growth, selective, help, availability, empathy, development, non-existent, pretty positive, curricular support, co-curricular support, and data-driven. The researcher found common themes and combined the codes, resulting in three final emergent themes. The first code group included the themes of support, empathy, help, pretty positive, curricular support, and co-curricular support—these themes were categorized under support. The second code group included the themes of advice, personal growth, and development—these themes were categorized under personal and academic growth. The third code group included themes of selective, non-existent, and data-driven—these themes were categorized under data-driven.
Table 9

Initial Code Groups and Final Emergent Themes - Emotional Support from Administrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Group</th>
<th>Final Emergent Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help, empathy, help, pretty positive, curricular support, and co-curricular support</td>
<td>Help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice, personal growth, and development</td>
<td>Personal and academic growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective, non-existent, and data-driven</td>
<td>Data-driven and selective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final emergent theme from the data supports Arrington et al., n.d.) that the presence of the administration should be integrated into all areas and not treated solely as an executive function.

RSQ3. Perception of Emotional Support from Administrators

Help. Help was defined as identifying with students and helping them in and out of the classroom. Help was a recurring theme found throughout the interview data. Participant 3 stated:

My most important emotional supporter was a teacher, who soon after became an administrator and would change my life for the better. I owe much of my current successes to her. She took what once was confused teenager and molded me into an intelligent and driven man with a wide breadth of knowledge and a yearning for continuous education through academic and life experiences.

Participant 9 stated,

In high school I got a lot of support from administration, both academically, and in my extracurricular activities on campus. They took time to get to know students and create relationships with them. The administrative staff at Fairfield Prep genuinely cared about
the well-being of the students. I think that getting this support made me realize that the authority figures at the school really cared about their students.

**Personal and Academic Growth.** Personal and academic growth was defined as the guidance offered to excel in the classroom by taking an interest in students’ overall development.

Participant 2 stated:

_They were able to give me the preparation and guidance that was necessary in helping me to succeed in College. They were very understanding of who I was and how that could assist even though there was difference in race._

Participants credited the SEED administrative program as a vital component in their success.

Participant 3 stated:

_The Director of the SEED program was also a huge support member during my time at Prep who pushed me academically and always made sure we were on top of everything. She had a rule where if you didn’t meet the set GPA in the S.E.E.D program then after school you had to go to the library to work on work or get extra help with a class. This tasked me in a way to never fall below that GPA so that I can participate in other activities after school, and I’m glad this helped me build my self-motivation._

Participant 8 stated:

_My most important emotional supporter was a teacher, who soon after became the SEED Director and would change my life for the better. I owe much of my current successes to her. She took what once was confused teenager and molded me into an intelligent and driven man with a wide breadth of knowledge and a yearning for continuous education through academia and life experiences._
Data-driven and selective. Data-driven and selective was defined as being selected as a means to fulfill the metrics of the school. Also, participants felt that their role was to engage in other facets of the school so understandably, emotionally supporting them was not a priority. Participants felt that their existence in the school benefitted the institutional goals of meeting the racially diverse numbers. Participant 1 stated:

I believe that there was an overemphasis from the administration as it pertains to emotional support. It seemed that even though it was a predominantly white school, there was spotlight on the minority to graduate. It seemed to be something that padded their numbers, but it was difficult to not see their support as a charity case.

Participant 3 stated:

Administrators seemed to be more hands on from a distance, while I was a student operations employee. They usually had our situation in mind when making certain decisions but would turn a blind eye to others. As we started to see more people of color in administrative roles, many of us including ourselves began to open up more to administrators.

Participant 7 stated:

This was virtually non-existent. I got the sense that my presence at my high school was to fulfill some racial quota. I appreciated the program that allowed me to attend my high school, but the administration overall seemed not to care about the well-being of its underrepresented students. From the administration, I got the sense that the program which got me there was a separate entity, having nothing to do with the institution. I didn’t feel that diversity was truly a value of the institution. When the existence of black
students in a space can be tied to a specific program and not because of institutional values (i.e., that diversity is something you just do), that is a problem.

Participant 9 stated: “Considering their role, they were in charge of the entire student body and function of the school community so understandably they didn’t have time for my problems or emotions whenever I needed someone to cheer me up or give me words of advice.”

**Emotional Support and Transition to Post-Secondary Schools.** To further assess the participants’ perspectives regarding emotional support, the researcher inquired which form of emotional support benefitted participants in their quest to post-secondary education. An identical procedure was used as previously mentioned in creating themes, codes, and operational definitions for the emotional support of peers, teachers, and administrators. Table 10 shows the codes and operational definitions from the emotional support that facilitated transition to post-secondary schools. These subthemes were broken down into three major themes—each emergent theme and its operational definition within the context of this study appears in Table 11.

**Table 10**

*Initial Code Groups Emotional Support and Transition to Post-Secondary Schools Code Names*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Code</th>
<th>Operational definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peers</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>People in age or grade level people living in the same place- having a particular characteristic in common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal validation</td>
<td>express understanding and acceptance of another person's internal experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotionally supported</td>
<td>A person who teaches especially in a school providing love, support, reassurance, acceptance, and encouragement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academically prepared</strong></td>
<td>ready for post-secondary study without the need for remedial assistance upon enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-management</strong></td>
<td>process of organizing and planning how to divide your time between specific activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Confidence booster</strong></td>
<td>to make someone feel more positive or more confident Action of giving someone support, confidence, or hope</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The initial coding phase yielded 9 codes which were from common responses from participants. These codes, as pertained to the perception of emotional support from administrators yielded: peers, community, personal validation, teachers emotionally supported, academically prepared, time-management, confidence booster, and encouragement. The researcher found common themes and combined the codes, resulting in two final emergent themes. The first code group included the themes of peers, community, personal validation, and emotionally, confidence booster—these themes were categorized under peer support. The second code group included the themes of teachers, emotionally supported, academically prepared, and time-management—these themes were categorized under teacher support. The third code group included themes of confidence booster and encouragement—these themes were categorized under encouragement.

Table 11

*Initial Code Groups and Final Emergent Themes- Emotional Support and Transition to Post-Secondary Education*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Group</th>
<th>Final Emergent Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peers, friends, classmates, community, personal validation, and emotionally supported, confidence booster</td>
<td>Validation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers, emotionally supported, academically prepared, and time-management, encouragement, mentoring</td>
<td>Mentorship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final emergent theme from the data supports (Scott et al., 2013) that facilitation of emotional support is important to foster transition to post-secondary education. The elements
involved in Black male’s success in high school are incumbent upon fostering a culturally responsive environment that factors in the participation of administrators, teachers, and peers.

**Validation.** Validation was defined as recognition or affirmation that a person or their feelings or opinions are valid or worthwhile. Participants in the study perceived their peers as an element of support that facilitated their transition to higher education. Participant 3 stated:

> I definitely feel like being supported by my peers at prep. Like I said before it was a very vulnerable time in my life. Being emotionally supported by my peers taught me how to choose my friends wisely because now we’re actually grown people and we’re responsible for our own actions. So being emotionally supported by my friends already gave me the feeling of like, okay. They would make me feel as good as I possibly could no matter if it was about school or not. They were here.

Participant 1 stated:

> My peers helped me with encouragement. It was a biggest element encouragement and either leading me to the right opportunity...you know helping me think through things that I may not want to have thought of just gaining their perspective. It was a it was a huge help especially in the college making decision process.

**Mentorship.** Mentorship was defined as guidance provided by a mentor, especially an experienced person in a company or educational institution. Participants in the study felt that teachers cared for them beyond the mere means of their existence in the classroom and affirmed who they were as a student as it pertains to pursuing post-secondary education. Participant 6 stated: “I think it was just letting me know that I was good enough to be in college just you know, the pursue a higher education behind the green and I got that through, you know, some
select teachers and then some of my peers.”. Furthermore, Participant 4 stated: “Teachers was the most influential just because when you go into college, your parents aren't going to be there as much for you educationally to kind of be there to remind you.”

**Discussion of Results**

The findings from the research shed light on the perceptions of Black males while they were enrolled at a predominantly White Jesuit high school. The results highlighted the perception of emotional support from peers, teachers, and administrators from Black males enrolled at a predominantly White institution.

Findings revealed that participants perceived the type of support and its source differently, with some having a greater impact than others. Black males in this study felt that teachers and peers were the elements of emotional support that best facilitated their transition to the institution of higher learning. Specifically, teachers provided the intellectual capacity for their success through academic content as well as social and emotional support. Peers offered emotional support through mentorship and a sense of belonging to the institution beyond just being a Black man. Furthermore, participants felt peers (mostly Black) served as academic and emotional accountability partners. The summation of the research sub-questions questions are as follows:

**RSQ1.** How do young Black males perceive the emotional support they received from peers while attending a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

**ANS1.1.** Black males in the study felt their peers played an important role in offering emotional support during their high school. Emotional support from peers came mostly in the form of help. Help was experienced during community extracurricular activities such as sports and school-wide plays. Additionally, Black males credited the optional summer program as an
opportunity where they were able to form friend groups. These friend groups became vital throughout the four years. However, it is important to note that the majority of Black males in the study alluded to their peer support as mostly coming from other Black males.

**RSQ2.** How do young African American males perceive the emotional support they received from teachers while attending a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

**ANS2.1.** Black males in this study felt that their teachers played an important role in offering emotional support through the means of academic excellence and emotional availability. Teachers were seen as people who were readily available to discuss academic matters by offering an open-door policy for students. Due to the open-door policy, participants there was a space where they could be vulnerable and share their emotional state. Teachers also affirmed their position as Black males in a predominantly White high school that, in turn, gave them a sense of belonging. Hence, teachers were viewed beyond someone who headed the classroom to provide academic content, they were seen to offer a safe space for emotional vulnerability.

**RSQ3.** How do young African American males perceive the emotional support they received from administrators while attending a predominantly White Jesuit high school?

**ANS3.1.** Black males in this study felt they were least supported by the school’s administration. Participants in the study perceived that the emotional support received was not fully genuine and question whether their position in the school was data driven. Participants credited the school administration team for providing the resources and the opportunity to excel academically, however, there was a sense of emotional disconnect. Therefore, the emotional support from administrators was perceived mainly in the form of providing the necessary resources. The perception that their mere existence in the school was to fulfill a racial quota and also to drive the diversity numbers permeated throughout participants responses. Lastly, the
emotional support that was credited through the administration came from the support that participants felt they received from the SEED diversity program—they stated, however, that it was simply not enough.

**RSQ4.** Which element of emotional support do young Black males perceive best facilitated the transition to the institution of higher learning?

**ANS4.1.** Black males in this study felt that teachers and peers were the elements of social support that best facilitated the transition to the institution of higher learning. Teachers provided the intellectual capacity for their success through academic content as well as social and emotional support. Peers were vital in offering emotional support through affirming a sense of belonging in the institution through community and encouragement. Furthermore, participants felt that their peers (mostly Black) served as academic and emotional accountability partners.

**Summary of Results**

The qualitative data collection from 12 participants revealed the perception of emotional support experienced by Black males enrolled in a predominantly White Jesuit high school in and their transition to post-secondary education. It shows that the different elements of emotional support from the constituents in the school (peers, teachers, and administrators) is imperative to a student’s success. On the other hand, the lack of emotional support can lead to a sense of confusion as it pertains to students feeling as if they belong within the institution.

Chapter five concludes the study, discusses the conclusions and limitations, and offers recommendations for practice and further research.
Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

Summary of Results

The purpose of the qualitative case study was to examine the perceptions of adult Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at predominantly White Jesuit high schools that facilitated their transition to an institution of higher learning. There has been research on the experience of Black males in predominantly White institutions; however, there is a dearth of research on the type of emotional support that Black males perceived they received directly from the institution (Fahle et al., 2017; Flood et al., 2017; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2017). A goal of this study was to give voices to the experiences of adult Black males visible for practitioners, policymakers, and in the literature. Due to racial marginalization, these students are often at risk of having their perspectives of emotional support diminished or minimized, which may cause a sense of isolation. The Black alumni desired to share their experiences so that change could be implemented to benefit this underserved population. The researcher sought to highlight the lived experiences of emotional support of Black males as it pertains to peers, teachers, and administrators; as an enrolled student first and the transition to an institution of higher education second. The researcher saw that some Black alumni felt emotionally supported by their peers, teachers, and administrators. In contrast, this researcher also found that participants in the study felt the lack of emotional support due to the misunderstanding of the emotional plight of Black males in predominantly White institution.

The research approach used in this study was a qualitative case study (Maxwell, 2005).

The research population consisted of 12 Black students who graduated from an all-male Jesuit high school between the ages of 18–24 and transitioned to college between 2014–2018. The research participants came from a single school in the Jesuit Northeast Province. The
participant sample was obtained using the purposive convenience sampling method. Three instruments were used to collect data: (a) researcher-developed interview protocol (Appendix F); (b) researcher-developed focus group protocol (Appendix G), and (c) a two-page participant essay that outlined the demographic profile (i.e. education attainment, age, and types of emotional support from peers, administration, and teachers) that immediately came to mind which helped them transition to an institution of higher learning (Appendix H). Using a qualitative case study approach for coding, the researcher triangulated the data from the personal essay reflections, focus groups, and interviews. This method was used to for data collection to ensure validity to the findings. The findings were presented and discussed in Chapter 4.

The majority of respondents were aged 18–24. Eight of the twelve respondents are currently enrolled in a four-year college and/or university bachelor’s degree, their first. Three of the twelve respondents are in their first year working in a career field. One of the twelve respondents is currently pursuing a doctoral degree.

**Summary of Key Findings**

Based on the themes that arose from the four data strands, the researcher believed that a feeling of belonging to the institution plays a vital role as it pertains to emotional support of Black students.

**Finding. Emotional Support from Peers**

Most participants credited their peers with their personal and academic success. In addition, Black males felt a sense of brotherhood through camaraderie. The sense of brotherhood was met in and out of the classroom. Black males perceived the help they received from their peers through the means of advisory and affirmation as a form of emotional support. They knew that their peers were available to provide academic and social assistance. The help also came
through the means of supporting each other by just having a shared racial identity. Lastly, the vulnerability that they were able to show to their peers was seen as a means of developing their overall character and provided a sense of comfort that enhanced their perception of emotional support.

**Finding. Emotional Support from Teachers**

Participants in the study felt that teachers showed emotional support by demonstrating the ability to empathize and show compassion. This affirmation through emotional support was felt by participants as they felt that teachers genuinely had their best interest at heart. Teachers were seen as ones who provided for their personal and academic growth while enrolled. Moreover, beyond the scope of academics, they were seen as taking an interests in their overall development. Teachers were able to provide this type of support according to participants through the means of having an open door policy and being readily available. It is important to note that participants felt that some teachers selected certain students to whom they had allegiance, hence playing favorites.

**Finding. Emotional Support from Administrators**

Participants felt that they were emotionally supported by the administrators in and out of the classroom. Administrators supported Black males by making the time to build relationships that became vital in their academic and life experiences. The SEED Director was often named by participants as the administrator whom they had direct contact. Despite the ability to connect with students, participants felt that the administration at times, were seen as data-driven and selective. They believed that their existence in the school benefitted the institutional goals by meeting the racially diverse numbers. Even though the administration may have had the right intention, participants felt that their existence at the school was a means to pad their numbers.
They were perceived to be more hands on from a distance, therefore lacking the types of emotional support needed.

**Finding. Elements of Emotional Support and Transition to Post-Secondary Schools**

Participants felt that the elements of emotional support and transition to post-secondary schools was seen through peer validation and teacher mentorship. Participants felt that the mentorship from peers was a means of academic and social encouragement. This form of encouragement led them to the right opportunity by being able to share their different life’s perspectives. In addition, teachers emotionally supported participants through mentorship and cared about them beyond the physical classroom setting. Through mentorship, teachers were able to emotionally support participants by letting them know they had what it takes to be in college.

**Interpretation of the Findings**

This study confirmed Gotlieb and House’s (1981) theory of social support through the lens of emotional support as it pertains to Black males enrolled in a predominantly White Jesuit school. It was evident from the responses that Black males’ perception of emotional support from their peers, teachers, and administrators played a vital role in their high school experiences as well as their transition to an institution of higher learning. Gotlieb and House (1981) confirmed this finding that the lack of emotional support adds to situational stressors, hence providing a sense of inadequacy and loss. The measurement of social support was also coined by Gotlieb and House (1981), who noted that there are two forms of support, tangible and intangible, that participants receive from an institution. In this study, participants perceived tangible support in the form of academic and financial resources received from their peers, teachers, and administration. Positive emotional connectivity and affirmation they received from peers, teachers, and administrators was perceived as intangible. Emotional support is facilitated
by empathy, reassurance, liking, and respect (Cohen et al., 2000). The theory of support lends itself to this study as it is concentrated on the interpersonal transactions between groups of people which reduce stress and enhance coping (Sarason & Sarason, 1985, p. 7). Therefore, findings from the study demonstrated that it is critical that Black males have a strong support system in predominantly White Jesuit high schools. Participants from the study reported a positive experience from the environment based on the notion that the different constituents in the institution were emotionally supportive. It is important to note that Black males respond well to a culturally responsive environment that allows them to feel safe in the school and supported by the larger community. This confirms Kurtessis et al.’s finding (2015) that the relational concepts of an individual in their environment lead to their success. Additionally, this finding also confirms Simmons’ (2012) study on Black males who found that it is important for the professional development of amongst school constituents as it pertains to the lived experience of Black males. Considering the diversity in culture, racial discrimination was the most evident element in predominantly White institutions (Allen, 2014; Banks & Obiakor, 2015; Cooper et al., 2018; Holst, 2016). Banks and Obiakor (2015) found that creating a culturally responsive classroom is vital to ensure the academic success of students. They emphasized the need for professionals to provide certain provisions to meet the needs of students who are not within the normative group. Holst (2016) studied the experience of Black alumni who were enrolled in a predominantly White high-performing high school and found that a positive school experience was only obtained through an environment that had good peer-peer, teacher-student, and administrator-student relationships. Similarly, Mendelson (2016) found that supportive relationships with adults at school play a critical role in student engagement among adolescents.
Although there has been a dearth of research exploring the emotional support of Black adult males enrolled in a predominantly White Jesuit school, studies and literature have explored the experiences of Black adult males within predominantly White institutions (PWI). Topics of studies and literature include: the perception and action of predominantly White institutions on the emotional support of Black males, Black males and emotional support in post-secondary schools, and emotional support of Black males in predominantly White schools. The data collected through this research suggested that Black male students who attend predominantly White Jesuit high schools perceive emotional support differently from their White peers. As participants engaged in conversation about their experience with emotional support, they were allowed to reflect upon their experience as Black males (student) in a predominantly White Jesuit school. The learning experiences from this research signified the importance of tangible and intangible emotional support for Black males from peers, teachers, and administrators.

The learning experience of emotional support identified through this research was the experience provided to students through their peer group. Several of the participants felt that their peers offered significant support. However, it was noted that this kind of support primarily came from other Black males who shared similar experiences. Arrington (n.d.) confirmed that Black students in predominantly White schools mostly find support among their peer group. Furthermore, to increase this type of support, the number of students of color must increase. To do so, schools should be committed to the recruitment and retention efforts of Black students to bolster their sense of belonging in the institution. In the book Why do all the Black Kids Sit Together in the Cafeteria, Beverly Tatum summarizes that peers who have similar experiences tend to stick together as a “buffer”, hence acting as “protective force”. She concluded that it also serves as a way to affirm one’s own identity.
The research identified the perception of emotional support of Black alumni with regard to teachers. Most participants felt they received emotional support from their teachers, but mostly, from the ones whom they were able to racially identify with. As stated in the review of the literature, it is important for predominantly White schools to focus on the recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Milner (2006) agreed with this reflection and stated that the presence of Black teachers in predominantly White schools bolsters cultural responsiveness, the formation of culturally responsive relationships, presence of mentors and role models and people who can connect with parents more easily to connect with parents, as well as serve as a counter-narrative on behalf of Black students, and also provide culturally congruent instructional practices.

Emotional support of administrators was also perceived by Black alumni in this study. Black students who feel emotionally supported by their school environment are likely to term their experience as positive. Wolfe (2013) posited that the under-representation of administrators of color in higher education is seen as one of the greatest challenges in predominantly White institutions. Furthermore, policies that are currently in place should ensure that the recruitment and retention of administrators of color is vital (Wolfe 2013). Additionally, administrators should ensure that policies that support a culturally competent curriculum where students are represented are in place. The NEA Human and Civil Rights Department (2008) highlighted four basic skills that are needed to ensure cultural competence in schools. Schools that are committed in this area should show a sign of valuing diversity, be culturally self-aware, understand the dynamics of cultural interactions, and institutionalize cultural knowledge and adaptation to diversity. These were all confirmed in this study.

Valuing the racial diversity of Black students is critical in perceived emotional support and was confirmed in this study. Participants mentioned they were able to relate to teachers who
they felt understood them culturally. This may be in part due to belonging on a sports team or simply due to an open-door policy which made them feel affirmed as a Black man.

Major findings from the study showed teachers were seen as the most affirming for the emotional support of Black males. However, they had to pick and choose who they associated with as some teachers were perceived as missing the ball, a hit or miss on affirming their position as a Black man. Mendelson (2016) mentioned that positive relationships between teacher and student were important; however, the true exploration of what this should look like has not been explicitly explored in the literature. It is clear that teachers should create spaces that are all-encompassing for students beyond academic instruction. Because teachers are seen as instructional practitioners, studies have shown that connecting cultural competence with pedagogy is a way to connect with students. Ware’s (2006) study focused on what is known as the warm demander pedagogy, a pedagogical approach steeped in the components of culturally responsive teaching. A teacher’s caring response to students reinforces their position in the environment and uplifts their voices in the larger community (Ware, 2006). The combined intersections of cultural/racial identity, warm demander pedagogy, and culturally responsive pedagogy serve as a true affirmation (Ware, 2006). Creating a sense of security between a student-teacher relationship is shown when Black culture is celebrated and acknowledged (Mundy, 2014).

Similarly, the literature supports the need for administrators to be fully engaged in the life of Black males through a targeted approach (Davis, 2015). However, new to the research are ways in which this approach is seen. In the research, Black males felt that administrators should go beyond the approach of providing resources and aim to create a more personal connection. Furthermore, a deeper analysis of the type of support that is warranted by the administrators
should be examined. A recent study, *The Black Male Achievement Gap: Strategies for Intervention* posited that the beginning of change in a school starts with effect school leadership (Koppie, 2017). Koppie suggested creating a single school culture, changing curriculum, and improving non-academic support within the school by changing the curriculum. New to the literature are ways that the administration at predominantly White schools can support Black males. Rastegari and Shafer (2018) proposed six ways that principals can build relationships with students across races: (1) Establish a collective identity for your school that includes teachers, students, staff, and families; (2) empathize with students and parents, even if it is nearly impossible to fully understand the challenges they face; (3) invest time in relationships with families; (4) push for agency; (5) assume positive intent on the parts of parents and emphasize the positive work of their children.

In conclusion, most of the interpretations were confirmed by the literature. Throughout the study, emotional support from peers, teachers, and administrators was discussed. However, new literature calls for a deeper examination of significant types of emotional support from administrator For example, some participants in the research felt they were not emotionally supported by the administrators and their relationship with certain teachers were of the “hit or miss” kind.

**Limitations**

A major limitation of this study was its sample size. Due to the small sample size, the findings from the research are not transferable to other institutions. The generalizability of the research is only applicable to the findings in this study and cannot be applied to a larger population. The researcher’s use of a small sample size was due in part to data saturation. Presumably, adding more participants to the study will not yield additional perspectives (Glaser
& Straus, 1967). Although the size is small, the researcher sought to capture thick rich data about
the emotional experience of young Black males. With Jesuit, high schools represented across all
borders of the United States, the study identified participants from the North-east section of the
United States. Lastly, there may be a gap in time since participants graduated high school, thus
rendering their personal account of their high school experiences possibly less clear. However,
narrative inquiry remains a valid tool for analysis given its ability to reflect on a person’s lived
experience as it relates to them (Clandinin & Huber, 2010).

Participants were selected through convenience sampling using social media referrals
(Facebook and LinkedIn), word of mouth, and emails. Participants were asked to tell their stories
as they deem necessary; therefore, limiting the number of participants was a key factor in the
research.

Lastly, the limitation to the study was the role of the primary investigator. To ensure
trustworthiness, the researcher used data triangulation via multiple data sources such as essay
reflections, individual interviews, and focus groups. Moreover, the use of member check was
done through the feedback of data from participants. This confirmed the interpretation was
correct. Furthermore, the researcher employed reflexivity through the use of a diary. The diary
was used to examine the researcher’s conceptual lens, note explicit and implicit assumptions,
preconceptions and values, and be aware of how these affected the research in all phases of the
study (Korjtens & Moser, 2018).

**Recommendations**

After reviewing the National Education Association (NEA) policy brief on *Promoting
Educators’ Cultural Competence to Serve Culturally Diverse Students*, the researcher
recommends that predominantly White Jesuit schools become more culturally competent.
Cultural competence promotes the idea that schools provide educators with the skills and knowledge needed to serve diverse students, in this case, Black males. As supported by the National Education Association (2020) Educators should value the “diversity within diversity” of these students by tapping into their cultural backgrounds and customs. Second, educators need to be culturally self-aware by examining their background, knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, and interests that may shed light on how they choose to interact with students. Third, educators need to understand the interplay between current experiences and the historical context in which Black men shape their experiences. Fourth, educators should be definite in creating a framework of racial diversity that is embedded within the infrastructure of the institution as it pertains to curricular, intra-curricular, and extracurricular initiatives (National Education Association, 2020).

“As schools continue to seek measure and implement interventions aimed at improving school climate, consideration should be given to grounding these efforts in a multidimensional conceptualization of climate that values student perspectives and includes elements of both engagement and safety” (Gase et al., 2017). The history of the lack of trust that Black males have for educational authorities has been a topic of discussion for many years (Jeffries, 2019). Furthermore, the relationship between peer groups amongst boys plays a vital role in whether or not they move on to post-secondary education (Thomas & Weber, 2001). Moreover, peer group relationships extend beyond the curricular aspect of a school. In other words, it provides companionship, feelings of belonging, help, personal validation, and emotional support (Kindermann, 2015).

To continue the support of peer groups, the researcher recommends that schools continue to provide the opportunities for peer gathering through the facilitation of on-boarding programs
especially for students entering their first year. Second, establishing a parent partnership between Black families during students’ tenure, and lastly, creating a Black male support program with Black alumni and current students is recommended. This support can be offered through the Black male mentorship program. “These programs allow for students to be supported by adults who come from the same culture and are successful as professionals in careers” (Koppie, 2017, p. 17).

Administrators should be vigilant during the hiring process and hire more administrators and faculty of color. Professional development around the topic of cultural competence for Black males should also be discussed during professional development seminars in a year.

In order for educational reforms around diversity to materialize, schools should be aware of the policy change that needs to happen in these institutions. The NEA points out that there are three things that schools can do in order to increase cultural competence: (a) pre-service education, (b) ongoing professional development, and (c) licensure. Teachers in predominantly White Jesuit schools should be required to take cultural diversity training as a part of the on-boarding process upon hire. Once employed, teachers should be required to participate in quarterly training sessions on ways to create lesson plans that meet the needs of Black students. Last, but not the least, predominantly White Jesuit high schools should create a licensure program by providing the opportunity for teachers to earn a certification in diversity, equity, and inclusion training.

Moreover, it is vital that schools implement administrative and teaching policies that speak directly to Black students. Hurst (2016) highlights ten things that schools can do today to primarily focus on the learning and emotional experiences of Black students. Schools, according to Whickham (2016), should be ready to suspend lessons that do not create a parallel to the lives
of Black students. For instance, he uses the example of covering the unit on protest and only using a single story that may not relate to Black students. A better way to introduce this idea in the classroom will be to discuss all protests including ones that are relevant to Black lives. Additionally, schools need to create safe spaces for students where they feel free to openly express themselves. These safe spaces will create an atmosphere of empathy where Black students can discuss the world around them and help school personnel get a sense of their emotions around particular subjects. Safe spaces are areas where Black students can openly discuss their sentiments around issues that matter the most to administrators and teachers.

The encouragement of family participation is also vital in emotionally supporting Black males in predominantly White Jesuit schools. Parents of Black males know them best and can help the institution in formulating ideas that best serve the needs of their sons (Whickham, 2016). The space for parents to have a voice in the education of their sons not only empowers them but put their sons in an advantageous position in the schools.

A significant finding in the study alludes to the relationship that students have with faculty. This may be due to the fact that the majority of their time is spent in the classroom. This researcher recommends faculty extend their scope of understanding of Black male matriculation so that they can fully understand the individual need of each student. Wallace and Bell (1999) proposed the importance of Black male connection to faculty in their study Being Black at a Predominantly White University. Their findings suggested that positive contact with faculty played an integral role in whether or not minority students (Black students) persevere in higher education. Faculty in schools should avoid the assumption that all Black males have similar experiences, therefore eliminating the need to give a generalized statement for a situation. Moreover, in continuation of individualizing the student, faculty should display an interest in the
singular experience of the Black student and not treat them as someone who is “representative of his entire race”.

The implementation of a racial literacy curriculum is recommended by the researcher because this contributes to students having the opportunity to appreciate diverse and unfamiliar experiences, facilitate problem-solving with the community, and create opportunities to talk about race (Vetter, 2014). The NEA confirms that this form of instruction serves to validate students’ cultural identity in classroom practices and instructional materials, acknowledge students’ differences as well as their commonalities, educate them about diversity, promote equity and mutual respect, access their ability and achievement validly, foster a positive interrelationship among students, their families, the community and school, motivate students to become active participants in their learning, encourage students to think critically, challenge students to strive for excellence, and assist students in becoming socially and politically conscious.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

In light of the limitations identified and the findings of the study, the following are recommended for future research:

1. A broader study that explores the perception of emotional support of marginalized groups enrolled at other predominantly White Jesuit high schools and their transition to post-secondary education. This study used a small sample size with only Black adult males, therefore the findings are not transferable. Replicating this same type of study in other Jesuit schools with the minority population will enable a deeper understanding into the lived experience of groups that are marginalized (Given, 2008).
2. A broader study that explores the Perception of emotional support of marginalized groups enrolled at predominantly White independent high schools and their transition to post-secondary education. Similarly, this study took place at a private Jesuit school, hence there are other predominantly White institutions that have the same type of demographical make-up. Replicating this type of study in other Jesuit schools with the minority population will enable a deeper understanding of the lived experience of groups that are marginalized (Given, 2008).

3. Exploratory studies that examine the perception of emotional support from the administrative leadership for any marginalized population within an institution. Based on the current study participants felt a dearth of support from the administration which was perceived to be based on their lack of understanding of the Black male. Further study that explores the administrative leadership and their perspective of Black males will provide a deeper insight (Henderson, 2008).

4. An additional topic that needs a closer examination of the lived experience of Black males in predominantly White Jesuit schools is the investigation of Black male intersectionality. This includes an examination of exploring Black males in the silos of gender identity, socioeconomic status (Cannon, 2014; Johnson III, 2015; Morales, 2014; Womble, 2018).

**Recommendations for Alternative Research Methods**

This qualitative study employed a data collection process that used essay reflections, semi-structured individual interviews, and a focus group interview. An alternative method to data collection that could be considered in a similar study would be what is known as a *walking interview*. 
Evans and Jones (2010) described the walking interview, a type of participatory research, known as the GIS (Geographic Information System) technique, which allows participants to respond in the environment to where the research is based. This type of interview brings into consideration the importance of environmental factors such as an individual’s local connection which has the potential to shape the discussion. Secondly, participatory research, as highlighted by Bergold and Thomas (2012) heavily involves participants in the conceptualization of the study and its design. Hence, the purpose, study significance and questions are formulated in a collaborative effort with both the researcher and participants.

Implications

It is warranted that predominantly White Jesuit high schools continue to explore ways to meet the underrepresented Black students in their environment. It is evident from the study that Black males regard a positive school environment to one that aims to meet their emotional needs. The following section provides implications for peers, teachers, and administrators.

Implications for Peers

It is important that the school fosters a community that lends itself to a sense of racial and cultural awareness. Participants in the study felt that, although they were supported by peers, there was still a lack of cultural sensitivity. They felt that their peers were not able to relate to them based on the notion that they did not know the kind of support that was needed due to their upbringing and merely what it meant to be a successful Black man. Therefore, schools need to devise a more racially and culturally based curriculum that brings more positive awareness to the Black diaspora. Celebrating solely the contributions of Black people during Black History Month defeats the sense of reducing the implicit bias that participants referred to when describing the emotional support peers. Therefore, to enhance this phenomenon, the lived experiences of Black
people should be taught and celebrated on a year-round basis within the curriculum as well as during school-wide assemblies (Bell, 2014).

**Implications for Teachers**

Participants in the study highly regarded the positive relationship they had with teachers. Participants spoke about teachers’ willingness to emotionally meet their curricular and extracurricular needs. Relationship building between teacher and student was highly regarded by the participants. To further the cultivation of this relationship, an implied approach could be more professional development for teachers to educate them on Black males and the different environmental factors that play a role in their lives. This form of cultural awareness can create an atmosphere where Black students feel valued and safe (Holst, 2016). Relationship-building between Black males and positive teacher relationships are a vital part of their educational experiences (Jeffries, 2019). “Black males need caring teachers who are equipped to support their educational endeavors, and who have been adequately trained to educate them” (Jeffries, 2019, p. 45). Furthermore, Jeffries (2019) contends that bias and cultural diversity pedagogy training will build a sense of trust and show support that will enhance the positive school experience for Back males.

**Implications for Administrators**

Participants in the study felt least supported by the administrators. The administrators were given credit for providing the opportunity for Black males to attend a school with such academic rigor. Due to their academic rigor, participants were able to attend an institution of higher learning on an even playing field with their peers. However, while enrolled in the school, participants felt disconnected from the administrative team. This implies that administrators form a student advocacy group that can help inform best practices. These groups will serve to
give them a voice and share their experiences with the main agents that implement change. The group can serve as a means to highlight ways that diversity can be implemented in the curriculum as well as help plan programmatic events for the school (Gase et al., 2017).

**Conclusion**

Franklin D. Roosevelt has said, “Education in its true sense — is our best protection against unreasoning prejudice and panic-making fear, whether engendered by special interest, illiberal minorities, or panic-stricken leaders”. Therefore, education is key to eliminate misinterpretation and uncertainties. Hence, it is incumbent that all predominantly White schools create a racially inclusive environment that explicitly emotionally supports marginalized Black males.

The findings revealed that most respondents perceived emotional support directly from peers and teachers. These factors were also real as they related to the elements of emotional support that facilitated their transition to post-secondary education. However, most respondents perceived emotional support from administrators nearly not enough to validate their position as a Black student in a predominantly White Jesuit high school.

This qualitative study on the perceptions of emotional support of young Black males in a predominantly White Jesuit high school as it pertains to emotional support from peers’ teachers, and administrators found the majority support came from peers and teachers but found it lacking from administrators. They felt that the administrators were far removed from their everyday existence in the school and only served the sole purpose of providing material resources such as financial aid and the opportunity to attend the school.

This research contributed to an understanding of the experiences of Black males enrolled in a predominantly White Jesuit high schools, and its findings and recommendations can serve as
a basis for future research projects for marginalized Black males in other Jesuit institutions. Second, this research can serve as a basis for future research projects for marginalized Black males in independent schools. Lastly, this research can serve as a basis for future research for marginalized Black groups in any given institution.

It is also anticipated that the experiences of the participants could be used to develop best practices for policymakers, administrators, and teachers that could contribute to a more inclusive environment for marginalized groups.

It is clear from the findings that Black males enrolled in a predominantly White Jesuit High school perceive emotional support through their peers, teachers, and administrators – most pronounced was the support they received from their teachers. Teachers lay the foundation for the positive experience of Black males; however, they should not be seen as the sole bearers of this responsibility. In order for teachers to provide the best social and academic experience for students, the administration needs to equip teachers with the necessary tools to meet the needs of these students. The current racial climate in our country has called attention to Black Lives and Black men in particular. This is a pivotal moment for predominantly White Jesuit high schools to provide emotional support for Black male students so they may become elevated in a space where they are underserved. The affirmation of Black male students is incumbent upon the institution to critically reflect and have honest conversations about whether they are meeting the desired outcome of this racial group.
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Appendix A: Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CONSENT TO BE PART OF A RESEARCH STUDY

1. KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCHERS AND THIS STUDY

Study Title: The Perception of Emotional Support of Young Adult Black Males at Predominantly White Jesuit High Schools and Their Transition to Post-Secondary Education

Study Sponsor: There is no study sponsor.

Principal Investigator: Alecia Thomas, MA College of Arts & Sciences, University of Bridgeport

1.1 Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to take part in this research study as you graduated from a Jesuit high school and are a Black male. Participation is voluntary.

Things you should know:

- The purpose of this research study is to investigate the perception of emotional support of Black males enrolled in a predominantly White Jesuit High school and their transition to post-secondary education. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to participate in in-depth interviews and focus groups for the duration of a month. The interviews will take approximately 30–60 minutes.

- There is no risk or discomfort associated with this study.

- The study will serve as best practices for Jesuit schools with predominantly White populations. It will also inform practice for administrators and faculty.
Participation in this research study is voluntary. You do not have to participate and you can stop at any time. Whatever you decide will not be held against you. Please take the time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to participate or not.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

2.1 What is the research study about and why are we doing the research study?

This study seeks to investigate the perceptions of young adult Black males regarding the emotional support experienced at predominantly White Jesuit high schools that facilitated transition to an institution of higher learning. Studies on Black males in predominantly White schools have been conducted in the past but none as in relation to Jesuit schools. This study intends to inform policymakers, administrators, teachers, and parents on the stressors experienced by Black males in predominantly White Jesuit high schools to inspire these adults within these institutions to find ways to support success through their understanding of their academic experience.

2.2 How long will the research last?

We expect that you will be in this research study for one month.

2.3 How many people will be studied?

We expect about 12 people in this research study. We expect that you will be in this research study for one month.

3. WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY?

3.1. What happens if I say yes, I want to be in this research?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in in-depth individual interviews and focus groups. The interviews will take place over a month’s span, in January 2020 and February 2020. Audio recordings will be used during the interviews. You will interact with the researcher and other participants in the study. Interviews will take place at the Fairfield University Library, Shelton Public Library, or a place of your choice. The researcher will conduct two separate interviews per person during this process.

3.2. What happens if I say no, I do not want to be in this research?
You may decide to not participate in the research, and it will not be held against you.

3.3 What happens if I say yes, but I change my mind later?

If you agree to participate in this research now, you can stop at any time, and this decision will not be held against you.

4. INFORMATION ABOUT STUDY RISKS AND BENEFITS

4.1. Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?

*There are no physical risks associated with this study. There is, however, the potential risk of loss of confidentiality. Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential; however, this cannot be guaranteed. Some of the questions we will ask you as part of this study may make you feel uncomfortable. You can refuse to answer any of the questions and can also take a break at any time during the study. You can stop your participation in this study at any time.*

4.2 Will being in this study help me anyway? *There are no direct benefits for you for participating in this study.*

5. CONFIDENTIALITY OF SUBJECT RECORDS

5.1. What happens to the information you collect?

Efforts will be made to limit your personal information, including in this research study, to people who have a need to review this information. For instance, organizations that may inspect and copy your information include the IRB and other representatives of this organization.

5.2. Can I be removed from the research without my consent?

The person in charge of the research study or the sponsor can remove you from the research study without your approval. Possible reasons for removal include failure to attend the interviews and follow-up sessions.
6. CONTACT INFORMATION

6.1. Who can I talk to?

If you have questions about this research (e.g. concerns, complaints, or think the research has harmed you in any way), you may contact Alecia Thomas, primary investigator at 860-315-2874 or althomas@my.bridgeport.edu.

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), you may talk to UB’s IRB Administrator at (203) 576-4974 or irb@bridgeport.edu.

7. RECORD OF INFORMATION PROVIDED

7.1. What documents will be given to me?

Your signature in the next section means that you have received copies of all of the following documents:

- This “Consent to be Part of a Research Study” document.

8. SIGNATURES

Signature Block for Capable Adult: Long

DO NOT SIGN THIS FORM AFTER THIS DATE \rightarrow December 2020

__________________________
Signature of subject

__________________________
Printed name of subject

__________________________
Signature of person obtaining consent

Date
Printed name of person obtaining consent  

Form Date
Appendix B: Permission to Conduct Research

October 17, 2019

Ms. Alecia Thomas  
Director of Diversity & Academic Support Services  
Fairfield College Preparatory School  
1073 North Benson Road  
Fairfield CT, 06824  

Dear Alecia,

Thank you for sharing your doctoral thesis titled, “The Perception of Emotional Support of Young Adult Black Males Enrolled at Predominantly White Jesuit High Schools and Their Transition to Post-Secondary Education.” We understand you will be conducting your research at Fairfield College Preparatory School. This is significant work. As you know, the recent 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus wrote about the importance of the universal mission of reconciliation and justice. Fr. General Arturo Sosa, S.J. also spoke about this in his address to the International Congress of Jesuit Education Delegates in October 2017.

I am happy to approve your request to conduct research at the three identified Jesuit schools. We wish you all the best in your studies.

Sincerely,

Joseph P. Parkes, S.J.  
Provincial Assistant for Secondary and Pre-Secondary Education  
Maryland and USA Northeast Provinces of the Society of Jesus
October 17, 2019

Ms. Alecia Thomas
Director of Diversity & Academic Support Services
Fairfield College Preparatory School
1073 North Benson Road
Fairfield CT, 06824

Dear Alecia,

Thank you for sharing your doctoral thesis titled, “The Perception of Emotional Support of Young Adult Black Males Enrolled at Predominantly White Jesuit High Schools and Their Transition to Post-Secondary Education.” We understand you will be conducting your research at Fairfield College Preparatory School. This is significant work. As you know, the recent 36th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus wrote about the importance of the universal mission of reconciliation and justice. Fr. General Arturo Sosa, S.J. also spoke about this in his address to the International Congress of Jesuit Education Delegates in October 2017.

I am happy to approve your request to conduct research at the three identified Jesuit schools. We wish you all the best in your studies.

Sincerely,


Joseph P. Parkes, S.J.
Provincial Assistant for Secondary and Pre-Secondary Education
Maryland and USA Northeast Provinces of the Society of Jesus
Appendix C: Permission to Conduct Research

May 28, 2019

Ms. Alecia Thomas, Director of Diversity & Academic Support Services, Fairfield College Preparatory School, 1073 North Benson Rd., Fairfield, CT 06824

Dear Alecia,

Best wishes on your doctoral thesis entitled *The Perceptions of Emotional Support of Young Adult Black Males who were Enrolled at a Predominantly White Jesuit School*. I am happy to approve your request to conduct research at Fairfield Prep and publish your results. We wish you the best in your studies.

Sincerely,

Rev. Thomas M. Simisky, S.J. President

June 5, 2019
Appendix D: Sample Email to Participate in Study

Subject: Invitation to participate in a research project on (insert subject)

Dear Prospective Participant,

My name is Alecia Thomas, Doctoral candidate at the University of Bridgeport located in Connecticut. I am working on a research project under the direction of Dr. Patricia Buxton.

I am writing to you today to invite you to participate in a study entitled The Perception of Emotional Support of Young Adult Black Males Enrolled at a Predominantly White Jesuit High School and their Transition to Post-Secondary Education. This study aims to capture the lived-experience of Black males while studying in a predominantly White Jesuit high school.

This study involves at least a two-page essay reflection, one 30-minute interview and one 30–45 focus group interview that will take place in a mutually convenient, safe location. With your consent, interviews will be audio-recorded. Once the recording has been transcribed, the audio-recording will be destroyed.

While this project does involve some professional and emotional risks, care will be taken to protect your identity. This will be done by keeping all responses anonymous and allowing you to request that certain responses be not included in the final project.

You will have the right to end your participation in the study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw, all the information you have provided will be destroyed.

All research data, including audio recordings and any notes will be encrypted. Any hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes or USB keys) will be kept in a locked cabinet in my home. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and the research supervisor.

The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the University of Bridgeport Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research.
If you have any ethical concerns about the study, please contact Dr. Patricia Buxton, Chair of the research committee by email: pbuxton@my.bridgeport.edu.

If you would like to participate in this research project, or have any questions, please contact me at 860-315-2874 or via email at althomas@my.bridgeport.edu.

Sincerely,

Alecia G. Thomas
Appendix E: Sample Follow-Up Email to Participate in Study

Subject:

Dear Participant:

As a graduate student in the educational leadership department at the University of Bridgeport, I am conducting research as a part of the requirement for a doctoral program. I am conducting research to understand the perception of emotional support of Black males enrolled at a Predominantly White Jesuit high school and their transition to post-secondary education. I previously sent an email inviting you to participate in the study. This follow-up email is being sent to remind you to respond if you would like to participate and have not already done so. If you would like to participate and have not already done so, the deadline for participation is December 30th.

This study involves at least a two-page essay reflection, one 30-minute interview and one 30–45 focus group interview that will take place in a mutually convenient, safe location. With your consent, the interviews will be audio-recorded. Once the recording has been transcribed, the audio recording will be destroyed.

While this project does involve some professional and emotional risks, care will be taken to protect your identity. This will be done by keeping all responses anonymous and allowing you to request that certain responses not be included in the final project.

You will have the right to end your participation in the study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw, all the information you have provided will be destroyed.

All research data, including audio recordings and any notes will be encrypted. Any hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes or USB keys) will be kept in a locked cabinet in my home. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and the research supervisor.
The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the University of Bridgeport Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research.

If you have any ethical concerns with the study, please contact Dr. Patricia Buxton, Chair of the research committee by email: pbuxton@my.bridgeport.edu.

If you would like to participate in this research project, or have any questions, please contact me at 860-315-2874 or via email at althomas@my.bridgeport.edu.

Sincerely,

Alecia G. Thomas
Appendix F: Case Study Individual Interview Protocol

Research Project

The Perceptions of Young Adult Black Men Regarding the Emotional Support Experienced at Jesuit High Schools that Facilitated Transition to an Institution of Higher Learning

Interviewer Name: Alecia Thomas
Date of Interview: TBD
Interviewee’s name: TBD
School of Earned Degree:
Year of Graduation:
Code Allocated:

Part A: Introduction

Introduction. Thank you in advance for taking the time to participate in this study. Prior to our interview, I would like to take the time to discuss my role and how this study fits in my research design.

Purpose of this research. To explore the perceptions of adult male males on the emotional support while enrolled at a predominantly White Jesuit school.

Relevance of this research. To bring forth an in-depth analysis of the emotional support Black males receives at a predominantly White Jesuit school.

Personal Relevance. My role is that of the researcher as a Doctor of Educational Leadership E.d.d candidate. First, this research fulfills my doctoral commitment at the University of Bridgeport, the Graduate School of Education, and is connected to the work I do in my current employment.

Ethical Considerations. All information in this interview will be kept confidential in an encrypted file accessible only to the researcher. Any personal identifiable in this interview will be coded to keep it confidential. Information in this study will be kept for said purpose and not
given to third parties. The content of this interview guide complies with the requirements of the ethical policy of the University of Bridgeport (https://www.bridgeport.edu/research/research-compliance).

The one-on-one interview should take no longer than 45 minutes and will be conducted solely between the researcher and respondents. ONLY with agreement, the interview will be taped.

I, the undersigned, have read and understood the above and agree that the data obtained from this interview will only be published solely for the purpose of this dissertation.

Signature: ___________________  Date ________________

Note that the researcher will share with you the final data analysis which is expected in the year 2020. In the meantime, you can reach the researcher via email:

Alecia Thomas: DBA Candidate
University of Bridgeport
Email: althomas@fairfieldprep.org

Part B: Opening Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B1 Please tell me briefly about what you are currently doing now post your graduation?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B2 How long have you been working in this field?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3 Are there any questions you have in particular that you would like to address prior to starting the interview?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part C: Research Question 1:

What is your perception of emotional support while enrolled at a predominantly White Jesuit high school?
Nowadays, there is a great deal of attention on the educational experiences of Black males. Also, there is a particular focus on the schooling experience of Black males in predominantly White schools. How did you perceive emotional support in your school?

As a graduate of a predominantly White Jesuit high school, how do you consider the importance of emotional support?

**Part D: Research Question 2:**

What was your experience at your school (Insert name of school) as far as being institutional support is concerned?

To what extent did you feel emotionally supported by your peers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid?

To what extent did you feel emotionally supported by your teachers as it pertains to affect, affirmation, and aid?

To what extent did you feel emotionally supported by the administration as it relates to affect, affirmation, and aid?

Which element of emotional support do you perceive best facilitated your transition to your institution of higher learning?

Thank you so much for participating in this research. Your participation played a vital role in the study.
Appendix G: Focus Groups Demographic Details Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions in the space provided. Circle or check the most appropriate options.

1. Age:
2. Are you Male Female (ONLY males can participate in this study)
3. What is your professional background?
4. How many years has it been since you graduated from high school?

Focus Group: Discussion Guide

Welcome and thank you for volunteering to take part in this focus group. You have been asked to participate as your point of view is important. Thanks again for agreeing to participate as I know your time is valuable.

Introduction: This focus group is designed to explore your perception of emotional support while enrolled in high school and the role it played in your transition to higher education. The focus group should take no more than an hour. With permission, may I record the discussion that will help to facilitate data collection and analysis?

Anonymity: Although your answers will be recorded, I would like to reinforce that information from this discussion will be kept confidential. Recordings will be destroyed once the data has been collected and saturated for themes. Information from the transcribed data will not contain individual information that can connect you to the research. Please do not discuss any comments with anyone except the members of the focus group. Note that you can refrain from answering any questions that you find unsuitable.

Introductory Question
I am going to give you a few minutes to think about the emotional support you received while enrolled in a high school and whether it played a role in your transition to higher education. Is there a volunteer who is willing to share his experience?

Guiding Questions

- What comes to mind when you hear the term “emotional support”?
- What drove you to this description? Can you explain?
- Why do you think emotional support is a key in the educational goal of a student in high school?
- What are your thoughts on the contextual nature of emotional support in predominantly white schools (PWI)?
- How do you feel that emotional support factored in your transition to higher education?
- How important is the role of the administrators in supporting Black males in predominantly White institutions?
- How important is the role of faculty in supporting Black males in predominantly White institutions?
- How would you make emotional support of Black males easy to implement in predominantly white institutions?
- Which element of emotional support do you think facilitated your transition to your institution of higher learning the most?

Concluding question

Of all the things we discussed, what would you say are the most important issues that you would like to talk about?

Conclusion
Thank you for participating in the study. Your opinions will play a vital role in the analysis of this study. If after today, you would like to discuss the study further, please feel free to email me at any time. Lastly, I would like to remind you that all comments in this report will be kept anonymous and confidential.
Appendix H: Directions for Essay Response

Dear Participant,

Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in the research titled: The Perception of Emotional Support of Black Males Enrolled at a Predominantly White Jesuit High School and their Transition to Post-Secondary Education. In no more than two pages, please answer the following questions. Upon completion, please send your responses via email no later than September 13th. Once the responses are received, I will schedule a follow-up face-to-face interview to discuss your responses.

1. How did you perceive emotional support from peers received while enrolled at an all-male-Jesuit high school and what effect did it have on your post-secondary education?
2. How did you perceive emotional support from teachers received while enrolled at an all-male-Jesuit high school and what effect did it have on your post-secondary education?
3. How did you perceive the emotional support received from administrators while enrolled at an all-male-Jesuit high school and what effect did it have on your post-secondary education?
Appendix I: Debriefing Form for Participation in a Research Study

Thank you for your participation in this study.

**Purpose of the study:** You were previously informed that the purpose of the study was finding The Perceptions of Young Adult Black Men Regarding the Emotional Support Experienced at Jesuit High Schools that Facilitated Transition to an Institution of Higher Learning. The goal of the research was to gain insight into the lived-experience of Black males in a PWI high school.

**Confidentiality:** You may decide that you do not want your data used in the research. If you would like your data removed from the study and permanently deleted, please contact me via email atlthomas@my.bridgeport.edu.

**Questions:** If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Bridgeport Human Research Protection Program at 203-576-4974 or irb@bridgeport.edu.

**Final Report:** If you would like to receive a copy of the final report of this study, please free to contact me via email, atlthomas@my.bridgeport.edu

Your signature below indicates that you have been debriefed and have had all of your questions answered (please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Researcher</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Participant</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</table>
Appendix K: Email to Participate in Face-to Face Interview via Zoom and in Person

Dear Research Participant,

Thank you for completing the personal reflection essay questions as it will serve a vital role in my study. The next step is to conduct a face-to face interview in person or via zoom. If you choose an in-person interview, please tell me the time and place where you would like to meet. If you choose to participate via zoom, please tell me the time that you are available and I will send you the zoom link on the day of the interview. All interviews will be recorded for the sole purpose of extrapolating the data. The transcription of the interviews will remain anonymous and destroyed six months after the dissertation is approved.

Best,

Alecia Thomas
Appendix L: Email to Participate in Focus Group Interview via Zoom

Dear Research Participant,

I cannot thank you enough for agreeing to participate in this study. The last step of the study, as mentioned in previous communication, is to conduct a focus group. The focus group is scheduled to take place on March 8th around 5 pm. I will send a zoom link via text or email (please indicate your preference). You will have the option to participate with or without video as a means to protect your privacy. However, note that all interviews will be recorded using the zoom application and transcribed immediately after. As the primary researcher, I will be the only one privy to the interview material and it will only be used to extrapolate data for the sole purpose of the study. Once the study is approved, all recordings and written transcripts will be destroyed six months after the study. Thanks again for agreeing to participate in the study, and I look forward to seeing you on March 8th!

Best,
Alecia Thomas
Appendix M: Citi Training Certificate

This is to certify that:

Alecia Thomas

Has completed the following Citi Program course:

Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (Curriculum Group)
Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (Course Learner Group)
Z - Refresher Course (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

University of Bridgeport

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w3da31966-93c9-4c2d-8df1-4e70cf7b7a43-27750985
Appendix N: IRB Approval Letter

January 28th 2020

Alecia Thomas, M.A.
School of Education
College of Engineering, Business & Education
University of Bridgeport

Dear Ms. Thomas:

On January 28th, 2020, a designated IRB member approved the following human subject research:

Type of Review: Initial, expedited
Project Title: The Perception of Emotional Support of Adult Black Males Enrolled at a Predominantly White Jesuit High School and Their Transition to Post-Secondary Education.
Investigator: Alecia Thomas, M.A.
IRB ID: 2019-11-20
Funding Agency: N/A
Grant Title: N/A
Grant ID: N/A
IND or IDE: N/A

To request continuing approval, you are to submit a completed “UB HRP-212 FORM: Continuing Review Progress Report” and required attachments by December 28th, 2020. For study closure, you are to submit a completed “UB HRP-212 FORM: Continuing Review Progress Report” and required attachments by February 28th, 2021.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of January 28th, 2021 this research expires on that date.

In conducting this research you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual.

Sincerely,

Mark H. Pitcher Ph.D.
Director, Health Sciences Inter-professional Research
IRB Administrator
University of Bridgeport

CC: Dr. Patricia Buxton

60 Lafayette Street • Bridgeport, CT 06604 • Tel: 203-576-4819 • E-mail: irb@bridgeport.edu